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**From:** SECSTATE WASHDC  
**Action:** ALL DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR POSTS COLLECTIVE *ROUTINE*  
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**TAGS:** APER  
**Subject:** Message from Acting Under Secretary Perez (M) Regarding the 2020 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey Results

## Key Points:

- The Department's 2020 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) response rate was 50 percent, 6 percentage points higher than the 2019 response rate of 44 percent. The survey was conducted between September 22 and November 2, 2020.
- For the 2020 FEVS, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) decreased the number of core items to accommodate the addition of COVID-19-related items. As a result, trending for some items and indices, including the Diversity and Inclusion Index will not be possible this year.
- Among the core survey items, the Department's scores for half of the items increased by 5 or more percentage points, particularly in areas related to supervision, work-life balance, and job satisfaction. The Department's Global Satisfaction and Employee Engagement Index scores increased by 1 and 4 points, respectively.
- The Bureau of Global Talent Management (GTM) shared bureau results with bureau executive offices and posted them here: <https://usdos.sharepoint.com/sites/Intranet-HR/offices/rma/Pages/EmployeeSurveys.aspx>.
- I encourage all employees to review the FEVS results, ask questions of management and leadership, and make suggestions on how we can improve employee engagement and satisfaction throughout our organization.

Message from Acting Under Secretary Perez

1. Strengthening our organization, making it more supportive and inclusive, is a

whole-of-Department effort—one that must be informed by, and grounded in, data. The annual Federal Employment Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) is the premier source of such data for the federal government and the participation of Department employees is critical to gleaning meaningful results.

2. While the 2020 FEVS was delayed last year – by nearly four months— due to the pandemic, it was administered across federal agencies and leveraged to assess employee perceptions of agencies’ responses to COVID19. Today, I am pleased to announce that the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has released the results, providing us a valuable trove of information we can use to collectively make the Department a more engaging and inclusive place to work.
3. Nearly 11,000 Department employees participated in the 2020 FEVS. The Department’s response rate increased by 6 percentage points from 44 to of 50 percent, compared to a Government-wide increase of 1 percentage point, from 43 to 44 percent. Although this year’s response rate was not our highest on record, the number of respondents was the highest since the inception of the FEVS in 2010. Thank you to those who participated—your valuable feedback helps us make the Department a better, balanced, and more inclusive workplace.

#### Overview of the Results

4. Core Items: The Department’s scores – the percent of positive responses – increased by 5 or more points for 18 of the 37 core items, covering topics that include perceptions of managers and supervisors, performance management, communication, and work life balance. The Department’s score decreased by 5 or more points for only one item that relates to fear of reprisal for disclosing violations of the law.
5. Employee Engagement Index (EEI): The EEI is designed to assess to what extent agencies create environments conducive to high employee engagement based on employee perceptions of their leaders, supervisors, and work. The Department’s EEI score increased by 4 points from 68 to 72 percent, in lockstep with the Government-wide score. EEI scores increased for 31 of the 39 bureaus and/or bureau equivalents.
6. Global Satisfaction (GSI): This GSI measures satisfaction with pay, the job, and the organization; as well as whether or not the employee would

recommend the organization as a good place to work. The Department's GSI score increased by 1 point from 66 to 67 percent, while the Government-wide GSI increased by 4 points from 65 to 69 percent. GSI scores increased for 22 of the 39 bureaus and/or bureau equivalents.

7. COVID-19 Items: Nearly 4 in 5 respondents agreed that leaders and supervisors in the Department have been supportive of their personal and professional well-being during the pandemic (i.e., showing concern, effectively communicating, demonstrating commitment to health and safety).

Among the supports needed and available to employees for their personal well-being during the pandemic, employees cited the following as the top three: 1) expanded telework – 80 percent; 2) availability of cleaning and sanitizing supplies – 77 percent and 3) encouraged use of PPE and other safety equipment at the worksite – 76 percent.

Among the supports needed, but not available to employees for their personal well-being during the pandemic, employees cited as the top three: 1) the need for expanded physical health resources (i.e., testing) – 26 percent; 2) training on health and safety protocols – 21 percent, and 3) timely communication about COVID at the worksite – 19 percent.

Among the supports needed and available to employees in order to do their jobs successfully during the pandemic, employees cited as the top three: 1) expanded collaboration tools – 85 percent; 2) consistent communication – 82 percent, and 3) information on remote work policies, procedures, and expectations – 76 percent.

Among the supports needed, but not available to employees in order to do their jobs successfully during the pandemic, employees cited as the top three: 1) equipment and technology for working remotely – 34 percent; and expanded IT support and training for remote work – 26 percent.

8. Alternative Work and Employee Support Programs: Participation in most alternative support programs increased (the exception is health and wellness programs), along with satisfaction with these programs. Satisfaction with telework and alternative work schedules (AWS) increased by 28 and 25 points, respectively.
9. President's Management Agenda (PMA) 20-20-20: The PMA 20-20-20 was a government-wide requirement for agencies to work with their subcomponents who scored in the bottom 20<sup>th</sup> percentile on the EEI based on the 2018 FEVS.

Those bureaus and work units developed action plans with the goal to improve their EEI scores by 20 percent by 2020. Based on the FEVS 2020 data, all work units saw improvements in their EEI scores; and four of the six bureaus, and seven of the eight Bureau of Consular Affairs (CA) passport centers met or exceeded the goal. We should all celebrate their success and see this as a positive sign that action planning can lead to improvements.

### Next Steps

10. The Bureau of Global Talent Management (GTM) shared FEVS results with bureau executive offices on April 1, and posted Department and bureau-level data to the following Intranet website: <https://usdos.sharepoint.com/sites/Intranet-HR/offices/rma/Pages/EmployeeSurveys.aspx>. In the coming weeks, GTM will publish a dashboard to make it easier to view historical FEVS data. The dashboard will include bureau-level data for OPM's Employee Engagement, Global Satisfaction, and Diversity and Inclusion indices; and an adaptation of the Partnership for Public Service's Best Places to Work in the Federal Government index. For the 2020 FEVS, OPM decreased the number of core items to accommodate the addition of COVID-related items. As a result, trending for the Diversity and Inclusion Index will not include 2020 data.
11. The availability of Post and office-level results varies according to how bureaus are organized and Post and office-level response rates. Please contact your Executive Office for specific questions regarding bureau results.
12. I encourage managers and supervisors to share the FEVS results throughout your work units and discuss bureau strengths and challenges. Be inclusive with your FEVS discussions and invite all employees – including those not eligible for the FEVS – to offer feedback and suggestions on where and how your bureau or Post can make improvements. Managers and supervisors needing assistance framing their FEVS discussion can contact GTM at [GTMSurveys@state.gov](mailto:GTMSurveys@state.gov).
13. The gains the Department experienced in the 2020 FEVS, in spite of the many challenges we faced, should be noted and celebrated; and maintaining and expanding those gains will require a concerted effort from the entire workforce. Let us all, no matter your position, grade, or location within the

organization, commit to ensuring the Department is a fair, inclusive, innovative, and safe place to work.

**Signature:** Blinken

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