Message

From: Bhandari, Pradnya [Bhandari.Pradnya@epa.gov]
Sent: 12/16/2020 9:45:02 PM
To: Orme-Zavaleta, Jennifer [Orme-Zavaleta.Jennifer@epa.gov]
CC: Blackburn, Elizabeth [Blackburn.Elizabeth@epa.gov]
Subject: Action Items and Take Aways from EC/MC

Hi Jennifer,

Below I've listed some of the key points from our discussion today for you to use in your closing remarks. There weren't many concrete action items so I mainly took the highlights from each of the sections.

- We started the meeting talking about the status of the transition team. The Agency Review Team is winding down their meetings and we can expect the First Team to arrive after inauguration. The Agency Review Team had 3 briefings with ORD, one on general ORD research, one about our resources and budgets, and the final one on scientific integrity. We're finishing up on follow-up items and will then be preparing for the First Team to arrive.
- Next, John walked us through the results of the 1-year Post Reorg Survey.
    - Largely, the results were positive, and like we heard from many of you, the reorg provided opportunities for better integration of science, stronger relationships, and better communication within the organization.
    - Like I mentioned, all the hard work by the people of this organization, especially in such a challenging year, has not gone unnoticed and in my recent conversation with Doug he commented on the role that ORD took in being responsive to the pandemic and most notably, our ability to sustain this level of support 9 months in.
    - As with any reorg, there are a few areas that we can work on and this includes engaging better with our staff and being more transparent about resource allocation. I know that there are already some actions in place to address this, but thinking about ways to be more transparent and further engage staff would be good as we head into a new year.
- We then transitioned into talking about the FY22 Managers Meeting and talked about some of the themes that we wanted to see. A lot of good ideas were mentioned; Resilience, Innovation, Impact, and many others, all of which embody the spirit of ORD. I'm sure the tri-chairs, Dale, Marty, and Terry, will take all these ideas and come up with a theme that gives us something to look forward and helps us begin fleshing out the session topics for the meeting.
- We spent some time talking about ELMS, looking back at our accomplishments in FY20, of which they were many, and how ELMS will be incorporated as we move forward. I appreciated the thoughtful discussion on what worked well for ELMS and things that could be changed to better serve ORD and help us continue improving as an organization.
    - Henry joined us for this discussion and reflected on ORD's ELMS journey and reminded us of the values of the LEAN Management system; to identify small problems before they become big problems, helps us monitor progress, and prevent regression.
- Missy shared with us updates from the first line supervisors group, highlighting the topics that were discussed at the FLS meetings this year and mapping out the topics for next year, including how to manage in a virtual environment, how to write PARS for the new system, and managing morale.
- Lastly, we talked about how we can strengthen our engagement with the post-doc community within ORD and provide career advancing opportunities for them. We've taken some steps based on feedback we've heard from the post-doc, but we can ramp up these efforts by taking a more active role in their career development, identifying what is the best career path for them, and helping them develop concrete skills like communication and management.
    - It is important that we do our part to make these post-docs feel like a part of the broader ORD community.

- Thank you all for your active participation in this meeting, I know it can be difficult when we're in a virtual setting, but the success of these meetings lies in your engagement and the discussions we have. Hopefully we can all be together in-person by this time next year!
- I wish everyone a safe, happy, and peaceful holiday season as we close out a truly unprecedented year. Please take this time to relax and refresh before we kick-off a new year of advancing the Agency's mission through sound science and research.

Pradnya Bhandari
Immediate Office
Office of Research and Development
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
bhandari.pradnya@epa.gov
O: (919) 541 4930
C: (919) 937 1989
RTP Building B
B340F