



Annual Employee Survey Results, 2007

U.S. Railroad Retirement Board

All Respondents

1. Interpretation of Results: Overall, the responses to the employee survey look very positive. In terms of the response rate, we were pleased that 70 percent of our employees completed the survey. In addition, the demographic characteristics of the respondents were very similar to the agency as a whole, with one minor exception. Team leaders account for about 1 percent of the RRB workforce, yet they comprised 13 percent of the responses to the survey.

The questions – as well as the RRB response rate – were virtually identical to those included in the Federal Human Capital Survey of all agencies conducted by OPM on a biennial basis. In comparing the responses to the more limited set of questions required for this survey with the previous results from the governmentwide survey, RRB employees continued to like the work they do and have a good understanding of the agency’s mission. In addition, we saw some progress in prior areas of concern such as recruitment and training.

For example, in looking at questions that relate to recruitment (questions 7 and 8), the percentage of employees with a favorable response increased from prior surveys while the unfavorable percentages showed a similar decrease. In the area of training (questions 12, 14 and 38), we saw an even larger increase in favorable responses coupled with decreases in the numbers of employees who had an unfavorable response or expressed no opinion. (On question 38, the percentages stayed roughly the same as in the previous surveys, with a slight shift of responses from “very satisfied” to “satisfied.”)

There were a few areas or questions in which negative responses increased, although they still represented a minority of those answering the question. Nevertheless, those questions about which we have some control provide opportunities for agency management to seek improved communication and policies. For example, we asked employees how satisfied they were with their involvement in decisions that affect their work (question 34). The percentage of respondents with favorable answers showed a decrease of almost 6 percent, and a corresponding increase in negative responses. However, it should also be noted that we saw an increase in favorable responses and a decrease in negative ones on the related question about satisfaction with information received from management (question 33).

In addition, we saw a decrease in very satisfied responses and an increase in both degrees of dissatisfaction in the question that related to pay (question 40). This has been a continuing phenomenon on each survey, as the percentage of employees dissatisfied with their pay has increased every time, standing at 19.2 percent in the current one. While the RRB receives favorable responses on questions that relate to the performance appraisal and awards system, there is little the agency can do to increase satisfaction with pay under the current wage and salary schedules. However, in the current survey results, some of the decrease in satisfied responses is reflected in an increase in the number of employees who expressed no opinion. The



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results are also similar to governmentwide responses in the OPM surveys, although the RRB's negative responses are significantly lower than the governmentwide percentages.

In a somewhat similar vein, the agency also saw an increase in dissatisfaction with physical conditions of the workplace (question 11). While the percentage of those who strongly agreed that physical conditions allow employees to perform their jobs well remained constant from the last OPM survey, we saw a decrease in those who agreed or expressed no opinion, with corresponding increases in the employees who disagreed or strongly disagreed. We attribute much of this to the fact that most of our employees work in an aging headquarters building. However, we will continue to work closely with the General Services Administration to make needed improvements as funds allow. In recent years, these joint undertakings have resulted in improvements to the plumbing and the heating/ventilation systems, as well as replacement of worn carpet and paint, to improve aesthetics and functionality. Fortunately, we saw a shift from negative to favorable responses in two related, important areas dealing with protection of employees from workplace hazards and potential security threats (questions 28 and 32).

2. How the survey was conducted: The survey was conducted online from November 26th, 2007 to December 14th, 2007.

3. Description of sample: All 986 full-time permanent employees of the agency were surveyed.

4. Survey items and response choices: See the tables on the following pages.

5. Number of employees surveyed, number who responded, and representativeness of respondents: Of the 995 employees surveyed, 697 responded, for a 70% response rate. These respondents are representative of the population except in the number of Team Leaders and employees from the Office of Programs who responded.

Supervisory Status	Population	Respondents
Non-supervisor	84%	71%
Team Leader	1%	13%
Supervisor	12%	10%
Manager	3%	5%
Executive	1%	1%
Gender		
Male	37%	34%
Female	63%	66%
Are you: Hispanic or Latino		
Yes	5%	5%
No	95%	95%
Racial Category		
White	62%	66%
Black or African-American	35%	30%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	<1%	0%



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Asian	2%	2%
American Indian or Alaska Native	1%	0%
Two or more races (not Hispanic or Latino)		2%



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Sub-Agency		
Office of Board Members	2%	2%
Office of Inspector General	5%	5%
Office of Equal Opportunity	<1%	0%
Bureau of Actuary	2%	1%
Bureau of Fiscal Operations	7%	6%
Office of General Counsel	1%	2%
Office of Legislative Affairs	<1%	0%
Bureau of Hearing and Appeals	1%	1%
Office of Administration	3%	4%
Acquisition Management	1%	1%
Public Affairs	1%	1%
Bureau of Human Resources	2%	1%
Office of Programs	<1%	9%
Operations	22%	13%
Policy and Systems	6%	5%
Resource Management Center	1%	1%
Assessment and Training	6%	5%
Field Service	30%	30%
Bureau of Information Services	15%	14%



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2007 Annual Employee Survey Results for U.S. Railroad Retirement Board All Respondents

Surveys Returned:
 697

Response Rate: 70%

Surveys Sent: 995

Prescribed Questions: Personal Work Experiences								
Item Text		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree		Total
1. The people I work with cooperate to get the job done.	Frequencies	191	372	71	47	14		695
	Percentages	27.5%	53.5%	10.2%	6.8%	2.0%		100.0%
2. I am given a real opportunity to improve my skills in my organization.	Frequencies	103	314	149	99	30		695
	Percentages	14.8%	45.2%	21.4%	14.2%	4.3%		100.0%
3. My work gives me a feeling of personal accomplishment.	Frequencies	188	364	85	34	21		692
	Percentages	27.2%	52.6%	12.3%	4.9%	3.0%		100.0%
4. I like the kind of work I do.	Frequencies	237	337	80	26	13		693
	Percentages	34.2%	48.6%	11.5%	3.8%	1.9%		100.0%
5. I have trust and confidence in my supervisor.	Frequencies	204	278	105	64	42		693
	Percentages	29.4%	40.1%	15.2%	9.2%	6.1%		100.0%
Item Text		Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor		Total
6. Overall, how good a job do you feel is being done by your immediate supervisor/team leader?	Frequencies	235	256	125	47	29		692
	Percentages	34.0%	37.0%	18.1%	6.8%	4.2%		100.0%



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Prescribed Questions: Recruitment, Development, & Retention								
Item Text		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know	Total
7. The workforce has the job-relevant knowledge and skills necessary to accomplish organizational goals.	Frequencies	136	374	107	48	10	18	693
	Percentages	19.6%	54.0%	15.4%	6.9%	1.4%	2.6%	100.0%
8. My work unit is able to recruit people with the right skills.	Frequencies	61	195	211	117	47	62	693
	Percentages	8.8%	28.1%	30.4%	16.9%	6.8%	8.9%	100.0%
9. I know how my work relates to the agency's goals and priorities.	Frequencies	274	332	52	16	3	15	692
	Percentages	39.6%	48.0%	7.5%	2.3%	0.4%	2.2%	100.0%
10. The work I do is important.	Frequencies	397	234	28	7	4	21	691
	Percentages	57.5%	33.9%	4.1%	1.0%	0.6%	3.0%	100.0%
11. Physical conditions (for example, noise level, temperature, lighting, cleanliness in the workplace) allow employees to perform their jobs well.	Frequencies	148	293	97	92	51	9	690
	Percentages	21.4%	42.5%	14.1%	13.3%	7.4%	1.3%	100.0%
12. Supervisors/team leaders in my work unit support employee development.	Frequencies	150	281	126	83	37	16	693
	Percentages	21.6%	40.5%	18.2%	12.0%	5.3%	2.3%	100.0%
13. My talents are used well in the workplace.	Frequencies	163	297	122	72	30	7	691
	Percentages	23.6%	43.0%	17.7%	10.4%	4.3%	1.0%	100.0%
14. My training needs are assessed.	Frequencies	83	291	155	109	38	13	689
	Percentages	12.0%	42.2%	22.5%	15.8%	5.5%	1.9%	100.0%



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Prescribed Questions: Performance Culture								
Item Text		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know	Total
15. Promotions in my work unit are based on merit.	Frequencies	87	211	158	103	64	69	692
	Percentages	12.6%	30.5%	22.8%	14.9%	9.2%	10.0%	100.0%
16. In my work unit, steps are taken to deal with a poor performer who cannot or will not improve.	Frequencies	29	190	158	147	80	86	690
	Percentages	4.2%	27.5%	22.9%	21.3%	11.6%	12.5%	100.0%
17. Creativity and innovation are rewarded.	Frequencies	53	224	207	113	61	36	694
	Percentages	7.6%	32.3%	29.8%	16.3%	8.8%	5.2%	100.0%
							No Basis to Judge	
Item Text		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know	Total
18. In my most recent performance appraisal, I understood what I had to do to be rated at different performance levels (e.g., Fully Successful, Outstanding).	Frequencies	188	320	85	57	24	17	691
	Percentages	27.2%	46.3%	12.3%	8.2%	3.5%	2.5%	100.0%
Item Text		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know	Total
19. In my work unit, differences in performance are recognized in a meaningful way.	Frequencies	54	232	165	128	50	61	690
	Percentages	7.8%	33.6%	23.9%	18.6%	7.2%	8.8%	100.0%
20. Pay raises depend on how well employees perform their jobs.	Frequencies	56	187	175	154	66	54	692
	Percentages	8.1%	27.0%	25.3%	22.3%	9.5%	7.8%	100.0%
21. My performance appraisal is a fair reflection of my performance.	Frequencies	136	327	105	64	50	11	693
	Percentages	19.6%	47.2%	15.2%	9.2%	7.2%	1.6%	100.0%
22. Discussions with my supervisor/ team leader about my performance are worthwhile.	Frequencies	127	299	131	86	42	8	693
	Percentages	18.3%	43.1%	18.9%	12.4%	6.1%	1.2%	100.0%
23. Managers/supervisors/team leaders work well with	Frequencies	129	293	143	59	31	38	693



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employees of different backgrounds.	Percentages	18.6%	42.3%	20.6%	8.5%	4.5%	5.5%	100.0%
24. My supervisor supports my need to balance work and family issues.	Frequencies	264	275	90	20	23	20	692
	Percentages	38.2%	39.7%	13.0%	2.9%	3.3%	2.9%	100.0%



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Prescribed Questions: Leadership								
Item Text		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know	Total
25. I have a high level of respect for my organization's senior leaders.	Frequencies	106	268	188	90	35	7	694
	Percentages	15.3%	38.6%	27.1%	13.0%	5.0%	1.0%	100.0%
26. In my organization, leaders generate high levels of motivation and commitment in the workforce.	Frequencies	54	224	204	150	40	21	693
	Percentages	7.8%	32.3%	29.4%	21.6%	5.8%	3.0%	100.0%
27. Managers review and evaluate the organization's progress toward meeting its goals and objectives.	Frequencies	86	293	171	47	20	76	693
	Percentages	12.4%	42.3%	24.7%	6.8%	2.9%	11.0%	100.0%
28. Employees are protected from health and safety hazards on the job.	Frequencies	136	359	116	46	18	18	693
	Percentages	19.6%	51.8%	16.7%	6.6%	2.6%	2.6%	100.0%
29. Employees have a feeling of personal empowerment with respect to work processes.	Frequencies	56	224	219	108	41	44	692
	Percentages	8.1%	32.4%	31.6%	15.6%	5.9%	6.4%	100.0%
30. My workload is reasonable.	Frequencies	77	367	107	92	46	4	693
	Percentages	11.1%	53.0%	15.4%	13.3%	6.6%	0.6%	100.0%
31. Managers communicate the goals and priorities of the organization.	Frequencies	87	344	146	69	30	14	690
	Percentages	12.6%	49.9%	21.2%	10.0%	4.3%	2.0%	100.0%
32. My organization has prepared employees for potential security threats.	Frequencies	103	320	157	67	19	28	694
	Percentages	14.8%	46.1%	22.6%	9.7%	2.7%	4.0%	100.0%



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Prescribed Questions: Job Satisfaction								
Item Text		Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neither	Dis-satisfied	Very Dis-satisfied		Total
33. How satisfied are you with the information you receive from management on what's going on in your organization?	Frequencies	44	294	179	131	42		690
	Percentages	6.4%	42.6%	25.9%	19.0%	6.1%		100.0%
34. How satisfied are you with your involvement in decisions that affect your work?	Frequencies	47	254	194	146	50		691
	Percentages	6.8%	36.8%	28.1%	21.1%	7.2%		100.0%
35. How satisfied are you with your opportunity to get a better job in your organization?	Frequencies	36	203	225	147	80		691
	Percentages	5.2%	29.4%	32.6%	21.3%	11.6%		100.0%
36. How satisfied are you with the recognition you receive for doing a good job?	Frequencies	91	298	145	99	56		689
	Percentages	13.2%	43.3%	21.0%	14.4%	8.1%		100.0%
37. How satisfied are you with the policies and practices of your senior leaders?	Frequencies	50	263	226	99	51		689
	Percentages	7.3%	38.2%	32.8%	14.4%	7.4%		100.0%
38. How satisfied are you with the training you receive for your present job?	Frequencies	61	289	183	113	44		690
	Percentages	8.8%	41.9%	26.5%	16.4%	6.4%		100.0%
39. Considering everything, how satisfied are you with your job?	Frequencies	127	359	132	46	26		690
	Percentages	18.4%	52.0%	19.1%	6.7%	3.8%		100.0%
40. Considering everything, how satisfied are you with your pay?	Frequencies	107	314	140	84	44		689
	Percentages	15.5%	45.6%	20.3%	12.2%	6.4%		100.0%



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Demographics

What is your supervisory status?	N	%
Non-Supervisor	491	71%
Team Leader	86	13%
Supervisor	70	10%
Manager	34	5%
Executive	6	1%

Are you...	N	%
Male	234	34%
Female	448	66%

Are you Hispanic or Latino?	N	%
Yes	37	5%
No	644	95%

Please select the racial category or categories with which you most closely identify.

	N	%
White	439	66%
Black or African-American	198	30%
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	3	0%
Asian	10	2%
American Indian or Alaska Native	1	0%
Two or more races	10	2%

What is your agency subcomponent?	N	%
Office of the Board Members	12	2%
Office of Inspector General	32	5%
Office of Equal Opportunity	1	0%
Bureau of the Actuary	9	1%
Bureau of Fiscal Operations	40	6%
Office of General Counsel	14	2%
Office of Legislative Affairs	3	0%
Bureau of Hearing and Appeals	6	1%
Office of Administration	24	4%
Acquisition Management	6	1%
Public Affairs	4	1%
Bureau of Human Resources	8	1%
Office of Programs	59	9%
Operations	90	13%
Policy and Systems	37	5%
Resource Management Center	6	1%
Assessment and Training	35	5%



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Field Service	203	30%
Bureau of Information Services	92	14%