



## 2008 Federal Human Capital Survey

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### U.S. Railroad Retirement Board Federal Human Capital Survey Results, 2008 (Survey Administration Period 8/1/08 to 9/26/08)

1. **Interpretation of Results:** The Federal Human Capital Survey (FHCS) is a tool that measures employees' perceptions of whether, and to what extent, conditions characterizing successful organizations are present in their agencies. The survey is conducted every two years by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and the results provide valuable insight into the challenges agency leaders face in ensuring the Federal Government has an effective civilian workforce and how well they are responding. Overall, the responses to the employee survey look very positive. We were pleased that of the 859 employees invited to participate, 570 completed the survey, for a response rate of 66.4%. Compared to an average response rate of 55.9% for the other 43 Federal agencies surveyed, the RRB had the eighth highest response rate.

This year, our agency also earned the distinction of having one of the highest score increases since the 2006 survey in questions related to job satisfaction. The RRB appeared in the top ten list of agencies with the highest increases in the Job Satisfaction index, one of four indices included in the Human Capital Assessment and Accountability Framework (HCAAF). The HCAAF guides governmentwide efforts to support agency mission results with strong human capital strategies. The Job Satisfaction Index indicates the extent that our employees are satisfied with their jobs and various aspects of their position. The rankings are based on percent positive ratings of the survey items that make up each index. The RRB had a 67.5% positive response rate in the Job Satisfaction Index which consisted of survey questions from the following categories: Personal Work Experiences; Recruitment, Development, and Retention; and Job Satisfaction. RRB employees indicated an increase in their satisfaction of policies and practices of senior leaders, their opportunity for upward mobility, and the on-the-job training offered, along with an increase in their general satisfaction of their job, organization, and pay.

Based on OPM's guideline for determining notable results, we scored especially high (greater than 65% favorable—Strongly Agree/Agree) on the majority of the items for questions measuring personal work experiences. Ninety four percent of the respondents think the work they do is important (question 20) and 88% know how their work relates to the agency's goals and priorities (question 19). Seventy six percent of respondents feel their work gives them a feeling of personal accomplishment—up four percent from the last survey in 2006 (question 5). Over 80% of respondents like the kind of work they do (question 6) and feel the people they work with cooperate to get the job done (question 1). Additionally, employees continued to feel supported by their supervisor to balance work and other life issues (question 12).

Despite escalating health care benefit costs in a precarious economy, 73% of employees remained satisfied with their employer-sponsored benefit plans, an increase of five percent from the last survey in 2006 (question 65). Satisfaction with the flexible spending account (FSA) program for employees is increasing as well. Of the employees that have an FSA, only two

percent are unsatisfied (question 68). Employees experienced an overall increase in satisfaction with all of their benefits. This could be due to the fact that they are well informed of the choices available to them. The agency holds a health benefits fair annually to coincide with open season enrollment. Additionally, training sessions are offered for employees that are nearing retirement.

On the other hand, the lowest scores were on items measuring recruitment, development, and retention and performance culture, although these scores still represent only a minority of the employees that responded. For example, 26% of the employees surveyed felt that their work unit is unable to recruit people with the right skills (question 14); however, this is an improvement of four percent from the last survey conducted in 2006. Only 31% of the employees surveyed agree that steps are taken to deal with poor performers who do not improve (question 23). The areas we intend to concentrate on improving in the upcoming years are training and dealing with poor performance.

2. **How the survey was conducted:** The survey was conducted online from August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008 to September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2008.

3. **Description of the employee sample:** All full-time permanent (non-conditional) employees of the agency as of December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2007 were surveyed.

4. **Survey items, response choices, and number of respondents for each question:** see the table on pages four through eight.

5. **Number of employees surveyed, number who responded, and representation of respondents:** Of the 859 employees surveyed, 570 responded, for a 66.4% response rate. Below are the demographics of the population.

<b><i>Work Location</i></b>	<b><i>Respondents</i></b>
Headquarters	73%
Field	27%
<b><i>Supervisory Status</i></b>	
Non-Supervisor	67%
Team Leader	13%
Supervisor	13%
Manager	5%
Executive	2%
<b><i>Gender</i></b>	
Male	34%
Female	66%
<b><i>Hispanic or Latino?</i></b>	
Yes	6%
No	94%
<b><i>Racial Category</i></b>	
American Indian or Alaska Native	<1%
Asian	2%
Black or African American	33%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	1%
White	61%
Two or more races	2%

<b>Age Group</b>	
25 and under	<1%
26 – 29	1%
30 – 39	6%
40 – 49	30%
50 – 59	51%
60 or older	12%
<b>Pay Category/Grade</b>	
Federal Wage System	<1%
GS 1 – 6	4%
GS 7 – 12	71%
GS 13 – 15	24%
Senior Executive Service	1%
Senior Level (SL) or Scientific or Professional (ST)	<1%
Other	<1%
<b>Length of Service with the Federal Government (excluding military service)</b>	
Less than 1 year	<1%
1 to 3 years	<1%
4 to 5 years	2%
6 to 10 years	4%
11 to 14 years	2%
15 to 20 years	19%
More than 20 years	73%
<b>Length of Service at Current Agency</b>	
Less than 1 year	1%
1 to 3 years	2%
4 to 5 years	3%
6 to 10 years	8%
11 to 20 years	25%
More than 20 years	62%

Survey Question			Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know	Total
1.	The people I work with cooperate to get the job done.	Frequency	151	323	53	34	9	NA	570
		Percentage	26.6	56.6	9.2	6.0	1.6	NA	100
2.	I am given a real opportunity to improve my skills in my organization.	Frequency	82	227	156	79	26	NA	570
		Percentage	14.5	39.7	27.5	13.6	4.8	NA	100
3.	I have enough information to do my job well.	Frequency	94	320	97	52	7	NA	570
		Percentage	16.6	55.8	17.2	9.1	1.2	NA	100
4.	I feel encouraged to come up with new and better ways of doing things.	Frequency	100	212	134	95	29	NA	570
		Percentage	17.4	36.7	23.9	16.8	5.1	NA	100
5.	My work gives me a feeling of personal accomplishment.	Frequency	154	278	90	32	16	NA	570
		Percentage	26.9	48.6	15.9	5.6	2.9	NA	100
6.	I like the kind of work I do.	Frequency	194	272	71	21	12	NA	570
		Percentage	33.8	47.7	12.7	3.7	2.1	NA	100
7.	I have trust and confidence in my supervisor.	Frequency	137	232	104	45	52	NA	570
		Percentage	23.9	40.8	18.3	7.8	9.2	NA	100
8.	I recommend my organization as a good place to work.	Frequency	136	255	96	54	29	NA	570
		Percentage	23.9	44.7	16.7	9.5	5.2	NA	100
			<b>Very Good</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Very Poor</b>	<b>Do Not Know</b>	<b>Total</b>
9.	Overall, how good a job do you feel is being done by your immediate supervisor/team leader?	Frequency	182	221	100	42	25	NA	570
		Percentage	31.7	39.1	17.3	7.4	4.5	NA	100
10.	How would you rate the overall quality of work done by your work group?	Frequency	206	288	65	7	4	NA	570
		Percentage	36.2	50.4	11.5	1.2	0.7	NA	100
			<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither Agree Nor Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Do Not Know</b>	<b>Total</b>
11.	The workforce has the job-relevant knowledge and skills necessary to accomplish organizational goals.	Frequency	78	341	98	37	11	5	570
		Percentage	13.9	59.6	17.3	6.4	1.9	0.9	100
12.	My supervisor supports my need to balance work and other life issues.	Frequency	210	226	76	24	27	7	570
		Percentage	36.9	39.5	13.2	4.2	4.8	1.3	100
13.	Supervisors/team leaders in my work unit provide employees with the opportunities to demonstrate their leadership skills.	Frequency	74	233	137	83	38	5	570
		Percentage	13.0	40.5	24.3	14.5	6.7	0.9	100
14.	My work unit is able to recruit people with the right skills.	Frequency	39	142	205	109	40	35	570
		Percentage	7.0	24.8	36.4	18.7	7.0	6.2	100

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know	Total	
15.	The skill level in my work unit has improved in the past year.	Frequency Percentage	58 10.1	214 37.5	200 35.2	52 9.1	22 3.9	24 4.2	570 100
16.	I have sufficient resources (for example, people, materials, budget) to get my job done.	Frequency Percentage	60 10.7	261 46.1	92 16.0	111 19.3	44 7.5	2 0.4	570 100
17.	My workload is reasonable.	Frequency Percentage	48 8.7	305 53.7	91 16.1	87 15.0	39 6.7	0 0.0	570 100
18.	My talents are used well in the workplace.	Frequency Percentage	80 14.0	267 46.6	118 20.7	72 12.7	30 5.4	3 0.5	570 100
19.	I know how my work relates to the agency's goals and priorities.	Frequency Percentage	165 28.9	337 59.1	48 8.5	13 2.3	4 0.7	3 0.5	570 100
20.	The work I do is important.	Frequency Percentage	289 50.8	245 42.9	28 4.8	6 1.0	2 0.4	0 0.0	570 100
21.	Physical conditions (for example, noise level, temperature, lighting, cleanliness in the workplace) allow employees to perform their jobs well.	Frequency Percentage	107 18.9	288 50.5	75 13.2	62 10.7	35 6.1	3 0.5	570 100
22.	Promotions in my work unit are based on merit.	Frequency Percentage	53 9.3	182 31.3	147 26.3	89 15.6	75 13.2	24 4.2	570 100
23.	In my work unit, steps are taken to deal with a poor performer who cannot or will not improve.	Frequency Percentage	27 4.8	149 25.9	159 28.3	127 22.1	67 11.8	41 7.2	570 100
24.	Employees have a feeling of personal empowerment with respect to work processes.	Frequency Percentage	32 5.7	211 36.6	182 32.2	93 16.4	28 5.0	24 4.2	570 100
25.	Employees are rewarded for providing high quality products and services to customers.	Frequency Percentage	53 9.3	222 38.6	134 23.8	93 16.2	49 8.8	19 3.3	570 100
26.	Creativity and innovation are rewarded.	Frequency Percentage	39 6.9	159 27.6	186 32.7	116 20.3	47 8.4	23 4.1	570 100
27.	Pay raises depend on how well employees perform their jobs.	Frequency Percentage	28 4.8	148 26.1	177 31.2	128 22.3	65 11.4	24 4.2	570 100
28.	Awards in my work unit depend on how well employees perform their jobs.	Frequency Percentage	52 9.1	235 41.2	131 22.9	79 14.0	41 7.1	32 5.6	570 100
29.	In my work unit, differences in performance are recognized in a meaningful way.	Frequency Percentage	27 4.7	131 23.0	195 34.3	111 19.4	63 11.0	43 7.6	570 100
30.	My performance appraisal is a fair reflection of my performance.	Frequency Percentage	85 15.0	287 50.1	96 16.7	61 10.9	35 6.2	6 1.1	570 100
31.	Discussions with my supervisor/team leader about my performance are worthwhile.	Frequency Percentage	79 13.9	252 44.0	115 20.4	66 11.4	51 9.1	7 1.3	570 100

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know	Total	
32.	In my most recent performance appraisal, I understood what I had to do to be rated at different performance levels (for example, Fully Successful, Outstanding).	Frequency	95	291	96	50	28	10	570
	Percentage	16.8	50.9	16.9	8.5	5.0	1.8	100	
33.	I am held accountable for achieving results.	Frequency	126	345	75	18	1	5	570
		Percentage	21.9	60.4	13.3	3.2	0.2	0.9	100
34.	Supervisors/team leaders in my work unit are committed to a workforce representative of all segments of society.	Frequency	66	220	163	43	16	62	570
		Percentage	11.5	38.5	28.9	7.4	2.8	10.9	100
35.	Policies and programs promote diversity in the workplace (for example, recruiting minorities and women, training in awareness of diversity issues, mentoring).	Frequency	69	232	137	37	17	78	570
		Percentage	12.1	40.3	24.3	6.4	3.1	13.7	100
36.	Managers/supervisors/team leaders work well with employees of different backgrounds.	Frequency	81	261	131	35	24	38	570
		Percentage	14.2	45.8	23.0	6.1	4.3	6.7	100
37.	I have a high level of respect for my organization's senior leaders.	Frequency	68	203	167	87	40	5	570
		Percentage	12.1	35.5	29.2	15.2	7.1	0.9	100
38.	In my organization, leaders generate high levels of motivation and commitment in the workforce.	Frequency	43	161	185	118	49	14	570
		Percentage	7.8	28.2	32.2	20.6	8.7	2.5	100
39.	My organization's leaders maintain high standards of honesty and integrity.	Frequency	63	201	165	68	34	39	570
		Percentage	11.1	35.2	29.0	11.8	5.9	6.9	100
40.	Managers communicate the goals and priorities of the organization.	Frequency	66	271	125	69	33	6	570
		Percentage	11.7	47.3	22.0	12.1	5.9	1.0	100
41.	Managers review and evaluate the organization's progress toward meeting its goals and objectives.	Frequency	68	259	134	37	16	56	570
		Percentage	12.0	45.2	23.6	6.5	2.9	9.9	100
42.	Employees are protected from health and safety hazards on the job.	Frequency	105	307	89	33	11	25	570
		Percentage	18.7	53.4	15.7	5.8	1.9	4.4	100
43.	My organization has prepared employees for potential security threats.	Frequency	78	297	118	39	13	25	570
		Percentage	13.9	51.8	20.5	6.9	2.4	4.5	100
44.	Complaints, disputes or grievances are resolved fairly in my work unit.	Frequency	40	186	180	59	43	62	570
		Percentage	7.1	32.4	31.8	10.3	7.7	10.8	100
45.	Arbitrary action, personal favoritism and coercion for partisan political purposes are not tolerated.	Frequency	72	218	130	59	36	55	570
		Percentage	12.7	37.8	23.3	10.4	6.3	9.6	100

		<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither Agree Nor Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Do Not Know</b>	<b>Total</b>	
46.	Prohibited Personnel Practices (for example, illegally discriminating for or against any employee/applicant, obstructing a person's right to compete for employment, knowingly violating veterans' preference requirements) are not tolerate	Frequency	95	246	107	26	26	70	570
		Percentage	16.5	42.9	19.2	4.4	4.7	12.2	100
47.	I can disclose a suspected violation of any law, rule or regulation without fear of reprisal.	Frequency	65	182	148	49	37	89	570
		Percentage	11.4	31.7	26.3	8.5	6.5	15.6	100
48.	Supervisors/team leaders provide employees with constructive suggestions to improve their job performance.	Frequency	53	261	133	80	28	15	570
		Percentage	9.4	45.8	23.3	13.9	5.0	2.6	100
49.	Supervisors/team leaders in my work unit support employee development.	Frequency	64	276	118	64	31	17	570
		Percentage	11.3	48.4	20.6	11.2	5.6	3.0	100
50.	Employees have electronic access to learning and training programs readily available at their desk.	Frequency	63	309	102	65	10	21	570
		Percentage	11.1	53.6	18.2	11.5	1.8	3.7	100
51.	My training needs are assessed.	Frequency	35	228	160	107	25	15	570
		Percentage	6.2	39.8	28.6	18.3	4.5	2.6	100
52.	Managers promote communication among different work units (for example, about projects, goals, needed resources).	Frequency	49	234	133	86	33	35	570
		Percentage	8.7	40.6	23.4	15.2	5.9	6.3	100
53.	Employees in my work unit share job knowledge with each other.	Frequency	119	313	69	43	22	4	570
		Percentage	21.1	54.7	12.1	7.5	4.0	0.7	100
54.	Employees use information technology (for example, intranet, shared networks) to perform work.	Frequency	163	355	34	6	5	7	570
		Percentage	28.8	62.0	6.1	1.0	0.9	1.2	100
				<b>Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied</b>					
		<b>Very Satisfied</b>	<b>Satisfied</b>	<b>Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied</b>	<b>Dissatisfied</b>	<b>Strongly Dissatisfied</b>	<b>Do Not Know</b>	<b>Total</b>	
55.	How satisfied are you with your involvement in decisions that affect your work?	Frequency	73	220	144	103	30	NA	570
		Percentage	12.9	38.4	25.2	18.1	5.3	NA	100
56.	How satisfied are you with the information you receive from management on what's going on in your organization?	Frequency	48	212	152	113	45	NA	570
		Percentage	8.5	36.8	27.0	19.6	8.0	NA	100
57.	How satisfied are you with the recognition you receive for doing a good job?	Frequency	77	223	131	92	47	NA	570
		Percentage	13.5	38.9	23.1	16.1	8.3	NA	100
58.	How satisfied are you with the policies and practices of your senior leaders?	Frequency	42	208	176	94	50	NA	570
		Percentage	7.6	36.1	31.1	16.5	8.8	NA	100
59.	How satisfied are you with your opportunity to get a better job in your organization?	Frequency	42	161	154	137	76	NA	570
		Percentage	7.4	27.9	26.9	24.2	13.5	NA	100

			Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Strongly Dissatisfied	Do Not Know	Total
60.	How satisfied are you with the training you receive for your present job?	Frequency	50	241	171	79	29	NA	570
		Percentage	8.9	42.4	29.9	13.7	5.1	NA	100
61.	Considering everything, how satisfied are you with your job?	Frequency	113	287	105	48	17	NA	570
		Percentage	19.9	50.3	18.5	8.3	3.0	NA	100
62.	Considering everything, how satisfied are you with your pay?	Frequency	99	275	95	71	30	NA	570
		Percentage	17.4	47.9	16.7	12.6	5.3	NA	100
63.	Considering everything, how satisfied are you with your organization?	Frequency	80	276	129	56	29	NA	570
		Percentage	14.3	48.0	22.7	9.8	5.1	NA	100
64.	How satisfied are you with retirement benefits?	Frequency	111	264	83	31	14	67	570
		Percentage	19.3	45.9	14.9	5.5	2.5	11.8	100
65.	How satisfied are you with health insurance benefits?	Frequency	120	297	72	46	22	13	570
		Percentage	20.9	52.2	12.7	8.0	4.0	2.3	100
66.	How satisfied are you with life insurance benefits?	Frequency	82	294	97	20	12	65	570
		Percentage	14.3	51.9	17.0	3.6	2.2	11.1	100
67.	How satisfied are you with long term care insurance benefits?	Frequency	40	118	146	19	9	238	570
		Percentage	6.9	21.0	25.6	3.4	1.6	41.5	100
68.	How satisfied are you with the flexible spending account (FSA) program?	Frequency	60	141	145	7	4	213	570
		Percentage	10.4	24.7	25.6	1.2	0.7	37.4	100
69.	How satisfied are you with paid vacation time?	Frequency	241	284	29	9	7	NA	570
		Percentage	42.4	49.6	5.0	1.7	1.3	NA	100
70.	How satisfied are you with paid leave for illness (for example, personal), including family care situations (for example, childbirth/adoption or eldercare)?	Frequency	232	271	33	22	12	NA	570
		Percentage	40.9	47.5	5.6	3.9	2.1	NA	100
71.	How satisfied are you with child care subsidies?	Frequency	6	29	126	8	11	390	570
		Percentage	1.1	5.5	22.3	1.5	2.0	67.6	100
72.	How satisfied are you with work/life programs (for example, health and wellness, employee assistance, eldercare, and support groups)?	Frequency	43	178	129	19	8	193	570
		Percentage	7.5	31.5	22.7	3.3	1.5	33.6	100
73.	How satisfied are you with telework/telecommuting?	Frequency	50	101	110	43	44	222	570
		Percentage	8.8	17.8	19.3	7.4	7.7	39.0	100
74.	How satisfied are you with alternative work schedules?	Frequency	123	170	74	34	39	130	570
		Percentage	21.7	30.0	13.1	5.8	6.6	22.7	100