

**PERFORMANCE
PLAN &
RESULTS (GPRA)**

This report contains FY 2015 accomplishments of the National Mediation Board relating to goals and objectives for Mediation and Alternative Dispute Resolution; Representation; Arbitration; and Administration. These accomplishments enabled the NMB to meet its statutory obligations and provide services to its airline and railroad labor, management and public customers.

**STRATEGIC
PLAN
GENERAL
GOAL 1
MEDIATION
& ADR**

Goal 1: To provide prompt and appropriate assistance for disputes involving pay, work rules, and working conditions (major disputes).

FY 2015 Accomplishments:

NMB standards applicable to processing and managing cases involving major disputes were consistently met in FY 2015. Case processing benefited from introduction of the Agency's Mediation Case Management System to track cases from application to closure.

Case management was accomplished as planned with mediators utilizing appropriate techniques at the table with support from senior mediators acting in an oversight role. Quarterly reviews of cases one year old or older by Board Members and senior mediation management insured that parties to the process received assistance appropriate for their case.

Goal 2: Provide appropriate and effective mediator training and continuous development.

FY 2015 Accomplishments:

New mediator training was redeveloped and enhanced during FY2015 to insure it met NMB standards. The Agency's new mediators are benefiting from a comprehensive program monitored by the senior mediators that includes orientation to the Agency, training in mediation and negotiation through the NMB's partnership with Dominican University's program in Conflict Resolution, training in Conflict Coaching, shadowing mediators as they work cases and integrating into the mediator corps through attending professional conferences and mediator meetings.

Through the use of Individual Development Plans (IDP) each mediator participated in training and development that met his or her individual needs. In addition, training covering industry specific topics was conducted during the bi-monthly mediator meetings. The NMB's partnership with Dominican University provided valuable and specialized training for mediators as they delivered courses in the areas of negotiation and mediation.

Goal 3: Pursue innovation in the delivery of mediation and alternative dispute resolution services.

FY 2015 Accomplishments:

The Agency completed a comprehensive review and update of all of its ADR programs in FY 2015. It is translating its general mediation and negotiation training developed for Dominican University to industry specific training for air and rail to use for internal dispute resolution purposes. Mediators who participate in more innovative alternative dispute resolution training return to debrief the entire mediator corps on what they have learned. Mediators continued to refine ADR strategies and techniques that addressed the unique needs of parties in negotiations, especially in the instances of merging carriers and unions in the airline sector. In the rail sector, parties have used ADR tools to integrate multiple regional provisions into common language.

Goal 4: Improve efficiency and effectiveness of NMB programs by providing leading online dispute resolution (ODR) technology and techniques to the Mediators and the parties.

FY 2015 Accomplishments:

The Agency continues to explore uses for online dispute technology. Mediators make use of WebEx technology to remotely share language and discuss proposals, and electronic flip charting was effectively used by the parties to reach agreements in complex cases merging multiple agreements, to track changes in language, and to share information. Using an asynchronous, text based platform, arbitrators and parties in the Section 3 process were able to submit, discuss, and decide cases with no travel and no synchronous meetings.

**STRATEGIC PLAN
GENERAL
GOAL 2
REPRESENTATION**

Goal 1: Prompt investigation of representation disputes and definitive resolution of employees' representation status for collective bargaining purposes

FY 2015 Accomplishments:

In most cases: OLA responded to representation applications within 2 business days of receipt by the NMB; assigned an investigator within 2 business days of receipt of the application; determined showing of interest within 45 days of docketing an application; and issued a certification or dismissal the next business day after the ballot count.

Goal 2: Enhance training and development of OLA staff.

FY 2015 Accomplishments:

Each OLA staff member updated his or her Individual Development Plan (IDP). Each year OLA employees meet with their manager to update or develop a plan to enhance career related skills. In FY 2015 OLA staff took classes related to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), government ethics, records management, procurement, the Railway Labor Act, and conflict resolution.

Goal 3: Enhance outreach opportunities in the legal, labor relations and alternative dispute resolution communities to better inform stakeholders about developments and increase the skills and experience of OLA employees.

FY 2015 Accomplishments:

Members of the Office of Legal Affairs continue to actively participate as panelists and attendees at conferences sponsored by the American Bar Association, American Law Institute, and the Association of Labor Relations Agencies. This year OLA attorneys gave presentations on the Railway Labor Act and recent Presidential Emergency Boards. OLA continued to participate in intra-governmental initiatives with other federal agencies such as the Department of Labor, National Labor Relations Board, and the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service. OLA attorneys serve as both Senior Editors and Contributing Editors of the Railway Labor Act treatise published by the Bureau of National Affairs and completed the 2015 pocket part supplement of the third edition of this treatise. OLA attorneys are active in the American Bar Association's Labor and Employment Law Section serving as Railway and Airline Labor Law Section's Diversity Liaison to the Committee and as the Public Vice Chair of the Bloomberg BNA Treatise Committee for ABA.

Goal 4: OLA staff provide prompt and efficient assistance to Presidential Emergency Boards.

FY 2015 Accomplishments:

All OLA staff members are trained on Emergency Board Procedures. OLA maintained continuous industry and agency communication at a level that provided for early preparation for potential Presidential Emergency Boards. OLA attorneys served as counsel to two Presidential Emergency Boards.

Goal 5: OLA maintains concise, relevant reference materials that are readily available to the public and which reduce the number of man-hours used to research and respond to inquiries.

FY 2015 Accomplishments:

OLA conducted semi-annual reviews of the Representation Manual and website, updating where appropriate.

Goal 6: Expand the use of technology to further streamline and reduce costs in representation and interference investigations.

FY 2015 Accomplishments:

OLA conducted a test of voice recognition software for use during investigations and drafting representation determinations. OLA also researched other cost and time saving mechanisms in taking employee statements during interference investigations. OLA continues to explore procedures to use electronic delivery of voting instructions.

STRATEGIC
PLAN
GENERAL
GOAL 3
ARBITRATION

Goal 1: Arbitration will provide outstanding service delivery to internal and external customers.

FY 2015 Accomplishment:

An audit was conducted of the administrative caseload processes, and procedures governing public law boards and system boards of adjustments were reviewed with the goal of streamlining. Procedures at the NRAB were also reviewed. Grievance mediation/arbitration was introduced to successfully resolve several aged cases at the NRAB.

Goal 2: To engage in active roster development for the contract arbitrators serving the airline and railroad industries.

FY 2015 Accomplishment:

NMB worked with the outside professional associations to increase the diversity of its applicants for the NMB's Arbitrators roster. NMB participated in an arbitrator training program with Dominican University and several railroads and labor organizations to introduce more arbitrators to railroad arbitration

Goal 3: The Office of Arbitration Services will be a center of innovation in the resolution of "minor" disputes.

FY 2015 Accomplishment:

The NMB met with the Arbitration Forum several times during FY 2015 to discuss innovation to improve the program. NMB also continued its review of all grievance mediation cases.

STRATEGIC
PLAN
GENERAL
GOAL 4
ADMINISTRATION

Goal 1: Provide outstanding service delivery to internal and external customers.

FY 2015 Accomplishment:

The Office of Administration responded to all requests for assistance or service from internal and external customers as soon as received. In addition, new Employee Orientation training was completed for each new employee.

Goal 2: Provide timely, efficient and responsible stewardship of the NMB's fiscal resources.

FY 2015 Accomplishment:

The NMB worked with BFS to ensure that required financial reporting is prepared and submitted timely. The NMB worked with BFS to ensure that 98% of payments were paid timely and accurately.

Goal 3: Ensure agency spending and budgets are transparent and provide the necessary support for each of the agency's missions throughout the whole fiscal year.

FY 2015 Accomplishment:

The NMB has an agreement with BFS to handle the agency's financial management system, and the agency integrated PRISM (a web based procurement system) into its procurement process. The NMB works with the BFS on a regular basis to ensure that the agency's quarterly apportionment is not exceeded.

Goal 4: Improve agency efficiency and public communications through cost effective information and communications technology improvements, including implementing Enterprise Architecture (design, secure and document) the emerging cloud, mobile, and other mechanisms.

FY 2015 Accomplishment:

The NMB completed its transition into the cloud environment for e-mail, calendars, contacts, and records. With this change, the NMB eliminated the majority of its in-house servers and made possible a revision and reduction in price of its network support contract.

Goal 5: Continue to ensure that NMB Information is secure while maintaining a government-leading information and communication technology system.

FY 2015 Accomplishments:

The NMB ensures that all information that contains Private Personnel Information (PPI) is password protected when transmitted electronically.