# AGENCY REVIEW and Landing Team principles guidance and materials

## PURPOSE

This guide contains our recommendations for agency review efforts before and after the election. It outlines what content must be gathered by agency review and landing teams to inform comprehensive policy implementation plans and briefing documents for appointees.

These outlines include sections on:

* Campaign policy and management priorities;
* Key issues and challenges in agencies;
* Budget overview and priorities;
* Key stakeholders and contacts, including those in Congress

## guiding Principles for agency review and landing teams

* **Strategic:** Teams should focus on the nominee/president-elect’s campaign platform as it relates to each agency and gather key information about the agency itself.
* **Integrated:** Teams must consider what information should be shared with the policy and appointments work streams within the transition team.
* **Focused:** Teams should identify the top issues and key aspects at each agency including those related to the campaign platform, those requiring immediate attention by the incoming agency leadership, other policy and agency priorities, and management and personnel issues.
* **Timely:** Clear timeframes should be set for compiling, reviewing and presenting information throughout the agency review and landing team process.
* **Prepared:** Teams should enter departments after the election equipped with relevant skills and experience to conduct agency reviews.
* **Consistent:** At all agencies, agency review teams should use a standard template.
* **Collaborative:** Good working relationships should be established within the transition team (between agency review teams, policy and appointments work streams), with the outgoing administration, and with career staff in order to understand the true challenges and opportunities for each agency.
* **Informed:** Employ an efficient way to verify information (data, opinions and advice) received during the agency review and landing team process and brief key personnel across the transition team on issues that will impact them/their portfolio(s) in office.

## Agency review and landing team Checklist

### PRE-ELECTION

* Organize agency review team structure by policy priority, existing executive branch structure, or both
* Prioritize agencies for review by on their size and relevance to the key campaign policy platform
* Select team members with the right mix of skills and expertise

*Note: teams require subject matter experts with prior political, policy and government experience to handle strategic and tactical matters*

* Identify external subject matter experts to verify recommendations
* Implement a standard agency review reporting template to capture essential data and present in a consistent way

*Note: This document can be used as a starting point for this reporting template*

* Draft key questions to guide agency review and landing teams pre- and post-election

*Note: This guidance material provides sample key questions*

* Develop a timeframe for teams to compile agency review and landing team findings before and after the general election
* Identify specific individuals that landing teams should meet with after the election
* By November 1, 2016, finalize a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the White House about transition team access to agencies for execution post-election

### POST-ELECTION

* Incorporate key findings from pre-election phase into review findings and briefings
* Schedule meetings with agency staff to source information for agency review reports
* Decide on structure of briefings to incoming White House and agency leaders

*Note: sample formats include government-wide, portfolio or issue specific*

* Confirm timeframe for briefings of incoming agency leaders and White House staff on key aspects of their new positions
* Share pertinent information across policy, appointments and agency landing teams

**ATTACHMENTS**

* Attachment 1: Pre-Election Agency Review – Table of Contents
* Attachment 2: Post-Election Landing Team – Table of Contents

*Note: All Partnership-developed position descriptions and agency profiles referred to throughout this material are provided in the resource guide for transition teams.*

# Attachment 1: Pre-Election Agency Review - Table of Contents

## overview

* **Audience:** policy and agency review leadership in transition teams, including those preparing for the landing teams following the general election.
* **Sources:** information should be drawn from publicly available sources.

## TABLE of Contents

1. **Executive summary** 
   1. High-level summary of the campaign’s policy priorities as they develop and apply to each agency (lead and liaison)
   2. High-level summary of other priorities, opportunities and issues for the agency in light of nominee’s campaign promises
   3. Key decision makers and structures
   4. Implementation opportunities through the Center of Government
   5. Key questions for landing teams:
      1. Identify information gaps to be addressed post-election

*Resources: departmental and agency websites; Partnership-developed agency profiles; Partnership-developed information on the Center of Government*

1. **Campaign policy and management priorities** 
   1. Overview of campaign commitments as they are developed
      1. Identify lead and liaison agencies on the project
      2. Specify the role of the agency/ies
      3. Identify the implementation path through the Center of Government (high-level)

*Resources: campaign policy teams; campaign policy platform; Partnership-developed information on the Center of Government*

1. **Organizational overview**
   1. Overview of agency’s mission and priorities
   2. Organizational chart – including agency subcomponents, key personnel and functions/work areas
   3. Agency profile:
      1. Workforce demographics
      2. Employee engagement data
      3. Primary functions and authorities (e.g. service delivery, statutory authorities, other requirements)
      4. High level budget and resourcing considerations
      5. Physical location(s)
   4. Office of the Inspector General (OIG)
      1. Biography of the Inspector General
      2. IG reports
   5. Government Accountability Office (GAO)
      1. GAO reports and recommendations
      2. GAO High Risk List
      3. GAO Duplication List
   6. Key questions for landing teams:
      1. What topics should be covered in this phase?
      2. What information gaps need to be addressed post-election?

*Resources: Partnership-developed agency profiles; Partnership-developed position descriptions; Best Places to Work in the Federal Government ®; Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) results; UnlockTalent.gov; Government Accountability Office website; Inspector General Website for agency*

1. **Top issues for new leadership**
   1. High-priority issues – challenges and opportunities (based on publicly available information)
      1. Key strategic issues and related government-wide issues that will impact the agency (based on agency profile and independent knowledge of the agency)
      2. Budget opportunities and challenges (e.g., Continuing Resolution, debt limit March 2017)
      3. Potential legal, regulatory, legislative and/or congressional issues and reports
      4. Technology and cybersecurity issues and risks
      5. Public-facing issues including media stories, issue profiles, and impact on citizens
      6. Implementation pathways for key policy priorities (Center of Government entities and levers)
   2. Agency and interagency goals
   3. Key questions for landing teams:
      1. What topics should be covered in this phase?
      2. What information gaps need to be filled post-election?
      3. What information from other agency review/landing teams is relevant for this agency?

*Resources: Partnership-developed agency profiles; Best Places to Work in the Federal Government ®; Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) results; UnlockTalent.gov; Cross-Agency Priority (CAP) goals website; Government Accountability Office website; Inspector General website for agency; agency FITARA scorecards (Federal Information Technology Reform Act); president’s budget stating how many FTEs are authorized to be employed by the agency during the relevant FY; prior government, agency and policy experience of review team members; department /agency websites, including OMB and those for other Center of Government entities; congressional website*

1. **Budget and management overview**
2. Summarize major budget changes since 2008 that affect policy goals for the agency, including planning for FY17 if available
   1. Determine the sequestration cap for the agency specified in the Budget Control Act of 2011
3. High-level budget implications for campaign promises relevant to agency
4. High-level personnel data – including aggregated and disaggregated full-time equivalent numbers and levels
5. Key questions for landing teams – what information gaps need to be filled?

*Resources: prior government, agency and policy experience of review team members; websites for current and previous budgets including the Government Publishing Office, the White House, Office of Management and Budget and the Congressional Budget Office; Memorandum on Requirements for the FY 2018 Budget Process from the Office of Management and Budget; Partnership-developed agency profiles; Partnership-developed position descriptions for CFOs and deputy secretaries*

1. **Key contacts and stakeholders** 
   1. Congressional contacts (may fluctuate post-election)
      1. Key staff – including career agency staff who manage relationships
      2. Committees relevant to identified priorities for department/agency
         * Consider: oversight, appropriations, nominations, policy development and validation
      3. Other members with special interest or subject matter expertise relevant to department/agency policy priorities
   2. Key stakeholders across government
      1. Partner agency contacts
      2. White House personnel
      3. Center of Government contacts (e.g., Office of Management and Budget, Policy and Management Councils)
      4. Other stakeholders that relate to the agency and/or policy priorities
   3. Key external stakeholders – for outreach post-election
      1. Including media, federal employee unions, interest groups, and regulated entities
   4. Specific individuals or positions that landing teams should meet with post-election
   5. Any pertinent reports or issues

*Resources: information from the transition team’s appointment team; agency and stakeholder websites; other public websites; expertise and experience of agency review team members*

1. **Agency review contacts**
   1. Transition team contacts: names, titles, and contact information
   2. Agency review team contacts: names, titles and contact information

*Resources: transition team leadership; agency review team leadership*

# Attachment 2: Post-Election Landing Team - Table of Contents

## overview and guidance

* **Audience:**
  + Primary - incoming political agency leaders (e.g., Secretary and Deputy Secretary) and the president-elect.
  + Secondary - transition team leadership, including heads of policy, agency review and appointments teams.
* **Sources:** information comes from pre-election agency review teams, interviews with agency personnel and detailed information from throughout the landing team process.

## TABLE of Contents

1. **Executive summary - campaign policy, management and other agency priorities**

Campaign policy and management priorities

* 1. Campaign policy and management commitments
     1. What key campaign and management commitments will this agency lead?
     2. What other agencies will support the lead agency on campaign and management commitments (e.g. government-wide policy)?
  2. Top issues for **immediate** attention
     1. What are the top policy and management issues that the president-elect/incoming leadership will need to address immediately after the inauguration?
        + Recommendation: segment issues into **immediate**/30/60/90 day priority levels

Agency Profile

* 1. Top issues for **immediate** attention
     1. What are the top issues that the incoming appointees will need to address when they walk into the agency?
     2. What are the agency and interagency issues that will require attention in the first 30/60/90 days?
        + Budget priorities and issues (e.g., priorities for FY 18, implications of a Continuing Resolution, implications of the debt limit in March 2017)
        + Technology and cybersecurity issues - GAO high risk list
        + Other issues requiring immediate attention e.g., legal, regulatory or other deadlines
        + Management and personnel issues

*Resources: campaign policy platform; policy and appointment team leads; interviews with agency; guidance provided to agencies to prepare for landing teams and briefing incoming political leadership*

1. **Campaign policy and management priorities** 
   1. Top issues for **immediate** attention
      1. What are the top issues that the president-elect/incoming leadership will need to address from day one (top 5-10 issues)?
   2. Issues for 30/60/90 day implementation
      1. What campaign policy and management issues will the incoming agency leadership need to deal with over the coming 30/60/90 days?
      2. How could these issues enhance or inhibit implementation of campaign promises?
         * Key personnel – including senior career leadership
         * Budget – implications of FY17 and approach for FY18
      3. What tools and levers will need to be used immediately?
         * Regulations – to issue and/or rescind
         * Executive orders – to issue and/or rescind
         * Legislation – to repeal or require development
      4. Who are the key stakeholders, supporting agencies and congressional contacts that will impact implementation?
      5. What issues will need to be raised with the administration and how?
   3. Critical implementation pathways and dependencies:
      1. Who are the key decision makers, influencers and inhibitors in the agency, Center of Government and Congress?
         * Personnel and pathways through the Center of Government (e.g., policy and / or management councils)
         * Sequencing of decisions (e.g., budget deadlines to support implementation of a campaign promise)

*Resources: campaign policy platform; policy and appointment team leads; interviews with agencies; guidance provided to agencies to prepare for landing teams and briefing incoming political leadership*

1. **Agency overview** 
   1. Agency mission and history
      1. What are the agency’s top priorities?
         * Include agency and interagency goals
      2. How has this evolved over the last 5-10 years?
         * Identify key milestones, challenges and opportunities
   2. Organization and structure
      1. Who are the key decision-makers and influencers in this agency?
      2. What political positions need to be filled first?
      3. What political positions can be filled without Senate confirmation?
      4. What other agencies are worked with consistently? Which relationships are most important? Which are the most challenging, and why?
      5. How has the agency’s structure changed over time?
      6. Describe the culture of the agency and how it enhances or hampers the way the agency performs.
   3. Personnel and management
      1. What is the agency’s total workforce and how has it changed over time?
         * Identify trends and provide analysis
      2. What are the key workforce data and trends relevant to the agency?
         * Include challenges and opportunities (e.g., for recruitment and retention)
      3. What talent gaps will impact the agency’s ability to delivery key policy, management and agency priorities?
   4. Cybersecurity
      1. How did the agency perform in the recent Federal Information Security Management Act evaluations and other vulnerability assessments (e.g., Critical Cyber Readiness Inspections)?
   5. Office of the Inspector General (OIG)
      1. What does the IG see as the top issues in the agency?
   6. Government Accountability Office (GAO)
      1. How has the agency addressed items identified on the High Risk List and in Duplication Reports?
      2. What actions should be taken by the incoming administration?

*Resources: Cross-Agency Priority (CAP) goals website; Government Accountability Office website; agency FITARA scorecards (Federal Information Technology Reform Act); president’s budget stating how many FTEs are authorized to be employed by the agency during the relevant FY; newly created non-career positions; any press, social media trends or other coverage over the last administration (e.g., ‘burrowing in’, appointments to advisory committees, outsourcing, controversial management decisions); Plum Book (2008, 2012); campaign policy platform; policy and appointment team leads; interviews with agencies; guidance provided to agencies to prepare for landing teams and briefing incoming political leadership.*

1. **High priority agency issues – top issues for incoming leadership** 
   1. Top issues for **immediate** attention
      1. What are the top issues that the incoming agency leadership will need to address from day one?
   2. 30/60/90 day issues for decision
      1. What are the key issues as they relate to:
         * Strategic and priority agency goals?
         * Budget – current and future, including impact of a potential continuing resolution and/or the debt limit in March 2017?
         * Management - including governance, IT support for key business functions, and other operational and financial issues?
         * Technology and cybersecurity risks and issues? (e.g., security and IT risk management posture/key vulnerabilities; highest-impact, public-facing services; and IT workforce challenges, skill gaps and retention**)**
         * Litigation, regulations and executive orders?
         * Congress, media and/or legislation
      2. How will these agency issues support or inhibit the incoming administration’s campaign policy and management platform?
      3. What is the process for decision approval, including:
         * Pathways through the Center of Government?
         * Gathering stakeholder and other agency input?
   3. Organizational structure and opportunities
      1. How could the structure of the agency be changed to best support the incoming administration’s policy and management agenda?
         * How difficult would it be to make this change? What are the enablers and roadblocks?
      2. What decisions and issues are already in the pipeline?
   4. Priority personnel issues
      1. What issues require immediate attention and will include new groups of political appointees at the agency?
      2. Who are the top-performing political appointees/what are the critical positions that are recommended to continue:
         * In the new administration (e.g., CFOs and other management positions);
         * Until a qualified replacement can be found (political appointees);
         * To implement the administration’s policy priorities (e.g., career staff).
      3. What leadership changes are expected? How will this impact the capacity of the agency to implement the administration’s agenda and meet performance expectations?
         * This includes outgoing political leadership and any career staff that are departing/retiring

*Resources: Partnership-developed agency profiles; draft 2018-2022 Agency Strategic Plan and 2018-2019 Agency Priority Goals; GAO/OIG reports, budget changes from 2008; Center of Government contacts; general counsel opinion; opinion pieces; interpretive regulations*

1. **Budget overview** 
   1. Major budget changes since 2008
      1. What have been the key pressures and constraints?
      2. What is the historical context of budget decisions, changes, and implications?
      3. What key issues in the current budget will impact the policy and management agenda of the incoming administration?
      4. Has the agency reached the sequestration cap established in the Budget Control Act of 2011 before? Do you see this as a potential problem?
   2. Funding sources and expenditure
      1. What are the agency’s major sources of expenditure (by program and/or priority)?
      2. What have been the major sources of funding? How have these sources evolved over time?

*Resources: Midyear Office of Management and Budget estimates; strategic plans (relevant multiyear strategic plans pursuant to GPRA and the strategic plans for the preceding four fiscal years); Congressional Budget Office; Memorandum on Requirements for the FY 2018 Budget Process from the Office of Management and Budget; annual performance plans and report*

1. **Congressional relations and issues**
   1. Oversight, appropriations and investigation committees
      1. Who are the leaders and members?
      2. Who are the key staff?
         * Include career agency staff who manage relationships and other members/staff with special interest or subject matter expertise
      3. What are the key issues for each committee?
         * Identify relevant issues relating to current inquiries that the incoming political leadership will need to know
         * Provide an overview of previous hearings
   2. Confirmation hearing preparation
      1. Who are the leaders and members?
      2. Who are the key staff?
      3. What are the top issues to be addressed at each hearing?
      4. What are the processes, logistics, and historical roadblocks?
   3. Required authorization/appropriations reports and updates to Congress
   4. Key pending legislation
      1. What key pending legislation does the incoming political leadership will need to know about?
   5. Continuing resolution (CR)
      1. What are the implications of a CR?
   6. Debt Limit
      1. What are the actions that need to be taken in light of the debt limit in March 2017?
      2. What are the implications of these actions?
   7. New Congress
      1. What are the implications of changes in Congress?
         * Will party majorities or committee chairmanships change?

*Resources: Partnership’s Senate committee profiles (provided at 8/11 Transition Roundtable); Partnership’s election-to-inauguration process in the Senate (in development); Partnership’s 2017 Legislative Landscape Assessment (in development); online directories such as Congressional Yellow Book, Federal Yellow Book, Bloomberg Government; House and Senate Appropriations Committees; agency legislative affairs offices; Office of Management and Budget; White House Office of Legislative Affairs*

1. **External stakeholders overview and issues (media, federal employee unions, interest groups and regulated entities)**
   1. Stakeholder mission and leadership
      1. Who are the key stakeholders?
      2. What are the key organizations and who leads them?
      3. What are their missions?
      4. Are there any special interests that would enhance or inhibit the incoming administration’s agenda?
      5. What recent engagements have been made with stakeholders/organizations?
      6. Are there any third-party reports that have relevance?

*Resources: new and existing relationships formed by transition; organization websites; information and analysis gathered from agency review, policy implementation and appointments work (in transition teams)*

1. **Key Contacts—policy and agency and review teams**
   1. Policy team contact(s)
   2. Agency review team contact(s):
      1. For lead agency – implementing policy
      2. For liaison agencies – implementing policy (e.g., for Center of Government review team)
   3. Appointment team contact(s)

*Resources: transition and agency review team leaders*

1. **Briefing schedule and format** 
   1. Topic/date/time/location of in-person briefings

*Resources: transition and agency review team leaders; agency specifications*