

SENIOR EXECUTIVES ASSOCIATION

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

• MAY 2017 •

FOUR PILLARS:

LAUNCHING A NEW ERA
FOR SENIOR EXECUTIVES



VISION

SEA is considered the world's preeminent center of excellence serving the professional needs of the Federal government's career leadership corps, which is universally recognized as forward thinking, entrepreneurial, accountable and serves the national interest with the highest professional standards.



MISSION

SEA promotes policies and programs that empower its constituent members to accomplish their vital mission responsibilities as well as advance their personal professional development.



SEA CORE VALUES

A passion for public service leadership exhibiting the highest standards of integrity, professional excellence, and accountability.



OVERVIEW

A changing world requires a changing Senior Executives Association. Since 1980, SEA has been “the voice” of Federal government career senior executive leaders, but being the voice of career leaders in 2017, while necessary, is no longer sufficient. This is why SEA is moving in a dramatically different direction through the implementation of the Four Pillars of this Strategic Direction.

SEA will continue to be the voice of the Senior Executive Service (SES) and SES-equivalents, but through this Strategic Direction we will empower all Federal government career leaders with the tools and resources they require to succeed in the 21st Century. SEA will accomplish this through a combination of policy and program initiatives that focus on developing a “Leadership Profession” within the Federal government that starts at the earliest point in a civil servant’s career and continues through retirement.

In addition, we will leverage the experience and wisdom of senior career leaders in new ways to promote a stronger and more effective government.

SEA believes that senior career leaders are an untapped resource that should be better utilized to improve the functioning of government, solve critical national challenges, and enhance public trust in the Federal government.

SEA developed this Strategic Direction after close consultation with key stakeholders. Its success depends on Four Pillars:

1. Strengthen the SES and Career Leadership Corps to Meet Current and Future National Requirements
2. Contribute to a Leadership Pipeline that Produces Passionate & Dedicated Federal Executives
3. Become a Thought Leader in Washington’s Policy Debates
4. Build a World Class Senior Executives Association

“NEVER DOUBT THAT A SMALL GROUP OF THOUGHTFUL COMMITTED CITIZENS CAN CHANGE THE WORLD. INDEED, IT IS THE ONLY THING THAT EVER HAS.” *—MARGARET MEAD*

PILLAR #1

STRENGTHEN THE SES AND CAREER LEADERSHIP CORPS TO MEET CURRENT AND FUTURE NATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

It is a fact of 21st Century life that disruptive and rapid change is the new normal. Senior Federal government career leaders must be equipped to respond to exponential rates of change caused by the rise of international terrorism, corporate and financial globalization, societal shifts caused by social media and big data, or tied to advances in health care, energy, environment, and information technologies.

The Federal government touches the lives of all Americans on a daily basis and must respond in times of national emergency quickly and decisively, whether it is a terrorist attack, a natural disaster, or an unexpected catastrophe

**"THE ULTIMATE MEASURE OF A
MAN IS NOT WHERE HE STANDS
IN THE MOMENTS OF COMFORT,
BUT WHERE HE STANDS AT
TIMES OF CHALLENGE AND
CONTROVERSY."**

—MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.



such as the 2010 Gulf of Mexico oil spill. When those national emergencies occur, career senior leaders in the Federal government are called upon to develop solutions equal to the challenges.

SEA will drive a legislative and policy agenda that enables senior executives to meet current and future national requirements. That agenda will focus on a broad range of issues, including:

- Civil service reform, including building a 21st Century workforce and developing a pay for performance system that rebalances the risk/reward accountability framework;
- Government transformation initiatives, such as acquisition reform, budget modernization, reducing mission duplication, and workforce restructuring strategies; and
- Legislative and policy issues that impact the everyday functioning of government, including cybersecurity, national security, and fiscal accountability.

To achieve this ambitious legislative and policy agenda, SEA will partner with key stakeholders in government, academia, and the private and non-profit sectors to build coalitions that support SEA's legislative and policy agenda.



PILLAR #2

CONTRIBUTE TO A LEADERSHIP PIPELINE THAT PRODUCES PASSIONATE & DEDICATED FEDERAL EXECUTIVES

The original intent of the 1978 Civil Service Reform Act was to create an elite cadre of senior executive leaders who would work with the President to implement an Administration's agenda. SEA's Strategic Direction builds on this original model by recognizing that leaders must be prepared throughout their careers for the challenges of senior executive leadership.

A primary goal of Pillar #2 will be to create a "Leadership Profession" focused on 21st Century requirements. SEA will promote leadership training and continuing education programs, the creation of a Federal government leadership certification process, and the development of a new accountability framework that rewards appropriate risk while maintaining the high professional standards of career leaders.

SEA will contribute to the Federal government's leadership pipeline by working through the SEA's Professional Development League (SEA PDL) to create a full spectrum of leadership training and experiences that starts the day a new employee swears the oath of office for entry into the civil service. SEA PDL, in partnership with key academic institutions, will develop a lifelong leadership educational program and certification process that includes the achievement of key career milestones and lifelong learning.

In addition, SEA will develop new platforms from which aspiring leaders with diverse experiences and backgrounds can engage in SEA programs. These will include Associates, Fellows and Aspiring Leaders programs.

"THERE'S NEVER BEEN A MORE IMPORTANT TIME TO TAKE STOCK OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S STRATEGIES TO CREATE THE BEST LEADERS."

*-DON KETTL, UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY, 2017*

PILLAR #3

BECOME A THOUGHT LEADER IN WASHINGTON'S POLICY DEBATES

SEA, historically, has effectively advocated for the interests of senior executive leaders, but with exponential change, SEA and its members must get in front of emerging national challenges and develop thoughtful and constructive solutions.

SEA is embarking on two efforts that will enable senior career leaders to be the voice of SEA in Washington policy debates.

**"WITHOUT DEBATE, WITHOUT
CRITICISM, NO ADMINISTRATION
AND NO COUNTRY CAN SUCCEED
AND NO REPUBLIC CAN SURVIVE."**

—JOHN F. KENNEDY

First, SEA is creating effective stakeholder engagement structures for career leaders. SEA is forming "Communities of Change" in six areas – Acquisition, Cyber, Fiscal Accountability, National Security, Governance Innovation, and Human Capital/Leadership – platforms from which SEA members can engage in Washington policy debates. In addition, SEA will form both agency-based and geographically based Chapters that will enable all of our members to contribute their perspectives and voices to the debates.

Second, SEA PDL will conduct original research that develops solutions for difficult Federal government challenges. SEA will team with academic institutions and other partners to identify trends and key pivot points that can be turned into legislation and policy positions. For example, SEA will conduct an annual "State of Federal Government Leadership" survey that pulses the thinking of career leaders and will be used to drive constructive changes in the Federal government.





SEA is entering the modern era of association management through this new Strategic Direction. Professional associations worldwide have learned that they can no longer simply be the “voice” of their members; they must actively engage with their members and deliver a significant return on investment for the time and resources that members put into an association.

“NOW MORE THAN EVER BEFORE, WE NEED AN EXECUTIVE CORPS THAT LEADS FROM A WHOLE OF GOVERNMENT PERSPECTIVE.”

—RON SANDERS, AUTHOR OF “BUILDING A 21ST CENTURY SES”

SEA has taken the first step in this direction by creating a separate Board of Directors and new mission for the SEA Professional Development League (SEA PDL). SEA PDL will organize SEA’s Annual Conference and Meeting, work with corporate sponsors, develop relationships with other associations, and provide leadership education and training programs.

In addition, SEA will create the stakeholder engagement structures – such as the Communities of Change, Chapters, and a Corporate Advisory Council – that will ensure that SEA’s activities and agenda remain fresh and vital. SEA will use these structures to work with key stakeholders in the Administration, Congress, OMB, OPM, agencies, the non-profit and private sectors to develop the policies and programs necessary to empower career leaders with the tools and resources they require to effectively perform their jobs.

PILLAR #4

**BUILD A WORLD CLASS
SENIOR EXECUTIVES
ASSOCIATION**



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