



Report to the National Football League on the Washington Commanders' Implementation of Recommendations

July 27, 2022

Introduction

Vestry Laight submits this third report to the National Football League (“NFL”) in compliance with the semi-annual reporting schedule set forth in the Commissioner’s July 1, 2021 statement. Employees of the Washington Commanders (“Team”) are divided between two locations approximately 45 minutes apart: FedEx Field in Landover, Maryland and the Inova Sports Performance Center at Commanders Park in Ashburn, Virginia (“Commanders Park”). For this reporting period, Vestry Laight focused on the Ashburn facility which houses Football Operations and a small number of staff from Business Operations.

In preparation for this report, Vestry Laight visited FedEx Field twice and Commanders Park three times. At FedEx Field we met with senior leadership, reviewed the confidential files of investigations conducted by People Operations since our last report, and reviewed the results of the Entertainment Team survey. We also continued our regular cadence of meetings with senior leadership, as described in our prior reports, met with senior staff from Football Operations, and with the coaches from the Entertainment Team. Vestry Laight shared insights and recommendations from our last assessment of the Commanders’ culture with the senior leadership team. On March 11, 2022, we shared our findings with the entire Business Operations staff in a moderated Ask Me Anything Session.

As in the last report, to probe and verify employees’ perceptions about culture and confidence in the reporting and investigations processes, we conducted in-person, confidential interviews with staff members at Commanders Park. People Operations provided Vestry Laight with complete lists of employees located in the Ashburn facility. From those lists we selected individuals to contact by e-mail with an eye toward selecting a cross section of interviewees by tenure, departments, gender, and, where possible, race/ethnicity. We conducted 21 interviews with Football Operations staff (27% of staff) and five members of Business Operations (13% of staff, or 19% of staff excluding kitchen staff and groundskeepers).

The Team’s leadership has continued to be highly responsive and accessible to us. They responded promptly to requests for information and data, facilitated our site visits and worked with us on the best approach to obtain employee confidence in the anonymity and utility of participating in interviews with the Vestry Laight team. Leadership has also been receptive to Vestry Laight’s input and recommendations regarding best practices.

This report sets forth our observations on the Team’s progress in implementing the recommendations. Neither the leadership team, the owners, nor their agents have directed, or sought to influence us in any way, nor have they reviewed this report prior to its submission.

Complaints and Investigations

Vestry Laight reviewed the investigation reports for the six complaints received by Human Resources (“HR”) during the reporting period, including two complaints that came through the hotline. Five of the complaints raised relatively minor instances of unprofessional behavior or insensitive remarks made between peers. One complaint involved an inappropriate remark about sexual orientation. In that instance the person who made the remark was suspended for a month during the investigation, required to complete anti-harassment training and a final warning was put in his file.

All complaints were investigated thoroughly and promptly (within a matter of days). When complaints were substantiated, appropriate remedial steps were taken, including providing respectful workplace training to departments in which incidents occurred. Consideration was given to the wishes of complainants when deciding about appropriate actions and steps were taken to keep complaints anonymous when requested.

Vestry Laight also interviewed some employees who had participated in complaints referenced in our prior report. We found that participants (witnesses and a person who was the subject of a complaint) generally felt that HR responded appropriately to concerns. Two people, however, shared feelings of dissatisfaction with the disciplinary action they believed had been taken. It is important to note that for confidentiality and privacy reasons these employees are not aware of all the steps that were taken.

The Team’s Progress in Implementing the Recommendations

- 1. Protocols for Reporting Harassment:** *Develop a formal protocol for reporting allegations of harassment and misconduct that allows victims to report anonymously and without fear of retaliation. Ensure that this protocol is communicated to all employees via the club’s employee handbook and in other ways. Engage a third party to monitor a confidential hotline/secure email site to receive workplace misconduct reports.*

Employees located in Commanders Park, whether working on Business or Football Operations, confirmed that they have received training regarding harassment, that they are aware of how to report misconduct and that they would feel comfortable reporting misconduct. A Football Operations employee observed that “Before, I felt that if I raised an issue, it would get swept under the rug and now, I am confident it would be addressed.” Another observed that “There is less anxiety about reporting. I feel like people handle concerns well.” There seems to be agreement that the culture has changed for the better as it relates to the ability to report misconduct. A long tenured employee said “Now we have a real program and if something came up, I would go . . . I had never seen HR run properly before.” Another commented “We have good people [in HR] who I trust and would feel comfortable reporting to. I know things

would be addressed in the right way." Some in Football Operations shared that while they would feel comfortable going to HR with a complaint, they would most likely raise it with the Head Coach ("Coach"). As an employee opined, discrimination or harassment "would not be tolerated and would be aggressively handled. Coach would come down like a hammer. This is not a group that is going to hide anything. It is sound and moral."

Regarding the confidential hotline, Vestry Laight confirmed that the complaints that come through it go to both People Operations and Legal.

- 2. Disciplinary Action Plan:** *Develop a formal disciplinary action plan with clear protocols and processes for documenting, evaluating, and adjudicating misconduct. Apply those protocols and processes consistently in a prompt and proportionate manner across the organization. This includes holding executives and other supervisors accountable for addressing misconduct in the organization, including by requiring that supervisory level employees formally report any misconduct of which they become aware and disciplining the failure to report such misconduct.*

Our review of the complaints received and investigated in this last six-month period shows that any disciplinary measures implemented were proportionate to the misconduct at issue and included a range of measures, such as training, placement on a performance improvement plan, a temporary suspension and issuance of a final warning. The wishes and concerns of the complainant were taken into consideration in evaluating any disciplinary action.

Although not the subject of a misconduct complaint to Human Resources, public comments by coach Jack Del Rio about protests and the events at the Capitol on January 6 were deemed hurtful and inconsistent with the values the Team stands for. As a result, Coach fined Del Rio \$100,000 to be donated to the United States Capitol Police Memorial Fund. Del Rio also apologized personally to the players and his colleagues in a team meeting. Most staff we interviewed expressed the view that Coach handled the situation well.

- 3. Regular Culture Surveys:** *Conduct regular, anonymized workplace culture and sexual harassment climate surveys to track the Club's progress in addressing these issues.*

The Team will field its next annual Engagement Survey in the fall. It will again partner with Culture Amp for the survey, enabling the Team to make direct year-over-year comparisons for employee perceptions relating to culture, inclusion, leadership, work-life and other topics. As before, Vestry Laight expects to have the opportunity to provide insight into the survey questions and to review the results.

A survey of the members of the Entertainment Team was conducted following the conclusion of the season, in March 2022, and the results are discussed in more detail in Recommendation 9 below. Notably, this is the first survey the Team has conducted of the cheerleading/dance team.

4. Regular Trainings: *Engage an independent and professional third party to provide regular training for all employees on bullying, sexual and other forms of harassment, diversity and inclusion, and other issues of workplace conduct. Provide special training for managers and supervisors on how to recognize and handle harassment and reports of harassment. Review the proposed training program with the League office and incorporate recommendations.*

The HR department has continued to enhance the trainings it offers staff as it strives to develop a positive workplace culture.

On February 17, NYU School of Law Professor Kenji Yoshino conducted a training on “Becoming an Ally to All” that was offered to all staff. The training was well attended and well received – almost 100 people participated including senior leadership and Tanya Snyder. Earlier this month a training on unconscious bias, facilitated by RISE, was offered to all staff. The Team has retained Paradigm to conduct a training on microaggressions in the fall.

People Operations has organized several trainings for managers that have focused on coaching, providing feedback, hiring, and goal setting. People Operations has retained LifeHikes to conduct the trainings which are voluntary. Leaders have been asked to provide managers with the opportunity to participate in them. Managers have also received training from EverFi on how to handle complaints that are raised with them. One interviewee expressed appreciation for leadership training and some individualized coaching sessions he received.

In addition, People Operations conducted a training on respectful work environments for the ticketing department.

On the Football Operations side, interviewees confirmed they had received training on sexual and other forms of harassment. They noted that there has been a big effort in the last couple of years to make such resources available and found the trainings useful.

5. More Diverse Workforce: *Increase the number of women and minorities throughout the organization, particularly in leadership and supervisory positions that have decision-making authority.*

Since our last report, the Team has announced internal promotions, hired externally and continued to expand its diversity and inclusion initiatives. The promotions and hires continue to expand the Team’s representation of people of color and women, including women of color. Representation alone is not sufficient, however; through its DEI-related trainings and activities, and a holistic approach to talent management, the Team is also driving a culture of inclusion. The demographics, DEI activities, and insights relating to inclusion from employee interviews are shared below.

Representation, Promotions, Hires and Attrition

Currently, women comprise 31% of the workforce and people of color comprise 39%. More specifically, 24% of employees are Black, 9% are Latinx, 3% are Asian-American/Pacific Islander (“AAPI”), and 3% are two or more races. These numbers represent an uptick from both a year ago, as well as two years previously, before the current leadership team was in place. Year over year, the Team has continued to expand its representation of women and diverse employees.

With respect to senior leadership, women hold 39% of VP+ roles overall and, within Business Operations, 46%. Again, this represents a steady and upward rise from a year before – and a staggering increase from the time before Jason Wright and his leadership team started with the Team. In fact, women’s representation at the VP+ level has almost tripled since 2020. In July 2020, women held only 14% of VP+ positions overall and 17% within Business Operations. The Team’s current higher proportionate representation of women in leadership positions than in its overall employee population is notable and unusual, especially as compared to F500 companies where the senior leadership does not often reflect the overall representation of women in the workforce.¹

The representation of people of color within leadership roles has also continued to increase steadily over time. Currently, one-third of VP+ roles overall, and 29% within Business Operations, are held by diverse employees – an almost doubling of representation from before the current leadership team took over.

The Team’s recent promotions and new hires are also consistently diverse. In the past six months, the Team has made 23 promotions. Women comprise 43% percent of promotions and people of color comprise 26%. Two of the three recent promotions to the VP level were diverse, including the Team’s first AAPI Vice President.²

The Team continues to hire diverse talent into meaningful and important positions within both Football Operations and Business Operations, including head athletic trainer, tight end coach and chief of staff to the president. More generally, 32% of its overall hires within the last six months are women and 35% are people of color. The Team continues to make a substantial commitment to building the pipeline of diverse talent, particularly for the critical path to leadership coaching positions and ultimately head coach. In April 2022 it announced an innovative, first of its kind major DEI initiative -- the Doug Williams Diversity Coaching Fellowship. Fellows are selected from Historically Black Colleges and Universities (“HBCUs”). This program will enhance access to and opportunity for talented coaches from HBCUs and create a pathway to work with NFL offensive staff. After an extremely competitive process, with the Team receiving over one hundred applications (not all from HBCUs), the Team announced the appointment of a Fellow from Bowie College. He will work as an Offensive Assistant,

¹ See Catalyst, [Women in Management \(Quick Take 2022\)](#), and McKinsey/LeanIn, [Women in the Workplace 2021](#).

² One of the recently promoted diverse VPs is no longer with the Team, following a voluntary resignation.

primarily with the Coach, offensive coordinator, and quarterbacks' coach. The Team hosted six Bill Walsh Diversity Coaching Fellows this summer, including one woman.

Diversity and Inclusion-Related Initiatives, Highlights and Perceptions

Within the past six months, the Team's DEI-related activities have become more strategic and geared towards strengthening existing initiatives, expanding into new areas, and providing opportunities for learning and upskilling for all of the staff.

Since our last report, the Team has provided Employee Resource Groups ("ERGs") with a strategic framework to ensure consistency in approach and programs, worked with existing ERGs to renew and strengthen their mission, vision and purpose, and supported the launch of two new ERGs. In April, the Team relaunched BEN (Black Engagement Network) and WIN (Women's Initiative Network) and shared their new vision and mission statements. In June, the Team launched the new Commanders Pride Network, with a mission to empower LGBTQ+ colleagues at the Commanders and develop an organization wide culture of intentional allyship through support and belonging. And, concurrently with the filing of this Report, the Team is excited to announce the launch of Somos Commanders, the Team's Latino/a/x ERG. All of the ERGs have an executive sponsor, with participation from the Team's most senior executives, including, for example, the Team President and the Chief Operating Officer. All ERGs welcome allies. As mentioned above, the Team offered training on "Becoming an Ally to All."

To drive a culture of inclusion, the Team has leveraged the heritage months to engage with its staff and the community, provide opportunities to highlight diverse leaders within the organization and provide more touchpoints for DEI related content. For example, the Team launched "The Brief," a DEI newsletter that is published each heritage month and reflects the Team's proactive, consistent communication around DEI (and not just reactive on an event-basis). During each heritage month, the Team celebrates "Everyday Champions," diverse staff who contribute to the success of the Team. The Team provided extensive programming during both Black history month and women's history month, and celebrated AAPI month for the first time. The Commanders were a top sponsor of the DC Capital Pride Celebration and over 60 employees (1/5 of the total staff) and 20 members of the Entertainment team participated in the parade.

Other DEI-related actions include hosting a women's leadership off-site in June, attended by women at the Senior Director level and above, Juneteenth-related programming and providing a Ramadan quiet breakroom.

The Team is also driving a culture of inclusion by focusing on equipping managers with more tools and training and providing more opportunities for valuing and rewarding employees who live the Team's values, which encompass inclusion (detailed more fully in Recommendations 4 and 8). One-third of the bonus of non-commissioned employees is tied to their individual impact and living the values. The Team also intentionally threads diversity and inclusion through its succession planning conversations held with all team leaders.

Vestry Laight recounts the Team's efforts with respect to talent management, ERG activities, diversity and inclusion programming and training in order to show that the Commanders' notable progress with respect to diverse representation has not occurred by happenstance, but rather through intentional and thoughtful leadership. As one of the diverse leaders within Football Operations commented, "The Team acts with intention. Diversity is at the forefront. Leadership makes it a point that it's going to make it a priority." Another noted that "the intentionality to do the right thing is there."

The Team's improved diversity and culture is noticeable to many. Employees in the Commanders Park facility commented that "This is one of the most diverse teams; it's a very small building and you can see employees are very diverse" and "I see more women and minorities." Football Operations is described as a "welcoming environment" for women, who are seen as qualified and have worked hard and "The locker room respects them for it." Coach has "diversified our group and it's for the better. It's better than an all-male building ... Players are now used to seeing women in the building. It's no longer the exception, it's expected."

In tandem with the substantial increase in diversity is also the improvement in culture. Several interviewees from Commanders Park described it as like "night and day." "We're better through and through," the organization is more professional, and many report feeling more respected and like they have a voice. "It is truly more of a family than it has ever been." Coach commands near universal admiration and respect for setting the right tone. "Coach reiterates the values and the sense of family" at every team meeting, he knows everyone whether an "equipment manager or a lawn person," and is "transparent, approachable, curious and open-minded." Many say there is no tolerance for harassment. Under Coach and the Team President, the "organization is now very focused on doing everything the right way." The work environment is described as "healthy," "warm, positive, and inviting." As detailed more fully below in Recommendation 7, the transformation of the HR function is described by many as dramatic and vastly for the better.

Still, it is recognized by some, particularly from the Business Operations side, that the culture is "in transition" and "still has a way to go," although the "culture of fear and retribution has changed." Another observed "It's a safer place to work. No woman is feeling objectified or belittled." One interviewee perceives, however, that more senior leaders "don't listen to women," and another noted that the industry in general is "very male dominated" and can "feel like a boys' club" and that you have to fight for your position. More broadly, and not with respect to gender or race/ethnicity, some people "are not feeling valued" and would appreciate more communication and support. Many interviewees also referred to the toll that the public scrutiny and headlines have exacted, describing it as "draining" and a drag on the ongoing culture work. As one interviewee lamented, "there are good people doing good things but it does not get reported. We feel it internally but it is not being seen externally."

6. Establish Clear Lines of Authority: *Implement clear organizational structure and clear lines of authority for club executives to eliminate influence of informal or unaffiliated advisors on the Club's business operations.*

Vestry Laight sees no indication of informal or unaffiliated advisors influencing the Team's business operations.

7. Expand and Empower HR and Legal: *Expand and empower the in-house HR and Legal Departments, particularly with respect to their ability to investigate and address allegations of misconduct at all levels, without interference from club executives.*

As can be gleaned from the developments around Recommendation 8 below, having set up the human resources infrastructure, People Operations is now working on strategies to advance the culture and values of the organization. It has developed and shared with staff a document setting out what the Team's values of Family, Impact, Growth, Honor and Trust, look like in action and how they can be advanced every day.

Much like their colleagues in Business Operations, employees in Football Operations have a remarkably consistent and positive view of the changes in People Operations and its increased presence and accessibility. "HR is like night and day better than in the past." Indeed, one stated that "Before, there wasn't HR," another similarly echoed, "Now we have a real [HR] program," and another said "HR has gone from one to more than one; now it's an actual department." The "change in People Operations is one of the best things that has happened." The Head of People Operations is seen as a "tremendous resource," "great to work with," and "awesome." Some staff also expressed appreciation for the team-building events and activities that People Operations has organized.

The Legal department has been expanded and now has three attorneys reporting to the General Counsel: two with the title of Counsel and one Associate Counsel. Each attorney is assigned to support the work of a particular business unit, although these assignments are flexible and vary depending on work needs.

Our review of the investigations of the complaints received during this reporting period did not show any interference by club executives or others into how those investigations were handled.

8. Develop Formal Onboarding, Performance Management and Compensation System, and Exit Interview Process: *Implement a formal onboarding process for new hires, a program of regular performance and compensation reviews, and an exit interview or debriefing process for departures.*

During the reporting period, People Operations led companywide performance reviews as well as talent reviews. Both processes were intentional in their incorporation of the Team's values and diversity goals.

Formal performance reviews were conducted in February and March and as a result, several promotions were announced, as detailed in Recommendation 5 above. We heard from staff that the performance reviews were helpful. Last year was the first year they were conducted in Football Operations and some told us they found it a helpful opportunity to provide and receive feedback about their roles and career objectives. Using a Culture Amp tool, all full-time employees have been asked to set their goals and those goals have been reviewed by their managers, who have also shared with the employee the performance bonus target for the specific role. People Operations reports that nobody raised issues regarding harassment or workplace misconduct during the performance review process.

The Team recently completed performing talent reviews with each department leader, and for the first time succession planning was part of that discussion. The talent reviews were used as a vehicle to look at the organization more holistically through a diversity lens, in order to identify teams that are not tracking in the organization's DEI objectives. The conversations around succession were intentional and focused on having diverse talent in each department.

There is an increased focus on the Teams' values and examining what those values look like in practice. Managers have been told that they have a responsibility for driving and inspiring a culture where diverse talent can thrive and for developing capacity in their department by providing regular coaching and feedback. Starting on August 1st, the Team will give the FIGHT Awards, to recognize employees who are living the Team's values. People who make nominations will be recognized as well. In addition, the Team intends to give tenured-based recognitions.

The Team has established a Performance and Profitability Plan ("PPP") for non-commissioned staff, designed to reward people not just for what they are doing but also for how they are doing it, thus keeping the values at the forefront. As established by the PPP, three factors will determine the bonuses: how well the organization has performed as a whole; how well the Team/department has performed; and the individual's impact on values and people.

The onboarding process for interns has been formalized and revamped to be more engaging and to build on the programming. Intern supervisors have also had training on roles and responsibilities regarding their interns.

Formal confidential exit interviews of employees who depart voluntarily have been regularly conducted since November 2020, when the current Head of People Operations took office. While exit interviews are voluntary, the response rate has been very high – out of 68 voluntary departures since November 2020, 64 people have participated in an exit interview. The Team's exit interview process is triggered when an employee tenders their voluntary resignation to a manager. The manager then notifies People Operations, and once the resignation is acknowledged and a last day of employment is established, People Operations contacts the employee and offers an exit interview. Members of People Operations conduct the interview, which tends to last between 30-45 minutes. People Operations summarizes and records the result of each exit interview in an exit interview tracker. The exit interview tracker – the only

documentation kept by People Operations for the exit interviews it conducts – collects the following information:

- Employee Name
- Title
- Reason for leaving
- High-level notes on interview
- Whether there was an allegation of bullying, harassment, sexual or other misconduct or retaliation
- Whether it is a regretted departure

People Operations sees exit interviews as a tool in making the Commanders a great place to work and uses the information gathered from the interviews to identify trends, develop policies and practices to meet the needs of staff, develop strategies for employee retention, develop trainings and culture initiatives, and determine organizational investment.

9. Protecting Cheerleading Team: *Ensure cheerleaders (if a program is retained, either in its earlier form or in the form of a new, co-ed Dance Team) have access to HR and other organizational resources, including by assigning an HR employee to the cheerleading squad. Confirm that the Team's processes and trainings described above apply to and are clearly communicated to the cheerleaders.*

Over the reporting period, the Entertainment Team had its annual tryouts and has begun its new season with a new name, Command Force, and a new co-coach. For this report, Vestry Laight interviewed the coaches and reviewed a pulse survey that was given to the dancers in March. The interviews and survey results continue to show a positive and supportive environment for members of the Entertainment Team.

Entertainment Team Update

Only five members of the Entertainment Team did not return for the new season. Two retired (they had been with the team since 2011 and 2014) and three were not invited back after auditions for various reasons that had to do with their work ethic, skills, or fit with the team. The two who retired reportedly left on good terms, were present for auditions and offered to help with the team going forward. Those who were not invited back also had conversations with HR, continue to associate informally with the team and are training and plan to audition next year.

The tryouts drew a lot of strong dancers. Prior to auditions, the team was able to hold eight pre-audition dance clinics over four weeks for the community. The coaches believe the huge turnout for auditions (around 220 as opposed to 120 last year) shows a positive response to the narrative they are creating and the changes to the program. Given the strong pool of dancers, the Team decided to expand from 37 to 44 members.

All the coaches stressed the importance of creating a strong culture. One coach said the high retention rate was a reflection of the positive culture they had worked to create observing, “I am proud of the culture I created there.” Another coach noted that decisions about retaining dancers who may not have been a good fit “showed the dancers we listened to them and value their comfort over talent.” The new co-coach had previously worked with the team as a choreographer and remembers not being sure what to expect but found the dancers were all really excited to be there and engaged. She said the team has more camaraderie than she has seen in other teams she has worked for. She said “Dancers show up and are there for each other, like a family.” In fact, at the end of each performance they say “One, two, three, family!” As an example of team solidarity, she said when fans ask for photos of just the female dancers they respond “No, we’re a family. If you want the picture, you get all of us.”

At the end of last season, the coaches held one-on-one performance reviews with each dancer to discuss what they do well, where they could improve, and to solicit feedback on what might be done better by the coaches. One coach described it as “awesome” and said they got some helpful suggestions for this year.

The coaches have also strived to create an open-door policy to ensure dancers feel comfortable coming forward with any concerns. The three coaches spoke highly of working together and described themselves as the “dream team.” One said they are “ambassadors for leadership” and said the dancers appreciated the interest executives have taken in the program. They also said HR has been “great,” “awesome at checking in,” and did a great job making sure the hiring process with the new dancers was smooth. The new coach appreciated the thorough two-week onboarding process, in particular the harassment training. She also appreciated that senior leadership appeared at the onboarding meeting and were very supportive. She stated “I had never been to an onboarding meeting like that.” In short, she said “I feel really honored to have this job!”

In terms of resources, the person initially brought in to oversee the team’s transformation said she set a number of conditions before accepting the position to ensure that ownership “was committed to change and not just hiring her for appearances.” Since joining, she says she got “100 percent support” and “no pushback whatsoever” about the direction she is taking the team. In fact, she says “The organization has been amazing at providing resources.” “Whatever I need, I get,” she added, including high-profile guest choreographers. She had high praise for Tanya Snyder and for the new executive leadership with whom she speaks regularly. Another coach noted that when a cheer program has problems, the easy thing to do would be to get rid of the program rather than work to strengthen the culture and make it more inclusive and reflective of the community.

Command Force has also been more thoroughly integrated into the organization. In April, one of the coaches presented at an all-staff Ask Me Anything meeting, creating visibility for the Entertainment Team throughout the organization, which was well-received. Command Force participated in the Capital Pride activities with Commanders’ staff. This summer Command

Force is restarting a youth program for the first time in three years. In addition, the coaches now have monthly calls with each department in the organization (including sponsorship, community engagement, charitable work, and communications/social media) and anticipate that they will have more community involvement and a higher public profile on social media this season.

End of Season Team Survey

At the end of the season, in March, the HR department (with input from Vestry Laight) fielded a survey to members of the Entertainment Team. This is the first time the Team has conducted a survey of the Entertainment Team, including any of its prior iterations. The survey was open for two weeks and included open-ended questions. The responses were consistent with the feedback we received during our interviews with dancers in January.

Of the 38 members, 21 participated (55%). The survey was provided online and also in a document version, though no one completed a printed survey (some members have limited access to computers which may have impacted the participation rate.) The responses were overwhelmingly favorable (96%). There was 100% agreement on:

- “I know how to report issues and concerns,”
- “I know what I need to do to be successful in my role,”
- “My experience with the team has been positive overall.”

In addition, 95% of respondents agreed that:

- “If I report a concern or complaint, it will be investigated.”
- “I would recommend the Washington Commanders as a great place to work.”
- “In the past year, I have seen positive improvements in organizational culture.”
- “I am proud to work for the Washington Commanders.”

Even the lowest scores (“I have access to the things I need to do my job well” and “I feel supported in my role with the team”) were a very positive 90%.

The write-in comments similarly reflected a positive culture. Respondents were asked “Are there some things we are doing great here?” and “Are there some things we are not doing so great?” Open comments included compliments to the coaches and HR for “going above and beyond to support the Entertainment Team to make sure we are safe and heard and cared for! The transition to this new team has been exceptional;” “[the Entertainment Coach] is amazing”; as well as appreciation for a supportive work environment (A “family”/supportive atmosphere with the proper access to help, if necessary;” “Very supportive work environment”) and good communications (“Constantly checked in on to make sure I’m happy;” “Maintaining an open communication with employees, taking feedback seriously and ensuring we all feel heard”). Some noted improvements from previous years including higher pay and making “sure we know where to get help, if needed.” Other comments included:

- “Last year I felt like we were an island by ourselves; this year feels more like a peninsula”
- “Inclusivity has improved”
- “Love it”
- “Everything is great”
- “You guys have been great motivators – not only did you hire us, but you make us want to do the job!”

When asked about what was not so great, the most common answer was “N/A” or “No” or “All is well” (12). In short, none of the comments raised concerns about safety or harassment and the overall tone was very positive, with specific mention of efforts by HR to make people feel safe. An open-ended question asking if there was anything else that should have been asked did not yield any substantive responses (Just a “No, you guys covered it.”)

10. Regular Assessment of Policies: *Require the Club to retain an independent professional consultant selected by the Team and approved by the league office to conduct an annual assessment of all employment policies to ensure they are both consistent with best practices and being implemented in practice. The league office will have full access to the consultant.*

People Operations is currently conducting a review of the policies, including the Employee Handbook, with outside counsel. Legal is revising the Fan Code of Conduct and anticipates that the revisions will be finished in time for the first game of the season.

Next Steps

Vestry Laight will continue its regular meetings with senior leadership to monitor progress and share insights into promising practices relating to its cultural transformation.

Areas of focus for the next reporting period include:

- Follow up with a cross-section of prior interviewees from Business Operations at FedEx field to assess their views on progress and conduct an additional small sampling of interview subjects
- Continued interaction with ERGs
- Collaboration with People Operations on the Annual Engagement Survey, currently planned for the fall of 2022
- Conduct follow-up (and additional) interviews with members of the Entertainment Team
- Continued review with People Operations and Legal of complaints and investigations as they arise

Conclusion

This reporting period Vestry Laight focused primarily on Football Operations and its perceptions of the culture transformation under way at the Commanders. Our confidential interviews confirmed trends seen in the fall Annual Engagement Survey: under the leadership of Coach and his team, Football Operations has established a strong-values driven culture and created what many described as a “family” with his staff. Coach leads by example and discusses values at every meeting. Interviewees with tenure noted the significant change in atmosphere from years past. All expressed confidence that misconduct would not be tolerated, and appreciated the effort to recruit players who would abide by the Team’s values. Some even shared that they tried to live up to Coach’s example because they did not want to “disappoint” Coach.

Coach has also made a concerted effort to diversify his program with women and coaches of color, has made efforts to promote diverse candidates within the NFL, and has been a strong supporter of the wellness program, which we understand to be amongst the most robust in the NFL.

The improvements in diversity and culture on the Football Operations side mirror those of the Team as a whole, which has seen a remarkable uptick since July 2020 in the representation of women and people of color, including in leadership positions. An empowered leadership team is intentionally and holistically driving a culture that is inclusive, high-performing and accountable. With robust human resources processes in place, People Operations and leadership are focusing on more strategic initiatives. These include equipping managers and staff with more tools and resources and rewarding those who exemplify the Team’s values. Interviewees appreciate these efforts as well as efforts by People Operations to create a respectful work environment and the processes that have been put in place to address any concerns.

The Entertainment Team has been buoyed by the increased investment in resources and attention. Having a dedicated and attentive HR lead, the presence of senior leadership at the onboarding meeting and the thoroughness of the onboarding process has made the dancers feel respected and cared for. They feel a strong bond with one another and are proud to have expanded their team to accept many of the new, talented dancers who auditioned.

The Team’s work does not take place in a vacuum, however. A variety of factors create stress, including the impact of pervasive negative press attention, uncertainty around the new stadium’s location, pressure to win on the field, as well as the heavy workload typically associated with the industry – and a whole new rebrand. The Team still endeavors to be “best in class” and a model for other organizations. Through the processes instituted, including strategic initiatives and refinements, driven by the thoughtful and intentional leadership currently in place, the Team should be able to continue to navigate through these stressors.