United States
Department of
Agriculture

**Agricultural
Research
Service**

January 1994

Stepping Into the Future

Report of the Secretarial Review Task Group

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In November 1992, a Secretarial Review Task Group was established for the Agricultural Research Service (ARS), by Jane L. Giles, Deputy Administrator for Administrative Management, in her former role as Personnel Director. The purpose of this Task Group was to review the current secretarial structure within ARS to identify "key" functions secretaries are performing in support of the ARS mission and to identify suitable incentives (i.e., awards, retention bonuses, etc.) which could be used to reward high-level performance. Each Area, Administrative Management, and the National Program Staff designated a secretary to serve as their representative on this Task Group. In addition, two Personnel Division employees were assigned to serve and/or facilitate over this study.

The Task Group members defined the following Mission Statement which would be used to focus its efforts:

> *The mission of this Task Group is to explore the changing nature of the secretarial profession, determine the existing status of secretarial positions within ARS (and comparable government agencies), and recommend actions designed to benefit both ARS and its secretarial professionals.*

The secretarial profession has changed dramatically over the past several decades with the increase in technology and automation. ARS secretaries no longer are behind the scenes handling routine office tasks. They are now the center of communications within their organizations. They must possess the management and administrative skills essential to organize daily schedules and assignments for themselves, their supervisors, and other employees in the organization. Many tasks that were previously considered managers' duties are now delegated to secretaries, especially those computer-oriented tasks dealing with financial and spreadsheet applications, database management, and graphics. Today's secretaries must possess good verbal, written, and interpersonal communication skills and be able to translate directions into written communications. They are technically oriented and adaptable to diverse situations. Secretaries are important members of the management team.

The Task Group encourages managers and supervisors to review the information presented in this report and use the recommendations to enhance the secretarial profession in ARS. Doing so will enable ARS to attract and retain a competent secretarial workforce.

The Task Group offers the following recommendations for consideration and implementation:

Position Classification:

- Fully evaluate the changing role of ARS secretarial support staff and pursue alternative methods in the position classification process to recognize these new roles.
- Evaluate each secretarial position on its' individual merit.
- Use TQM techniques and principles to aid in the enhancement of secretarial positions.
- Implement immediately the use of working titles for secretarial positions.
- Where appropriate, establish full performance levels which are reflective of the work assigned.

Training:

- Establish a formal Secretarial Training Program and provide opportunities for secretaries to pursue certification through Professional Secretaries International.
- Establish a Mentoring Program for secretaries.
- Implement a defined orientation plan for new secretarial employees.
- Use the Career Enhancement Program more frequently to provide career advancement opportunities.

Awards:

- Establish a National Secretary of the Year Award and Organizational Secretary of the Year Awards.

Communication:

- Establish a National Secretarial Advisory Council and Organizational Secretarial Advisory Councils.

Each of the above recommendations are discussed in detail in the Task Group report and suggested methods for implementation are provided for many of these recommendations.

Finally, we wish to express our appreciation for the opportunity to serve on this Task Group and believe the recommendations made will be beneficial to ARS in redefining the role of its professional secretarial staff.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION AND RECOMMENDATIONS 1

THE SECRETARIAL PROFESSION — THEN AND NOW 7
- WHAT IS A SECRETARY? 8
- EXPECTATIONS OF SECRETARIES 9
- THE SECRETARY AS A PROFESSIONAL 11

FACT-FINDING ANALYSIS 13
- SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS OF INTERNAL RESPONSES 13
- SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS OF EXTERNAL ORGANIZATIONS . . . 19
- COMPARISON OF INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL DATA 24
- SUMMARY 25

WHAT OTHERS HAVE DONE 27
- USDA PROGRAMS 27
  - Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) 27
  - Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) 28
- OTHER FEDERAL AGENCIES 29
  - National Institutes of Health (NIH) 29
  - National Security Agency (NSA) 30
  - General Services Administration (GSA) 30
  - Bureau of Reclamation (DOI) 30
  - Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) 31

POSITION CLASSIFICATION OF SECRETARIAL POSITIONS 33
- CLASSIFICATION 35
  - OPM Classification Standards 36
  - Titling Practices 36
  - Secretary, GS-0318, Classification Standard 36
    - Work Situation A 37
    - Work Situation B 37
    - Work Situation C 38
- CHANGING ROLE OF SECRETARIAL EMPLOYEES 38
- ROLE OF THE SERVICING PERSONNEL OFFICE AND MANAGEMENT IN CLASSIFICATION 40
- ROLE OF THE EMPLOYEE IN THE CLASSIFICATION PROCESS . . 41
- CHANGING ATTITUDES TOWARD SECRETARIAL WORK 41

CLASSIFICATION OPTIONS 41
Determining Which Duties Impact the Title, Series, and Grade Level 42
Use of TQM Techniques to Enhance Career Opportunities 43
Use of Alternative Series/Titles 43
Use of Organizational Titles 45
Impact of the Person on the Job 45
Feasibility of Establishing Career Ladders 46
SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS 46

SECRETARIAL COMPETENCIES 49

TRAINING 55
INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (IDP) 56
ROLE OF THE PERSONNEL DIVISION AND MANAGEMENT 57
ROLE OF THE SECRETARY 58
TRAINING METHODS 58
OTHER DEVELOPMENTAL ASSIGNMENTS 59
MENTORING PROGRAM 60
SECRETARIAL CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS 60
ORIENTATION PLAN FOR SECRETARIAL STAFF 62
SUPERVISORY ASSISTANCE AND TRAINING 62
CAREER ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM 63
SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS 64

AWARDS 65

ESTABLISHMENT OF SECRETARIAL ADVISORY COUNCILS 67
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES 67

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS 69

REFERENCES 71

LIST OF EXHIBITS

1. LIST OF ORGANIZATIONS PARTICIPATING IN THE EXTERNAL SURVEY E-1

2. SECRETARY GS-0318 GRADE LEVEL CHARTS E-3

3. *THE WASHINGTON POST* ARTICLE E-5

4. SECRETARY SERIES, GS-0318 SECTION TITLED "GRADING OF POSITIONS" E-7

5. FPM BULLETIN 990-90 TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT E-9

6. NFC PAYROLL/PERSONNEL PROCESSING MANUAL OFFICIAL POSITION TITLES AND CODES E-23

7. SAMPLE MENTORING PROGRAM E-41

8. PROFESSIONAL SECRETARIES INTERNATIONAL CHART E-61

9. PROPOSED ORIENTATION PLAN FOR SECRETARIAL EMPLOYEES E-63

10. PROPOSED ORIENTATION PLAN CHECKLIST E-65

11. PROPOSED CRITERIA FOR THE ARS SECRETARY OF THE YEAR AWARD E-67

12. PROPOSED FORMAT AND STRUCTURE FOR THE NATIONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL SECRETARIAL ADVISORY COUNCILS E-71

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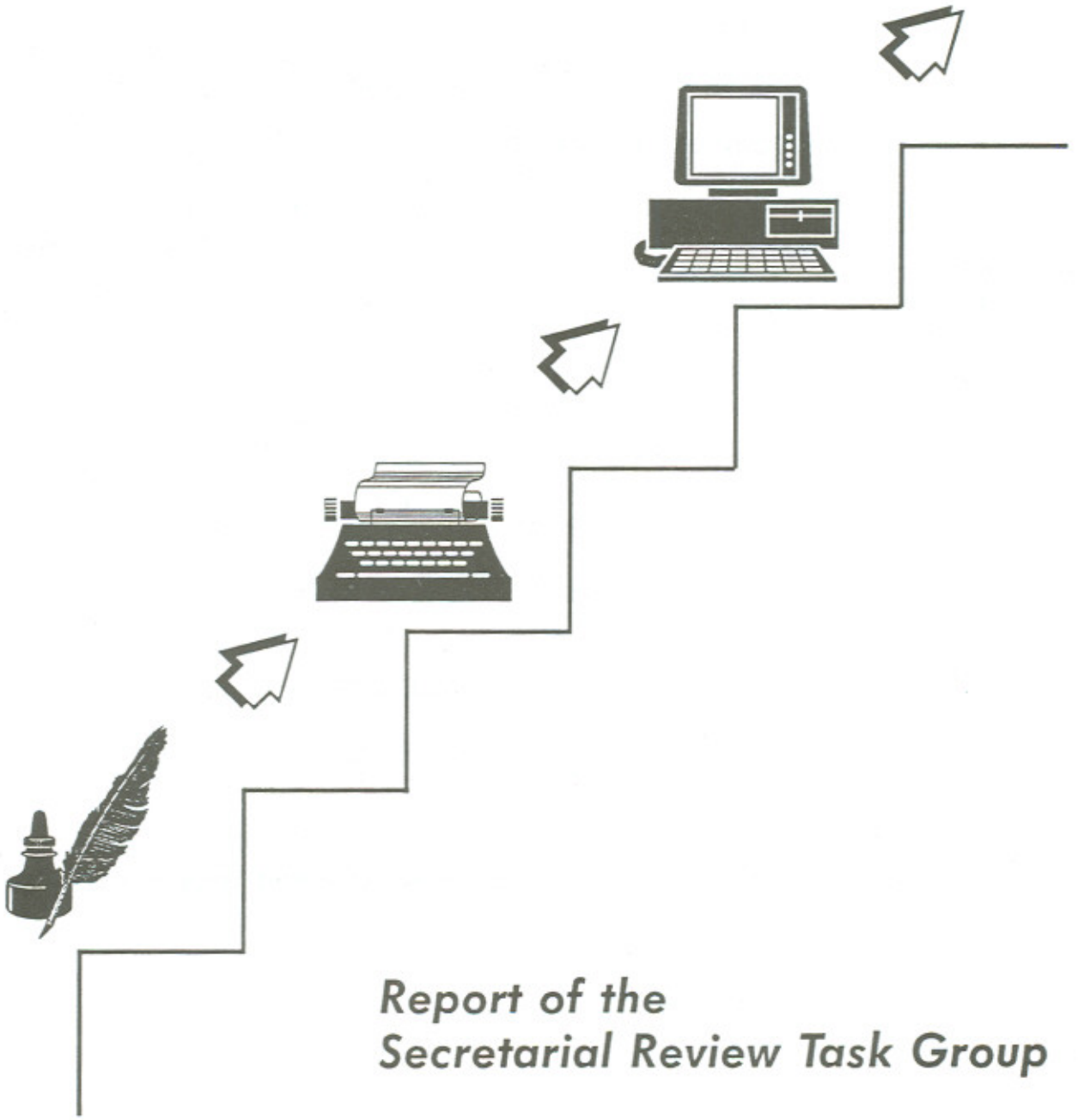

Report of the Secretarial Review Task Group

December 1993

INTRODUCTION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In November 1992, a Secretarial Review Task Group was established for the Agricultural Research Service (ARS) by Jane L. Giles, Deputy Administrator for Administrative Management, in her former role as Personnel Director. The purpose of this Task Group was to review the current secretarial structure within ARS to identify "key" functions secretaries should or could perform in support of the ARS mission, and to identify suitable incentives (i.e., awards, retention bonuses, etc.) which could be used to reward high-level performance.

In establishing this Task Group, each Area, Administrative Management, and the National Program Staff were asked to designate a secretary to serve as their representative. In addition, two Personnel Division employees were assigned to serve on or facilitate this study. The members of this Task Group were:

Kay Carr, SAA
Carmela Carrick, NPS
Libby Fouse, PWA
Bonnie Ingram, MWA
Angie Marchetti, AM
Elaine McGuire, BA
Betty Sigler, NPA
Joyce Smith, NAA
Anne Steele, SPA
Genevieve Swartzberg, MSA
Sandy Thomas, PD, POB
Cecelia Stortzum, PD, NSB

The role of the secretaries serving on this Task Group was to:

1. Learn how secretarial positions are classified in the Federal government.

2. Collect position descriptions from other organizations to assess how their secretarial positions function and to identify "key" functions being performed which should be incorporated in ARS secretarial positions.

3. Visit other organizations to learn what their secretaries are responsible for performing.

4. Identify incentives available to recognize the skill and level of knowledge of ARS secretaries.

5. Share the results of the fact-finding with the other Task Group members and participate in preparing the final report of the Task Group addressing the findings and providing recommendations for needed changes.

To "kick off" this Task Group, a meeting was conducted in Greenbelt, Maryland, with all participants, on January 12–13, 1993. The focus of the meeting was to identify tasks, determine how the Task Group would meet its goals and objectives, and develop a schedule for completion of assignments. As part of the meeting, a one-half day training session was provided by an outside contractor on the use and application of the Secretary, GS-0318, Classification Standard.

Many topics were discussed during the meeting which the Task Group has used as the basis for much of its study and final report. In an effort to gather information, the Task Group developed two questionnaires, one was issued to all current ARS secretaries and one was used in gathering information from other organizations (e.g., Federal, State, and private industry) on duties and responsibilities performed by secretarial employees, pay, titling of positions, etc. Both fact-finding surveys were well received and responses were used by the Task Group to further define its goals and objectives and to formulate recommendations. Over the past several months, Task Group members, working individually and in groups, have gathered data on the secretarial occupation and evaluated the usefulness of the information gathered.

In establishing this Secretarial Review Task Group, management has "opened the door" for change in the secretarial occupation in ARS. The Task Group believes that management understands that the occupation has changed and is willing to listen to not only the concerns of the Task Group members, but also the concerns of ARS secretaries. In conducting this study, the Task Group sought to identify areas (both positive and negative) where changes are needed if ARS is going to attract, recruit, and retain a highly qualified and competent secretarial employees.

The Task Group fully acknowledges past efforts to enhance the role of secretaries in ARS, and believes that, by working together, we can develop a program which will further enhance that role as well as ensure that they are kept up-to-date on technological advances. Some of the recommendations made by the Task Group will require the allocation of resources. However, the benefits received from implementing the recommendations will far outweigh the expenditures if the end goal is to ensure that ARS has a highly qualified and competent secretarial workforce.

The Task Group is not recommending across the board promotions for secretaries. Rather, we are asking that a new approach be identified for the classification of these positions. It is evident that every secretary is an individual, and the manner in which each supervisor makes assignments and delegates work may be highly variable. It is our finding that force-fitting these positions into a common mold allows no flexibility to managers, supervisors, and employees in accomplishing the Agency's mission. The Task Group also has not recommended a career ladder be established as a "generic" plan for all secretaries. Instead, we are merely requesting that consideration be given in individual cases to the establishment of career ladders, where appropriate.

The Task Group seeks to identify common secretarial competency levels which should help ensure that ARS has highly qualified secretaries. The use of the examples provided will ensure that a consistent pattern is followed in both the hiring and training of secretaries. Minimal expectations for all secretarial positions will be clearly defined for both new and current employees. In addition, both newly hired and current secretaries would benefit tremendously from participation in a mentoring program.

The Task Group believes that establishment of both National and Organizational[1] Secretarial Advisory Councils could help open lines of communication and alleviate concerns in the future, while also addressing issues which will update the skills of ARS secretarial employees.

Lastly, an ARS Secretary of the Year Award should be established to recognize secretarial employees who have attained a level of excellence in their occupation as recognized by both peer and supervisory nomination.

Several of the recommendations made by this Task Group parallel recommendations made in the recently issued (July 1993) Human Resource Management (HRM) Implementation Plan and should be useful to ARS in accomplishing its human resource goals and objectives. These recommendations relate to awards, training, career development, position awareness, and communication.

Specifically, the Task Group recommends that:

- The changing role of the ARS secretarial support staff be fully evaluated and alternative methods be sought in the position classification process to recognize these new roles.

[1]Headquarters, Areas, Administrative Management, National Program Staff.

- Positions be evaluated on their individual merits, and full consideration be given to the complexity involved and the broad spectrum of all work performed.

- TQM techniques and principles be used to aid in the enhancement of secretarial positions, and to create an environment where all employees play an integral part in the operation of an organization.

- The use of working titles for secretarial positions be implemented immediately.

- Complete consideration be given at the time positions are established to their unique characteristics, and where appropriate, full performance levels be established which are reflective of the work assigned.

- Ensure that Individual Development Plans (IDPs) are completed for all secretaries.

- A formal Secretarial Training Program be established in ARS.

- A Mentoring Program be established for secretaries.

- Opportunities be provided for secretaries to pursue certification through Professional Secretaries International (PSI).

- A defined orientation plan be implemented for secretaries.

- Training be offered for ARS managers, supervisors, and employees to assist in assessing and identifying training needs. In addition, training should be provided in team building techniques.

- The Career Enhancement Program be used, where appropriate, to advertise positions in a local geographical area which will provide advancement opportunities for current employees.

- A National Secretary of the Year Award, as well as Organizational Secretary of the Year Award, be established.

- A National and Organizational Secretarial Advisory Councils be established.

In the following report, the Task Group presents a historical background on the evolution of secretarial positions, as well as a discussion on the image and perception of the secretarial occupation; presents a summary of the surveys

conducted; discusses the issue of position titling and grading; and discusses establishment of formal training and mentoring programs for ARS secretaries, a Secretary of the Year Award, and National, as well as Organizational, Secretarial Advisory Councils.

The Secretarial Review Task Group encourages ARS managers and supervisors to review the material and information presented and to use the information and recommendations to enhance the secretarial profession in ARS. The Task Group recommends that ARS develop a program where individuals **WANT** to work for ARS in this profession.

By doing so, the Task Group believes that together we will be:

STEPPING INTO THE FUTURE.

THE SECRETARIAL PROFESSION — THEN AND NOW

In contrast to the current trend of women dominating secretarial positions, in the early days men dominated the office, performing stenographic and bookkeeping tasks. The position was considered one of distinction and status and a stepping stone into higher positions. The word "personal" or "private" preceded secretary in the title to reflect this elevated status. Some of our great leaders who began their careers as secretaries to important political people are John Quincy Adams, Henry Adams, John Hay, and Lyndon Johnson.

There has been a lot of change in the secretarial profession since the early 1800s. Then, most organizations were small and occupied a single location. Communication within the office was generally face-to-face, rarely written; external communication was handwritten. In 1867, the typewriter was invented. In 1873, after the typewriter was perfected, shorthand increased in use. Together, they became communication tools. About this time, women **slowly** began to enter the profession in stenographic positions. Even with women entering an office workforce, most of the private business schools still had men and boys as primary enrollees.

As companies/industries grew more complex and larger, internal correspondence became necessary, and the volume of external correspondence grew. Women filled the void created by this expansion. But, as women began to assume the secretarial role, the image of a prestigious position began to dissolve. Women were expected to accept less money than men had received for the same workload. Change was continuing with the invention of the mimeograph machine, and shortly after, the telephone, transcribing machine, and calculating machine. Women adapted to technological changes of the time and learned to operate the new equipment.

By the 1890s, a library supply company had started distribution of an office filing cabinet, thereby making the filing system a little more efficient. By the 1900s, the use of carbon paper was widespread. There was paper everywhere! The "modern office" had arrived, or so it seemed. Office technology continued to change.

By the 1930s, women dominated the office work force. Once again, women kept up with technological changes by learning to operate the electric typewriter. In the late 1930s and early 1940s, the photocopier and computer were invented. Even though it took a while for computers to become widespread, their acceptance revolutionized office outputs. (The number of digital computers in worldwide use

increased from less than 15 in 1950 to more than 40,000 by the late 1960s.) In the 1960s, came xerography and tons of paper. Secretaries only **thought** there was paper everywhere before.

The next major change in the office setting was the introduction of the IBM magnetic tape selectric typewriter. This occurred in the mid 1960s. Secretaries could then insert and delete words and make corrections without retyping the entire document. Flawless documents could be produced with much less effort.

By the end of the 1970s, offices had dedicated word processors with video displays, CPUs [central processing unit], magnetic disks, and high speed printers. Again, secretaries thought, "As far as conveniences go, how much better can it be?"

Then came the personal computer (PC). The first PC was introduced in 1975. Two American students founded the Apple Computing Company and introduced the Apple II. IBM followed suit in 1981 with its PC. Yes, there has been a lot of advancement since the 1800s; all of these changes have increased secretarial duties drastically. Office automation is in full swing. There were more than one half million general purpose computers used in North America in the early 1980s. With the many programs now available, more is expected of secretaries than ever before.

WHAT IS A SECRETARY?

Webster (*3rd New International Dictionary*, 1967) defines secretary as 1) one entrusted with the secrets or confidences of a superior, and 2) one employed to handle correspondence and manage routine and detailed work for a superior.

The National Survey of Professional, Administrative, Technical, and Clerical Pay, March 1986 (Bull. 2271, U.S. Dept. of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics) has this definition for secretary:

> "One who provides principal secretarial support in an office, usually to one individual, and in some cases to the subordinate staff of that individual. Maintains a close and highly responsible relationship to the day-to-day activities of the supervisor and staff. Works fairly independently, receiving a minimum of detailed supervision and guidance. Performs varied clerical and secretarial duties requiring a knowledge of office routine and understanding of the organization, programs, and procedures related to the work of the office."

Professional Secretaries International's (PSI) long-standing definition of a secretary is:

> "An assistant to an executive who possesses mastery of office skills and ability to assume responsibility without direct supervision, displays initiative, exercises judgment, and makes decisions within the scope of assigned authority."

EXPECTATIONS OF SECRETARIES

In ARS, 25 to 30 years ago, a typical secretary typed reports and manuscripts, filed, took dictation, and answered the phone. Secretaries were also expected to act as a receptionist; aid visitors; handle routine inquiries; compose and edit documents, letters, and reports; make travel arrangements, sort and screen mail; schedule meetings; make appointments; operate and maintain office machines; and use their own initiative.

Today, the secretary's job has expanded beyond handling routine clerical and administrative duties. Secretaries now are the center of communications. In addition to a good command of grammar and fast, accurate typing, it is essential that they possess good verbal, written, and interpersonal communication skills. Secretaries correspond with other units within the Agency or Department, their supervisor's colleagues at universities and industry (both in the U.S. and abroad), and the general public. By composing correspondence, directing calls, gathering information, and preparing reports, secretaries free supervisors to conduct research and concentrate on program management.

Secretaries must also possess management and administrative skills necessary to organize daily schedules and assignments for themselves, their supervisors, and/or their subordinates. They must be adaptable and versatile, and able to handle stress and constant interruptions. A professional demeanor is important. A secretary is a "paramanager" in charge of work flow, purchasing, and personnel administration.

With recent changes in office automation and software now available, new areas of responsibilities have developed for secretaries. They are assuming far more managerial and administrative responsibilities. They can and are expected to perform many "atypical" duties. Because of these "atypical" duties, secretaries must stay current on word processing/computer skills and various computerized business programs. Tasks that were previously managed by supervisors are now delegated to secretaries, especially computer-oriented tasks dealing with financial and spreadsheet applications, database management, and graphics. Secretaries compile budget documents such as the ARS Annual Resource Management Plan (ARMPS), as well as Current Research Information System (CRIS) documents to which Unit research

dollars are assigned. They are responsible for preparing in-house as well as extramural CRIS documents. Secretaries often develop spreadsheets to track year-end expenditures which include salaries and procurement documents. Some secretaries input data into computer systems and create spreadsheets and graphs which are incorporated in typed documents. Some are expected to do scientific literature searches from databases such as BIOSIS through Dialog or other retrieval services, and through the Research Management Information System (RMIS). Databases must be created and maintained for retrieved literature, as well as for, manuscripts, patents, etc., that are in preparation.

As reported in *Computers Ease The Load – At Times*, Larry Hirschhorn, research fellow at the Wharton School, claims "Office technology links previously unconnected tasks such as typing and editing of research and graphics production, and thus is transforming many secretarial jobs into 'paraprofessional' careers. Technology integrates what were traditionally divided skills." The importance of accuracy in inputting data is receiving increased impetus as more and more reports are generated from one-entry — once the data are entered into the system, they are used Agency wide. The one-entry concept has arrived.

The secretary must also be a computer analyst and have the technical skills necessary to use and oversee a variety of automated office equipment. According to Professional Secretaries International, secretaries are "office translators who resolve 'technophobia'." Secretaries must be familiar enough with computers and software to act as a technical liaison, install hardware and software, and train others in their use.

Joseph Healey, former president of the New York Chamber of Commerce, says:

> "No one quite learns the basics of a business like the secretary through whose hands pass the important communications that turn ideas and concepts into action programs. Just as communication in personal relationships keeps those relationships alive and growing, so communication by telephone, letters, memos, and reports keep all departments of a business in close contact with one another. This information handler interfaces with every level of the company. ... [They] are the first company representative the public contacts. The enormous importance of this first impression can hardly be overestimated. From public relations to processing the most sensitive information, the secretary keeps a business running smoothly. Competent, sensitive secretaries are among the greatest assets businesses possess."

Carolyn Fryar, senior vice-president of Kelly Services, Inc., says that secretarial roles are more challenging and include increasing responsibilities:

> "Secretaries are now assuming the role of information managers in offices as computers allow access to information never before available. A secretary (information manager) must know where to get the information needed, how to get it, and what to do with it once it has been retrieved. This new role requires more analytical and creative skills. With these skills, the job becomes more challenging and diversified. As office technology continues to become more sophisticated and widespread, the secretary's role, undoubtedly, will continue to expand to a more skilled and more professional level."

Today, secretaries have a wider repertoire of skills, and are part of the management team — partners, working side-by-side with their bosses and taking responsibility for more decision-making tasks. Blanche Ettinger, professor, Department of Secretarial and Office Information Systems, Bronx Community College, N.Y., says that executives themselves are realizing that qualified secretaries are harder to replace than good executives.

The secretary's job includes a variety of complex and diversified activities. The former assistant vice president of human resources at the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company says "the modern-day secretary is frequently called upon to act as an executive assistant."

What is a Secretary? — The glue that keeps a team together and the oil that keeps it running smoothly and efficiently.

THE SECRETARY AS A PROFESSIONAL

Webster defines a **professional** as one having great skill or experience in a particular field or activity, and one who has an assured competence in a particular field or occupation. Frequently, the secretary is the first contact in an office, and the image of the organization is formulated with this contact. First impressions influence attitudes of people. Therefore, it is important that a secretary perform as a professional. This professional image is one of competence, good communication skills, organization, and efficiency. A professional secretary projects an image of one who is in control and handles the job with confidence — able to handle responsibilities in a proficient manner often in stressful and difficult situations.

The stereotypic view of secretary as one who performs trivial tasks, takes dictation, types, files, and answers the phone, has given a negative perception of the job of secretary. The secretary may be seen by others as unimportant, in part, due to

the manner in which secretaries project themselves as "Just a secretary." The public perception of secretaries may be improved through courteous, confident, and competent handling of office contacts, phone calls, visitors, etc. Management's perception of the secretary's job is changing as the TQM concept of empowering employees is established. Secretaries are being recognized as valued members of the management team. Management affirms secretaries as part of the team by using their skills, including them in planning sessions, and recognizing their contributions to the team.

While secretaries are perceived by some as a critical part of successful management teams, others still believe that secretaries are unimportant — not a part of the team. To change this perception and gain the respect of supervisors and coworkers, secretaries must develop good working relationships with management to be effective and efficient team members. Secretaries must know the interworkings of the organization and be able to perform the duties of the position without requiring constant supervision. The time of both supervisors and coworkers is important, and secretaries must relieve them of many administrative and managerial tasks.

Effective secretaries work well with all employees of the management team, setting the mood in the office. They organize and prioritize their work for maximal effectiveness.

The position of a secretary is, as expected, a supportive one and a professional one who makes the team look good. As it was in the beginning, the position of secretary is not only most honorable, but also one of which to be proud.

FACT-FINDING ANALYSIS

One of the objectives of the Secretarial Review Task Group was to determine how ARS secretarial positions compare with secretarial positions in other organizations in terms of pay, titling, duties performed, and benefits. The Task Group conducted an internal survey of ARS secretaries and an external survey of outside organizations. The Task Group was seeking to identify duties and responsibilities performed by secretaries; ideas on position titling; methods used to set salaries; and issues and concerns that secretaries have about their current positions. Internal and external surveys were needed to identify significant differences and identify common issues/concerns.

Within ARS, 484 secretarial surveys were issued, with each Task Group participant responsible for coordinating activities for their respective areas. Responses were received from 299 secretaries (61 percent).

For the external survey, each Task Group member was responsible for contacting no more than 10 organizations within their geographical areas. Surveys were issued to 102 organizations (e.g., private industry, colleges/universities, state governments, other Federal agencies). Responses were received from 46 organizations (45 percent). Several requested copies of the final report.

Summaries of the surveys and an analysis of how ARS secretarial positions compare to other organizations follow. Many responses were well thought out and informative, and the Task Group presents several of these comments in their entirety.

SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS OF INTERNAL RESPONSES

The survey sought responses in four categories:

- "Key" functions performed,
- "Atypical" work performed,
- Long-term career goals, and
- Other issues and concerns.

The first two questions are closely related and responses are grouped together.

1. What are the "key" functions performed by you in your present position?

and

2. Describe briefly any other responsibilities that you perform in your position which are "atypical" of work performed by secretaries.

Duties ranged from answering the phone and filing, to complex office automation tasks.

The Task Group evaluated and grouped the collected facts into several work assignment types which include both "atypical" and traditional duties:

- Office Automation
- Personal Contact
- Meeting Preparation
- Mail/Files
- Administrative duties (budget, travel, personnel, purchasing, property, imprest fund)
- Writing/Editing
- Liaison
- Equipment Maintenance
- Research Support Agreements
- Other

"Atypical" duties performed by ARS secretaries include:

- Dealing with high level and foreign visitors, citizens groups, and the media. Assisting foreign research associates with living arrangements, adapting to workplace, paperwork, etc.

- Organizing national/international meetings — facilities, housing, programs, translators.

- Preparing necessary paperwork for foreign research associates and foreign visitors to come to the lab. Also preparing foreign travel/trip reports through Research Management Information System (RMIS).

- Making administrative decisions.

- Handling procurement responsibilities.

- Assisting in ARMPS and budget preparation.

- Handling personnel responsibilities.
- Research Management Information System (RMIS).
- Training new employees.
- Operating numerous PC software packages (approximately 40 were cited as being used).
- In the absence of a delegation clerk (response from a Contracting and Assistance Division employee), preparing delegations of contracting authority, assigning numbers, extending and terminating delegations per instructions, preparing forms for special delegations.
- Preparing cooperative agreements, fund transfers, and grant proposals with cooperators by meeting with scientists to assess work and time requirements for the year; monitoring spending throughout the year and preparing necessary paperwork to add or de-obligate funds as necessary; reviewing monthly management reports from a university for accuracy, and reporting discrepancies to the research leader or ADODR.
- Working with security system to keep accurate records on authorized employees, and preparing documentation to add new employees to the security system; watching for violations and reporting to appropriate source.
- In the case of employee injury, prepares all accident report forms, and instructs/assists employee in obtaining medical treatment if needed.
- Translating or obtaining translation of foreign language documents.
- Designing and preparing graphics for national and international presentations.
- Editing manuscripts.
- Assisting technical editor for scientific journal.
- Serving as CRIS contact providing program assistance for RMIS to other secretaries; providing advice and assistance on agreements and grants to scientists.
- Managing the imprest fund.

- Coordinating repairs and purchases of office equipment.
- Independently compiling and preparing reports.

It must be noted that not all secretaries perform the above duties. The above information highlights those responsibilities that several respondents indicated they were performing. Many of the duties described by the respondents reflect a greater knowledge of administrative operations than many believe the secretaries use.

Traditional duties described by those responding include typing, filing, answering phones, operating word processing software on PCs, receiving visitors, maintaining calendars, completing T&As, screening mail, maintaining logs, etc.

In response to the question "What are your long-term career goals?", 365 responses were received. Of the 365, only 45 respondents indicated that they want to remain in the secretarial field. Many secretaries expressed interest in enhancing skills through training and advancing to higher responsibilities and compensation. They enjoy their work but want to contribute more to the organization and have the support and respect of their coworkers.

Responses from 109 secretaries indicate that they are definitely interested in other occupations and many expressed an interest in administrative work, computer science, education, and nursing. Higher education is required to reach their goals and many ARS secretaries are actively attending training classes/college or making plans to do so.

ARS secretaries were asked to express other comments or concerns. With automation, the secretarial position has definitely changed over the past several years. Secretaries feel that the GS-0318 series is outdated and that classification of positions should consider fully the duties performed in each job. Job titles need to be changed to reflect what a secretary does. Many duties now include responsibilities in administrative areas, and require knowledge and the use of many software programs. Titles of Administrative Assistant, Office Manager, or Personal Assistant would define the job more accurately.

The following is a sampling of responses received:

> "I feel the secretarial field has not only changed in the last 15 years, but has turned inside out! Certainly, our work has broadened considerably with automation, as we are continuously involved in learning new software packages, electronic systems, and application of same. Along with this advanced technology comes increased responsibilities in most instances. Unfortunately, although the secretarial field has changed considerably and responsibilities are ever

increasing, the grade structure has remained the same over the past several years."

"My greatest concern for secretaries is that they are not compensated for the work they provide. Secretaries are required to have a broad knowledge of information and most work independently to relieve the RL of personal involvement in day-to-day operations of the unit as well as maintain and provide information needed during preparation of ARMPS. Technicians assist their supervisors as do secretaries, and most technicians salaries are much more."

"ARS secretaries are expected to be experts on personnel actions, T&As, foreign and domestic travel, procurement, budget, ARMPS, CRIS documentation, and contracting, but when they apply for positions in any of these areas, they are told they do not have the specialized experience."

"I do not believe ARS adequately considers the different functions secretaries perform at field locations when we apply for promotions. Anything we do is just 'general' experience vs. 'specialized' experience. Some secretaries really do have specialized experience, especially in administrative areas."

"Change the duty title from SECRETARY to OFFICE MANAGER or ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT. I remember when a secretary's only office automation was switching to an electric typewriter. The world has changed, office technology has changed, telecommunications and computers and fax machines, etc., have changed the work place forever. The only thing that hasn't changed is the image of the secretary and the acknowledgement that she/he has incorporated all of these changes into her/his daily activities, to become a highly effective and integral part of the office scene. The secretary has been called upon to do more, become more diversified, more involved in managing the office activities, but without the pay or respect that goes with the added responsibility."

"Training opportunities are minimal; seems supervisors don't want them to be gone from the office. Need a mentoring program."

"My concern is that the dedicated 'secretary' per se will become a 'thing of the past' as the next generation will seek other careers with better pay, opportunities, and prestige."

The following comment from one secretary highlights many comments received from other ARS respondents:

> "Secretaries work under constant pressure and ludicrous deadlines, and, if deadlines are not met, it's the secretaries' fault. They are expected to be happy and subservient at all times. Secretaries are expected to keep visitors occupied until their supervisors are ready to meet with the visitor; they are required to stop whatever they are working on and deal with various coworkers, answer a wide variety of questions, and know everything about everything. Secretaries are supposed to be the forever good sport by helping out with food and drink whenever birthdays or special occasions arise (regardless of what might be going on in their own homes/lives). They are expected to attend all special emphasis programs and make sure their PHONES ARE COVERED and STILL MEET ARS' deadlines, and if they don't go to these programs, they are frowned upon.
>
> "In addition to the above, ARS secretaries have been forced to switch to a more complicated software package. They were never asked for an opinion or any ideas about changing software packages. While still in the process of learning and getting familiar with the new software, they were all connected to a LAN/WAN. This presented more problems; i.e., sharing printers, other PC-generated glitches, and fumbling around with various textbooks and pages of notes. But this is progress, and the secretary is supposed to get the work out without missing a beat.
>
> "Lastly, secretaries' work gets to be scrutinized by 'higher ups,' and they get to redo documents as often as DEEMED necessary for minor/insignificant changes or people's preferences. That's real good for the secretaries' MORALE.
>
> "In closing, I'd like to add that THERE ARE **SOME** PEOPLE who want to be a secretary and not change job fields. Secretaries' jobs should be treated with a lot more respect, and they certainly should have their pay scale raised. As you can see from above, a secretary is critical to the operation of an office/Agency. If it weren't for the secretarial/clerical/office automation staff, nothing would be accomplished.
>
> "After all, what other professionals get to fight over and beg for time off during the Thanksgiving/Christmas holiday season."

SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS OF EXTERNAL ORGANIZATIONS

The Task Group conducted a survey of external organizations to compare ARS secretarial positions, titles, and salaries. The survey sought information in the following categories:

- Number of individuals supported.
- Salary ranges.
- Responsibilities/duties performed.
- Who in the organization handles administrative functions such as budget preparation, contracting and purchasing, facilities maintenance, etc.
- How salaries are set.
- Who establishes policy on salaries.
- Comparability of salaries across the organization.
- Whether pay matrixes/schedules are used.
- How promotions are granted.
- Types of award/bonus programs.
- Types of employee benefits available.
- Whether the secretaries felt their pay was equitable with their level of responsibility.
- Concerns or problems with present position.
- Long-term career goals.
- Other concerns/comments.

Organizations contacted ranged in size from small local businesses to large corporations, other Federal agencies, and colleges/universities. A complete list of participating organizations is included as Exhibit 1.

In response to the question on number of people worked for, 24 respondents indicated:

Respondents	Number of People Supported
13	1
6	2–5
2	6–10
1	11–15
2	21 or more

Salary ranges of those responding were as follows:

Respondents	Annual Salary Range
4	$10,000–$20,000
9	$21,000–$25,000
15	$26,000–$30,000
4	$31,000–$35,000
1	$36,000–$40,000

At one corporation, salaries range from $12,000 to $36,000 per year for positions including receptionist, secretary, administrative assistant, and executive secretary, and salaries may be negotiated higher by supervisors.

When asked if their organizations had separate positions established to handle administrative functions such as budget preparation, contracting and purchasing, facilities maintenance, etc., 43 of 51 respondents indicated that there are separate positions. These assignments include accountants, customer service representatives, purchasing clerks, staff analysts, administrative assistants/analysts, and budget analysts.

Thirty organizations use pay schedules to set pay; 13 indicated that supervisory discretion is allowed in setting pay; and 5 indicated that pay is set within pay bands. Several indicated that pay grades are established; unions negotiate salaries; or pay is based on Departmental budgets, in conjunction with the Director of Personnel Services. At one corporation, for each job description there is an established base

salary and ceiling; experience determines where within the range an employee starts; and performance reviews are conducted every 3 months with opportunities for raises every 6 months. Another responded that salaries are set by the Board of Directors who determine when and if salary increases are given and how much. Another responded that salary increases and when they are granted is based on State Legislative action.

In response to the question "Who in the organization establishes policy on salaries?", 1 responded the first-line supervisor; 2 responded the second-line supervisor; 19 responded the Personnel Department; and 25 responded that policy on pay is established by the home office, Compensation Committee of the Board of Directors, Director/Vice-President, Corporate Headquarters, owner, Corporation President, Vice President of Administration, Civil Service Pay Scale, or Board of Directors. Twenty-eight organizations indicated pay schedules are used; 13 indicated no pay schedules are used; and 2 were unsure.

Of 47 respondents to the question "Are salaries comparable across the board in your organization?", 34 responded yes; 11 responded no; and 2 responded unsure. Six respondents indicated that promotions were granted based on seniority; 24 indicated promotions were granted based on competitive advertisements; and 21 indicated that promotions were granted based on supervisory discretion. Other considerations for promotion included performance, qualifications, and ability to do the job.

Several award/bonus programs were cited by respondents. These include annual salary reviews, cash incentives, retention bonuses, holiday bonuses, "High Five" Awards, birthday luncheons, profit-sharing, peer and spot awards, attendance bonuses, QSIs, variable merit increases, and suggestion awards. Employee benefits at organizations surveyed include health and life insurance, retirement, child care, maxiflex, savings plan, vacation based on seniority, personal business days, continuing education, annual and sick leave, short and long-term disability benefits, employee assistance programs, leave of absence policy, tuition assistance, vision and dental benefits, legal services, wellness and physical fitness programs, and free college tuition for employees and immediate family.

Following are a few direct comments in response to the question, "Is your compensation equitable?"

> "I feel secretaries have and should have a great deal of responsibility. They are in a position that is vital to the success of the operation. They can do more and should be allowed to advance as well as in many other positions. There should be a career path established. Training and hands-on experience should be included in this path."

"Compensation is equitable but only because it includes tuition benefits for the family — free tuition."

"No, even though I get what is considered a good salary, the job I do is very high stress. I can understand why secretaries die of heart problems, etc., because when one's job entails so many various duties and such high-level people are involved, it is sometimes very demanding to have the responsibility of correlating the many and varied duties we do. When I started working in the secretarial field years ago, it was much less stressful."

Most secretaries responding indicated that their major duties and responsibilities include those of traditional secretaries (e.g., typing, receptionist, mail handling, maintaining supervisors calendar, maintaining files, travel). Listed below are some of the "atypical" assignments being performed:

- Administering salary planning and annual performance award programs.
- Administering annual performance reviews.
- Maintaining the personnel database for research employees.
- Preparing proposals, contracts, and agreements.
- Preparing accounts payable; sales tax and quarterly tax reports; handling problems involving the dealership.
- Reconciling monthly budget statements.
- Establishing and maintaining undergraduate and graduate student records through database.
- Preparing purchase, training, procurement, personnel action requests.
- Managing/coordinating office/division activities; budget and procurement; office moves; office maintenance; training; main contact for TSP [Thrift Savings Plan] information and health and life insurance inquiries.
- Handling accounting spread sheets (entering data into computer), payrolls, correspondence related to budget, and typing reports and forms.

The Task Group found it interesting that most of the responses to the question "What is your one main concern in or about your present position?" were very similar to the responses from secretaries within ARS, including:

> "That I will never move out of the secretarial field. This seems a difficult move in this agency. The supervisors don't seem to want to advance secretaries because they will have to hire new ones."

> "Job Security."

> "Monetary compensation equivalent to job title and responsibility involved."

> "With supervisors and managers becoming more proficient in the use of computer programs and LANs [Local Area Networks], the need for ordinary typing of documents and distribution of such may cease to exist for most secretaries. Maybe the answer is to refocus our efforts on computer programs with a database for all types of office needs."

> "Stereotyping the secretarial positions. Employers and supervisors have problems with reclassifying secretaries to administrative titles even knowing that most secretaries do a majority of administrative duties not secretarial."

> "I have an excellent rapport with my supervisor, therefore, my concerns are brought to him on a regular basis. He does all he can to make the job something pleasant."

In terms of long-term career goals, most respondents indicated that they are pursuing other careers outside of the secretarial field, attending college to enhance opportunities, waiting for retirement, or seeking a promotion. Some indicated that they are satisfied with their present position.

Lastly, respondents were asked to provide any other comments or concerns. Below is a sampling of the responses received:

> "Within John Hancock the opportunities are boundless. With hard work and dedication, anything is possible, so I feel confident with myself and John Hancock."

> "The reason I left Federal government service was that the pay scale was much lower than that of the Prince Georges County [Maryland] government. Also, there are few secretarial jobs at Beltsville above

GS-06. I obtained that grade at the age of 26 — where would I go for 30 years?"

"Constant threat of RIF; remote worksite causing long travel to work; women only get secretarial jobs — even female engineers get non-engineering work."

"We find it a problem to keep a good qualified secretary. Therefore, when we hire a good secretary we make every attempt to pay her enough to keep her in our employ."

COMPARISON OF INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL DATA

It is evident that most organizations have begun to address concerns of employees in secretarial occupations. Many have begun to recognize the role of the position in the organization and are titling positions to more appropriately recognize this role. In ARS, secretaries generally provide support services for a large number of individuals rather than serving as personal assistant to one individual. In contrast, most of the respondents to the external survey indicated that they provide support to one individual. Salaries at non-Federal organizations fall within the range of $10,000 to $40,000 per year. Using the 1993 General Schedule pay scale, salaries for grades 3 through 9 range from $14,603 to $36,123 per year, and are comparable to the salaries paid in external organizations. In many outside organizations, salaries are set from pay scales, but are negotiable even at the lowest levels.

As with ARS, most organizations responded that they have separate positions established to handle administrative functions such as budget preparation, contracting and purchasing, facilities maintenance, etc. Private organizations grant promotions based on seniority, level of experience, and supervisory discretion. Many organizations indicated that promotions are based on competitive advertisements. Opinions varied, both internally and externally, on equity of compensation.

Award and bonus programs are comparable. While internal respondents cited QSI and Cash Awards, external respondents cited annual salary reviews, cash incentives, retention bonuses, etc., which are similar to Federal programs. Some external organizations provide other awards and bonuses such as profit-sharing, attendance bonuses, and holiday bonuses, which the Federal government does not provide. Employee benefits also were basically the same. Some benefits cited which are not provided by the Federal government include tuition assistance and free college tuition, legal services, wellness and physical fitness programs, and child care.

Duties and responsibilities typical of the secretarial occupation are performed by secretaries both internally and externally. In terms of performance of "atypical"

duties, most ARS secretaries appear to be performing more duties outside the secretarial occupation than are their counterparts in private organizations. Those "atypical" duties which were cited by outside organizations relate to administrative functions such as personnel, budget, contracting, and office automation, which are similar in some respects to the "atypical" duties cited by ARS secretaries.

Responses in reference to long-term career goals were basically the same and other comments and concerns cited by external secretaries mirrored the responses received from ARS secretaries. It is evident from both the internal and external responses that secretaries want to be recognized as an important part of a team, want to have their positions titled to more accurately reflect the work being performed, and believe compensation should be increased.

The following response received from a manager outside the Federal government best expresses the disenchantment with the secretarial occupation:

> "There is a scarcity of competent and dedicated secretaries. Unless we as managers face this problem and award secretaries with pay and benefits, we will continue to have this problem. Why should they remain secretaries, when they can choose another career with greater opportunities and pay?"

SUMMARY

Where do we go from here? It is evident that the role of the traditional secretary has changed both internally and externally. The Task Group recommends that ARS analyze the information provided in this report, and working with secretaries, redefine our role in ARS. We must seek alternatives to the traditional classification of these positions to more accurately title and compensate the many highly qualified and dedicated office support staff we have within ARS.

WHAT OTHERS HAVE DONE

USDA PROGRAMS

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS)

(1) APHIS established a program titled, ExCel (Excellence Through Competence, Experience, and Learning).

(2) The ExCel Program provides progressive training and development experiences for all levels of office support staff, from entry to full performance level.

(3) A combination of classroom and on-the-job training, as well as work assignments, is used to incorporate skills assessment, developmental assignments, and internal and external training.

(4) The program is structured in three levels:

- Level I — EXPERT (Excellent Performance Through Training) — Includes the core skills required by all clerical office support staff at all grade levels and consists of orientation (mandatory); administrative systems and procedures; correspondence; creating an error-proof document; excellence in English; computer competence; data and records management; customer service and public relations; and career assessment and planning workshop. Participants who complete Level I and attain scores of 90-100 percent on the performance-based tests receive certification as "EXPERTS" and become eligible for Level II, the APHIS Master Performer Program.

- Level II — MASTER PERFORMER — Master Performer training provides developmental experiences tailored to the needs of an individual and prepares secretaries for more responsible career assignments. Participants remain in their current positions and spend 10 percent of their time working with Recruitment and Development to develop skill in training and employee development. The program includes an Introduction to Employee Development training; Instructor Training; and tuition support for outside training such as university courses and other Government training. Upon completion, participants

receive a certificate from the Administrator and are eligible for a cash award.

- Level III — MASTER PERFORMER TRAINER — Graduates of the Master Performer Program are eligible to compete for the Master Performer TRAINER Program. If selected, participants receive a promotion of one grade level above their current grade. Those selected, while remaining at their work site, spend 20 percent of their time working with Recruitment and Development, developing and/or delivering office skills training to Agency employees. Also included are instructor training and college and university courses. Participants also are eligible for Recruitment and Development-funded cash awards.

Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS)

(1) FAS has a Secretarial Development Committee.

(2) The committee serves in an advisory role to the Training Officer in developing and implementing the FAS Secretarial Training Program.

(3) The committee is composed of senior level secretaries (1 GS-08, 3 GS-07s, and 1 GS-06) serving one-year terms; it also includes representatives from grades GS-03–08 determined by ballot on a rotational basis.

(4) Officers are elected (Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Recording Secretary, and Alternate Secretary).

(5) The committee prepares an annual work plan as well as reports its accomplishments semiannually to the Assistant Administrator, Management; prepares a written report annually to the Administrator.

(6) The committee was established to:

- Study, analyze, and recommend developmental training for the FAS secretarial staff.

- Evaluate on an on-going basis the effectiveness of the secretarial development program and provide input to the training officer.

- Provide in-house training opportunities for the FAS secretarial staff in areas such as orientation of new employees, FAS correspondence and forms, and office management.

- Work with the training officer on curriculum planning, development, and implementation.

- Award a Certificate of Achievement to secretaries completing the training program for their grade level annually.

- Make suggestions to personnel programs on the awards/recognition for FAS secretaries.

OTHER FEDERAL AGENCIES

National Institutes of Health (NIH)

(1) A review committee was established and charged with reviewing the classification of senior secretaries at NIH and making recommendations on whether and, if so, how grade levels and career advancement opportunities could be increased. (Senior secretaries at NIH are at the Laboratory or Branch Chief level.)

(2) The committee's recommendations included:

- Recognition of the contributions of secretaries and classification of their positions commensurate with the level of complexity and scope of the duties they perform.

- Establishment of administrative bridge positions where appropriate. Consider restructuring and classifying secretarial positions with the most extensive administrative responsibilities to bridge administrative positions.

- Design a formal career development program for NIH secretaries. A structured curriculum of coursework and training for secretaries, particularly those at the senior level of the profession, does not exist.

- Use organizational titling practices to more accurately describe the roles of secretaries. Executive Assistant and Extramural Program Assistant are two position titles recommended for use.

- Conduct an evaluation in 12 to 18 months to determine whether the implementation of these recommendations has made a difference.

National Security Agency (NSA)

(1) NSA has a certification program for the position of Executive Secretary.

(2) The certification program was created to ensure the development of a well-trained, professional, executive secretary.

(3) NSA has clearly defined training and experience requirements for certification.

(4) The Executive Secretary Career Panel (ESCP) governs the Executive Secretary Certification Program and establishes the criteria for certification.

General Services Administration (GSA)

(1) GSA has a Clerk-Typist/Secretary Certification Training Plan designed to prepare its employees to carry out their assigned responsibilities.

(2) It requires a supervisor and an employee to identify the skills and abilities that the employee should master; select appropriate training and developmental activities; monitor growth and accomplishment; plan realistic career development; determine the level of competency needed to perform quality work now and in the future; and recognize strengths and improve weaknesses.

(3) GSA has defined requirements for receipt of certification.

Bureau of Reclamation (DOI)

(1) DOI established an Administrative Support Career Management Program.

(2) Goals and responsibilities of the program include:

- Encouraging a common language to discuss changes in positions and, in particular, changes in clerical/secretarial positions resulting from changing technology or changes in the work environment.

- Developing common understanding among managers, supervisors, and staff on grade-level distinctions for clerical/secretarial staff.

- Providing information on clerical/secretarial staff occupations, and clear job restructuring options and duties.

- Providing clear instructions to supervisors, managers, and employees on the methods and procedures to use in restructuring positions and coordinating with servicing personnel offices for reclassification of the positions.

- Encouraging managers and supervisors to involve the entire staff in "building" or restructuring clerical/secretarial positions.

- Encouraging managers and supervisors to review traditional clerical/secretarial positions that become vacant to assure that they still meet the needs of the organization, and to determine if the positions could be restructured to be more fully used.

- Reinforcing the concept that when a position grade changes, work of the position must significantly change. Grades of positions do not change unless the scope and complexity of the work have significantly changed. Higher graded jobs reflect different duties and greater responsibilities.

- Providing information on how positions are titled and graded when work consists of duties from several occupations.

- Establishing training and development programs for all levels of Reclamation's clerical/secretarial workforce.

- Enhancing Reclamation's ability to attract, recruit, and retain highly skilled and motivated clerical/secretarial staff.

- Enhancing the status of Reclamation's professional secretarial workforce and encouraging employees to value clerical/secretarial positions as a viable and valued career in Reclamation.

(3) DOI's program is clearly defined and responsibilities are outlined.

(4) DOI provides clearly defined guidance in the report which addresses the areas of training, awards, mentoring, and advisory councils.

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

(1) EPA has established policy defined as the Administrative Support Career Management System.

(2) In the tradition of TQM, it studied the impact of technology on secretarial career fields; developed and tested pilot career management systems; conducted internal assessments of recruitment and retention issues; and convened focus groups to assess changes occurring in the secretarial field.

(3) Responsibility for the success of the program lies with supervisors, managers, etc. These individuals have been charged with:

- Establishing basic orientation programs for new secretaries and administrative staff.
- Conducting skills assessments of secretarial and administrative staff at the annual mid-year review; identifying training and development needs, and documenting these with Career Management Plans.
- Establishing skills and training requirements for secretarial and administrative positions at each grade level.
- Committing sufficient resources to on-going training of secretarial and administrative staffs to keep them up-to-date on technological changes and to promote their career development.
- Encouraging completion of certified professional secretary programs by Office Managers.
- Conducting reviews of each secretarial and administrative position when vacated, or at the request of an incumbent or supervisor, to determine if restructuring of the position is appropriate.
- Providing training to supervisors and managers on position management, staff utilization, and job restructuring.
- Committing to the building of "office teams" by including support staff in retreats and team building exercises.
- Reporting to the Deputy Administrator annually on progress that has been made in the implementation of the career management system.

POSITION CLASSIFICATION OF SECRETARIAL POSITIONS

The issue of inequity in secretarial grade levels and pay has been circulating for years. Over the past 6 years, the Personnel Division has conducted several reviews of not only secretarial positions, but also positions in other occupations, such as, administrative technician/officers, purchasing agents, computer specialists, technicians and support scientists. These types of position/occupation reviews also are not novel solely to ARS. Other Federal agencies have tackled the same type of occupational studies on a regular basis. The fact that other Federal agencies, i.e., EPA, NIH, Bureau of Reclamation (DOI), APHIS, etc., have developed programs around the secretarial occupation further confirms that ARS is not alone in dealing with this issue.

As of June 1, 1993, there were 471 secretarial positions in ARS (Exhibit 2). Of the 471 positions, ARS has:

1	-	GS-10
1	-	GS-09
11	-	GS-08
48	-	GS-07
278	-	GS-06
126	-	GS-05
6	-	GS-04

The last ARS review of secretarial grade level issues was conducted in July 1988. The purpose of that study was to review the ARS secretarial grade level situation and provide management with viable options. It focused on application of the Secretary Series, GS-0318, classification standard to covered positions, and on key classification criteria within the standard which is a major determinant of grade level. This key factor, Knowledge Required by the Position, measures both the Work Situation and its complexity, as well as, knowledge required by a secretary to have substantial involvement in an organization's administration. Grade level concerns focused on secretaries to Area Directors (which were GS-07), secretaries to Associate Area Directors (which were GS-06), secretaries to Deputy Area Directors of the Beltsville Area Institutes which had just been reorganized (which were GS-06), and

Research Unit secretaries ARS-wide (most were GS-05). At the time of the study, grade levels for the 450 secretarial positions were:

1	-	GS-09
3	-	GS-08
29	-	GS-07
165	-	GS-06
252	-	GS-05

Since 1988, the percentage of secretaries at the GS-08, GS-07, and GS-06 levels has risen (Exhibit 2), while the percentage of secretaries at the GS-05 level has decreased. The greatest percentage of increase in secretarial grade levels occurred at the GS-06 level. In 1988, 36 percent of ARS secretaries were GS-06 compared with 59 percent now graded at the GS-06 level, an increase of 23 percent.

In the end, the 1988 study established criteria for crediting Work Situation B Special Provisions to secretarial positions assigned to individual Research Units. This offered the possibility of promoting Research Unit secretaries from the GS-05 to GS-06 grade. Based on the current number of GS-06 positions (278) versus the 1988 level (165), one would have to conclude that the establishment and use of the above criteria significantly impacted the grade levels of Research Unit secretaries.

Even with this increase in the grade levels of secretarial positions, focus still remains on the perceived inequities. Many of these perceptions stem from the apparent fact that secretarial grade levels are now, as in the past, tied to the hierarchical position of a supervisor in an organization; the attitude that secretaries are "second-class" citizens in the organization; and the lack of career advancement opportunities within the secretarial occupation.

It is evident, not only within ARS but within the secretarial profession as a whole, that the traditional role of a secretary has changed. Technology, e.g., E-mail, voice mail, database programs, electronic spreadsheets, and word processing, have forced these changes to take place. A recent article (Exhibit 3) in the May 9, 1993, *The Washington Post*, titled "Matching Secretaries' Pay With Skills May End an Era of 'Rug Ranking'," indicated that many employers have begun computing the pay for secretaries in the same manner as for other employees, based on responsibilities, work to be performed, and skills required. As managers and other employers continue to gain skill in the use of personal computers and perform most of their own work using the computers, changes are being forced in the traditional role of the secretary.

In our fact-finding process, the Task Group encountered many organizations, both private and governmental, who have begun to recognize these changes in the secretarial occupation. Some have changed position titles, raised salaries to coincide with increased levels of responsibility and performance of duties, and increased

responsibilities for secretaries in their organizations. To keep pace and to ensure that ARS can attract, recruit, and retain an available pool of highly qualified secretarial employees, ARS must work now to identify the "new" role of its secretaries.

Most of our secretarial employees have many years of service with ARS and harbor a wealth of administrative and program related knowledge and skills to share in accomplishing the Agency's vital missions. These skills and knowledge levels should be further developed and fully used to ensure efficient and economical operation of our Agency.

In the following sections, the Task Group presents an overview of classification issues in general and those related to the secretarial occupation in particular; a discussion on changes which have/are occurring in the secretarial occupation; a discussion on the roles of the Servicing Personnel Office, management, and employees in the classification process; and various options for consideration by management in dealing with changing situations/needs.

CLASSIFICATION

The Classification Act of 1923 established the law of equal pay for substantially equal work. This Act was amended several times and was later replaced by the Classification Act of 1949. In addition to the law established by the Classification Act of 1923, the Classification Act of 1949:

- Provides a definition of each grade in the General Schedule.
- Directs the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), after consulting with Federal agencies, to prepare standards for agencies to use in placing positions in their proper classes and grades.
- States that standards issued by OPM shall:
    - Define the various classes of positions in terms of duties, responsibilities, and qualification requirements.
    - Establish official class titles.
    - Set forth grades in which the classes of positions have been placed.

While the 1949 Act has also been amended and supplemented, it is the primary legal authority for classifying positions within the Federal Government.

OPM Classification Standards

The Office of Personnel Management approves and issues position classification standards that must be used by agencies to determine the title, series and grade of positions. The majority of position classification standards are developed by OPM and are applicable to occupations common to many or all Federal agencies.

Classification standards usually include a definition of the kind of work covered by the standard; background information, such as descriptions of typical kinds of assignments found in the occupation(s) covered and definitions of terms; official titles; and criteria for determining proper grade levels.

Position classification standards encourage uniformity and equity in the classification of positions by providing an established standard for common reference and use in different organizations, locations, or agencies. This "sorting out" and recording of like duties and responsibilities provides a basis for managing essential Federal personnel management programs, such as recruiting, placing, compensating, training, reassigning, promoting, and separating employees. Agencies are required to classify positions consistent with criteria and guidance issued by OPM.

Classification standards are public documents and should be available for review by anyone interested in their content.

Titling Practices

OPM is required by law (5 U.S.C. 5105) to establish the official titles of positions in published classification standards. Position classification standards generally prescribe titles to be used for positions in a series. Only the prescribed title may be used on official documents relating to a position; e.g. position descriptions, personnel actions. The requirement to use official titles, however, does not preclude agencies from using any unofficial title they choose for positions. Unofficial titles may be appropriate and helpful for internal agency use or for recruiting purposes. Some unofficial titles used by ARS are Research Leader, Chief, Section Head, Director, Research Associate, and Location Administrative Officer.

Secretary, GS-0318, Classification Standard

The secretarial standard is written in the Factor Evaluation System (FES) format. Under FES, positions are placed in grades on the basis of their duties,

responsibilities, and qualifications required as evaluated in terms of nine factors common to nonsupervisory positions in the General Schedule occupations:

Factors

1. Knowledge Required by the Position
2. Supervisory Controls
3. Guidelines
4. Complexity
5. Scope and Effect
6. Personal Contacts
7. Purpose of Contacts
8. Physical Demands
9. Work Environment

In applying the secretarial standard, Factor 1 measures the nature and extent of information or facts which a secretary must understand to do acceptable work, and the nature and extent of skills needed to apply this knowledge. To be used as a basis for selecting a level under this factor, a knowledge must be required and applied. The same type of knowledge may be found at different point levels depending on the extent of knowledge required.

For this occupation, the extent of knowledge required is related, in part, to the work situation in which the position is found. Work situation refers to the complexity of the organization served (i.e., the immediate office in which the secretary works, and any subordinate offices) which affect the extent of office rules, procedures, operations, and priorities a secretary must apply to maintain a proper and smooth flow of work in an organization and between organizations. Descriptions of the three Work Situations described in the Secretary standard are:

Work Situation A. These organizations are small and of limited complexity. Although the organization may include several subordinate sections or subgroups, the employee's supervisor directs the staff primarily through face-to-face meetings, and internal procedural and administrative controls are simple and informal. Within the supervisor's organization, there are few complicated problems of coordination requiring formal procedures and controls for adequate solution.

Work Situation B. The staff is organized in subordinate segments which may in turn be further divided. Direction of the staff is exercised through intermediate supervisors, and the subordinate groups differ from each other in such aspects as subject matter, functions, relationships with other organizations, and administrative requirements in ways that place demands upon the secretary that are significantly greater than those described under Work Situation A.

There is a system of formal internal procedures and administrative controls, and a formal production or progress reporting system. Coordination among subordinate units is sufficiently complex to require continuous attention.

Also, at this level organizations may be described as Work Situation A in terms of internal coordination when they have extensive responsibility for coordinating work outside of the organization. Such organizations may be placed in Work Situation B when the responsibility for coordination of work outside the organization requires procedures and administrative controls equivalent to those described above for this level.

Work Situation C. In addition to conditions described in Work Situation B, staffs of organizations in this situation are augmented by various staff specialists in such fields in personnel, management analysis, and administration. The organization is typically divided into three or more subordinate levels with several organizations at each level. In addition, such organizations typically have one of the following (or equivalent) conditions which increase the knowledge required by the work:

1. The program is interlocked on a direct and continuing basis with the programs of other departments, agencies, or organizations, requiring constant attention to extensive formal clearances and procedural controls.

2. The program is directly affected by conditions outside the organization which vary widely in nature and intensity, and which frequently require organizational, procedural, or program adjustments in a supervisor's organization.

3. There is active and extensive public interest or participation in the program which results in the supervisor spending a substantial portion of the time in personal contacts with citizens groups, professional societies, the media, educational groups, officials of State or local governments, or community leaders, etc.

The majority of the secretarial positions in ARS have been credited with Work Situation B.

CHANGING ROLE OF SECRETARIAL EMPLOYEES

Many technological advances have been made over the past decade which have affected the traditional role of secretaries. The most notable change came with the increased use of personal computers by all levels of an organization. Because most professional and technical staff are using personal computers to accomplish their daily

assignments, there has now been a shift in word-processing and document creation from the support staff to these individuals. This shift has and is continuing to provide opportunities and time for the support staff to become more actively involved in the daily operation of the office and to acquire greater knowledge of the office's programs and assume more complex duties. In fact, many of our secretaries have already begun to assume an increased role, and have increased their knowledge of the programs they support.

It has been predicted that the future office will process information and data more rapidly, and greater coordination and integration of program and administrative data will be critical to the success of an organization.

Through our fact-finding process, the Task Group found that most secretaries are concerned about future changes (e.g., reorganizations and RIFs, and their impact on secretarial positions), and are uncertain about their roles, the possible disappearance of secretarial jobs, and lack of clearly defined roles. Poor communication between some supervisors and secretaries has caused problems with roles, responsibilities, and organizational relationships. Many secretaries who responded to our survey indicated that secretarial work appears to receive very little respect within ARS and is considered low in status. Very few secretaries expressed a clear desire to remain in the secretarial field.

Many good secretaries are leaving Federal employment for higher pay, more prestigious titles, and greater career advancement opportunities. Executive secretaries in the private sector are now being titled Office Managers, Administrative Managers, and Staff Assistants. The new titles recognize the value and importance of these positions. For those remaining in the Federal service, our ARS survey responses indicate the need for similar recognition of their value.

Demographic changes in the employment pool are already occurring and these changes will continue. Managers and supervisors will experience difficulty in finding employees who are trained and willing to fill jobs in a secretarial support role. In fact, if you were to ask a group of high school students what their long-term goals are, you would probably have very few responding that they want to be secretaries.

All of the above issues have opened an opportunity to redefine the role of ARS secretarial positions. The potential now exists to assess fully the workloads in our organizations and to determine how best to accomplish this work. Many of our scientists and RLs would like to be freed from the administrative burdens placed upon them, and the Task Group believes that many of these assignments can be performed by the secretarial staff. The potential exists for adding responsibilities such as reports management, analysis of report data, greater administrative work, and greater involvement in budget and fiscal control matters.

It is important to note that not all organizations and employees will be equally affected by restructuring efforts. Job design will be determined by:

- Employee skill level;
- Developmental potential;
- The character, complexity, and nature of the individual unit; **and**
- The supervisor's willingness to delegate more complex tasks and responsibilities.

Secretaries also will need to show that they have the initiative to perform additional duties and responsibilities. It would cause long-term personnel management problems to either merely change titles without a specific change in duties or responsibilities, or to attempt to force-fit a "standard" job into every organizational unit. New roles will not only take strong managerial commitment, but also will require tremendous employee commitment to make a new job design work. An innovative approach to the classification of these positions must be fully explored and Position Classification Specialists must assume a greater role in advising management on establishing, restructuring, and changing positions.

ROLE OF THE SERVICING PERSONNEL OFFICE AND MANAGEMENT IN CLASSIFICATION

ARS policy is to develop and administer position classification and position management programs in accordance with all applicable laws, policies, rules, and regulations of USDA and OPM. Programs must be designed to serve the specific needs and requirements of ARS; help provide and maintain accurate and consistent classification of positions; and be a joint responsibility of the Personnel Division, managers, and supervisors.

To implement such a policy, the Personnel Division, managers, and supervisors must work together to assure that:

1. Each employee has a current and properly classified position description which adequately describes the work assigned; and

2. Positions and organizations are structured in accordance with sound position management principles.

ROLE OF THE EMPLOYEE IN THE CLASSIFICATION PROCESS

The primary role of the employee in the classification process is to assure the accuracy of her/his position description. Employees are encouraged to discuss classification issues with their supervisor, Location Administrative Officer, and/or Personnel Division. These discussions will often answer questions, resolve issues, and prevent the filing of formal appeals.

All employees have the right to appeal the occupational series, position title (if not prescribed by OPM), and/or grade level of their current position. Instructions for filing Position Classification Appeals are found in Directive 439.1.

CHANGING ATTITUDES TOWARD SECRETARIAL WORK

The Task Group recognizes that implementing change is often difficult; however, by working together, managers, supervisors, employees, and Position Classification Specialists can redefine the role of secretaries within the Agency to make them an integral part of the "team."

Secretaries must take responsibility for their own careers. They must take the initiative to ask for more complex assignments from not only the immediate supervisor, but from all employees in the organization without having to be told to do so. When someone calls with a non-technical question, they should try their best to respond without having to refer the call to another person. And, most of all, they must be professional in their day-to-day activities.

Position Classification Specialists must leave the attitude of "that's how it is" and move on to "how can I help management get where they want to be." They must use imagination and creativity in advising management on establishing, redefining, and restructuring positions.

CLASSIFICATION OPTIONS

The Task Group believes that where there is an organizational need and where employees show initiative and interest to become more involved in the operation of organizations programs, management has an opportunity to create new positions or restructure current positions that combine office manager duties with significant office automation and support duties. Managers, supervisors, and employees must take responsibility for building and describing work that is unique to their positions.

Positions should be viewed and evaluated as individual positions rather than grouping all incumbents into a single category. For example, ARS traditionally has had standard examples of position descriptions for all secretaries to Research Units. Using these standard position descriptions allows no flexibility in classifying individual positions.

Determining Which Duties Impact the Title, Series, and Grade Level

The Task Group recognizes that secretaries operate at different levels of responsibility throughout the Agency and realize that not all positions warrant upgrading. The Task Group does, however, question the traditional classification of these positions and the force-fitting method of placing positions at certain grade levels. In fact, the Secretary Series, GS-0318, in the section titled "Grading of Positions" (Exhibit 4) states:

> "EVALUATE EACH POSITION INDIVIDUALLY. No position should be placed in a particular grade simply because, 'all branch secretaries are that grade.' Even positions in the same echelon of the same organization may have very different duties and responsibilities."

Managers and supervisors should have the ability to:

- Create a new position or restructure an existing position which combines office manager responsibilities with office automation or program support duties. These positions would not only be the principal administrative and clerical support position, but rather a hybrid position composed of duties from a variety of occupations.

- Add substantive responsibilities for PC software application (such as desk-top publishing, spreadsheet, database development) that are more complex than traditional word-processing. The knowledge and creativity required by the more complex PC software programs may be sufficient to enhance the grade of the position. This will be feasible only for employees adept at PC operation who possess or who can gain greater-than-normal skill in this area.

- Establish program support positions by redistributing the lower graded work performed by other technicians, professional, or scientific positions within the organization.

- Enhance the traditional secretary position by adding significant management and leadership duties and responsibilities.

Use of TQM Techniques to Enhance Career Opportunities

In a recent issuance (*FPM Bulletin* 990-90), OPM provided guidance to Federal agencies on Total Quality Management (TQM) (Exhibit 5). One area addressed in this Bulletin relates to the use of TQM practices in the position management and position classification functions. OPM has suggested that TQM principles could be used in the position management system to accomplish agency goals, achieve organizational efficiency and productivity, foster creativity and innovation, improve quality, and enrich the lives of its employees.

The burden of responsibility for establishing positions lies within the Agency. Agencies are authorized to establish positions in whatever manner they believe will ensure achievement of program goals and missions. Using TQM would allow the use of creativity in establishing positions and may enhance the grade levels of an organization's positions. OPM advises that everyone involved in the classification process should be involved in the planning and design phase of establishing new or revised organizations.

Use of Alternative Series/Titles

Throughout our survey responses, both internal and external, it was evident that feelings and views of those in the secretarial occupation are that these positions should be retitled to more accurately reflect duties and responsibilities. When classifying positions, selecting the correct occupational series depends heavily on knowledge of the standards and on the specific position being evaluated. In most cases, identification of a correct occupational series is not difficult. Generally, a Position Classification Specialist can identify a correct series by viewing the duties of a position and the knowledge required to perform the job and relate it back to an established classification standard. The difficulty arises in identifying the correct occupational series for assignment when the position encompasses work which fits in one or more occupational series. In cases such as these (classifiers call them mixed-series positions), the correct occupational series can be assigned by use of a combination series, general or "catch-all" series, or selection of the most appropriate series which relates to duties of the position. As a general principle, the appropriate series is one that best fits in terms of sources of recruitment and lines of promotion, reasons for the position's existence, and background knowledge required.

Most secretarial/clerical functions are covered by the GS-0300, General Administrative, Clerical, and Office Services Group. Within this classification group, there are 35 different occupational series (e.g., GS-0303, Miscellaneous Clerk and Assistant Series; GS-0304, Information Receptionist Series; GS-0318, Secretary Series; GS-0322, Clerk-Typist Series; GS-0326, Office Automation Series; and GS-0344, Management Clerical and Assistance Series). Each of these occupational series has a "series definition" which aids in the determination of appropriate occupational series for assignment to a given position.

The Secretary Series, GS-0318, definition reads:

> "This series includes all positions the duties of which are to assist one individual, and in some cases the subordinate staff of that individual, by performing general office work auxiliary to the work of the organization. To be included in this series, a position must be the principal office clerical or administrative support position in the office, operating independently of any other such position in the office. The duties require a knowledge of clerical and administrative procedures and requirements, various office skills, and the ability to apply such skills in a way that increases the effectiveness of others. The duties do not require a technical or professional knowledge of a specialized subject-matter area."

Although most ARS secretaries meet this definition in terms of being the principal office clerical or administrative support position, the Task Group maintains that many of our positions now exceed the full intent of the definition in that they are performing more complex duties and responsibilities which do, in many instances, require a knowledge of the subject-matter dealt with in the research unit or office. In addition to the traditional secretarial functions, many ARS secretaries are performing duties which are "atypical" to the occupation. It is these "atypical" duties and responsibilities that the Task Group believes need to be fully evaluated and graded based on other appropriate classification standards. For example, if a secretary is heavily involved in coordinating preparation of the annual ARMPS package and in the maintenance, monitoring, and control of expenditures for the office, these duties should be evaluated by application of more appropriate standards such as the Accounting Technician Series, GS-0525, or the Budget Assistant Series, GS-0561.

Another standard which might be useful in appropriately recognizing the importance of these positions is the GS-0303, Miscellaneous Clerk and Assistant Series. This series definition reads:

> "This series includes positions the duties of which are to perform or supervise clerical, assistant, or technician work for which no other series is appropriate. The work requires knowledge of the procedures

and techniques involved in carrying out the work of an organization and involves application of procedures and practices within the framework of established guidelines."

It is recognized by the Task Group that the "typical" secretarial functions will need to be evaluated by application of the Secretary Series, GS-0318. However, in many instances, the percentage of time spent performing "typical" secretarial duties has decreased while performance of "atypical" assignments has increased. The Task Group feels, however, that the "atypical" assignments are frequently overlooked in the position classification process because they may not be fully defined in the position description, or because they don't fit the mold of "traditional" secretarial functions. In addition, most classifiers shy away from the use of the GS-0303 series because it is a "catch-all" series used when positions fit no where else.

Over the years, the use of the GS-0303 series has increased government-wide. This is evident by the fact that the NFC Payroll/Personnel Processing Manual, Official Position Titles and Codes, includes 614 different titles being used for positions covered by the GS-0303 series (Exhibit 6). Some examples of titles being used are: Administrative Management Assistant, Administrative Support Assistant, Administrative Support Coordinator, Office Management Assistant, Program Support Assistant, Program Management Assistant, and Office Manager (Administrative Services). This title code book is used by all current Federal agencies who receive payroll/personnel processing services from the National Finance Center.

Use of Organizational Titles

In addition to identifying more appropriate classification standards for use in evaluating secretarial positions, management can pursue the use of organizational working titles to more accurately reflect the work assigned to the positions. Organizational titles do not take the place of the official classification titles prescribed by given classification standards. The use of organizational titles should be pursued in instances where secretarial duties are grade controlling and where ARS wants to officially recognize that the secretarial position has a greater role in the organization.

Impact of the Person on the Job

Duties and responsibilities assigned to positions change over time. Many of the changes result from reorganizations, new or revised organizational responsibilities or program missions, and changes in technology. In some cases, however, incumbents bring unique capabilities, experience, or knowledge to a position which also can impact on the work performed. These unique traits also can have an impact on a position's classification.

Under normal circumstances, it is a position which is classified. However, there are situations where the relationship between the employee and the position can be recognized when the performance of the incumbent broadens the nature, or scope and effect of the work being performed. For example, exceptional ability of an employee may lead to the attraction of especially difficult work assignments, unusual freedom from supervision, special authority to speak for the supervisor, continuing contribution to organizational efficiency and effectiveness, recognition as an "expert" sought by peers, or similar considerations. Such changes affect the difficulty of work or the responsibility or authority given an employee and can be recognized in the classification process.

Feasibility of Establishing Career Ladders

Although the Task Group would like to see an established career ladder system for secretarial positions, they realize that many factors are involved in these determinations. For example, if the Secretary Series, GS-0318, is the appropriate standard for use in classifying a given position, it is recognized that establishing career ladders must be within reach of the grading system for the standard. In addition, the Task Group recognizes the different levels within which positions and incumbents function, and that establishment of career ladders based on standard position descriptions may not be reflective of the duties and responsibilities of "individual" positions.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In summary, the Task Group recognizes the past efforts made to address the secretarial grade level concerns which resulted in establishment of criteria for evaluating secretaries to research leaders and promotions for many deserving employees. The Task Group believes, however, that many secretaries are now performing outside the criteria which were established to evaluate these positions and responsibilities. The Task Group believes that secretaries, as well as managers and supervisors, must recognize secretaries' value to the Agency, and attitudes must be changed toward the secretarial occupation. Secretaries want to be an "integral" part of the team, and want to be respected. Part of this respect will come from within. A secretary must take responsibility for her/his own career, seeking out developmental and training assignments to increase the knowledge and skills brought to a position.

Although ARS employees in the secretarial field would like to see their positions upgraded, it is the Task Group's finding that not all positions are alike, and not all supervisors and employees operate alike. Therefore, the Task Group believes that positions occupied by secretaries within ARS must be evaluated **individually** and appropriate title, series, and grade levels assigned. Secretaries and their supervisors

must break from the tradition of looking next door and indicating that this position operates the same as the one next door. Although our positions have many similar characteristics, there are just as many distinctly different characteristics. One supervisor might delegate significant responsibility to a secretary to act on his/her behalf, while another supervisor down the hall might not delegate any responsibility. These distinct characteristics must be evaluated and graded appropriately.

The Task Group submits the following recommendations to ARS management for grading and titling secretarial positions:

- ARS management at the highest level must instruct its managers, supervisors, and the personnel community to fully evaluate the changing role of ARS secretarial support staff, and seek alternative methods in the classification process to recognize these new roles.

- Evaluate each secretarial position on its' individual merit and give full consideration for all work performed.

- Utilize TQM techniques and principles to aid in the enhancement of secretarial positions, and to create an environment where all employees play an integral part in the operation of an organization.

- Implement immediately the use of working titles for secretarial positions which have a significant role in management of the office. Suggested working titles include: Program Assistant, Program Management Assistant, Program Research Assistant, Executive Assistant, and Office Manager.

- Identify situations where an incumbent has a recognizable impact on a position and ensure that this impact is recognized in the classification process.

- Provide complete consideration at the time positions are established to their unique characteristics and, where appropriate, establish full performance levels reflective of work assigned to the positions.

SECRETARIAL COMPETENCIES

In an effort to assist managers, supervisors and employees in determining training needs and defining Knowledge, Skills and Abilities which should be essential when recruiting secretaries, the Task Group has defined competency levels for ARS secretarial positions. In doing so, the Task Group has identified several different competency levels:

- Entry level
- Intermediate level
- Journey level
- Advanced level

The knowledge, skills, and abilities identified are those that the Task Group believes are necessary for success in secretarial positions in ARS. The Task Group believes that these definitions of competency levels will be useful to both managers and supervisors and to secretaries as they prepare IDPs for training needs and purposes. In addition, the Task Group believes that using the definitions as a standard when recruiting for vacant secretarial positions should help in identifying suitable candidates.

On the following pages are charts which define different levels of secretarial competencies.

SECRETARIAL COMPETENCIES ENTRY LEVEL
Knowledge of English grammar, spelling, and punctuation.
Knowledge of general office procedures.
Skill in personal computer operation; knowledge of key software packages or advanced knowledge of one software package.
Skill in operating general office equipment such as copy machines, fax machines, personal computers, typewriters, etc.
Skill in taking and transcribing dictation (if appropriate).
Ability to proofread typed material and make necessary corrections.
Ability to read, interpret and apply regulatory material of a non-technical nature.

SECRETARIAL COMPETENCIES INTERMEDIATE LEVEL
Knowledge of English grammar, spelling, punctuation, sentence and paragraph structure to produce a clear, concise document.
Knowledge of general office policies and procedures on correspondence, timekeeping, travel, ordering supplies, personnel, CRIS work units, budget preparation, and tracking financial documents.
Skill in personal computer operation; advanced knowledge of key software packages.
Skill in operation of office equipment such as copy machines, fax machines, personal computers, typewriters, etc.
Skill in taking and transcribing dictation (if appropriate).
Skill in proofreading typed material, and making necessary corrections to text and format.
Skill in researching, interpreting and applying regulatory material and in making decisions.
Skill in writing and editing to produce non-technical correspondence.
Skill in basic problem-solving and decision-making techniques.
Ability to provide information on the status of projects, commitments, goals, and priorities of the supervisor and staff.
Ability to coordinate work with other offices.
Ability to advise and instruct clerical staff on new procedures and regulations, and on the use of office equipment.
Ability to plan and carry out work assignments independently.

SECRETARIAL COMPETENCIES JOURNEY LEVEL
Knowledge of English grammar, spelling, punctuation, sentence and paragraph structure and correct word usage to prepare draft or final reports of a non-technical nature.
Knowledge of office management policies and procedures dealing with correspondence control, files maintenance, timekeeping and travel regulations to instruct subordinate secretaries and to verify accuracy of material received and procedures used in subordinate offices.
Knowledge and skill to coordinate all administrative processes of the office, including advising secretaries and clerical staff in subordinate offices on new procedures and regulations.
Skill in personal computer operation; advanced knowledge of a broad range of software packages used by ARS.
Skill in advising and instructing clerical staff on new or proper procedures to use, information required for conferences and reports, and use of office equipment.
Skill in taking and transcribing dictation (if appropriate).
Skill in proofreading typed material, and making necessary corrections to text and format.
Skill in researching, interpreting, applying, and explaining ARS policies, directives, and regulatory material to others.
Skill in writing and editing to produce non-technical correspondence.
Skill in oral communications.
Skill in data analysis and report preparation with guidelines for completion outlined by supervisor.
Ability to plan and carry out work assignments independently and resolve problems in accordance with policies and office practices.
Ability to develop solutions and establish new procedures to simplify existing systems.
Ability to apply a large body of written or unwritten guidelines, policies, precedents, and practices which may not be directly applicable to the work.

SECRETARIAL COMPETENCIES ADVANCED LEVEL
Knowledge of English grammar, spelling, punctuation, sentence and paragraph structure and correct word usage to prepare draft or final reports of a non-technical nature.
Knowledge of office management policies and procedures dealing with correspondence control, files maintenance, timekeeping and travel regulations to instruct subordinate secretaries and to verify accuracy of material received and procedures used in subordinate offices.
Knowledge and skill to coordinate all administrative processes of the office, including advising secretaries and clerical staff in subordinate offices on new procedures and regulations.
Knowledge and skill to independently analyze data, summarize results and present a completed report in final form without supervisory assistance.
Skill in personal computer operation; advanced knowledge of a broad range of software packages used by ARS.
Skill in advising and instructing clerical staff on new or proper procedures to use, information required for conferences and reports, and use of office equipment.
Skill in taking and transcribing dictation (if appropriate).
Skill in proofreading typed material, and making necessary corrections to text and format.
Skill in researching, interpreting, applying, and explaining ARS policies, directives, and regulatory material to others.
Skill in writing and editing to produce non-technical correspondence.
Skill in oral communications.
Skill in data analysis and report preparation using experienced judgment and initiative to complete assignments.
Ability to plan and carry out work assignments independently and resolve problems in accordance with policies and office practices.
Ability to develop solutions and establish new procedures to simplify existing systems.
Ability to apply a large body of written or unwritten guidelines, policies, precedents, and practices which may not be completely applicable to the work.
Ability to plan and carry out work assignments independently, resolve problems in accordance with policies and office practices, with supervisor reviewing work accomplishments only on the basis of general effectiveness.

TRAINING

To ensure that ARS has highly qualified and competent secretaries, managers and supervisors must invest resources to provide training opportunities which will allow secretaries to update their knowledge and skill levels. As traditional roles change and ARS moves forward, training will be critical to the success of the Agency and will better equip secretaries with knowledge and skills which will help them advance into more responsible roles in the organization. The Task Group believes that it is essential that secretaries have good office and communication skills, a basic background in computer software and operation, the ability to prioritize work, and the ability to work independently.

The Task Group believes that a standard secretarial training program must be established for use across the board in ARS. Such a program will enable ARS secretaries to increase their skills and will make them more effective in their positions. Additional training and developmental assignments will enhance secretaries' role in the organization and will allow them the opportunity to assume more responsibility in their positions. As secretaries continue to assume greater administrative management responsibilities, supervisors are freed to conduct research which is vital to ARS missions.

The role of secretaries varies with the organization, and duties and responsibilities also can be significantly different from one organization to another. Secretaries, themselves, are very different. They come from different cultural backgrounds, have different types of experience, and have educational backgrounds ranging from high school to college graduates. Secretarial experience may range from none to over 30 years.

No profession has changed more during the past 10–15 years because of the technological revolution than the secretarial profession. Computers, computer programs, and various software applications are now essential to offices. Recent technological advances require continual upgrading of skills and computer literacy by secretaries. As technology has changed, secretaries have become more involved as members of management teams. Their responsibilities now frequently require technical and automation competence as well as skills in communication, human resources, and organization of work-flow. Many secretaries play a vital role in the management and coordination of office-supported operations. They also may be a vital part of a team by keeping up-to-date on all office activities to ensure that assignments are completed and deadlines are met, and may have the authority to make commitments for their supervisors as well as to speak for them in their absence.

Such changes in secretaries' roles have resulted in the need for their training in team building, assertiveness, ethics, leadership, communication, etc.

The guidelines outlined in this section attempt to set an Agency standard for training secretaries and should aid in establishing programs for current as well as prospective ARS employees. To have a successful secretarial training program, the Task Group believes that managers and supervisors also must be provided training to assist them in recognizing the potential of their employees and in identifying appropriate training and developmental assignments for their employees.

In the following sections, the Task Group presents various options for consideration and recommendations for the establishment of a formal secretarial training program.

INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (IDP)

ARS recognizes that people are its greatest asset. Much effort is placed on educating, training, and developing ARS employees. However, in many instances, training needs for ARS secretaries have been overlooked. It is, therefore, important to identify individual training and developmental needs in a systematic way to maintain a highly competent and motivated secretarial workforce.

ARS is responsible for providing the necessary training for its employees to ensure their success in the Agency. Just as there are essential training courses for many other professional positions, the need to ensure a fully trained secretarial staff within ARS is equally essential. Secretaries should be encouraged to take courses which assist them in developing assertiveness and confidence, as well as, enhance their performance and career development. In addition, training should be provided in ethics, team-building, and leadership.

An IDP is a realistic, written plan for identifying needs and documenting appropriate training and developmental activities to enhance an employee's job performance, and for identifying an employee's short and long-range career goals. An ideal IDP is based on complementing performance needs of an Agency and its employee. ARS Directive 440.1 (L.c.1.), states

> "All permanent ARS employees will have, as an integral part of the performance review and career development process, an IDP based on identified knowledge, skills, and abilities required to perform the duties of the position."

ARS employees are responsible for completing an IDP during their annual performance evaluation in coordination with, and for approval by their supervisor. A

supervisor is responsible for ensuring that funds are available for agreed upon developmental activities. An IDP is not binding (as a contract), but is used to focus on training needs and plans for systematic completion of desired training.

An IDP must be developed for each ARS employee. An IDP can change from year to year, and its primary purpose is to assist an employee in setting goals, assessing strengths, and charting how an employee can best contribute to an Agency's mission while experiencing personal growth. Hence, an IDP provides the mechanism by which an employee's personal goals can be considered within a framework of an Agency's program objectives. Since the process includes both a supervisor's and employee's perspective, establishing an IDP provides opportunities for exchange and feedback so established training goals are reasonable and achievable.

To assist managers and supervisors in assessing training needs and developing meaningful IDPs, the Task Group has recommended establishment of expected levels of competency for secretarial employees in ARS. It suggests that these competency levels be used in developing an IDP. In addition, it recommends that managers and supervisors draw on experiences and expertise of the Personnel Division, National Services Branch, Training Section, for assistance and guidance in defining formal classroom training requirements, and in identifying developmental assignments for IDPs.

ROLE OF THE PERSONNEL DIVISION AND MANAGEMENT

Managers and supervisors will work with the Personnel Division to provide secretaries with appropriate training and education to allow them to perform duties and responsibilities outlined in their positions as well as to perform other tasks in support of the office. Such training will allow secretaries an opportunity to gain knowledge, skills, and abilities needed for success and advancement potential into more responsible roles. Managers and supervisors will be responsible for promoting the development and use of common secretarial practices and standards, as well as more advanced knowledge, skills, and abilities, for use by ARS in accomplishing its mission.

The Personnel Division will be responsible for working with managers and supervisors to develop policies and procedures to ensure that training materials reflect ARS policy and promote consistency and quality. Program design must be flexible to meet the needs of employees; must be sensitive to human resource needs and budgetary constraints of managers; and must not limit management's authorities.

The Personnel Division will continue to assist managers and supervisors in becoming familiar with recruitment and career development processes, and develop structured training and development programs for secretaries.

ROLE OF THE SECRETARY

Secretaries will be responsible for reviewing their position descriptions and determining, in conjunction with their supervisor, what training needs exist. The Personnel Division will furnish training guidelines from which the secretary and supervisor can chart a personalized training program.

TRAINING METHODS

Providing a structured secretarial training program within ARS poses many challenges due to the large number and geographical dispersion of ARS locations. These issues should not, however, adversely impact the implementation of training programs that better equip employees to do their jobs. Many training methods/options are available for enhancing employee development.

Training programs for secretaries should be designed to use a variety of methods and alternatives that ensure high quality and efficiency, and use positive approaches. To provide all ARS locations with appropriate means to facilitate training, the Task Group recommends the following options:

- Correspondence courses
- Self-instruction (programmed instruction courses)
- Computer-based instruction
- Video-based instruction
- Packaged programs using a local facilitator
- Classroom training
- Desk aids
- Written instructions detailing standards for performing office functions
- On-the-job training (planned activities)
- Formalized mentor programs
- Seminars and workshops

Where appropriate, it is recommended that knowledgeable ARS secretaries or members of National/Organizational Secretarial Advisory Councils (as defined in this report) be used to provide training on internal policies and procedures. All training provided should adhere to both USDA and ARS policies and procedures, as well as with the United States Government Printing Office Style Manual. All new secretaries should be assigned to a mentor in a local office, an Area Office, or elsewhere in

ARS, to provide a mechanism by which a new employee may become fully familiar with the policies and procedures of the Agency.

OTHER DEVELOPMENTAL ASSIGNMENTS

Most training is viewed only as classroom-type education. However, many options are available for developing knowledge, skills, and abilities. In many cases, employees learn better by "doing" rather than just "listening." Other developmental assignments can be a good, if not a better, way of learning practically and efficiently. Budget and time constraints as well as job-specific needs may make it undesirable for training to be made up entirely of formal courses. Following are examples of other types of learning experiences:

- Attendance at staff meetings
- Serving as instructor/facilitator/conference leader
- On-the-job training
- Coaching by specialists in the Agency
- Job performance review and discussion
- Developmental counseling
- Project, committee, task force assignments
- Rotational assignments (or details)
- Job enrichment — increased responsibility
- Opportunities to make presentations
- Attendance at courses/conferences/lectures
- Teleconferencing
- Participation in community/civic activities
- Independent reading in specialized fields
- Studying manuals/bulletins/reports/etc.
- Home study courses
- Memberships in professional organizations/societies
- Lateral reassignments
- Job shadowing
- Self-development/self-study
- Attendance at formal training courses
- Computer assisted instruction
- Interactive video

Once an employee has identified goals and needed knowledge, skills, and abilities, one should be able to gain many knowledge, skills and abilities via alternative "developmental assignments." The training experience should be as broad as possible for maximum interest and learning.

Managers, supervisors, and employees may be surprised to learn that excellent training opportunities often are available in unexpected ways right in one's own Agency.

MENTORING PROGRAM

To fulfill ARS missions, every effort must be made to retain our workforce. The Task Group believes that establishing mentoring programs for secretaries within each Area will assist them in developing the knowledge and skills needed in their positions, enhance their job satisfaction, and encourage them to set goals for career enhancement.

Mentoring is an exchange of knowledge gained through personal experiences. It refers to a relationship between two individuals in which a more experienced person **(the Mentor)** assists a less experienced person **(the Mentee)**. It is designed to motivate employees and help create a climate conducive to promoting and achieving an increase in employee productivity. It will provide employees with material and knowledge which can assist them in establishing a career plan, identifying short and long-term goals, and constructing an IDP aimed at developing competencies that will prepare them for the future.

The mentoring experience is challenging and stimulating for the mentor because the mentee brings fresh ideas and enthusiasm to the relationship. The mentor and mentee may collaborate on innovative processes. Mentees benefit by having a person who can provide them with insights into how the organization works, its history, and culture. They also develop competence and confidence in important work-related skills through coaching and technical advice provided by their mentor. As a result of the assistance mentors provide to mentees, an organization gains a better trained and more committed workforce. Planned mentoring can include group meetings or team projects, where additional links will be formed. The message that mentoring conveys to the mentee is that SHE OR HE IS IMPORTANT TO THE ORGANIZATION; thus, it helps create loyalty and commitment to the organization.

The Task Group includes in this document a sample mentoring program for consideration by ARS management (Exhibit 7).

SECRETARIAL CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS

In our external fact-finding survey, several organizations were identified that have implemented certification programs for secretaries. These programs are designed to provide both educational and developmental assignment opportunities for employees in the secretarial field. The Task Group recognizes the benefit of

certification programs. Completion of a certification program gives an employee a sense of accomplishment, is an added credential, and is recognition of professional competence and expertise.

A secretarial certification program used by APHIS has several features that the Task Group believes are worthy of consideration by ARS. The APHIS program provides a structured training program for secretaries at three levels:

Level I - Expert
Level II - Master Performer
Level III - Master Performer Trainer

Employees participating in the program are provided with formal training on a variety of topics related to the secretarial/administrative fields, and receive certification upon completion of the requirements at each level. At Level II or III participants may be given a cash award along with certification. After completion of Level III requirements, participants are promoted to the next higher grade based on their certification as an Instructor for secretarial courses. The promotion follows the incumbent even with reassignment as long as the incumbent continues to conduct training at least 20 percent of the time. APHIS' goal is to have a cadre of employees who can serve as trainers for future certification programs. Due to the newness of the program, no participants have yet attained Level III certification, and training is currently conducted by contract trainers. One downfall cited by the APHIS Program Manager is a lack of internal personnel in the Personnel Division to run, monitor, and oversee the program. The Program Manager indicated that for a program such as this to function properly, appropriate resources and support must be provided.

In conducting its research, the Task Group received information from Professional Secretaries International (PSI), the world's leading non-profit secretarial organization. PSI's mission is to be acknowledged as the leader in enhancing individual and collective value, image, competence, and influence among office professionals. PSI is a professional organization with membership open to anyone who is employed as a secretary, has attained the Certified Professional Secretary rating, or is employed as a teacher of business education. PSI strives to effect increased productivity, career development, and quality of work life within an office environment by providing opportunities for educational, personal, and professional growth. PSI defines a secretary as an executive assistant who possesses a mastery of office skills, demonstrates the ability to assume responsibility without direct supervision, exercises initiative and judgment, and makes decisions within the scope of assigned authority. In addition to seminars, workshops, and other activities sponsored for members of PSI, the Institute for Certification, a department of PSI, administers the Certified Professional Secretary (CPS) Examination twice a year at locations across the U.S., and in the Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico.

Exhibit 8 provides course/examination information on the Certified Professional Secretary Examination administered by PSI.

The Task Group recommends that resources be provided to enable secretaries to pursue PSI certification. The Task Group believes that both the employee and ARS would benefit from the knowledge, skills, and abilities gained from the many educational opportunities provided by this organization. Cost for completion of the Certified Professional Secretary Examination is under $200.

ORIENTATION PLAN FOR SECRETARIAL STAFF

To ensure that new secretaries feel comfortable in their new positions, it is important that they receive a proper and informative orientation to the Agency. The orientation should provide an overview of ARS as a whole, as well as, an overview of the organization where the secretary will be working; address who key management officials are in ARS and where they are located; address key topics which are essential for satisfactory performance in their positions (e.g., telephone answering procedures, correspondence procedures, mail distribution, etc.); and provide guidance on safety procedures and precautions, ethics, outside employment, and EEO/CR requirements.

To assist managers and supervisors in providing appropriate orientation, the Task Group submits an Orientation Plan (Exhibit 9) which should be used in conjunction with current new employee orientation procedures. Use of this policy on an Agency-wide basis will provide a standard orientation program for all new ARS secretaries. Also, to assist managers and supervisors in conducting the orientation, the Task Group includes a Secretarial Orientation Plan Checklist (Exhibit 10) that should be completed within the first 30 days of a new secretary's employment. During the orientation period, training needs should be identified and documented on the IDP.

SUPERVISORY ASSISTANCE AND TRAINING

Training must also be made available to supervisors to assist them in their roles and responsibilities for assessing training and developmental needs for secretaries and other employees. For a successful working environment to exist, supervisors need to recognize the potential of their employees and acquire the knowledge to create a successful working relationship which best benefits ARS. An essential part of working on a successful team is the interaction between supervisor and employee, not only with secretaries but also with other employees. It is

recommended that each supervisor who works with a secretary receive training in team building. Such a course might contain the following objectives:

- Building The Office Team — Secretary and Manager
- Understanding Personal Assessments (e.g., Myers Briggs)
- Understanding Team Roles
- Developing Team and Organizational Skills
- Skills in Outlining Action Plans for Teams
- Ability to Identify Assertive, Aggressive, and Passive Behavior

CAREER ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

The ARS Career Enhancement Program (formerly referred to as Upward Mobility) was established to provide job opportunities for employees whose current assignments do not provide advancement opportunities beyond the GS-10 or an equivalent grade. It is ARS policy that this Program be used as an available staffing tool to provide realistic opportunities for undertrained and underutilized employees to attain their employment potential and provide ARS additional means for achieving greater use of its employees.

Use of the Career Enhancement Program to advertise vacancies provides opportunities for employees in "dead end" positions to have access to greater promotion potential and career advancement opportunities. Use of the Career Enhancement Program by ARS has been limited. ARS does have a formal AO Training Program under which individuals are selected and trained, and once requirements of the program are met, trainees compete for appropriate AO vacancies. One drawback for many individuals in the secretarial field is that this program requires the signing of a mobility agreement because it is an agency-wide program. Most ARS secretaries are female and have families in the geographical areas of their current employment. Signing a mobility agreement causes problems when potential assignments in another geographical area might not be conducive to a spouse finding a new position. Because of their limited mobility, many secretaries cannot apply for the AO Training Program.

The Task Group believes the AO Training program should continue for individuals who are available to relocate. It is recommended that ARS managers and supervisors use the Career Enhancement Program, where appropriate, to advertise positions within local geographical areas. For example, where a Biological Science Laboratory Technician vacancy occurs, management might advertise the position using the Career Enhancement Program to provide local employees who do not fully meet qualification requirements an opportunity to be considered. Educational qualifications will then be attained by completing structured reading assignments, on-the-job training, and formal educational course work.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In summary, the Task Group acknowledges past efforts by ARS to provide training and career development for its secretarial employees. The Task Group believes that ARS managers and supervisors must continually assess the training and developmental needs of its secretarial staff as well as its other staff, and as resources permit, provide training for these employees which will further develop their knowledge and skill levels, and help them assume a greater role in the organization. Providing for the continual development of its secretaries should ensure that ARS has a highly qualified and competent secretarial workforce.

The Task Group submits the following recommendations to ARS management for use in training secretaries:

- Establish a formal Secretarial Training Program within ARS. In doing so, ARS should rely on current secretaries or members of the National/Organizational Secretarial Advisory Councils (see page 67) to develop such a program and to conduct the training.

- Establish a Mentoring Program for secretaries.

- Provide the opportunity for secretaries to pursue certification through Professional Secretaries International.

- Ensure that all secretaries, as well as all other employees, have an IDP.

- Implement the defined orientation plan for secretaries.

- Provide training to managers, supervisors, and employees which will help them assess and identify training needs of their employees. In addition, managers, supervisors, and employees should be trained in team building techniques.

- Use the Career Enhancement Program, where appropriate, to advertise positions within the local geographical area which will provide advancement opportunities for employees.

AWARDS

It is ARS policy to (1) establish and administer an Incentive Awards Program which supports and enhances Agency and national goals and meets employee recognition needs, (2) grant recognition commensurate with the value of the contribution to the Government, and (3) motivate employees by recognizing and rewarding those who attain high levels of performance. The granting of awards is, however, not mandatory.

It is evident from data gathered that ARS employees, including secretaries, are recognized annually through the Incentive Awards Program. Below is a summary of the awards granted to secretaries (occupational series 0318) since 1988:

Type of Award	Year					
	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993*
Performance	88	107	113	172	179	176
Quality Step Increase	21	22	36	24	40	14
Special Act/Service	40	68	75	97	90	47
Spot	0	0	0	4	93	64
Suggestion	0	0	4	1	0	0
Totals	151	197	228	298	402	301

(*Partial year data)

In many situations, supervisors and managers have used the Incentive Awards Program as a mechanism to further compensate secretaries for the work they perform. In some instances, the use of the awards program to provide additional compensation stems from the perception that secretaries' pay is not adequate for the work they perform.

In addition to individual awards covered by the Incentive Awards Program, the Labor & Employee Relations Branch (LERB) manages the following special awards:

- ARS Research Scientist of the Year Awards Program
- ARS Hall of Fame Awards Program
- Technology Transfer Awards Program
- ARS Administrative Support Awards for Excellence

Special awards programs may be developed to meet specific needs of an organization and can serve as an aid to achieve ARS goals and objectives. Special awards programs can be designed to promote cost reduction and recognize scientific excellence, achievement of equal employment goals, occupational health and safety, energy conservation, and improved services to the public. These programs must be approved by the Director, Personnel Division, prior to implementation. Recognition can be monetary or nonmonetary.

To recognize the importance of secretarial positions to ARS, the Task Group recommends that ARS:

> Implement a National Secretary of the Year Award, as well as Organizational Secretary of the Year Awards.

In Exhibit 11, the Task Group provides suggested criteria for the establishment of a National Secretary of the Year Award.

To ensure consistency, Areas which already have award programs will need to review criteria for their program against criteria defined in this report. In situations where criteria for the current Area program is not consistent with the guidelines and criteria established in this report, appropriate modifications must be made to ensure consistency with the ARS Secretary of the Year Award.

ESTABLISHMENT OF SECRETARIAL ADVISORY COUNCILS

To involve secretaries in decisions which affect their role in ARS, the Task Group recommends that:

> A National Secretarial Advisory Council (NSAC) be established.

The Council could serve in an advisory capacity to the ARS Administrator (or designee) in an effort to address employment, career development and enhancement, training, mentoring, and award/recognition issues affecting secretaries throughout ARS. The Council could participate and provide insight into efforts to recruit, reward, and retain the highest quality secretarial staff, and assist in enhancing the status, professionalism, and career opportunities for the secretarial staff; thus ensuring that ARS has highly skilled secretaries to meet the demands of the Agency in the future. It is the Task Group's belief that establishment of a NSAC would instill a sense of pride and purpose in the secretarial occupation.

The Task Group recommends that the NSAC initially be comprised of members of the Secretarial Review Task Group. In addition, the Task Group recommends that Organizational Secretarial Advisory Councils (OSAC) be established in each ARS Area, Headquarters, National Program Staff, and Administrative Management, to serve in an advisory capacity to management on issues which impact secretaries within their organizations.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The goals and objectives of the National and Organizational Advisory Councils would include:

- Providing advice on matters related to the employment, development and advancement of secretaries, including activities such as participating in career days, job fairs, etc.

- Improving communication, awareness and skills among secretaries, and strengthening programs and opportunities for their career development.

- Improving recognition of the secretarial profession and promoting professionalism within the occupation.
- Assessing and providing recommendations and input to the development and implementation of policies and programs affecting secretaries.
- Addressing Agency-wide or system-wide problems for secretaries related to career advancement.
- Assisting in the development and presentation of required and appropriate training opportunities for secretaries.
- Participating in programs established to ensure consistency in awards and promotion opportunities for secretaries.

In Exhibit 12, the Task Group provides a suggested format and structure for both the National and Organizational Secretarial Advisory Councils.

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Mr. Frankie Gladden
Management Techniques

The Beltsville Area — for sharing their mentoring program

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EXHIBIT 1

LIST OF ORGANIZATIONS PARTICIPATING IN THE EXTERNAL SURVEY

Akins L-M Jeep, Inc.
Army Research Lab
Catholic University of America, Mechanical Engineering Dept.
Cope Centers, Inc., Subsidiary of Northwestern Corp.
Cushing and Neville
Department of Energy
Department of Commerce, NOAA
Department of the Interior, U.S. Fish & Wildlife, Patuxent Wildlife Research Center
Department of Justice
Deposit Guaranty National Bank
Environmental Protection Agency
Federal Trade Commission
Fleet Bank
Frederick County [Maryland] Government
Fresno County [California] Government
Garan Manufacturing
Harron Communications Corporation
J. T. Baker, Inc.
John Hancock Mutual Funds
Law Firm (Exact name not given)
Lawrence Livermore National Lab (University of California)
Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Mississippi State University
Mississippi Seed Improvement Association
NAPA Auto Parts
NASA, Goddard Space Flight Center
National Institutes of Health
National Fisheries Research Center
National Resources, Inc. (Environmental Company)
National Institute of Standards & Technology (NIST)
Naval Research Lab
Portsmouth Naval Shipyard
Prince George's County [Maryland] Government
Reliance Electric Company
Rohm and Haas Company
St. Paul/Seaboard

Thiokol Test Section Secretary (Defense Contractor)
U.S. Forest Service
University of Maryland Football Office
Utah State University:
    Personnel Office
    Secretary in AA-EEO Office
WEAVEXX Manufacturing
Wolverine World Wide, Inc.
WordPerfect Corporation
Yale University

EXHIBIT 2

SECRETARY GS-0318 GRADE LEVEL CHARTS

Secretary GS-0318 Grade Levels
USDA-Agricultural Research Service, June 1, 1993

Organization	Grade Levels							Totals
	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	
HQ[1]		9	9	4	2		1	25
NPS		2	30	4		1		37
AM		5	20	5	1			31
AAOs			3[2]	5				8
BA	1	17	40	8	1			67
MSA		11	21	2	1			35
MWA		15	39	3	1			58
NAA		4	17	3	1			25
NPA		24	23	6	1			54
PWA		23	25	4	1			53
SAA		4	34	3	1			42
SPA	5	12	17	1	1			36
Totals	6	126	278	48	11	1	1	471

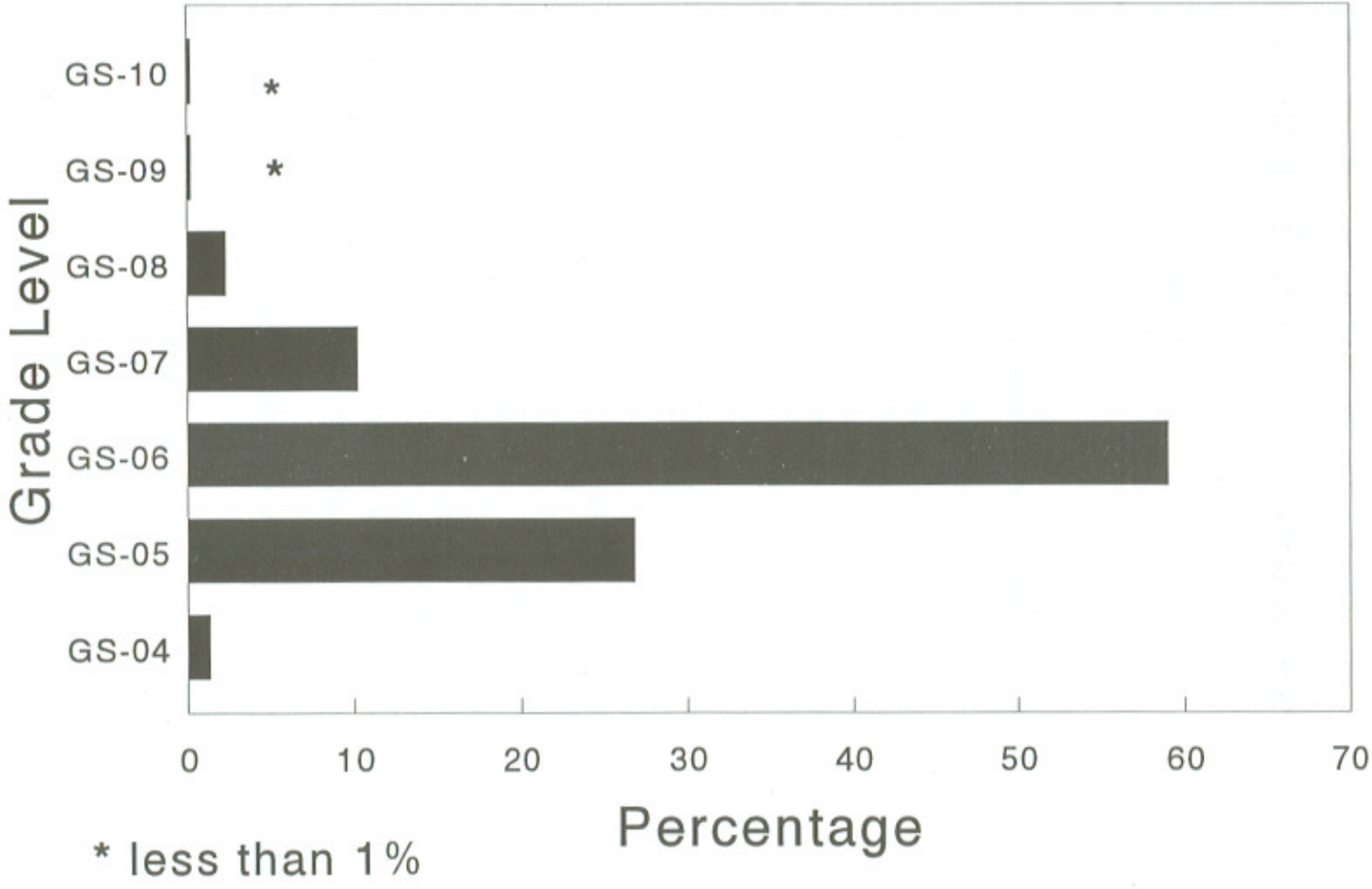
[1]Includes Information Staff, Budget and Program Management Staff, and Office of Cooperative Interactions.
[2]Includes Secretary to the Beltsville Area Administrative Officer.

Secretary GS-0318 Grade Levels, 1988

Grade Levels							Totals
04	05	06	07	08	09	10	
0	252	165	29	3	1	0	450

ARS Secretarial Positions

Grade Levels as of 1 June 1993



* less than 1%

EXHIBIT 3

THE WASHINGTON POST ARTICLE
May 9, 1993

Matching Secretaries' Pay With Skills May End an Era of 'Rug Ranking'

By Carol Kleiman
Chicago Tribune

Co-dependent no more.

That's one way to describe a slow change in how secretaries' salaries are being determined: Wages no longer are solely dependent on the rank of the manager the secretary works for.

Instead, smart employers are computing secretaries' salaries the way they do everyone else's, based on responsibilities, the work to be performed and skills required. Nonetheless, salaries of the nation's 3.6 million secretaries are worrisome: In 1991, their average income was only $19,361 a year.

And the Labor Department estimates there will be a turnover of 1.8 million secretarial jobs in this decade, because of the traditionally low wages and lack of career paths. At the same time, some 550,000 new jobs for secretaries will be created by 2005.

"Secretaries' jobs are changing," said N. Elizabeth Fried, president of N.E. Fried and Associates, a national compensation consulting firm based in Dublin, Ohio. "As mid-level managers are downsized, many of their assignments are given to experienced secretaries."

Fried said technological innovations such as E-mail, voice mail, database programs, electronic spreadsheets and word processing "have dramatically changed the secretary's job."

"As mid-level managers are downsized, many of their assignments are given to experienced secretaries."

— Elizabeth Fried

But not salary, though Fried said that "overall, secretaries are being compensated better."

The "rug-ranking method" is Fried's term for linking secretaries' salaries to those of the executives they report to. "The higher up the manager, the larger the office, the better the desk, the better the quality of the rug—and the better pay for the secretary," she said.

But, finally, companies are beginning to pay administrative staff on their work content. "The move toward more progressive, content-based practices began in 1988, jumped significantly in 1990 and was a continuing trend through 1992," Fried said.

In a survey she did of 478 members of the American Compensation Association, 29.1 percent used only content of work in 1988 to evaluate secretaries' salaries, 36.7 percent in 1990 and 41.6 percent in 1993. Overall, about 70 percent of employers used some form of job content to set wages for some or all their secretarial positions, she said.

BY JOHN MACDONALD FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

In the survey, salaries for secretaries ranged from $25,000 to $45,000, said Fried.

"Greater skill and responsibility deserve greater pay," said the compensation expert. "Every other job is treated that way, and secretaries should not be relegated to an antiquated, inequitable pay system.

"Companies can no longer afford to hire unskilled secretaries. They need secretaries with computer skills, who can be part of the company's management team. If you want that, you have to pay for it."

Professional Secretaries International, a network of 68,000 secretaries based in Kansas City, Mo., has long promoted "decoupling" the status of the manager and the salary of the secretary.

"What's happening is that secretaries are moving up in terms of responsibility because of technology, and companies only now are starting to pay more," said Susan Fenner, manager of education and professional development.

Fenner said the average member of her association is an older, experienced woman who earned $27,147 in 1992, compared with an average salary of $20,640 in 1982. Those who have earned the association's certified professional secretary rating averaged $1,500 more a year.

Members who work as secretaries in sales and marketing average $33,000; in the media, $29,943; temporary help, $29,600; manufacturing and utilities, $28,067.

Fenner said changes in the office have been dramatic. "The majority of managers have their own personal computers, and of those, 50 percent do their own letters and mailing," she said, citing a study by Minolta Camera Co.

Among the group's membership, one-third report to two or three bosses.

Fenner believes that the end of co-dependency, rug ranking and coupling in determining salaries is coming.

"I saw a classified ad asking for a secretary able to do financial work, forecasting, software packages, travel extensively, take shorthand and also have other good secretarial skills," said Fenner. "The salary was $70,000 a year. It was breathtaking."

Odd Jobs

Q I've been job hunting for months now, and I'm beginning to wonder if I'm not being hired for jobs I'm qualified for because I never fill out the line asking what salary I expect to get. Am I doing the wrong thing?

A There's no way to know if that's the reason you're not getting the job. But the salary question does put you in a lose-lose situation. If you put down what you think you rightfully should earn, it might be too much money and might eliminate you from consideration. If you put down too little, you might get the job—and a low salary. Try answering: "To be determined." With any luck, that will work.

Q My co-workers and I sit in front of computers all day inputting data. We're dropping like flies with repetitive stress injuries such as carpal tunnel syndrome. How can I keep up-to-date on information about carpal tunnel syndrome and what to do to prevent it?

A CTD News is an independent newsletter that covers the issue of repetitive stress injuries. "These injuries are not a plague but certainly an epidemic," said James Kinsella, CDT News associate editor. For more information, write CTD News, 10 Railroad Ave., P.O. Box 239, Haverford, Pa. 19041. Phone: 215-896-4902.

Q I've been self-employed for several years, but lately my business hasn't been doing well. I'm job hunting, and I wonder if being self-employed counts for anything or if it's a negative to prospective employers. Should I put it on my résumé?

A Yes, mention you've been self-employed and be proud of it. It shows you have initiative, energy, management skills, good work habits and are not afraid to take risks. Besides, these days, employers check out everything on a résumé—including sins of omission.

Q For the past three years, I've worked for a nonprofit agency. Now, I want to switch to the private sector. However, I feel that working for a nonprofit has tagged me as a low-quality candidate to those in the for-profit world. Is there anything I can do to assure employers I took a nonprofit job out of choice and not because I couldn't get a job anywhere else?

A The nonprofits are where the jobs are today, and you should not be stigmatized. But Laura Phelps, a Chicago employment consultant, agrees that "there is a definite hesitation on the part of corporations to value the experience of job seekers from the nonprofit sector." Phelps said that for-profit businesses look for people with organizing and management skills and nonprofits often look for caring people with a commitment to their organization's cause.

"To make the transition to for-profit, build on your contacts with corporate members of your board of directors," Phelps suggests. "They know your worth as a professional."

Q My company is in a "no movement" mode. We are top-heavy with people like me who are 35 to 50 years old and who still are below middle-management levels. Some of us, who used to be generalists, are being made into specialists. This is not going over too well because many of us feel the talents we've honed over 10 to 20 years of service are being wasted. Is this just the first step in corporate plans to buy out or phase out low-ranking, long-term employees?

A Most U.S. companies are in the "no movement mode" because of the glut of baby boomers who have nowhere to go. Coupled with the current policy of downsizing, cutting back and reducing staff wherever possible, this makes you and your colleagues vulnerable. I would look at the fact you're being retrained into a specialist as a positive thing: In a tight labor market, instead of laying you off, the company is trying to salvage your job. Forget, if you can, your years as a generalist and learn new skills at your company's expense. At the same time, you can look for a new job.

Q Is it true that occupational therapists rank No. 2 on the list of health care professionals most in demand in this decade?

A Yes, the demand for occupational therapists is second only to that for physical therapists. The U.S. Department of Labor expects 16,000 new jobs to open for occupational therapists in the next 10 years. For more information about the profession, write the American Occupational Therapy Association, 1383 Piccard Drive, Suite 301, Rockville, Md., 20850. Phone: 301-948-9626.

—Chicago Tribune

EXHIBIT 4

SECRETARY SERIES, GS-0318
SECTION TITLED "GRADING OF POSITIONS"

Excerpt from: SECRETARY SERIES GS-0318, pages 7–8

GRADING OF POSITIONS

Positions should be evaluated factor by factor using one or more of the comparable benchmarks or factor level descriptions, or both, for the Secretary Series. For some positions, one or more factors may fail to meet the lowest or exceed the highest level of that factor as described in this standard. Those factors should be evaluated through use of the primary standard for the factor evaluation system. More complete instructions for evaluating positions are contained in the Instructions for the Factor Evaluation System.

EVALUATE EACH POSITION INDIVIDUALLY. No position should be placed in a particular grade simply because, "all branch secretaries are that grade." Even positions in the same echelon of the same organization may have very different duties and responsibilities.

Since positions in this series are responsible for increasing the effectiveness of others by performing clerical and administrative support duties, their grades are obviously affected by the kind and level of those available supportive duties. This absolutely does not mean that the grade of the position will necessarily vary with the grade or echelon of the supervisor. It does mean that supervisors with more difficult and complex supportive work to delegate will be able to support higher grades for secretary positions than supervisors with less difficult and complex supportive work to delegate.

Many positions include typing and stenographic duties. These duties will not normally determine the grade. However, if it appears that typing or stenography may be the grade determining work, refer to the Typing and Stenographic Grade-Evaluation Guide.

EXHIBIT 5

FPM BULLETIN 990-90
TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT

Office of Personnel Management

FPM Bulletin 990-90

Federal Personnel Manual System
FPM Bulletin

Bulletin No. 990-90

Washington, DC 20415
November 18, 1992

SUBJECT: Total Quality Management

Heads of Departments and Independent Establishments:

1. Many managers across Government are implementing a management approach called Total Quality Management (TQM). These managers expect their personnel offices to help them tailor personnel policies to complement TQM.

2. Attached is guidance for personnel officials describing TQM and suggesting ways that agencies can adapt personnel practices within current policy and regulation.

/s/ Douglas A. Brook
Acting Director

Attachment

Inquiries: Office of Systems Innovation and Simplification, Personnel Systems and Oversight Group, (202) 606-2810
Code: 990 - General and Miscellaneous

Distribution: Basic FPM

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Attachment to FPM Bulletin 990-90

FPM BULLETIN ON TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT

1. Purpose

The purpose of this Bulletin is to prepare personnelists to work effectively with agency managers in planning and implementing Total Quality Management (TQM) initiatives. The guidance focuses on specific personnel functions, and suggests ways that current personnel rules and policies in these functional areas can be used to support rather than impede TQM. It suggests practices which may be useful across a broad spectrum of Federal agencies, including those beginning to implement TQM or even just at the stage of considering how to systematically improve organizational management.

Much can be done within the existing statutory and regulatory framework to support implementation of TQM, and managers need the assistance of their personnel experts to take full advantage of these flexibilities. Meanwhile, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) continues to review aspects of the existing legal framework which may not be as supportive of TQM as some might wish. This effort will help determine what changes might be appropriate and feasible to enhance Federal human resources management in a TQM environment.

This Bulletin complements publications of the Federal Quality Institute (FQI) which explain TQM in greater detail and offer guidance directly to managers. Copies of FQI publications can be obtained by writing to the Federal Quality Institute, P.O. Box 99, Washington, DC 20044-0099, or by calling 202-376-3747. The FQI also maintains a Federal Supply Schedule of TQM contractors that can be used, with limited competition, by Federal agencies to help them implement TQM. Information on this Schedule can be obtained by contacting FQI.

2. Total Quality Management

Total Quality Management is a comprehensive customer-focused management philosophy for improving the quality of an organization's products and services. It is a way of structuring relationships in agencies to achieve customer satisfaction by involving all employees in continuously improving the work processes of the organization. Many of the world's leading corporations attribute their success to the adoption of this philosophy.

TQM seeks to improve the quality of an organization's work and the quality of worklife of employees and managers. Internal and external customers are identified for each service or work product, their expectations about services or products determined, and variations in the work process controlled to enable the organization to meet or exceed customers' expectations consistently. There is always room to improve quality. Quality improvements can be incremental and continuous, or can come in significant spurts when breakthroughs are made in systems.

For maximum effectiveness, the principles of TQM should be tailored to each organization. In this way, the TQM approach to managing organizational performance will fit with the organization's mission, and improve its culture, environment, quality, and productivity.

In order to successfully implement TQM, it is vital that the effort have the active and visible support and leadership of the top management and union of that organization. Management in organizations undertaking TQM should be aware of the up-front investment of time, effort, and resources required to start and maintain a TQM effort. Activities would include assessing systematically the climate and culture within the organization and developing a strategic plan and an organizationally tailored strategy for TQM implementation. With effective implementation of TQM, an organization can recoup the costs of start-up many times over.

TQM creates a climate or culture in which employees may play new roles in the organization. It builds on key assumptions about employees and their roles in the organization. For example, they:

- Want to do good work and take pride in their work;
- Do not require close supervision and are capable of motivating their own best efforts through self-set goals if given constructive and timely feedback;
- Are effective problem-solvers, particularly in the team setting;
- Know best how to improve the way their particular jobs are done;
- Make their greatest contributions to an organization they trust, and perform optimally if they are involved in planning for its future, improving current systems and services, and ensuring the success of those systems and services (this requires that they be well-informed of developments affecting the organization and themselves, and that they understand how their work contributes to the whole); and
- Want opportunities to learn and apply new skills.

TQM uses specific techniques to achieve quality improvement:

Strategic planning enables the organization to take a longer view of the possibilities for the future and to decide on courses of action which will bring about positive outcomes.

Statistical process control (SPC) provides the tools that enable employees to track variation in work processes, to pinpoint problems, and to mark progress towards quality improvement goals. These tools include check sheets, flow charts, brainstorming, pareto charts, histograms, cause and effect diagrams, control charts, etc.

Teams enable work groups within and across organizations to diagnose problems, design better work processes, stimulate creative thinking, schedule work, and, ultimately, break through to previously unattained targets of excellence. Process-oriented work teams and work redesign may result in teams' developing degrees of autonomy, with teams collectively assuming many of the traditional supervisory functions.

Training is offered for all employees in quality improvement techniques as is developmental training to improve specific job skills. Training includes quality awareness, group dynamics, interpersonal communication skills, and problem-solving tools.

Recognition and rewards are provided that are congruent with the principles of TQM and emphasize team and organizational achievement. Recognition and rewards frequently are non-monetary in form and reinforce teamwork and organizational cooperation.

Quality assurance systems are developed to prevent problems and errors from occurring in the first place. The initial focus of quality assurance is at the front-end, and continues throughout the process. Continuous assessment of processes and of the organization's quality and productivity efforts is a hallmark of total quality. This contrasts with the more traditional quality control mode of inspecting for errors after products or services are developed.

3. Labor-Management Relations

TQM calls for a high degree of employee participation and involvement. About 60 percent of Federal employees are represented by an employee union elected to be the exclusive representative of all employees in the bargaining unit. Unions have consultation rights, rights to negotiate over changes in most working conditions,

and rights to negotiate over the impact and implementation of other changes in working conditions which might otherwise be non-negotiable. Union representatives also have a right to be represented at formal discussions with bargaining unit employees concerning general working conditions. Union support and active participation in the TQM approach can make an enormous difference in an organization's success with TQM and the amount of time that it may take to implement TQM.

a. Union Involvement.

Personnel officials should strongly encourage management to discuss with union officials as early as possible the introduction of TQM. Early and full involvement will build the trust necessary for cooperation and partnership, and the ultimate success of the TQM approach. A good beginning would include keeping union leadership well informed, inviting them to participate in training sessions along with agency management, and offering them full partnership with management in planning the implementation of TQM through membership on TQM steering committees and quality councils, and participation in strategic planning processes and policy-making bodies.

In some instances, management may find that initial efforts to consult with labor are questioned because the union representatives are unclear about the objectives of the TQM effort and believe that TQM might erode union solidarity. It is also possible that some unions will have no interest in participating with management but do not object to the introduction of TQM in the organization. In both cases, personnel officials should advise managers to keep the union informed of plans, activities, and progress in implementing TQM during all phases of the quality improvement effort, and every effort should be made to get and keep the union cooperatively and actively involved in quality improvement activities. Union participation in TQM will improve its chances for success.

If the union chooses not to cooperate in the development and implementation of TQM, management will have to consider whether a more limited implementation can be accomplished by working with only non-bargaining units and supervisory and management officials within the organization.

b. Negotiations.

The introduction and implementation of TQM may involve changes in conditions of employment. Agencies, therefore, should ensure that they meet bargaining obligations resulting from TQM-related activities and changes before such changes are implemented. To help ensure efficient and constructive bargaining, agencies are encouraged to provide unions with timely and complete information

about TQM and the specific changes in process, organization, procedures, etc. that are proposed.

c. Cooperation.

Ongoing union-management relationships with respect to TQM should be marked by a high degree of labor-management cooperation to help ensure TQM's successful implementation. TQM presents an opportunity for labor and management to develop cooperative relationships. Such a cooperative relationship can result in a more constructive approach to bargaining over TQM-related matters as well as cooperative relationships within the formal collective bargaining process.

Labor-management cooperation can take different forms ranging from informal, ad hoc, day-to-day communications to formal, joint participation in specific programs. Cooperation relies on common understandings and joint agreements on matters of mutual interest. OPM has published guidance on labor management cooperation:

> FPM Chapter 711, Subchapter 3: "Labor-Management Cooperation: Policy Guidance," October 24, 1988, encourages Federal agencies to engage in these initiatives and provides useful information on how to proceed.
>
> *Labor-Management Cooperation: A Guide to Resources*, contains information about publications, training, and agency-union experience with labor-management cooperation, as well as contacts at the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service and the Department of Labor who can answer questions and provide assistance.
>
> *Compendium of Labor-Management Cooperation Activities in the Federal Government* presents several dozen examples of cooperative activities, ranging from simple open-door policies to union participation in total quality management organizations.

Many organizations include union representation on the quality council or other steering groups established to guide the overall TQM implementation effort. While a troubled labor-management relationship can crush a TQM effort, a healthy and constructive relationship between labor and management can be very helpful to clarifying the purposes and intent of the TQM effort to employees.

4. Performance Management

TQM supports performance management through its emphasis on the following activities:

- Developing long-term plans and strategies;
- Emphasizing employee involvement in planning, goal-setting, and identifying measures;
- Providing frequent, sometimes daily, performance feedback;
- Making only meaningful distinctions among performance levels;
- Putting a premium on both internal and external customer measures and customer feedback;
- Improving continuously the processes by which work is performed; and
- Stressing group collaboration as opposed to individual competition.

Federal performance management systems requirements are flexible enough to permit implementation of TQM within the Federal structure. However, many of our existing performance appraisal systems do not reflect adequate use of these flexibilities. While much has been said about the incompatibility of performance appraisal and TQM, Federal agencies have been innovative in finding ways to incorporate TQM philosophy with required performance appraisal systems to be more supportive of a TQM environment. The following are major ways in which TQM and performance appraisal can complement each other:

Performance plans are most effective if developed against the backdrop of a long-term strategic plan, and if developed jointly by the employee, the team, and the manager. Performance plans can emphasize customer satisfaction, improvements to work processes, contributions to team efforts, intergroup cooperation, initiative, and receptivity to new approaches. For managers, performance can be defined and assessed to emphasize the extent to which they have applied TQM principles and techniques, and how well they have empowered and coached employees and encouraged continuous workflow systems improvement.

Progress reviews are most effective if done frequently and not limited to once or twice a year. Teams should be given feedback on a frequent, even daily, basis. Managers can then schedule

regular--biweekly, monthly, or quarterly--meetings with employees to review trends, discuss new ideas, and talk about ways to solve problems and enhance skills. Frequent feedback supports continuous improvement and employee involvement, eliminates surprises, and reduces the fear and anxiety associated with annual performance appraisal.

Appraisals and ratings can be used as summary documentation of the feedback that has been occurring continually throughout the performance period. Raters should be encouraged, where appropriate, to solicit input from a wide range of sources, including customers, other team members, and subordinates, to ensure that the most relevant information available is used to assess performance. Also, it is possible for a team to establish an appraisal process for the individual team members as well as for the team as a whole. The rating official can invite subordinates to assess their manager's effectiveness, and in some cases the manager may request such input for a self-assessment. A rating official must still sign the required performance documentation based upon the input and recommendations received from other sources.

TQM emphasizes the importance of measuring how well the system serves the customer. Techniques for measurement are focused on customer satisfaction, not just on traditional measures of the amount of activity or achievement of internal organizational production goals (e.g., 10 percent increase in production, number of reports produced, phone calls answered). Traditional measures provide objective data gathered over time on organizational performance, which is fed back to keep the organization informed of its progress in achieving continuous improvement. However, traditional measures may not measure the quality (value) of the effort in meeting or exceeding customer expectations, which is the goal of quality. As TQM becomes more widely implemented and agencies gain more experience in linking individual and organizational performance, OPM may need to consider further revisions to current FPM guidance and policy.

5. Employee Recognition

Organizations implementing TQM should review their incentive awards policy. TQM encourages the use of a variety of forms of recognition that can be used to celebrate achievements both large and small, such as incremental quality improvements, a team's exceeding a target for the first time, or an individual's suggesting a way to improve customer service. Managers should be encouraged to

consider the full range of informal to formal recognition available--ranging from a simple thank you to a mug or t-shirt, to more tangible monetary and nonmonetary incentive awards or time off. The key is to select a form of recognition that is meaningful to the group or individual.

Recognition systems should emphasize giving employees feedback on the merits of their ideas, suggestions, and achievements. It is important for management to respond to employee input in a timely manner regardless of whether the idea is adopted. It is also important that recognition--formal or informal, monetary or nonmonetary--be given in a timely manner. The motivational impact of recognition and awards relates directly to the promptness with which they are granted.

Many organizations implementing TQM will want to give greater emphasis to group awards. Some may wish to develop productivity gainsharing programs which can distribute awards across an organization. Gainsharing programs can distribute a percentage of savings that result from reduction in unit cost of production, or from individuals' exceeding production standards. FPM Letter 451-6, April 10, 1989, contains more specific guidance about productivity gainsharing programs.
In addition, organizations should revisit their employee suggestion programs. TQM puts great value on employees' contributing ideas on how to improve the work processes, especially those that involve their own jobs. Organizations may, therefore, want to make it easier for employees to submit suggestions, including suggestions outside the scope of their positions. Agencies should improve the timeliness and quality of the review process of those awards so that recognition is achieved in a way that encourages employees to participate in suggestion programs.

Managers should periodically assess new ideas which have been tested or adopted within the group, and grant individual or group recognition accordingly. Managers or work teams may want to solicit ideas about how to improve particular work processes, with management giving suggestion awards to those whose ideas are adopted, plus recognition for others who offered suggestions. Organizations should consider heightening the publicity about awards, especially suggestion awards. The personnel office can assist by publicizing awards through employee newsletters, bulletin boards, and other means. Often the publicity about a contribution or success is effective recognition by itself.

6. Training

A TQM training strategy should be developed as an integral element of an overall TQM implementation plan. TQM organizations will be receptive to an aggressive and strategic approach to managing training. They will view training as a key way to protect and enhance their investment in human resources. They may also be especially interested in systems which keep track of employee skills, which

monitor career development, and which enable organizations to do succession planning.

Training in a TQM context should be on a "just in time" basis, and TQM training will normally be given on an organizational basis, rather than to individuals. Policies should be developed for phasing in training in relation to TQM implementation generally, and for scheduling training as needed. Many organizations provide TQM training to their top managers initially, followed by appropriate training for mid-level managers, first-line supervisors, and employees in that order. Other organizations train whole work groups of employees and managers at the same time.

TQM organizations should provide skills training for their employees in such areas as team building, strategic planning, problem-solving tools, statistical and other quantitative analysis, creative thinking, interpersonal communications skills, group decision-making, etc. Supervisors' and managers' training will need to stress establishing a climate for quality improvement, team-building, interpersonal relations, and other skills which will prepare them to coach employees and facilitate teams in a TQM environment.

TQM organizations put a premium on employee development and need to apply a broad definition of job-relatedness. In addition to stressing training in TQM principles and techniques, they will want people to learn more about the functions of the organization as a whole, especially the functions that are immediately downstream or upstream in the employee's workflow. Employees will be encouraged to learn skills which are related, but not necessarily integral, to their current positions.

7. Position Classification and Position Management

Agencies implementing TQM will wish to use the position management system as a way to accomplish agency goals, achieve organizational efficiency and productivity, foster creativity and innovation, improve quality, and enrich the lives of employees. Because this often involves changing the organization of work, a TQM initiative can present some special challenges in the areas of position classification and position management.

For many organizations, the first step in relating classification and position management to TQM efforts lies in recognizing the extent to which agencies can control how they organize work--the content of positions and the managerial considerations involved in designing an effective position structure reflecting TQM principles. An agency is at liberty to structure work and design positions and organizations in whatever way it believes is best to achieve its mission in the most efficient and economical way.

Many of the positions designed through such an effort do not appear as examples in any standard. This does not mean such positions cannot be established, but it may mean that special care should be taken to compare the position with the criteria in standards to arrive at a classification determination. Therefore, as a practical matter, classifying novel or unusual positions created as part of a TQM initiative may take more time than usual. It is advisable to include everyone involved in the classification process very early in the planning and design stages for a new or modified organization.

At the same time, organizations can simplify their job classifications by developing generic position descriptions and by automating the creation and classification of position descriptions.

Typically, implementation of TQM results in the use of broader jobs, less hierarchy, and fewer controls and guidelines. TQM may result in more use of generalist positions. In some cases the generalist will encompass most of the sub-specialties of a family of jobs, and in extreme cases the position will include work which is normally classified in different job families. When management determines that the use of generalist positions will promote effectiveness, classifiers should expect to classify jobs accordingly, i.e., into more general occupational series such as GS-201, GS-301, GS-303, GS-401, and GS-601. Where titles are not prescribed in the standard, classifiers may want to make full use of titling flexibility including parenthetical titles to denote multiple specialties.

Most organizations, regardless of whether they are implementing TQM, are looking for ways to reduce unnecessary requirements which impede productivity. TQM organizations typically go further by "empowering" teams and individuals to apply judgement and to try changes in their work processes. In these instances, functions previously performed by the supervisor are divided among the members of the teams--"enlarging" their opportunity to do a greater variety of work involving more personal responsibility and authority. In some instances the increased scope, complexity, and responsibility of team positions could enhance the grades of the team member positions. The additional salary costs would be offset, at least to some extent, by the elimination of supervisory positions and by increased team productivity.

Empowering teams often means reducing the number of supervisory positions and broadening the supervisory span of control. Both "guidelines" and "supervision" are often more loosely defined in a TQM setting. Organizations may accomplish a reduction in the number of supervisory positions without triggering reclassification to lower grade by:

- Converting supervisory positions to non-supervisory "leader" or "facilitator" positions where appropriate.

- Converting vacant supervisory positions to non-supervisory "leader" positions.

- Designating senior non-supervisory staff as "leaders" in lieu of supervisory positions.

Classifiers should be as flexible as possible in titling such positions. If the standards do not permit use of "leader" or "facilitator" in the official position title, managers can still use them as organizational or working titles. "Leaders" in the TQM environment have a level of responsibility which is exercised through coaching rather than through directing. Similarly, "facilitators" exercise their responsibilities through planning and coordination.

In one-grade interval occupations, the Work Leader Grade Evaluation Guide may provide the flexibility for classifying some team positions one grade above the highest level of non-supervisory work led. As teams become more autonomous and assume more of the responsibilities previously held by managers, these new responsibilities may be given classification consideration to the extent permitted by applicable position classification standards.

8. Staffing

TQM's focus on treating managers as customers of the staffing process can lead that process to become more directly responsive to the real requirements of work to be accomplished. This approach gives the organization greater ability to shape its skill base to accomplish its overall strategic direction.

TQM can affect staffing in a number of more specific ways: (1) broader jobs lead to broader qualification requirement; (2) selecting officials can communicate about, and select for, those skills and abilities which the organization values as important to a successful TQM implementation; (3) creative methods of testing for interpersonal and other skills needed in a participative management setting may be used to select both employees and managers; (4) employees can participate in interviewing candidates and effectively recommending selection of new hires and promotions; (5) organizations may seek to improve the staffing process by seeking and incorporating input from applicants as another customer of the process; and (6) greater operating flexibilities can be made available through delegated and shared examining arrangements and delegated staffing authorities, supported by increasing automation.

9. Delegations of Personnel Authority

Generally, TQM organizations prefer to redelegate personnel authorities to the lowest practical level in the organization. In the case of self-managed teams, authorities may be delegated to a team leader, even if that designation is one that rotates among the team members on a regular basis. While delegations may be to a particular official, there is rarely any bar to that official's consulting with others in the work group or with customers before exercising the authority. There is virtually no personnel authority which, by OPM regulation, cannot be redelegated to a team leader.

10. Conclusion

Agencies and organizations within agencies embrace TQM in order to improve the quality of the services they deliver and the programs they administer. This undertaking is challenging and often difficult. The personnel official's challenge is to be flexible, creative, and innovative in order to meet the needs and expectations of his or her customers in the new organizational environment. There is much that can be done within existing personnel policies to support organizations implementing TQM. If particular policies, guidance, or procedures appear to be in the way of an effective implementation of TQM in a given agency, and the personnel organization does not see any way for it to interpret and apply the existing regulations to solve the organizational problems identified, the issue should be raised with the Office of Personnel Management and the Federal Quality Institute so that they may consider and propose other actions to alleviate the problem.

EXHIBIT 6

NFC PAYROLL/PERSONNEL PROCESSING MANUAL OFFICIAL POSITION TITLES AND CODES

GS-0303 MISCELLANEOUS CLERK AND ASSISTANT SERIES

Code	Series and Authorized Titles	Abbreviation
0001	Access Clerk	ACCESS CLK
0002	Acquisitions Assistant	ACQ ASST
0003	Administrative Aid	ADMV AID
0004	Administrative Appeal Clerk	ADMV APPEAL CLK
0005	Administrative Clerk	ADMV CLK
0006	Administrative Liaison	ADMV LIASN
0007	Administrative Management Assistant	ADMV MGMT ASST
0008	Administrative Management Clerk	ADMV MGMT CLK
0009	Administrative Office Assistant	ADMV OFF ASST
0010	Administrative Services Clerk	ADMV SRVCS CLK
0011	Administrative Support Assistant	ADMV SUPRT ASST
0012	Administrative Support Technician	ADMV SUPRT TECHNCN
0013	Administrative Technical Assistant	ADMV TECHNCL ASST
0014	Administrative Technician	ADMV TECHNCN
0015	Administrative Trainee	ADMV TR
0016	ADP Staff Assistant	ADP STAFF ASST
0017	Agricultural Information Assistant	AGRL INF ASST
0018	Agricultural Marketing Assistant	AGRL MKTG ASST
0019	Air Unit Clerk	AIR UNIT CLK
0020	Appeals Review Clerk	APPEALS REVW CLK
0021	Applications Clerk	APPLICS CLK
0022	Assistant Machine and Mailroom Operations Supervisor	ASST MACH & MAIL RM OPERS SUPVR
0023	Authorization Clerk	AUTHZTN CLK
0024	Administrative Support Coordinator	ADMV SUPRT COORD
0025	Biological Clerk	BIOLCL CLK
0026	Building Services Clerk	BLDG SRVCS CLK
0027	Business Management Assistant	BUS MGMT ASST
0028	Business Management Clerk	BUS MGMT CLK

Code	Series and Authorized Titles	Abbreviation
0071	Economic Research Assistant	ECON RES ASST
0072	Editorial Processing Operator	EDITL PROCSNG OPERTR
0073	Editorial Review Clerk	EDITL REVW CLK
0074	Employee Compensation Clerk	EMP CMPNSN CLK
0075	Enrollee Clerk	ENROLLEE CLK
0076	Environmental Coordinator Assistant	ENVRNMTL COORD ASST
0077	Equipment Management Clerk	EQUIP MGMT CLK
0078	Clerk Interpreter	CLK INTRPRTR
0079	Event Management Clerk	EVENT MGMT CLK
0080	Executive Secretary	EXEC SECY
0081	Export Document Examiner	EXPORT DOCMT EXAMNR
0082	Export Processing Assistant	EXPORT PROCSNG ASST
0083	Extension Program Assistant	EXT PROG ASST
0084	FOSDIC Forms Technician	FOSDIC FORMS TECHNCN
0085	Facilities Business Management Assistant	FACIL BUS MGMT ASST
0086	Facilities Management Clerk	FACIL MGMT CLK
0087	Facilities Reservations Assistant	FACIL RESERVATIONS ASST
0088	Field Clerk	FLD CLK
0089	Field Compilation Clerk	FLD COMPIL CLK
0090	Field Operations Supervisor	FLD OPERS SUPVR
0091	Field Representative	FLD REPR
0092	Field Research Support Assistant	FLD RES SUPRT ASST
0093	Field Supervisor	FLD SUPVR
0094	Fire Clerk	FIRE CLK
0095	Fire Management Clerk	FIRE MGMT CLK
0096	Fire Operations Clerk	FIRE OPERS CLK
0097	Fire Prevention Information Assistant	FIRE PREV INF ASST
0098	Foreign Documents Clerk	FRGN DOCMTS CLK
0099	Foreign Operations Assistant	FRGN OPERS ASST
0100	Foreign Travel Coordinator	FRGN TRAV COORD
0101	Forms Clerk	FORMS CLK
0102	Freedom of Information Assistant	FREEDOM OF INF ASST
0103	Communications Assistant	COMMUN ASST
0104	General Services Aid	GEN SRVCS AID
0105	General Services Assistant	GEN SRVCS ASST
0106	General Support Clerk	GEN SUPRT CLK
0107	Geographic Clerk	GEOGRAPHIC CLK
0108	Geographic Clerk (Digitizing)	GEOGRAPHIC CLK (DIGITIZING)
0109	Geographic Technician	GEOGRAPHIC TECHNCN
0110	Geography Clerk	GEOG CLK

Code	Series and Authorized Titles	Abbreviation
0111	Geography Technician	GEOG TECHNCN
0112	Government Patent Rights Clerk	GOV PAT RIGHTS CLK
0113	Grain Market News Assistant	GRAIN MKT NEWS ASST
0114	Graphics Assistant	GRAP ASST
0115	Hazardous Materials Support Assistant	HAZARDOUS MTRLS SUPRT
0116	Hearing Clerk	HRG CLK
0117	Historical Assistant	HISTRCL ASST
0118	Historical Clerk	HISTRCL CLK
0119	Human Resource Assistant	HUMAN RESOURCE ASST
0120	Information and Training Clerk	INF & TRNG CLK
0121	Information Assistant	INF ASST
0122	Information Center Assistant	INF CENTR ASST
0123	Information Clerk	INF CLK
0124	Information Services Supervisor	INF SRVCS SUPVR
0125	Initial Reviewing Clerk	INITIAL REVIEWING CLK
0126	Initial Reviewing and Serializing Supervisor	INITIAL REVIEWING & SERIALIZING SUPVR
0127	Intelligence Reporting Assistant	INTELL REPTG ASST
0128	International Relations Assistant	INTNATL REL ASST
0129	International Trade Affairs Assistant	INTNATL TRADE AFF ASST
0130	International Travel and Services	INTNATL TRAV & SRVCS ASST
0131	Interviewer	INTRVWR
0132	Contraband Clerk	CONTRABAND CLK
0133	Inventory Management Assistant	INVENT MGMT ASST
0134	Investigations Assistant	INVEST ASST
0135	Investigations Clerk	INVEST CLK
0136	Investigative Assistant	INVESTIGATIVE ASST
0137	Label Review Assistant	LABEL REVW ASST
0138	Labels Clerk	LABELS CLK
0139	Land Management Assistant	LAND MGMT ASST
0140	Land Management Planning Assistant	LAND MGMT PLNG ASST
0141	Land Use Planning Assistant	LAND USE PLNG ASST
0142	Lands Clerk	LANDS CLK
0143	Legal Clerk	LEG CLK
0144	Legal Reference and Notices Clerk	LEG REFER & NOTICES CLK
0145	Legislative Affairs Clerk	LEGIS AFF CLK
0146	Legislative Assistant	LEGIS ASST
0147	Legislative Clerk	LEGIS CLK
0148	Legislative Reporting Assistant	LEGIS REPTG ASST
0149	Legislative Review and Records Clerk	LEGIS REVW & REC CLK
0150	Licensing Clerk	LICSNG CLK

Code	Series and Authorized Titles	Abbreviation
0151	List Sampling Frame Coordinator	LIST SAMPLING FRAME COORD
0152	Logistical Coordinator	LOGISTICAL COORD
0153	Logistics Clerk	LOGISTICS CLK
0154	Machine and Mailroom Operations Supervisor	MACH & MAIL RM OPERS SUPVR
0155	Mail and Supply Clerk	MAIL & SUPP CLK
0156	Mail List Assistant	MAIL LIST ASST
0157	Mail List Clerk	MAIL LIST CLK
0158	Maintenance Clerk	MTNCE CLK
0159	Management Information Assistant	MGMT INF ASST
0160	Management Services Assistant	MGMT SRVCS ASST
0161	Management Support Assistant	MGMT SUPRT ASST
0162	Management Support Supervisor	MGMT SUPRT SUPVR
0163	Mapping Clerk	MAPNG CLK
0164	Mapping Supervisor	MAPNG SUPVR
0165	Market News Assistant	MKT NEWS ASST
0166	Market Reporting Assistant	MKT REPTG ASST
0167	Market Reporting Clerk	MKT REPTG CLK
0168	Message Clerk	MESSAGE CLK
0169	Microfiche Control Clerk	MICROFICHE CONT CLK
0170	Microfilm Control Assistant	MCRFLM CONT ASST
0171	Microform Support Technician	MICROFORM SUPRT TECHNCN
0172	Minerals Clerk	MNRLS CLK
0173	Minerals Program Assistant	MNRLS PROG ASST
0174	Miscellaneous Assistant	MISC ASST
0175	Miscellaneous Clerk	MISC CLK
0176	Nursery Clerk	NRSRY CLK
0177	Ocean Services Program Assistant	OCEAN SRVCS PROG ASST
0178	Office Assistant	OFF ASST
0179	Office Automation Assistant	OFF AUTOMATION ASST
0180	Office Clerk	OFF CLK
0181	Office Management Assistant	OFF MGMT ASST
0182	Counterfeit Clerk	COUNTERFEIT CLK
0183	Office Services Assistant	OFF SRVCS ASST
0184	Office Services Clerk	OFF SRVCS CLK
0185	Office Services Supervisor	OFF SRVCS SUPVR
0186	Office Systems Technician	OFF SYS TECHNCN
0187	Operations Assistant	OPERS ASST
0188	Operations Clerk	OPERS CLK
0189	Operations Support Assistant	OPERS SUPRT ASST
0190	Operations Support Clerk	OPERS SUPRT CLK

Code	Series and Authorized Titles	Abbreviation
0191	Order Control Assistant	ORDER CONT ASST
0192	Order Control Clerk	ORDER CONT CLK
0193	Parking Assistant	PARKING ASST
0194	Patent Applications Assistant	PAT APPLICS ASST
0195	Patent Assistant	PAT ASST
0196	Patent Clerk	PAT CLK
0197	Patent Maintenance Assistant	PAT MTNCE ASST
0198	Patent Maintenance Clerk	PAT MTNCE CLK
0199	Patent Search Assistant	PAT SEARCH ASST
0200	Patent Security Clerk	PAT SECUR CLK
0201	Payment Document Control Clerk	PYMT DOCMT CONT CLK
0202	Payment Document Control Supervisor	PYMT DOCMT CONT SUPVR
0203	Permits Assistant	PERMITS ASST
0204	Permits Technician	PERMITS TECHNCN
0205	Petitions Clerk	PETITIONS CLK
0206	Phototypesetting Technician	PHOTOTYPESETTING TECHNCN
0207	Planning Assistant	PLNG ASST
0208	Planning Clerk	PLNG CLK
0209	Plans Inventory Resource Clerk	PLANS INVENT RESOURCE CLK
0210	Prelist Office Supervisor	PRELIST OFF SUPVR
0211	Printing and Reproduction Assistant	PRTG & REPROD ASST
0212	Procedures Writer	PROCDR WRI
0213	Processing Clerk	PROCSNG CLK
0214	Processing Control Assistant	PROCSNG CONT ASST
0215	Processing Control Coordinator	PROCSNG CONT COORD
0216	Product Management Assistant	PROD MGMT ASST
0217	Production Control Assistant	PRODN CONT ASST
0218	Production Control Clerk	PRODN CONT CLK
0219	Program Analysis Assistant	PROG ANALS ASST
0220	Program Assistant	PROG ASST
0221	Program Clerk	PROG CLK
0222	Document Control Clerk	DOCMT CONT CLK
0223	Program Coordinator	PROG COORD
0224	Program Maintenance Clerk	PROG MTNCE CLK
0225	Evidence Control Clerk	EVIDNC CONT CLK
0226	Program Management Assistant	PROG MGMT ASST
0227	Program Records Clerk	PROG REC CLK
0228	Program Services Assistant	PROG SRVCS ASST
0229	Program Services Clerk	PROG SRVCS CLK
0230	Program Support Assistant	PROG SUPRT ASST

Code	Series and Authorized Titles	Abbreviation
0231	Program Technician	PROG TECHNCN
0232	Program Training Assistant	PROG TRNG ASST
0233	Project Clerk	PROJ CLK
0234	Promotion Assistant	PROM ASST
0235	Promotion Clerk	PROM CLK
0236	Public Affairs Assistant	PUBLIC AFF ASST
0237	Public Affairs Clerk	PUBLIC AFF CLK
0238	Publications Assistant	PUBLICTN ASST
0239	Publications Clerk	PUBLICTN CLK
0240	Publications Maintenance Clerk	PUBLICTN MTNCE CLK
0241	Quality Control Assistant	QUAL CONT ASST
0242	Quality Control Clerk	QUAL CONT CLK
0243	Quality Control Enumerator	QUAL CONT ENUM
0244	Quality Inspection Clerk	QUAL INSP CLK
0245	Quality Inspection Specialist	QUAL INSP SPECLST
0246	Receipt and Review Supervisor	RECEIPT & REVW SUPVR
0247	Recording Clerk	RECORDING CLK
0248	Records and Communications Clerk	REC & COMMUN CLK
0249	Records Assistant	REC ASST
0250	Records Technician	REC TECHNCN
0251	Recreation Information Assistant	RECR INF ASST
0252	Recreation Information Clerk	RECR INF CLK
0253	Reference Clerk	REFER CLK
0254	Reference Technician	REFER TECHNCN
0255	Reinterviewer	REINTERVIEWER
0256	Reports and Data Control Assistant	REPTS & DATA CONT ASST
0257	Reports Assistant	REPTS ASST
0258	Reports Clerk	REPTS CLK
0259	Reports Coordinator	REPTS COORD
0260	Reports Processing Assistant	REPTS PROCSNG ASST
0261	Reports Processing Specialist	REPTS PROCSNG SPECLST
0262	Reproduction Services and Distributor Assistant	REPRODUCTION SRVCS & DISTRIBUTOR ASST
0263	Research Assistant	RES ASST
0264	Resource Assistant	RESOURCE ASST
0265	Resource Assistant (Timber)	RESOURCE ASST (TIMB)
0266	Resource Clerk	RESOURCE CLK
0267	Resource Information Clerk	RESOURCE INF CLK
0268	Resource Services Clerk	RESOURCE SRVCS CLK
0269	Resource Technician	RESOURCE TECHNCN
0270	Review Clerk	REVW CLK
0271	Sampling Clerk	SAMPLING CLK

Code	Series and Authorized Titles	Abbreviation
0272	Scanner Data Clerk	SCANNER DATA CLK
0273	Scheduling and Reports Clerk	SCHDLNG & REPTS CLK
0274	Scheduling Coordinator	SCHDLNG COORD
0275	Searching Clerk	SEARCHING CLK
0276	Searching Supervisor	SEARCHING SUPVR
0277	Security Aid	SECUR AID
0278	Security and Safety Assistant	SECUR & SAFETY ASST
0279	Security Assistant	SECUR ASST
0280	Security Clerk	SECUR CLK
0281	Security Technician	SECUR TECHNCN
0282	Senior Documentation Projects Assistant	SR DOCMTN PROJS ASST
0283	Senior Executive Secretary	SR EXEC SECY
0284	Senior Interviewer	SR INTRVWR
0285	Serializer	SERIALIZER
0286	Serializer Clerk	SERIALIZER CLK
0287	Shop Assistant	SHOP ASST
0288	Shop Clerk	SHOP CLK
0289	Sign and Posters Assistant	SIGN & POSTERS ASST
0290	Soil Series Clerk	SOIL SERIES CLK
0291	Space and Property Management Assistant	SPACE & PROP MGMT ASST
0292	Space Management Assistant	SPACE MGMT ASST
0293	Special Projects Assistant	SPEC PROJS ASST
0294	Special Projects Clerk	SPEC PROJS CLK
0295	Special Survey Technician	SPEC SURVEY TECHNCN
0296	Staff Aid	STAFF AID
0297	Staff Assistant	STAFF ASST
0298	Staff Assistant to the Administrator	STAFF ASST TO THE ADMR
0299	Staff Clerk	STAFF CLK
0300	Stamp Clerk	STAMP CLK
0301	Standards Committee Assistant	STDS COMMTE ASST
0302	State Loan Clerk	STATE LOAN CLK
0303	State Office Clerk	STATE OFF CLK
0304	State Program Clerk	STATE PROG CLK
0305	Statistical Information Assistant	STATCL INF ASST
0306	Statistical Information Clerk	STATCL INF CLK
0307	Subscription Clerk	SUBSCRIPTION CLK
0308	Supervisor, Correspondence Control Section	SUPVR CORRES CONT SEC
0309	Support Assistant	SUPRT ASST
0310	Support Services Assistant	SUPRT SRVCS ASST
0311	Support Services Clerk	SUPRT SRVCS CLK

Code	Series and Authorized Titles	Abbreviation
0312	Evidence Control Technician	EVIDNC CONT TECHNCN
0313	Survey Assistant	SURVEY ASST
0314	Survey Clerk	SURVEY CLK
0315	Survey Coordinator	SURVEY COORD
0316	Survey Technician	SURVEY TECHNCN
0317	Tape Controller	TAPE CNTRLR
0318	Tape Librarian	TAPE LIBRN
0319	Tape Management Technician	TAPE MGMT TECHNCN
0320	Field Office Clerk	FLD OFF CLK
0321	Technical Assistant	TECHNCL ASST
0322	Technical Assistant (Soils)	TECHNCL ASST (SOILS)
0323	Technical Clerk	TECHNCL CLK
0324	Technical Communications Assistant	TECHNCL COMMUN ASST
0325	Technical Information Clerk	TECHNCL INF CLK
0326	Telephone Clerk	TELEPH CLK
0327	Telephone Interviewer	TELEPH INTRVWR
0328	Testing and Selection Clerk	TSTNG & SLCTN CLK
0329	Timber Clerk	TIMB CLK
0330	Timber Resource Assistant	TIMB RESOURCE ASST
0331	Timber Sales Assistant	TIMB SALES ASST
0332	Total Resource Inventory Assistant	TOTAL RESOURCE INVENT ASST
0333	Trade Information Assistant	TRADE INF ASST
0334	Trade Information Clerk	TRADE INF CLK
0335	Trademark and Affidavit Clerk	TRADEMARK & AFFIDAVIT CLK
0337	Trademark Assistant	TRADEMARK ASST
0338	Trademark Classification Assistant	TRADEMARK CLASSIFN ASST
0339	Trademark Clerk	TRADEMARK CLK
0340	Trademark Program Assistant	TRADEMARK PROG ASST
0341	Trademark Search Assistant	TRADEMARK SEARCH ASST
0342	Trademark Services Assistant	TRADEMARK SRVCS ASST
0343	Traffic and File Clerk	TRAFF & FILE CLK
0344	Traffic Clerk	TRAFF CLK
0345	Training and Common Clerk	TRNG & COMMON CLK
0346	Training Clerk	TRNG CLK
0347	Training Program Assistant	TRNG PROG ASST
0348	Training Supply Assistant	TRNG SUPP ASST
0349	Training Support Clerk	TRNG SUPRT CLK
0350	Travel Information Assistant	TRAV INF ASST
0351	Tree Improvement Resource Clerk	TREE IMPRVMT RESOURCE CLK

Code	Series and Authorized Titles	Abbreviation
0352	Underwriting Clerk	UNDERWRITING CLK
0353	Unit Clerk	UNIT CLK
0354	Visitor Information Clerk	VSTR INF CLK
0355	Visitor Information Services Clerk	VSTR INF SRVCS CLK
0356	Warehouse Examining Assistant	WHSE EXAMNG ASST
0357	Word Processing Operator	WORD PROCSNG OPERTR
0358	Worker Trainee	WRKR TR
0359	Work Order Control Clerk	WORK ORDER CONT CLK
0360	Zone Clerk	ZONE CLK
0361	Data Management Technician Record	DATA MGMT TECHNCN REC
0362	Personal Property Technician	PERSNAL PROP TECHNCN
0363	Space and Property Technician	SPACE & PROP TECHNCN
0364	Customer Service Representative	CUSTMR SRVC REPR
0365	Enrollment Clerk	ENROLLMENT CLK
0366	Membership Assistant	MEMBRSH ASST
0367	Membership Clerk	MEMBRSH CLK
0368	Security Escort	SECUR ESCORT
0369	Scientific Data Clerk	SCNTFC DATA CLK
0370	Scientific Data Technician	SCNTFC DATA TECHNCN
0371	Personnel Staffing Assistant	PERS STAFF ASST
0372	Management Support Technician	MGMT SUPRT TECHNCN
0373	Appeals Assistant	APPEALS ASST
0374	Administrative Programs Assistant	ADMV PROGS ASST
0375	Budget and Travel Assistant	BUDG & TRAV ASST
0376	Congressional Research Technician	CONGRSNL RES TECHNCN
0377	Congressional Correspondence Technician	CONGRSNL CORRS TECHNCN
0378	District Supervisor	DIST SUPVR
0379	Electric Publishing Technician	ELEC PUBLISHING TECHNCN
0380	Information Processing Assistant	INF PROCSNG ASST
0381	Information Processing Clerk	INF PROCSNG CLK
0382	Information Control Technician	INF CONT TECHNCN
0383	Internal Programs Assistant	INTRNL PROG ASST
0384	Legal Office Assistant	LEG OFF ASST
0385	Legal Reports Assistant	LEG REPTS ASST
0386	Management Information Technician	MGMT INF TECHNCN
0387	Operator Assistant	OPER ASST
0388	Program Assistant	PROG ASST
0389	Report Technician	REPT CPNT TECHNCN
0390	Staff Resource Assistant	STAFF RESOURCE ASST
0391	Support Systems Supervisor	SUPRT SYS SUPVR
0392	Tax Administrative Assistant	TAX ADMV ASST

Code	Series and Authorized Titles	Abbreviation
0393	Closing Clerk	CLOSING CLK
0394	Realty Clerk	RLTY CLK
0395	Wage Requirements Assistant	WAGE REQ ASST
0396	Wage Requirements Clerk	WAGE REQ CLK
0397	Program Aid	PROG AID
0398	Receiving Clerk	RECEIVING CLK
0399	Valuation Clerk	VALUATION CLK
0400	Records Clerk	REC CLK
0401	Assignment Clerk	ASSGNMNT CLK
0402	Collections Asst	COLLS ASST
0403	Collections Clerk	COLLS CLK
0404	Commitment Clerk	COMMITMENT CLK
0406	Loan Management Technician	LOAN MGMT TECHNCN
0407	Loan Clerk	LOAN CLERK
0408	Loan Management Clerk	LOAN MGMT CLK
0409	Mortgage Servicing Clerk	MORTGAGE SRVCNG CLK
0410	Management Information Technician	MGMT INF TECHNCN
0420	Occupancy Assistant	OCCUPANCY ASST
0421	Title I Clerk	TITLE I CLK
0422	Program Support Technician	PROG SUPRT TECHNCN
0423	Foreign Program Assistant	FRGN PROG ASST
0424	Project Assistant	PROJ ASST
0425	Regulatory Program Assistant	REGLTRY PROG ASST
0426	Epidemiology Clerk	EPIDMLGY CLK
0427	Affirmative Action Assistant	AFFIRMATIVE ACTN ASST
0428	Information Processing Technician	INF PROCSNG TECHNCN
0429	Personnel Security Clerk	PERS SECUR CLK
0430	Administrative Operations Assistant	ADMV OPERS ASST
0431	Administrative Services Assistant	ADMV SRVCS ASST
0432	Protective Programs Assistant	PROTCTV PROGS ASST
0433	Protective Programs Clerk	PROTCTV PROGS CLK
0434	Student Assistant	STUD ASST
0435	Administrative Support Aid	ADMV SUPRT AID
0436	Error Resolution Clerk	ERROR RESOLUTION CLK
0437	Investigative Equipment Assistant	INVESTIGATIVE EQUIP ASST
0438	Congressional Affairs Aid	CONGRSNL AFF AID
0439	Technical Aid	TECHNCL AID
0440	Firearms Enforcement Aid	FIREARMS ENFCMNT AID
0441	Evidence Clerk	EVIDNC CLK
0442	Disclosure Assistant	DISCLOSURE ASST
0443	Training Support Aid	TRNG SUPRT AID
0444	Investigative Equipment Clerk	INVESTIGATIVE EQUIP CLERK

Code	Series and Authorized Titles	Abbreviation
0445	Project Aid	PROJ AID
0446	Auditing Technical Assistant	AUDTG TECHNCL ASST
0447	Business Development Clerk	BUS DVLPMT CLK
0448	Business Development Control Clerk	BUS DVLPMT CONT CLK
0449	Business Opportunity Clerk	BUS OPP CLK
0450	Business Opportunity Control Clerk	BUS OPP CONT CLK
0451	Computer and Support Services Clerk	COMPR & SUPRT SRVCS CLK
0452	Contracts/Compliance Technical Assistant	CONTRS/COMPLNC TECHNCL ASST
0453	Disaster Control Clerk	DISASTER CONT CLK
0454	District Information Resource Clerk	DIST INF RESOURCE CLK
0455	Information Management Technician	INF MGMT TECHNCN
0456	Information Resource Technician	INF RESOURCE TECHNCN
0457	Information Technician	INF TECHNCN
0458	Legal Control Clerk	LEG CONT CLK
0459	Loan Processing Clerk	LOAN PROCSNG CLK
0460	Loan Servicing Clerk	LOAN SRVCNG CLK
0461	Minority Small Business Clerk	MINORITY SMALL BUS CLK
0462	Pass Program Assistant	PASS PROG ASST
0463	Program Support Clerk	PROG SUPRT CLK
0464	Public Information Assistant	PUBLIC INF ASST
0465	Public Information Clerk	PUBLIC INFO CLK
0466	Size Appeals Assistant	SIZE APPEALS ASST
0467	Student Aid	STUD AID
0468	Verification Clerk	VERFCTN CLK
0469	Word Process Supervisor	WORD PROC SUPVR
0470	Work Control Center Coordinator	WORK CONT CENTR COORD
0471	Audiovisual Services Assistant	AUDIOVISUAL SRVCS ASST
0472	Exhibition Aid	EXHIBITION AID
0473	Audiovisual Shipping Clerk	AUDIOVISUAL SHPG CLK
0474	Booking and Shipping Clerk	BOOKING AND SHPG CLK
0475	Government Ethics Assistant	GOVT ETHICS ASST
0476	Administrative Assistant	ADMV ASST
0477	Bond Clerk	BOND CLK
0478	Bond Issuance Officer	BOND ISSUANCE OFFCR
0479	Change of Address/EFT Clerk	CHNG OF ADDRESS/EFT CLK
0480	Correspondence Prescreening Clerk	CORRES PRESCREENING CLK
0481	Debt Collections Technician	DEBT COLL TECHNCN
0482	Examining and Certifying Clerk	EXAMNG & CERTIFYING CLK
0483	Financial System Assistant	FNANCL SYS ASST
0484	Financing Assistant	FNANCG ASST

Code	Series and Authorized Titles	Abbreviation
0485	Government Security Information Assistant	GOVT SECUR INFO ASST
0486	Inquiry Clerk	INQUIRY CLK
0487	Microform Services Technician	MICROFORM SRVCS TECHNCN
0488	Microform Inspector	MICROFORM INSPR
0489	Numerical Records Clerk	NUMERICAL RECS CLK
0490	Property Control Clerk	PROP CONT CLK
0491	Records Management Assistant	RECS MGMT ASST
0492	Receipt and Distribution Clerk	RECPT & DISTR CLK
0493	Receipts and Research Assistant	REPTS & RES ASST
0494	Security Shipping Clerk	SECUR SHIPPING CLK
0495	Senior Clerk	SR CLK
0496	Senior Materials Destruction Technician	SR MATRLS DESTRUCTION TECHNCN
0497	Support Clerk	SUPRT CLK
0498	Support Services Assistant	SUPRT SRVCS ASST
0499	Suspense Outmail Clerk	SUSPENSE OUTMAIL CLK
0500	Transactions Clerk	TRNSAC CLK
0501	Utility Clerk	UTIL CLK
0502	Vault Clerk	VAULT CLK
0503	Vault Custodian	VAULT CUSTODIAN
0504	Field Office Dispatcher	FLD OFF DSPTCR
0505	Freedom of Information and Privacy Acts Aid	FREEDOM OF INF & PRIVACY ACTS AID
0506	Health and Safety Clerk	HLTH & SAFETY CLK
0507	Health and Safety Technician	HLTH & SAFETY TECHNCN
0508	Identification Clerk	IDNTFCTN CLK
0509	Information Support Clerk	INF SUPRT CLK
0510	Inspection Clerk	INSP CLK
0511	Legislative Tracking Assistant	LEGIS TRACKING ASST
0512	Manpower Resource Assistant	MNPWR RESOURCE ASST
0513	Office Assistant (Editing and Stenography)	OFF ASST (EDITG & STENY)
0514	Office Assistant (Editing and Typing)	OFF ASST (EDITG & TYPG)
0515	Office Manager (Edit)	OFF MGR (EDIT)
0516	Office Manager (Administrative Services)	OFF MGR (ADMV SRVCS)
0517	Office Manager (Editing and Stenography)	OFF MGR (EDITG & STENY)
0518	Protective Operations Clerk	PROTCTV OPERS CLK
0519	Protective Operations Technician	PROTCTV OPERS TECHNCN
0520	Record Research Aid	REC RES AID

Code	Series and Authorized Titles	Abbreviation
0521	Research Support Assistant	RES SUPRT ASST
0522	Resident Agency Clerk	RESDNT AGENCY CLK
0523	Senior Squad Clerk	SR SQUAD CLK
0524	Squad Clerk	SQUAD CLK
0525	Suggestion Clerk	SUGG CLK
0526	Counterfeit Assistant	COUNTERFEIT ASST
0527	Administrative Support Clerk	ADMV SUPRT CLK
0528	Student Assistant (Government-Administration)	STUD ASST (GOVT ADM)
0529	Student Assistant	STUD ASST
0530	Docket Issuance & Files Clerk	DKT ISSUANCE & FILES CLK
0531	Election Clerk	ELECTION CLK
0532	Video Display Terminal Operator	VID DISPLAY TERMINAL OPERTR
0533	Weekly Summary Clerk	WEEKLY SUMMARY CLK
0534	Compliance Assistant	COMPLNC ASST
0535	Supervisor Docket Issuance & Files Unit	SUPVR DKT ISSUANCE & FILES UNIT
0536	Labor Management Relations Aid	LBR MGMT REL ASST
0537	Clerical Support Assistant	CLER SUPRT ASST
0538	Labor Management Relations Assistant	LABOR MGMT REL ASST
0539	Docket & Scheduling Clerk	DKT & SCHEDULING CLERK
0540	Secretarial Assistant	SECRETARIAL ASST
0541	Chief, Mail & Transportation Section	CH, MAIL & TRANSP SEC
0542	Confidential Secretary to the Board Member	CONFID SECY TO THE BD MEMB
0543	Staff Assistant to the Executive Secretary	STAFF ASST TO THE EXEC SECY
0544	Reader	READER
0545	Editorial & Publication Control Clerk	EDITL & PUBLICTN CONT CLK
0546	Operations Management Assistant	OPERS MGMT ASST
0547	Election Specialist	ELECTION SPECLST
0548	Public Inquiries Specialist	PUBLIC INQ SPECLST
0549	Check Request Clerk	CHECK REQUEST CLK
0550	Exception Processing Clerk	EXCPIN PROCSNG CLK
0551	Overpayment Processing Clerk	OVPMT PROCSNG CLK
0552	Stop Entry Clerk	STOP ENTRY CLK
0553	Telephone Order Clerk	TELEPH ORDER CLK
0554	Numbering Clerk	NUMBERING CLK
0555	Mail Operations Assistant	MAIL OPERS ASST
0556	Processing Control Clerk	PROCSNG CONT CLK
0557	Receipt & Control Clerk	RECPT & CONT CLK

Code	Series and Authorized Titles	Abbreviation
0558	Shipping Clerk	SHPG CLK
0559	Quality Review Clerk	QUAL REVW CLK
0560	Dockets Clerk	DKTS CLK
0561	Library Clerk	LIB CLK
0562	Teletax Clerk	TELETAX CLK
0563	Taxpayer Education Assistant	TAXPAYER EDUC ASST
0564	Appeals Aid	APPEALS AID
0565	Case Record Review Clerk	CASE REC REVW CLK
0566	Case Record Clerk	CASE REC CLK
0567	Appointment Clerk	APPT CLK
0568	Senior Case Record Clerk	SR CASE REC CLK
0569	Notices Clerk	NOTICES CLK
0570	Support Technician	SUPRT TECHNCN
0571	Case Record Reviewer	CASE REC REVWR
0572	Processing & Control Clerk	PROCSNG & CONT CLK
0573	Combined Case Control Assistant	COMBINED CASE CONT ASST
0574	Information Receptionist	INF RECPTNST
0575	IRP Clerk	IRP CLK
0576	OCR Clerk	OCR CLK
0577	AIMS Assistant	AIMS ASST
0578	AIMS Coordinator	AIMS COORD
0579	TPDS Distribution Clerk	TPDS DISTR CLK
0580	EP Case Assignment Clerk	EP CASE ASSGNMNT CLK
0581	AIMS/EACS Clerk	AIMS/EACS CLK
0582	EP Processing Clerk	EP PROCSNG CLK
0583	90-Day Clerk	90-DAY CLK
0584	Property Control Specialist	PROP CONT SPECLST
0585	Administrative Operations Specialist	ADMV OPERS SPECLST
0586	Cycle Clerk	CYCLE CLK
0587	Docket Assistant	DKT ASST
0588	Inventory Clerk	INVENT CLK
0589	Contracts Assistant	CONTRS ASST
0590	Records Clerk	REC CLK
0591	Personnel & Payroll Liaison Assistant	PERS & PAYRL LIASN ASST
0592	Travel Verification Technician	TRAV VERFCTN TECHNCN
0593	Computer Facility Operator	COMPR FACIL OPERTR
0594	Special Authorization Technician	SPEC AUTHZTN TECHNCN
0595	Architectural Clerk	ARCHL CLK
0596	Correspondence Management Assistant	CORRES MGMT ASST
0597	Fleet Management Technician	FLEET MGMT TECHNCN
0598	Program (Assistant Training)	PROG ASST (TRNG)
0599	EEO Program Assistant	EEO PROG ASST

Code	Series and Authorized Titles	Abbreviation
0600	Training Coordinator	TRNG COORD
0601	Personnel Operations Assistant	PERS OPERS ASST
0602	NFC Liaison Assistant	NFC LIASN ASST
0603	Actuarial Assistant Cadre Trainee	ACTU ASST CADRE TR
0604	Audio Visual Materials Coordiant	AUDIO VIS MTRLS COORD
0605	Case Control Assistant	CASE CONT ASST
0606	Correspondence Analyst Router	CORRES ANAL ROUTER
0607	Disclosure Operations Assistant	DISCLOSURE OPERS ASST
0608	Exemption Organizations Clerk	EXEMPT ORGNZNS CLK
0609	Inplant Liaison Technician	INPLANT LIASN TECHNCN
0610	Mail, File & User Fee Supervisor	MAIL, FILE & USER FEE SUPVR
0611	Personnel/Payroll Assistant	PERS/PAYRL ASST
0612	User Fee Examiner	USER FEE EXAMNR
0613	Document Review Clerk	DOCMT REVW CLK
0614	Document Review Assistant	DOCMT REVW ASST
0615	Legal Information System Assistant	LEG INF SYS ASST
0616	Legal Document Technician	LEG DOCMT TECHNCN
0617	Administrative Staff Assistant	ADMV STAFF ASST
0618	Security & Office Services Assistant	SECUR & OFF SRVCS ASST
0619	Procurement Liaison Assistant	PROCUR LIASN ASST
0620	Litigation Support Technician	LITGTN SUPRT TECHCN
0621	Legal Data Technician	LEG DATA TECHNCN
0622	Reproduction Clerk	REPROD CLK
0623	Litigation Support Assistant	LITGTN SUPRT ASST
0624	Legal Document Classifier	LEG DOCMT CLASS
0625	Classification Data Technician	CLASSIFN DATA TECHNCN
0626	Legal System Support Assistant	LEG SYS SUPRT ASST
0627	Case Administrative Technician	CASE ADMV TECHNCN
0628	Assistant Record Supervisor	ASST REC SUPVR
0629	Correspondence Management Assistant	CORRES MGMT ASST
0630	Assistant File Supervisor	ASST FILE SUPVR
0631	Case Management Technician	CASE MGMT TECHNCN
0632	Data Base Administration Assistant	DATA BASE ADM ASST
0633	Confidential Assistant	CONFID ASST
0634	Personnel Liaison Assistant	PERS LIASN ASST
0635	Travel Services Assistant	TRAV SRVCS ASST
0636	Legal Administrative Assistant	LEG ADMV ASST
0637	Interpol Technician	INTERPOL TECHNCN
0638	Microfiche File Clerk	MICROFICHE FILE CLK
0639	Telecommunications & Computer Operator Supervisor	TELECOMMUN & COMPR OPERTR SUPVR

Code	Series and Authorized Titles	Abbreviation
0640	Facilities Technician	FACIL TECHNCN
0641	Personnel Liaison Clerk	PERS LIASN CLK
0642	Property Management Technician	PROP MGMT TECHNCN
0643	Support Services Technician	SUPRT SRVCS TECHNCN
0644	Records & Reports Assistant	REC & REPTS ASST
0645	User Support Technician	USER SUPRT TECHNCN
0646	Data Technician	DATA TECHNCN
0647	Control Correspondence Technician	CONT CORRES TECHNCN
0648	Office Systems Operator	OFF SYS OPERTR
0649	Parole Clerk	PAROLE CLK
0650	Parole Data Technician	PAROLE DATA TECHNCN
0651	Research Clerk	RES CLK
0652	Case Processing Assistant	CASE PROCSNG ASST
0653	Batching Clerk	BATCHING CLK
0654	Case Processor	CASE PROCSR
0655	Case Records Controller	CASE REC CNTRLR
0656	Equipment Control Clerk	EQUIP CONT CLK
0657	PCS/Status Control Clerk	PCS/STATUS CONT CLK
0658	Records & Control Clerk	REC & CONT CLK
0659	Returns Program Clerk	RETURNS PROG CLK
0660	Sealing Clerk	SEALING CLK
0661	Sorting & Batching Clerk	SORTING & BATCHING CLK
0662	Materials Coordinator	MTRLS COORD
0663	Maintenance Control Clerk	MTNCE CONT CLK
0664	Property Control Clerk	PROP CONT CLK
0665	Technical Publication Control Clerk	TECHNCL PUBLICTN CONT CLK
0666	Clerk (Techs Operator)	CLK (TECHS OPERTR)
0667	Composition Clerk	COMPOSITION CLK
0668	Customs Explorer	CUSTOMS EXPLR
0669	Customs Port Aid	CUSTOMS PORT AID
0670	Delinquent Accounts Assistant	DELINQUENT ACCTS ASST
0671	Disclosure Technician	DISCLOSURE TECHNCN
0672	Distribution Clerk	DISTR CLK
0673	Drug Screening Program Assistant	DRUG SCREENING PROG ASST
0674	Enforcement Aid	ENFCMNT AID
0675	Enforcement Assistant	ENFCMNT ASST
0676	Enforcement Clerk	ENFCMNT CLK
0677	Enforcement Compliance Technician	ENFCMNT COMPLNC TECHNCN
0678	Entry Receipt Clerk	ENTRY RECEIPT CLK
0679	Entry Support Clerk	ENTRY SUPRT CLK

Code	Series and Authorized Titles	Abbreviation
0680	Executive Assistant	EXEC ASST
0681	Fines, Penalties & Forfeiture Clerk	FINES, PENALTIES & FORFEITURE CLK
0682	Firearms Control Technician	FIREARMS CONT TECHNCN
0683	Fiscal Management Assistant	FISC MGMT ASST
0684	General Order & Special Accounts Clerk	GEN ORDER & SPEC ACCTS CLK
0685	Information Management Assistant	INF MGMT ASST
0686	Inspectional Program Assistant	INSPECTIONAL PROG ASST
0687	Lab Clerk	LAB CLK
0688	Management Excellence Assistant	MGMT EXCELLENCE ASST
0689	Management Program Clerk	MGMT PROG CLK
0690	Management Program Assistant	MGMT PROG ASST
0691	Management Program Technician	MGMT PROG TECHNCN
0692	Office Support Aid	OFF SUPRT AID
0693	Port Assignment Coordinator	PORT ASSGNMNT COORD
0694	Seizure Clerk	SEIZURE CLK
0695	Staff Management Assistant	STAFF MGMT ASST
0696	Investigative Research Assistant	INVESTIGATIVE RES ASST
0697	Enforcement Assistant	ENFCMNT ASST
0698	Student Volunteer	STUD VOL
0699	Witness Security Assistant	WITNESS SECUR ASST
0700	Administrative Support Assistant (Civil)	ADMV SUPRT ASST (CIVIL)
0701	Administrative Support Assistant (Criminal)	ADMV SUPRT ASST (CRIM)
0702	Administrative Support Assistant (NASAF)	ADMV SUPRT ASST (NASAF)
0703	Administrative Support Assistant (Warrant)	ADMV SUPRT ASST (WARRANT)
0704	Executive Correspondence Assistant	EXEC CORRES ASST
0705	Registration Assistant	REGSTRN ASST
0706	Reports Processing Clerk	REPTS PROCSNG CLK
0707	Surveillance Assistant	SURVEILLANCE ASST
0708	Information Processing Technician	INF PROCSNG TECHNCN
0709	Legal Education Assistant	LEG EDUC ASST
0710	Rural Development Clerk	RURAL DEVPLMT CLK
0711	Rural Development Assistant	RURAL DVLPMT ASST
0712	Mutilated Currency Examiner	MUTILATED CURRENCY EXAMNR

EXHIBIT 7

SAMPLE MENTORING PROGRAM

INTRODUCTION

Mentoring is an exchange of knowledge gained through personal experiences. It refers to a relationship between two individuals in which a more experienced person **(the Mentor)** assists a less experienced person **(the Mentee)**. It is designed to motivate employees and help create a climate conducive to promoting and achieving an increase in employee productivity. It will provide employees with material and knowledge which can assist them in establishing a career plan; identifying short and long-term goals; and constructing a training plan aimed at developing the competencies that will prepare them to advance to a higher level position. The Mentor Program is structured career enrichment activities geared to help meet the development needs and professional growth of employees.

PURPOSE

The Agricultural Research Service realizes that to fulfill our mission, we must retain our workforce and assist employees in enhancing job satisfaction. At the same time, the workforce is changing to encompass greater numbers of women and minorities.

The Mentoring Program is designed to build individual relationships between experienced employees and employees striving to be successful within the ARS structure. It will provide a formal structure within which employees are afforded the opportunity to form relationships with more experienced personnel and thereby gain an additional source of knowledge and experience. The Mentees will be encouraged to assess their goals, whether for improvement and advancement in the current job or for making a job change. Realistic steps to progress toward the goals will be agreed upon by the Mentor and Mentee; it is anticipated that the Mentee's manager will be involved in providing training, shadow assignments, or details.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The primary objectives of the Program are to:

- Improve the present knowledge, skills and abilities of support staff; thereby increasing their productivity and potential for current and/or future positions.
- Complement the Career Enhancement Program (CEP) by providing employees with information and career counseling that will assist them in their career development.
- Improve morale of employees by providing an opportunity for program participants to gain career enrichment, experience, and employment satisfaction.
- Help meet EEO Affirmative Employment Plan (AEP) goals of improving training and career advancement opportunities for under-represented groups.
- Establish specific goals to promote career/professional development.
- Identify resources and strategies to enhance growth.
- Understand the Mentor-Mentee relationship.

AREA OF FOCUS

The Mentoring Program is for employees in a single-interval series at the GS-1 through GS-9 grade levels, or wage grade (WG) equivalents. The program will capitalize on the experiences of successful employees, who volunteer to serve on a one-to-one basis, as Mentors to support staff who wish to have assistance in developing their potential for increased employment enrichment and/or career advancement opportunities.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PROGRAMS

The Mentor Program is designed to motivate employees and help create a climate conducive to promoting and achieving an increase in employee productivity. It is not the Career Enhancement Program (CEP), which is designed to place an undertrained employee in a target trainee position with increased promotion potential; advertised under merit promotion procedures. The Mentor Program is intended to complement the CEP currently in place. It will encourage and train Mentees to use existing systems such as Individual Development Plans. It will provide employees with material and knowledge which can assist them in their career development.

This program will help meet EEO Affirmative Employment Plan (AEP) goals of improving employment and career advancement opportunities for members of under-represented groups. The program is not intended to be a substitute for classroom and on-the-job training, continuing professional education, or other similar development programs. However, it is intended to provide a forum to offer guidance and encouragement in job performance and/or career development.

Participation in the Mentor Program does not guarantee selection for competitive promotion, reassignment, training and/or developmental opportunities.

MENTORING PROCESS

Mentoring requires a high level of communication between Mentor and Mentee. The mentoring process provides an opportunity to enhance natural skills and build strengths in weaker areas.

The evaluation method is as much a learning tool as it is a measurement tool. It provides a framework for the Mentor and Mentee to discuss the importance of performance improvement. It describes specific actions and behaviors that each participant can identify, look for, and use.

Mentoring takes many forms. It can be informal or formal, planned or spontaneous. Planned mentoring programs should let people know what is expected of them when they become involved in a mentor relationship.

A Mentoring Oversight Committee's responsibilities would include producing all necessary organizing documentation, letters, etc., matching Mentors with Mentees in conjunction with results of assessment, providing training for Mentors and Mentees, planning workshops and meetings, developing a structure for evaluating the program, making suggestions for improvements in the program, and keeping top level management apprised of the progress of the program.

The Process

- Selection
- Training
- Pairing
- Initial meeting between Mentor and Mentee
- Skills/needs assessment
- Meetings
- Workshops

- Shadow assignments
- Monitoring and evaluation

For example, the Mentee must not jeopardize the mentoring relationship by asking the Mentor to **resolve** a disagreement the Mentee is having with his or her Supervisor over his or her evaluation. Or, tell the Supervisor, "I'm just doing what my Mentor advised, now you're marking me down."

BENEFITS OF MENTORING

Employees who perform well spend time evaluating their performances in their jobs. They rehearse, play their performances back, and improve with experience. Mentors can play an important role in developing effective performance. Mentors listen, ask questions, provide insight, collect data by observation, and give feedback. This is an avenue for employees to receive advice in a structured manner. The Mentoring Program is designed to meet the career development needs of the employees. The Program will also complement the Career Enhancement Program.

Some of the benefits to Mentees:

- Support
- Contacts
- Perspective
- Job hunting skills
- Goals
- Technical skills

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT THE MENTOR PROGRAM

Q. Why do we need a Mentor Program? Why can't people find their own Mentors?

A. Many people who need and can use the help of a Mentor may not realize it. If mentoring is left to chance capable people are often overlooked — especially those in support positions. This program makes the benefits of mentoring accessible to a wider group of people than before.

Q. What will the Mentor Program accomplish?

A. For individuals, it will provide career and job guidance of many kinds: feedback about self presentation, discussion about career goals, information about how

the system works, development of strategies to reach goals, acculturation regarding the organization's norms and values.

For ARS, the Mentor Program will create a positive working environment where employees' hidden skills and talents are brought to light and used positively. It will help us tap the best in every employee, including the Mentors who have a great deal to offer others.

Q. What is the difference between this and the career enhancement program?

A. The Career Enhancement Program is an employment program where applicants are competitively selected to be trained to fill targeted slots. The Mentor Program is a non-competitive counseling program which is designed to help employees develop their careers. You may participate in one or the other, in both, or in neither.

Q. Who can be a Mentor? What will they do?

A. Only a willingness to take time to serve, and the ability to listen, offer suggestions, and maintain discretion are required. A Mentor may be an employee at any level or in any occupation, as long as the person is willing and committed to work with a Mentee. A Mentor is a good listener who offers information, ideas, support, and feedback. Their role is to make suggestions and recommendations, not to tell the Mentee what to do.

Q. Who can be a Mentee? What will they do?

A. People who are ready to pay attention to their jobs and career development can be Mentees. If you are looking for someone to care about your working life and guide you as you set a direction or try to reach goals, do apply for the program. You'll be responsible for communicating clearly with your Mentor, having realistic expectations about the help given, and following up on your Mentor's suggestions and recommendations. Of course, it will be up to you to decide which ones are appropriate for you.

Q. How will the matching be done?

A. The Mentor Committee will make tentative matches, on the basis of detailed application forms about what mentors have to offer, and what Mentees are looking for. No one will be matched in the same chain of command. You will be notified of the tentative matches after your training. At an informal mixer, you can meet your Mentor or Mentee; if you're not going to be there, call the person to set up an alternative.

Q. What if you aren't comfortable with your Mentor/Mentee?

A. After your first real meeting, notify the Mentor Committee about whether you feel you can work with the person you've been tentatively assigned. Don't be afraid to say you don't think it will work; no one can really tell whether a given match will work until the two people have met and talked. If you feel stymied later in the process, talk directly with your Mentor/Mentee about the issues; the next step is to talk with someone on the Mentor Committee about a possible match.

Q. How are Supervisors involved in the program?

A. Supervisors can support the Mentor Program by encouraging employees to participate. People are more motivated on the job if they have a goal, and can see that high performance where they are now will pay off in the direction they want to go. Mentors will be developing perspectives and skills, especially in communications, which are bound to be useful back in the office. At the end of the year, Supervisors will be recognized along with the Mentors and Mentees who are their employees.

Q. How long does the program last?

A. The program lasts for one year and is evaluated periodically. People who wish to continue informally may do so or they may want to reapply and work with a different Mentor or Mentee.

HOW MENTORS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Mentors are the key to career progress for many talented people who may lack goals, or a clear idea of what they can do to reach their goals. Reports show that employees who had a Mentor (especially during their first year on the job) were more satisfied with their jobs, and were more likely to report that their expectations were met regarding their jobs and their career development opportunities. Past participants usually agree that mentoring is worthwhile and deserves support of management.

Mentor Roles in Career Development

Communicator

- Encourages two-way exchange of information.
- Listens to career concerns and responds appropriately.
- Establishes an environment for open interaction.
- Schedules uninterrupted time to meet with Mentee.
- Acts as a sounding board for ideas and concerns.

Counselor

- Works with Mentee to identify and understand career-related skills, interests, and values.
- Helps Mentee evaluate appropriateness of career options.
- Helps Mentee plan strategies to achieve mutually agreed-upon goals.

Coach

- Helps to clarify performance goals and developmental needs.
- Teaches managerial and technical skills (OJT).
- Reinforces effective on-the-job performance.
- Recommends specific behaviors that need improvement or changes.
- Clarifies and communicates organizational objectives and goals.
- Serves as a role model to demonstrate successful professional behaviors — leads by example.

Advisor

- Communicates the informal and formal realities of progression within the organization.
- Recommends opportunities for training.
- Recommends appropriate strategies for career direction.
- Reviews developmental plan on a regular basis.
- Helps Mentee identify career obstacles and takes appropriate action to overcome them.

Broker

- Expands the Mentee's network of professional contacts.
- Helps bring together Mentees who might mutually benefit from helping each other.
- Helps link Mentee with appropriate educational and employment opportunities.
- Helps the Mentee identify resources required for career progression.

Referral Agent

- Identifies resources to help Mentee with specific problems.
- Follows up to ensure effectiveness of resources.

Advocate

- Intervenes on the Mentee's behalf and represents his or her concerns on specific issues to higher-level managers.
- Arranges for Mentee to participate in highly visible activities within the organization and outside of it.

What Mentoring is Not

- Cloning – an attempt to mold the Mentee into your own image.
- Domineering – an opportunity to show how much you know.
- Undermining the Mentee's Supervisor.
- Taking credit for the Mentee's success.
- Taking Supervisors out of the loop.

Individual Roles

Supervisor:

- The Supervisor should be aware that the Mentoring Program is another resource made available in the development of employees.

- The Supervisor is still responsible for the primary development of the employee in the area of:

  - Career Advisor
  - Technical Advisor
  - Management Counselor
  - Performance Reviewer/Evaluation
  - On-the-Job Training Instructor

Mentor:

What's in it for the Mentor?

There are many theories of stages of development of children and adults. Erik Erikson[1] has depicted several stages of adult development and has suggested that each stage has a major task to be completed before moving on to the next stage. In the work place, people need to accomplish mastery of their jobs and professional skills. Later in their careers people's focus will expand and they will reach a stage in which they have a need to guide the next generation. Most of us know people who have reached the stage where they wish to pass on what they have learned to the next group coming along. This provides job satisfaction for those people. It also provides an opportunity for ARS to capitalize on the investment it has made in these "masters" (Mentors) and not lose that hard won knowledge. Thus, the Mentoring Program benefits Mentees, Mentors, and ARS!

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[1]Erik H. Erikson, "Identity, Use and Crisis," W. W. Norton and Co., New York, NY, 1968.

Duties of Mentors

Mentors are responsible for attending the required training, attending an introductory meeting with the Mentee, providing one-on-one confidential guidance and coaching to the Mentee, respecting the boundaries between the Mentee and his or her Supervisor, providing candid feedback, and committing to one year's participation. Mentors will give advice in general terms concerning job qualifications, job duties, and recommended career paths in the Agricultural Research Service. They will not determine Mentee's eligibility for jobs.

The Mentor's responsibilities will include many factors, such as:

Career Advisor. Review the Mentee's strengths, limitations and goals.

Counselor/Soundboard. To listen to problems and concerns of the Mentee and, through open questioning techniques, allow the Mentee to discover potential solutions and make suggestions on different avenues of approach to the problem in the future.

Personal Development. Review the career goals of the Mentee and serve as a sounding board for his or her thoughts on how to achieve them. Discuss any need for improvements to the Mentee's professionalism, decision-making and "big picture" concepts behind decisions made.

There are areas where the roles of the Mentor and the Supervisor will overlap. It is vital that the Mentor keep perspective of his or her role. The Mentors should remind themselves that they are to provide support to the Supervisor with regard to the development of the Mentee and not to enforce their own decisions on career plans of the Mentee.

Duties of Mentees

The Mentee will observe the styles and behaviors of his or her Supervisor, peers and Mentor to see the potential variety of methods possible in dealing with different situations encountered in his or her development. The Mentee must:

- Be held accountable for his or her own actions.
- Not ask the Mentor to intercede with his or her Supervisor concerning Manager-Employee issues.

- Not cite the Mentor as authority to supersede the Supervisor's authority.
- Not play his or her Supervisor against the Mentor.

CHRONOLOGY FOR IMPLEMENTING THE MENTORING PROCESS

(1) Discuss and resolve policy questions.

(2) Constitute mentoring committee.

(3) Committee discusses program informally with as many people as possible, to begin to arouse interest and identify both potential Mentors and Mentees.

(4) Develop draft general announcement, guidelines, chronology, flyer, application forms, and evaluation criteria. Committee and Director review and comment.

(5) Finalize program objectives, factors, assisting and impeding program, publicity potential in different areas, possible guidelines. Dates are established for all major program milestones.

(6) Revise all documents and return them in final form within 48 hours. Provide suggestions on publicity and quarterly follow up.

(7) Committee is able to give people contacted informally the date, time and place for information meeting about the program. Flyer is posted.

(8) Committee briefs managers on the program, and asks them to help recruit both Mentors and Mentees.

(9) Holds an open information meeting for all employees, with Supervisors particularly urged to attend. At the meeting, distribute letter to all employees with application forms for both Mentors and Mentees, with deadline.

(10) After the due date, recruit as needed to compensate for uneven numbers of Mentors.

(11) Send each applicant a letter informing them whether they are eligible to participate, explaining the next step is mandatory training which the Supervisor must approve.

(12) Conduct training (1/2 day for Mentors, 1 day for Mentees) based on pre-interviews.

(13) Match Mentors and Mentees who want to proceed, and notify them of tentative matches. Provide each person's application to the one with whom they have been tentatively matched.

(14) Hold an opening mixer to which Mentors and Mentees are invited. If possible, ask Area Director to make opening remarks. The purpose is for people to meet the one they are matched with, and set up their first meetings.

(15) Check in with each pair to ensure that both people want to proceed, and that they have met for the first time.

(16) Conduct quarterly follow-ups such as seminars on career development and other topics the pilot group identifies. At mid-year, gather participants for early assessment.

(17) Evaluate the program on the basis of criteria agreed on initially.

(18) Recognize all participants publicly.

MENTOR PROGRAM GROUND RULES

Confidentiality is the most important ground rule. What passes between the Mentor and the Mentee is private, unless specific permission is given. The Mentee needs to be mindful that the Mentor may well be passing on insights and experiences which require just as much discretion as the Mentee's own revelations. The Mentor needs to be particularly conscious of casual conversations with people known to both parties. If asked how its going, a general answer like "Great, she's a bright person with a lot of potential," is appropriate, but "She's bright, but she doesn't have the educational background she needs, in fact she told me . . ." absolutely is not. If you are in doubt, contact a Committee member for advice.

The Mentor and the Mentee's Supervisor may not discuss information revealed during the mentoring process. While this is just another aspect of confidentially, it is particularly important that the Mentee knows that the Mentor will not be passing information back to the Supervisor. In an organization where many Mentors and Mentees' Supervisors may know each other, discretion is a challenge.

The Mentor and Mentee may meet for up to one hour a week of official time. It is up to the two people to design a schedule that works well for them. While

neither of course can be absent from work without supervisory approval, mentoring meetings have been approved as part of each participant's official duties.

Mentor Committee members may not participate as Mentees. Even though the Mentor Committee puts in many hours every year to make the program work for other employees, they are not eligible to participate as Mentees. They are responsible for the matching process, which must remain unbiased.

Matches will not be made in the immediate chain of command. This prevents Mentees from being matched with their second or third level supervisors, because it would disrupt the formal lines of authority in the organization, and because the Mentor is supposed to be an objective outsider, not an interested party.

The formal mentoring program in no way restricts informal mentoring. Many successful people have not one but several Mentors, whom they approach with different kinds of needs and questions. Don't hesitate to find people to mentor you informally — whether they are peers, supervisors, friends or people in the workplace. Mentors themselves need Mentors. Once you begin to find the process valuable, you will probably want to extend it to others.

MENTORING PROGRAM
MENTEE REGISTRATION FORM

NAME: _____

JOB TITLE AND GRADE: _____

JOB SERIES: _____

ORGANIZATIONAL UNIT: _____

BUILDING/ROOM NUMBER: _____

MAILING ADDRESS: _____

TELEPHONE: _____ YEARS AT ARS: _____

FIRST ARS JOB: _____

1. Please write a few sentences about your own career history, where you started and where you are now. _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. What are your career goals now, if any? _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

3. What are you looking for in a Mentor, in terms of experiences, skills, values, knowledge, or whatever they may be able to offer? How would you like them to help?

_____

_____

_____

_____

4. What would you like to accomplish at the end of the 12-month period, through your mentoring relationship and all you other efforts toward career development?

_____

_____

_____

5. What are you hoping to change about your present job/career situation?

_____

_____

_____

_____

6. Why would you like to participate in the program? _____

_____

_____

_____

7. How much time would you be able to devote to your Mentor in the first three months of the year-long program? (An average of one hour a week is recommended.)

_____

8. What is the best time of day for you to meet? _____

_____

9. Approximate Days Travel/Month: _____

10. Anything you would like to add? _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR'S NAME: _____

PLEASE ATTACH A CV TO THIS REGISTRATION FORM

MENTORING PROGRAM
MENTOR REGISTRATION FORM

NAME: _____

JOB TITLE AND GRADE: _____

JOB SERIES: _____

ORGANIZATIONAL UNIT: _____

BUILDING/ROOM NUMBER: _____

MAILING ADDRESS: _____

TELEPHONE: _____ YEARS AT ARS: _____

FIRST ARS JOB: _____

1. Please write a few sentences about your own career history, where you started and where you are now. _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. What personal experiences, skills, values, or knowledge would you particularly like to pass on to a Mentee? _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

3. Are you able to help your Mentee in these areas?

_____ Information about a particular career. Please specify what the career(s) would be: _____

_____ Practice and information about interviewing

_____ Information about how the personnel system works

_____ Information about SF-171's

_____ Setting a career direction

_____ Developing an awareness of organizational politics and games, and how to play them

_____ Creating a career strategy to attain goals

_____ Developing solutions to job problems

_____ Improving skills in particular areas

_____ Information about ARS careers

_____ Information about how ARS works as an organization

4. Why do you want to be a Mentor? _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

5. How much time would you be able to devote to your Mentee in the first three months of the program? (An average of one hour a week is recommended.)

_____

6. What is the best time of day for you to meet? _____

_____

7. Approximate Days Travel/Month: _____

I agree to serve as a Mentor if I am matched with a Mentee whose goals and interests are compatible with mine. I understand that I must attend a mandatory training session.

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR'S NAME: _____

PLEASE ATTACH A CV TO THIS REGISTRATION

EXHIBIT 8

PROFESSIONAL SECRETARIES INTERNATIONAL CHART

CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL SECRETARY PROGRAM			
Sponsor	Professional Secretaries International		
Examination	Administered Twice Annually: • First Friday/Saturday in May • First Thursday/Friday in November		
	Examination Categories: • Behavioral Science in Business • Business Law • Economics and Business Management • Accounting • Office Technology • Communications		
Qualifications	Based on experience/education	Experience: 4 years 3 years 2 years	Education: No college Associate Degree Bachelors Degree
	A Secretary can take the examination anytime, but certification will be withheld until all requirements are met.		
Benefits	• Professional certification • College credit (up to 32 credits)		
For more information on this program, contact the Personnel Division, National Services Branch, Training Unit.			

EXHIBIT 9

PROPOSED ORIENTATION PLAN FOR SECRETARIAL EMPLOYEES

It is ARS policy to provide comprehensive orientation for all new and entry level secretaries including employees new to the agency, new to a position, and those currently in secretarial positions who may not have had the opportunity for such training in the past.

The Personnel Division will provide oversight and guidance to management for training of all secretaries. Supervisors will discuss the position description, performance standards for the position, and Secretarial Orientation Plan Checklist with the secretary.

Supervisors will ensure that ample time is provided for on-the-job and classroom training for secretaries, as well as time after each training session to apply and practice the skills learned. Supervisors also will ensure that backup coverage is provided for secretaries to attend training and practice what they learn.

Supervisors will monitor the training progress of their secretary through appropriate communication and ensure the completion of a Secretarial Orientation Plan Checklist within the first 30 days of employment. Completion of the Checklist introduces the secretary to everything on the checklist, and identifies and documents needed training on an IDP by the end of the 30-day orientation. Actual training and developmental assignments will be provided a secretary within a reasonable time following the orientation program.

The Secretarial Orientation Plan Checklist, when completed, will be returned to the Personnel Division for filing in the Official Personnel Folder.

EXHIBIT 10

PROPOSED ORIENTATION PLAN CHECKLIST

SECRETARIAL ORIENTATION PLAN CHECKLIST (Employee/Supervisor initial and date upon completion of activity)			
ACTIVITY	EMPLOYEE	SUPERVISOR	DATE
Introduction to ARS			
• Become familiar with ARS' mission			
• Become familiar with ARS' organization			
• Become familiar with location of ARS' offices, programs, and personnel			
Telephone Techniques			
• Use of telephone equipment			
• Procedures for answering telephone and placing outgoing calls			
• Procedures for screening and routing incoming calls			
• Introduction to ARS and outside agency telephone books			
Office Essentials			
• Timekeeping (leave slips and timesheets)			
• Procurement requests			
• Training forms			
• Personnel Action forms			
• Travel			
• Arrangements (vendor numbers, travel authorizations)			
• Airline tickets (ordering and pickup)			
• Advance of funds and registration fees			
• Vouchers and claims for reimbursement			
• Government credit card application			
Correspondence			
• Become familiar with Correspondence Handbook			
• Routing procedures and location of mail codes			
• Copies (official file, etc.)			
• Identify applicable software packages			
• Help contacts			

SECRETARIAL ORIENTATION PLAN CHECKLIST
(Continued)

ACTIVITY	EMPLOYEE	SUPERVISOR	DATE
Supplies			
• Location and how to order supplies			
Copies			
• Where copies are located/procedure for duplication services			
• Where to get paper supplies			
• Who to call for repairs/service			
Mail Distribution			
• Location of mailroom			
• FAX machine (location and telephone numbers)			
• Procedure for sending and receiving FAX messages			
• Pouch mail/interoffice mail/overnight mail delivery			
• Congressional, Freedom of Information, and recorded mail			
Meetings and Conferences			
• Location, availability, and reservations for conference rooms			
• Procedures for setting up meetings			
• Arrangement of conference calls			
File Systems			
• Agency file system/office file system			
Reinforcement of Checklist			
• Introduction to office protocol and procedures, i.e., work schedules, sick leave, office organization, staff meetings			
• Reference organizational charts, supply/communication center procedures, health/security procedures			
Individual Development Plan (IDP)			
• Develop IDP for training needs			
• Classroom training should cover the topic areas identified			
Other			
• Safety			
• Ethics			
• EEO/CR requirements			
• Outside employment (Form 101)			

EXHIBIT 11

PROPOSED CRITERIA FOR THE ARS SECRETARY OF THE YEAR AWARD

NATURE OF AWARD

The purpose of the ARS Secretary of the Year Award Program is to annually recognize outstanding achievements and creative efforts of ARS secretaries on a nationwide basis. Nominations submitted in response to the ARS Secretary of the Year Award must be the winner of an Area Secretary of the Year Award, and will have received appropriate recognition in an Area. To ensure consistency among Areas, it is recommended that both the National Secretarial Advisory Council and Local Secretarial Advisory Councils be involved in the establishment of local awards programs.

The ARS National Secretarial Award winner will receive monetary recognition in the amount of $5,000. This will be considered the Gold Award. In addition to the Gold Award, a Silver Award for $3,000 and a Bronze Award for $2,000 will be awarded to the second and third place winners. These individuals will be recognized at the ARS annual awards ceremony. A plaque containing the names of the ARS Secretary of the Year recipients will be hung in an appropriate place in ARS.

ARS ORGANIZATIONAL CATEGORIES

The following 11 organizational categories have been established for the National Secretary of the Year Award:

1. Headquarters — This includes:

    - Administrator's Office
    - Office of International Research Programs
    - Office of Technology Transfer
    - Budget and Program Management Staff
    - Information Staff
    - Legislative Staff
    - Equal Employment Opportunity Staff

2. Eight Areas — This category will include secretaries in the Area Administrative Offices.

3. National Program Staff

4. Administrative Management

PROCEDURE

For each of the 11 organizational categories one individual will be selected as the local recipient using the nomination criteria and guidelines listed below. In this way, an equitable system will be established, and each awardee will be automatically nominated for the ARS National Secretarial Award.

NOMINATION CRITERIA

To be considered for this award, the following criteria must be met:

1. Nominee must be classified in a secretarial or clerical position as listed below:

    - GS-0303 — Miscellaneous Clerk and Assistant Series (only those positions that serve as a principal assistant, or secondary assistant in an office)

    - GS-0312 — Clerk-stenographer and Reporter Series

    - GS-0318 — Secretary Series

    - GS-0322 — Clerk-typist Series

    - GS-0326 — Office Automation Clerical and Assistance Series

2. Nominee must have received an outstanding or superior rating during their last performance evaluation.

3. The nomination must show evidence of achievements well beyond normal job performance during the past year and must indicate how work performed has substantially improved the operation of an organizational unit.

4. Achievements should include:

    - Organizational Achievement — Overall achievement; such as, initiatives taken in successfully reorganizing office procedures,

improving filing or other systems or mastering or promoting use of new office equipment, etc., which result in improved productivity.

- Skill Advancement — Initiatives taken to substantially improve or acquire skills beyond job qualifications, such as individual educational pursuits or taking the lead in the enhancement of office-wide productivity and skill improvement.

- Person-To-Person Relationships — Establishment of exceptional inter- and intra-unit working relationships that assist a unit in accomplishing its mission, training co-workers and others, and promoting teamwork.

NOMINATION PROCEDURE

Nominations for the Secretary of the Year Award must be prepared in the format as shown at the end of this section. Peer nominations as well as nominations by supervisors are encouraged. Only permanent employees are eligible. Deadlines for submission of nominations will be established by the Labor and Employee Relations Branch, Personnel Division.

ARS SELECTION COMMITTEE/PROCEDURE

The Selection Committee for the ARS Secretary of the Year Award will consist of a Research Leader, an Administrative Officer, a member of the National Secretarial Advisory Council (at least for the first year), a representative from the EEO staff, and a secretary from an outside agency (possibly a higher graded secretary at the Departmental level). After the first year, the previous year's winner should serve on the Selection Committee. One of these individuals will be asked to serve as Chairperson for the Committee.

Nominees will be scored by each Committee member using the following point system (maximum score of 20 points):

Organizational Achievement	2 - 10 points
Skill Advancement	1 - 5 points
Person-to-Person Relationships	1 - 5 points

By secret ballot, the committee will submit their scores to a Chairperson who will then tally the totals. The names of the top three finalists will be submitted to the Administrator (or a designee) for selection of the winners.

ARS SECRETARY OF THE YEAR AWARD
Nomination Format

NAME OF NOMINEE: _____

ORGANIZATIONAL CATEGORY: _____

GRADE LEVEL: _____

NAME OF IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR: _____

Please respond to the following statements and provide specific examples of accomplishments. These supporting statements should be typed and no longer than a total of two pages.

1. Organizational Achievement — Describe quality and quantity of secretarial support.

2. Skill Advancement — Describe how the nominee has taken the initiative in his/her personal development, has participated in solving problems encountered in the work environment, and has demonstrated a positive attitude toward the position he/she occupies.

3. Person-to-Person Relationships — Describe how the nominee has established and maintained good working relationships and has provided direction and assistance to others.

NOMINATED BY:

_____ _____
Name and Title of Nominator Date

_____
Address

_____
Telephone Number

EXHIBIT 12

PROPOSED FORMAT AND STRUCTURE FOR THE NATIONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL SECRETARIAL ADVISORY COUNCILS

NATIONAL SECRETARIAL ADVISORY COUNCIL (NSAC) — COUNCIL STRUCTURE AND MEMBERSHIP

The National Secretarial Advisory Council (NSAC) will initially be comprised of members of the Secretarial Review Task Group.

Responsibilities

NSAC members will be expected to carry out the following responsibilities:

- Participate in semi-annual meetings and other ad hoc or special meetings, as necessary.
- Serve on selection committees for the ARS Secretary of the Year Award.
- Inform Organizational Secretarial Advisory Councils (OSAC), the Administrator, and other management officials of NSAC activities and concerns and ensure appropriate distribution of information about NSAC and its initiatives throughout local councils.
- Report on OSAC activities to NSAC through an annual written report, oral updates, and participation in conference calls and meetings.
- Work on NSAC projects, such as providing guidance on establishing local councils, training programs, mentoring programs, etc.
- Issue NSAC newsletters.
- Participate in ARS Task Groups and Committees.

Officers

The NSAC will have an Executive Board comprised of the following officers elected from its membership:

1. Elected Officials
   - National Co-Chairpersons
   - National Vice-Chairperson
   - National Recording Secretary
   - Parliamentarian
   - Advisors - Personnel Division Representatives and former NSAC Chairs

2. Representatives as Designated by Each Area/Office as Communications Liaisons:
   - Headquarters
     - Office of the Administrator
     - Office of the Deputy Administrator, NPS
     - Office of the Deputy Administrator, AM
   - Beltsville Area
   - Mid-South Area
   - Midwest Area
   - North Atlantic Area
   - Northern Plains Area
   - Pacific West Area
   - South Atlantic Area
   - Southern Plains Area

In addition, the appointed Chairpersons of any committees established by the Board shall serve on the Executive Board during the term of their appointment.

Executive Board

Terms of Office and Eligibility. The Co-Chairpersons will initially serve one- and two-year terms beginning immediately following election at the first meeting. New Co-Chairpersons will serve two years. All other officers will serve one-year terms. No person may hold more than one elected position concurrently on the Executive Board. In cases where an Area representative is an elected officer, a new area representative must be designated to serve as the Communications Liaison for that area.

In the event that any officer other than the Co-Chairpersons is unable to complete her/his term, the Co-Chairpersons will appoint another NSAC member to

serve in the position until the next election. In cases where a Co-Chairperson submits a resignation, an election will be held to replace this member.

Duties of Officers

National Co-Chairpersons **will**:

- Preside at all general meetings and other meetings, as appropriate.
- Advise and work with top management on implementing policies and programs affecting the secretarial work force.
- Develop all general correspondence to managers and ensure that all correspondence is sent through appropriate channels.
- Maintain contact with OSACs on their activities and participation.
- Serve as advisors to the ARS Federal Women's Program.
- Manage activities of the Executive Board.
- Appoint Chairpersons of committees established by the Executive Board.

National Vice-Chairperson **will**:

- In the absence of a Co-Chairperson, be responsible for carrying out all duties of the Co-Chairperson.
- Lead in developing the fiscal year work plan and budget for the NSAC.
- Assist Co-Chairpersons in managing operations of the NSAC.
- Coordinate arrangements for hosting NSAC meetings.
- Report directly to the Co-Chairpersons.

National Recording Secretary **will**:

- Set up meetings, contact all NSAC members, and record and distribute minutes of meetings.
- Maintain accurate roster and E-Mail lists of membership.

- Arrange conference calls as needed.
- Prepare articles on NSAC for Agency newsletters.
- Attend meetings in the absence of Co-Chairpersons or Vice-Chairperson.
- Report directly to Co-Chairpersons and Vice-Chairperson.

Communications Liaisons **will**:

- Facilitate regular communication among OSAC representatives in designated facilities.
- Serve as liaison between NSAC and OSAC.
- Collect and report information on significant activities, questions and concerns.
- Keep OSAC representatives aware of information and activities of NSAC and related programs.

Parliamentarian **will**:

- Ensure that all NSAC meetings are conducted in accordance with the by-laws.
- Ensure proper representation of OSACs at NSAC meetings.
- Oversee nomination and election procedures and chair the nominating committee.
- Report directly to Co-Chairpersons.

Nominations/Selections

The Parliamentarian will be responsible for coordinating nomination and election procedures of all Executive Board positions. A nominating committee of no more than three members, including the Parliamentarian, will be appointed by Co-Chairpersons at least 3 months before elections which will take place in May of each year. The nominating committee will consist of members who are not running for office. If the Parliamentarian is running for an elected position, Co-Chairpersons shall appoint a member to chair the nominating committee and oversee the election

process. The nominating committee shall develop a slate of nominees, at least one for each office. Two weeks prior to the meeting, a ballot and biographical sketch of each nominee will be distributed to NSAC's representatives.

Communications

Meetings. NSAC members will meet semi-annually, usually in May and December. Co-Chairpersons may call other meetings as necessary via conference calls. Minutes will be taken, and copies distributed to all NSAC members. NSAC members will be responsible for briefing the secretarial staff in their organizations on the activities discussed at NSAC meetings and obtaining their feedback and input on planned programs.

Information Sharing. The NSAC will keep Agency management and employees informed of its programs and activities through the following mechanisms:

- Distributing minutes.
- Publication of NSAC newsletters.
- Sharing work plans and accomplishment reports with management and supervisory staff and the secretarial workforce.
- Conducting seminars and workshops.

Correspondence

The Co-Chairpersons will sign correspondence, with copies to the Administrator.

Work Plans/Accomplishments Reports

The NSAC will develop an annual work plan to set goals and objectives, and plan activities for the fiscal year. Copies of the work plan will be sent to the Administrator. The NSAC will review the annual work plan quarterly to determine progress, assure that timeframes set will be met or, if necessary, redefine them.

An accomplishment report will be written by the Executive Board based on the work plan and published at the end of each fiscal year.

ORGANIZATIONAL SECRETARIAL ADVISORY COUNCILS (OSACs)

Each OSAC will develop its own by-laws based on the needs of its own area. The NSAC will provide guidance for OSACs. Their purpose, goals and objectives will parallel those of the NSAC but structure, membership, meeting format and schedule will be decided upon at the local level. Membership in a OSAC should be encouraged and promoted since involvement of several members will allow a OSAC to be more effective.

A OSAC chairperson (or an alternate) will serve as representative on the National Council and will report on or make recommendations relative to local councils.

The Executive Board of the National Secretarial Advisory Council will be elected by and from the representatives of the OSACs.

Officers and representatives of a OSAC could be a combination of both appointed and elected members. Appointed representatives should include head secretaries of the various Divisions/Offices (the rationale being that these secretaries are generally responsible for providing professional guidance and direction to other secretaries).

OSAC representatives should communicate with their constituents on a regular basis to ensure that relevant concerns/issues are addressed and provide feedback on progress made as a result of OSAC and NSAC efforts.