



UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT  
Washington, DC 20415

The Director

Tuesday, June 13, 2000  
CPM 2000-7A

**MEMORANDUM FOR: Human Resources Directors**

Subject: IT SPECIAL RATE STUDY QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

**These Qs and As are an addendum to our May 18, 2000, memorandum to agency personnel directors ([CPM 2000-7](#)).**

- 1. Our agency has not yet implemented the information technology (IT) parenthetical specialty titles for the GS-334 Computer Specialist Series. Does OPM expect us to classify our GS-334s by specialty and obtain staffing data for these positions by June 30, 2000?**

We understand that the Office of Personnel Management only recently provided agencies with the IT parenthetical specialty titles and that use of these titles is optional at this time. We are not requiring agencies to assign a specialty title to each of their GS-334 positions for the purpose of the special rate study. If you have not yet implemented the specialty titles, please estimate the number of IT employees by specialty and provide data on their staffing situation as accurately as possible (except for the information requested in Form B, as discussed in question 5, below). This will require working closely with your agency's Chief Information Officer and other IT managers who have the expertise and first-hand knowledge needed to provide staffing data reflective of your IT workforce.

If OPM approves any special rate schedules by specialty title as a result of this study, agencies will be required to specifically identify employees in covered positions at that time.

- 2. CPM 2000-7 requests that we provide headcount data for each skill category on Form A (Attachment 2). Do you want us to include vacant positions (by specialty) in the headcount data?**

Please provide data on the actual number of employees on-board (i.e., filled positions) for each specialty. This data will help us estimate the impact of establishing special rates for a particular category.

- 3. A number of our IT positions could be identified by more than one specialty title. How should we submit data for such hybrid positions?**

For the purpose of this report, we are focusing on employees' paramount or primary specialty. You should not double-count employees who have more than one specialty. Please include them under their paramount/primary specialty. However, if you have employees for

whom one specialty is not paramount but who do not fit in the "General" category, submit the headcount and ranking information for such hybrid employees on page 2 of Form A.

**4. By what grade levels do we define "Entry/Development," "Full Performance Level," and "Supervisory/Managerial" on Form A?**

Form A requests that you rank recruitment and retention problems by specialty and general work level. We hope to obtain an overall picture of where the IT staffing problems primarily exist from this information. We did not define these work levels by grade because we felt it was not necessary for this purpose. In addition, the grades covered by these work levels could vary between agencies. Form B requests more detailed staffing data by grade level for each skill category.

**5. We are not able to provide the staffing data requested in Form B (Attachment 3 to CPM 2000-7) because we have not yet implemented the IT specialty titles/skill categories. Do you want us to provide estimates?**

On Form B we request very specific staffing data by grade level for each IT specialty/skill category. If you are not able to provide such specific data, please estimate the number of employees at each grade level for each specialty/skill category (page 1 of Form B). This will help us estimate the cost of any future special rate schedules. In addition, please submit a separate Form B with the staffing data requested for all your GS-334 positions in total.

**6. What beginning and ending dates should we use for the staffing data on Form B?**

A 1-year snapshot should adequately reflect the staffing situation for a particular IT specialty. The ending data should be current to within 60 days of your data submission to OPM, if possible. If data are not available for the full year, the snapshot timeframe should not be less than 6 months.

**7. Should we submit a different Form C for each IT specialty?**

We would like you to rank IT recruitment and retention problems by geographic area overall, for all IT specialties, on Form C (Attachment 4 to CPM 2000-7). It is not necessary to submit separate rankings for each specialty unless you would like to highlight that staffing problems are particularly acute for a specific skill category in a given area.

**8. On Form A, does OPM expect us to assign a ranking to each skill category?**

Yes, for all skill categories for which you have employees. Assign a ranking or rating of 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 in all columns for each skill category that applies to your agency--with "1" used for categories with the most severe staffing problems and "5" for categories with the least severe staffing problems. (We are **not** asking you to select the five skill categories in each column with the most severe staffing problems and rank order only the top five.)

- To [CPM 2000-7](#)
- To [Compensation Administration Home Page](#)

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