



UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT
Washington, DC 20415

The Director

Friday, December 19, 2008

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief Human Capital Officers

FROM: Michael W. Hager, Acting Director

Subject: Moratorium On Senior Executive Service (SES) Qualifications Review Board (QRB) Cases

In accordance with 5 CFR 317.502(d), the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) may suspend processing of an agency's Senior Executive Service (SES) Qualifications Review Board (QRB) cases when the agency's head departs or announces his or her departure. This is done to ensure the incoming head of the agency will have the full opportunity to exercise his or her prerogative to make or approve executive resource decisions that will impact the agency's performance during his or her tenure. To that end, OPM has imposed a moratorium on the processing of a particular agency's SES QRB cases when the head of that agency departs for any reason, effective immediately upon the effective date of his or her departure. A QRB moratorium will also be imposed when the head of an agency announces his or her intention to leave that office, effective immediately upon that announcement.

On December 1, 2008, President George W. Bush requested letters of resignation from all non-termed presidential appointees by December 19, 2008. This was done to provide the President-elect maximum flexibility in assembling his administration. Accordingly, effective immediately OPM is imposing a Governmentwide moratorium on SES QRB cases.

While a QRB moratorium is intended to preserve the prerogatives of an incoming agency head, this must be balanced against the need to ensure the continuity of agency operations during such transitions. Accordingly, I will consider requests for exceptions to the QRB moratorium on a case-by-case basis. Requests for exceptions should be signed by the agency head or the official who is designated to act in the agency head's absence and must specifically address the potential for adverse impact on national security, homeland security, or a critical agency mission, program, or function if a particular SES candidate is not immediately certified.

Please address any questions to Mary Lamary, Acting Manager, Executive Resources Services Group by email at mary.lamary@opm.gov or phone at 202-606-1255.

cc: Human Resources Directors