



UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT
Washington, DC 20415

The Director

Wednesday, June 15, 2016

MEMORANDUM FOR: CHIEF HUMAN CAPITAL OFFICERS

FROM: ACTING DIRECTOR, BETH F. COBERT

Subject: National Security Professional Development (NSPD) Interagency
Personnel Rotations Program Guidance on Strong Preference

In order to support the implementation of the NSPD Interagency Personnel Rotations Program, The U.S. Office of Personnel Management is issuing the attached guidance on providing preference to employees who completed the program when they apply to senior level positions. This guidance is to assist participating agencies in meeting the requirement mandated by section 1107(e) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013.

If you have any questions, please contact Veronica Villalobos at Veronica.Villalobos@opm.gov.

Attachment: Guidance on “Strong Preference” for National Security Professionals (NSP) SES Positions (below)

Section 1107(e) Selection of Individuals to Fill Senior Positions –

The head of each agency participating in the program established pursuant to subsection (c) shall ensure that, in selecting individuals to fill senior positions within an Interagency Community of Interest, the agency gives a strong preference to individuals who have performed interagency rotational service within the Interagency Community of Interest pursuant to such program.

Agencies need to conduct a job analysis to support a technical qualification requirement applicable to NSP SES positions addressing experience gained through interagency rotations. Agencies that develop such a requirement would give preference when selecting for NSP SES positions to those individuals who meet it, including using it as a tie-breaker in deciding 2 or more equally qualified individuals.

The U.S. Office of Personnel Management and the NSP Executive Steering Committee (ESC) encourage agencies to implement a technical qualification requirement for specific NSP-designated SES positions for demonstrated ability to lead inter-agency, inter-departmental, inter-governmental activities, or comparable cross-organizational activities. Agencies may exercise discretion and flexibility in defining and elaborating upon the technical qualification requirement based on their positions and mission demands.

As supported by the appropriate job analysis, this policy recommends a multi-agency or equivalent experience for selection into NSP SES positions. OPM and the ESC have defined the qualifying “inter-agency” experience as follows:

Individuals should have “inter-agency” experience related to national security and have served in a leadership capacity (formal or otherwise) on a temporary or permanent assignment, on a multi-agency task force, in an inter-agency liaison capacity, and/or as a volunteer. The experience should meet the following criteria:

- extensive involvement (i.e., substantial time commitment, as determined by the job analysis, or decision-making responsibility);
- tangible results or accomplishments; and
- separate experiences in at least two organizations or a single experience involving multiple organizations.

The organizations referenced above can include Federal, state, local or foreign government entities, non-profit or non-governmental organizations, private sector organizations, international organizations such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and/or academic institutions. Departments may define multiple organizations to include their major components as appropriate.

Agencies and departments will need to—

- Determine the specific occupations and/or positions to which this requirement may apply.
- Conduct job analysis in support of the requirement as required by the Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures, (1978), 43 FR 38290 (August 25, 1978) and 5 CFR 300.103. Agencies may contact the Office of the Director of National Intelligence and the Office of the Secretary of Defense for information on the job analyses methodology they used to support their technical qualification.
- Provide broad access to its employees to multi-organizational experiences to ensure a sufficient pool of qualified individuals is available to make sure resulting selections are merit-based and avoid the appearance of pre-selection.
- Determine, in consultation with the ESC, if exceptions will be allowed, and under what circumstances (e.g., grandfathering or there are no highly-qualified candidates with inter-agency experience and it would be a detriment to the agency not to fill the position with available candidates).