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*Chris*

# Study of the Foreign Service



## Generalist Personnel System

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### The Task

The Department's new leadership asked the Study Group to conduct a short-term study of the Foreign Service Officer Generalist personnel system. We were asked to examine and make recommendations on all aspects of the personnel system -- structure, recruitment, career development (including assignments and training) and promotion/selection out. We were given sixty days to complete the study.

### The Problems

Our first task was to determine what, if anything, is wrong with the current personnel system. As a general rule we followed the principle, "if it ain't broke, don't fix it".

The Foreign Service personnel system has experienced continual change over the last twenty years. Because of this, many Foreign Service Officers expressed the hope that our report would not lead to further drastic changes. They felt that the Service needed a period of stability and continuity in our personnel system, especially after the significant changes required by the 1980 Foreign Service Act.

In general, we agree. We did not find problems serious enough to justify fundamental changes to the existing system. We believe that the 1980 Foreign Service Act is a useful and flexible tool for managing the personnel system. We do not suggest modifying the law as it applies to the subject of our study.

We judge that overall the personnel system is working well. The Foreign Service is, by and large, able to support the President with the requisite foreign policy expertise in the formulation and implementation of America's foreign policy. Generally speaking the Foreign Service can provide an officer with the right kind of generalist or expert skills for a particular position at a particular time where and when the President needs. The overall quality of personnel in the Foreign Service is excellent. On the whole, Foreign Service Officers are well motivated, disciplined and loyal to the administration in office in Washington.

Nevertheless, there are problems. Many of them have been noted in similar studies over the years:

- o The Foreign Service has no consensus on what the overall structure of the Service should be;

- o The cone system is too rigid;
- o The Foreign Service is not attracting enough top recruits; it has a special problem recruiting qualified minority candidates;
- o The Foreign Service discourages training, and does not adequately develop needed expert skills;
- o Many senior FSOs are poor managers;
- o The Foreign Service career development system is inadequate; its assignment process is not really a process -- it is a free-for-all;
- o Many officers lack the discipline to accept unappealing jobs.

The list goes on. The problems are familiar; yet they persist. Correcting them will require a determined commitment from management.

Some of the particular problem areas that we address are:

1. Defining Requirements and Managing Positions

The State Department must have a more effective means to determine its personnel requirements. These have developed incrementally over the years with little effort made to relate the current position requirements to actual workload.

As a result, there is no way to judge the current position structure. For example, the Foreign Service cannot say with confidence whether its current top-heavy structure is necessary or desirable. No provision is made for funding positions to cover officers on transfer. As a result large and regular gaps exist in staffing. These have a debilitating effect on the Service, particularly in relation to language training. Finally, top management does not have sufficient management information (in formats tailored to its interests) to know how well the personnel system is working.

2. Structure of the Generalist Corps

The Foreign Service needs a mix of people who have expert skills (language and area specialists, economists, arms control experts, science and technology officers) and those with generalist skills (policy development and integration). In addition, it needs officers skilled in operations and resource management. At the senior level, most officers need a combination of these skills.

The "cone" system reflects the reality that there are different kinds of work in the Foreign Service. However, that system has become too rigid, overly restricting the assignment process. As a result, it does not encourage the development of officers with the broad experience needed in the Senior Foreign Service. Management has taken useful steps to blur conal boundaries. We would go further.

By providing few incentives for training, the current structure also inhibits the development of needed expert skills. The system does not provide for a stable career path for many officers; instead it loses many good ones too soon and after a substantial investment in their careers.

No subject arouses more discussion in the Foreign Service than promotions. None is more hotly debated. Around no issue have more myths accumulated.

Yet on the whole the promotion system works. No doubt mistakes are made. But for the most part, better officers are promoted more quickly than mediocre officers, and the best officers do get to the top. While the initial experience with the senior threshold was traumatic, we endorse its continued use as a mechanism for deciding which officers are prepared for senior positions.

Despite the almost universal belief that efficiency reports are worthless because of inflated ratings, in fact promotion boards can distinguish among officers on the basis of efficiency reports. This suggests that, while some improvements could be made in the efficiency report forms, they would only marginally affect the promotion system.

However, the Department has allowed selection out to fall into disuse. The problem begins at the junior tenuring level where 96% of the candidates who are presented for tenuring are selected into the Foreign Service. In the mid-level and senior years selection out has all but disappeared. We think this is a mistake. Selection out can encourage better performance and remove, on a regular basis, those who do not meet our standards.

The effect of suspending selection out at the lower grades has been to put all of the pressure for selection out on the senior threshold. This is costly, both to the officers involved and to the Service. We believe that it is far better to select officers out as their substandard performance becomes apparent. Of course, selection out procedures must meet rigorous standards of equity.

### 3. Recruitment/Hiring

To be competitive with other employers, the Foreign Service must streamline its hiring process. Currently it takes 12-15 months, on average, to offer an applicant a job. Not surprisingly two out of three people finally offered an appointment decline it (although there are various reasons for declining).

Although the written exam has been challenged in court, we believe the current selection process -- a written exam followed by an oral exam -- is still valid. The written exam meets two basic needs: it is open to all and therefore encourages the Foreign Service to be truly representative of the diversity of American society; it also screens the large number of initial applicants down to a manageable number for the oral assessment. Also, the written exam helps to assure that those entering the Foreign Service have a common body of knowledge relevant to the job of representing our multi-ethnic society abroad.

Despite recent improvements, the Foreign Service still does not do enough systematic and coordinated recruitment. Except for recent laudable programs to encourage women and minorities to apply to the Foreign Service, recruitment efforts are too passive. Secure in the knowledge that 14,000 people apply each year for 200 jobs, the Foreign Service does not go out and seek the very best. But in today's intensely competitive hiring markets we will not attract the best by sitting back and hoping they discover us. It is not a buyer's market.

We must make a greater and more focused effort to persuade the best minority candidates to take the written exam. As that happens, the "near-passer" system, designed as a stop-gap measure, should be phased out.

A number of supervisors say that many officers lack interpersonal skills. We heard the complaint often enough to suggest further investigation by the Department.

### 4. Career Development, Assignments and Training

The Foreign Service lacks a professional career development system. Under the current multi-phased bidding process, Career Development Officers (CDOs) are overworked. As a result they cannot, and do not, provide career development counseling. Instead, they concentrate their efforts on the short-term question of how the next assignment will affect an officer's promotion. This is not career development; it is promotion counseling.

The career development process is distrusted and viewed with cynicism by the Foreign Service. Officers are left on their own to plot out their career development -- if they are lucky under the tutelage of a senior mentor. But the needs of the Service are not consistently made part of the process.

The Foreign Service assignment system is driven too much by the officer's desires and not enough by the Service's needs. The Service must take into account an officer's preference, family situation, and areas of interest. Good management would not do otherwise. The bidding system was established to ensure that FSOs had a say in their assignments.

But the Foreign Service has gone too far in this direction. The bidding system has become a perpetual motion machine with an officer submitting bid after bid after bid until finally he finds a job which satisfies him. Are the needs of the Service satisfied? We believe that they are not.

The Service is also hurt by a decline in training, especially during the past decade. Since the 1980 Act, the amount of time the average officer spends in training throughout his or her career has declined by 23%. Because of this, expert skills, particularly languages, are deteriorating.

Over the past three years there has been a marked drop in the number of Language Designated Positions (LDPs) held by officers with the requisite language skills. Since 1985 the LDP incumbency rate has declined in every regional bureau. Gaps are one reason for this problem: officers in language training leave to fill a vacancy overseas before they get a 3/3. Yet language proficiency lies at the very heart of the Foreign Service Officer's skills. If there is one area in which the Foreign Service can claim a comparative advantage over competing Washington bureaucracies, it should be that of expert knowledge of foreign countries and their languages.

There are two reasons for the reduction in training. Over the past 10 years FSI's budget and position base have been cut. Secondly, officers believe that training tours will make them less competitive, though we find no evidence in the promotion figures to support this belief.

Management has moved to correct this perception. It has suspended the time-in-class requirements for students of hard languages and in long-term economic training. Evidence suggests that these steps may encourage more officers to take hard languages, though apparently not further economic training. Still, more needs to be done to make training not just a neutral but a beneficial part of an officer's long-term career development. And the Service must reverse the decline in resources for training.

## Our Proposals for Improvement

### 1. Defining Requirements and Managing Positions

As a top priority, management should commission a comprehensive functional needs study for Foreign Service generalists. The results should then be translated into a set of position requirements (by grade, skill and number) based on the defined workload. To reduce position gapping, management must fund sufficient transient positions. With fewer early transfers out of language training, the Service's language skills should improve. Finally, management should develop a clear set of reporting requirements by which the personnel system can give the Department's managers useful information on system performance.

### 2. Structure of the Generalist Corps

Because the cone system is too rigid, we recommend moving to a system based on two disciplines: Policy Development (PD); and Operations and Resource Management (ORM). These disciplines should form the basic structure of the future Foreign Service generalist corps.

At tenuring, officers would be assigned to one of the two disciplines on the basis of their interest and Service need. They would then spend most of their career in their primary discipline. Each officer, as now, would develop a subspecialization in a particular field. For example, an officer might be designated PD/Politico-Military Affairs, PD/Petroleum Economist, or ORM/Consular Affairs. Subspecialization is critical to our model both to meet Service needs and to discourage dilettantism. But substituting a structure based on two disciplines for one based on four cones would allow considerably more assignment flexibility.

We also believe that senior Foreign Service Officers, to be effective, must have experience in both the Policy Development and Operations Resource Management disciplines. We would require that any officer wishing to be considered for promotion into the Senior Foreign Service serve at least one mid-level excursion tour in the alternative discipline.

New Foreign Service Officers must perceive they will have a career in the Service, not just a job. We therefore recommend that the junior officer period be extended to five years and the mid-career maximum set at twenty years. Thus most officers will enter the Service with the prospect of a minimum twenty-five year career. To encourage training and to assure a more stable career path, we also recommend minimum times-in-class for the mid-level years.

Moreover, to avoid punishing officers who are promoted quickly into the Senior Foreign Service only to find themselves "ticking out" early, we recommend establishing a multi-class Senior Foreign Service officer time-in-class. This would help the Service retain the skills and expertise of senior officers. But to make it work, management must resist the temptation to lengthen the senior TIC.

We have matched our proposed model against the Department's data base. These projections conclude that our recommendations would have only a slight effect on projected promotion rates. Management should still use LCEs in the Senior Foreign Service to assure flow-through and to adjust the staffing of the Senior Foreign Service according to the percent of non-career appointees.

Finally, we recommend greater use of selection out. We would require Junior Officer Tenuring Boards to deselect 15% of candidates each year. In addition, all promotion boards at mid and senior levels would be required to low-rank 5% of each cohort for referral to the Performance Standards Board.

### 3. Recruitment/Hiring

The Foreign Service must shorten the time it takes to make a job offer. The Department should be targetting entrants who are fresh out of university or graduate school because these are the people preparing to make a career commitment.

To be competitive the Department must be able to offer appointments to students in May of their last academic year. To do so, it should shorten the average time between the written exam and the job offer to seven months. Accordingly, the written exam should be offered in October of each year.

Management must allocate more time and resources to recruitment. A dynamic senior officer should be put in charge of the effort. Much greater use can be made of FSOs in this systematic, broad-based effort.

We also recommend a more targetted program to recruit fully qualified minority candidates. We would establish The Secretary's Foreign Affairs Fellowships to help pay for the graduate studies of outstanding minority candidates.

We believe the written exam should be continued. When the current job analysis is finished, a new exam should be carefully prepared to withstand legal challenges.

Finally, we think management should seek ways to test and reward interpersonal skills in the selection process.

#### 4. Career Development, Assignments and Training

We recommend that the Department establish a professional career development program. Career development counseling should begin even before the phone call offering an applicant appointment into the Foreign Service. It should continue during the junior officer years, preparing for the junior threshold. A tenured officer should be counseled about the likely course of his or her career -- not just for the next assignment, but for subsequent assignments leading to the senior threshold. Career development officers should be given professional training and be assisted by a cadre of Civil Service CDOs who would provide the continuity today's system lacks.

We would make assignments more responsive to service needs. We recommend substituting a Job Preference System (JPS) for the current bidding system. Once a year officers would be encouraged to express a preference for their next assignment. But we would stop the endless submission of additional bids. And to assure that Service needs are given higher priority, we would give the Director General's representatives on assignment panels the authority to decide -- after considering the officer's and bureau's preferences -- where an officer should go. We recommend the Department establish a Star Assignment system to attract officers to jobs that top management designates as high priority.

Our proposals give more authority over the assignment process to the central personnel system. This should be acceptable to the Foreign Service if combined with a credible career development program. As one junior officer told our group "I would gladly sacrifice more for the needs of the Service if I saw some logic and reason in the assignment process."

To provide more incentives for training we have recommended a minimum time-in-class at the mid-level. This would allow officers important opportunities for self-improvement. To rebuild language skills, we recommend a firm policy: no officer may leave language training until he or she has achieved a 3/3 level. We would also reinforce language precepts at both the tenuring and senior thresholds. The Department must reinstate FSI's budget and manpower to levels appropriate to this emphasis on training.

Neither the career development nor assignment systems will work unless management can staff personnel jobs with top officers. This may take years. But there is no alternative if the Foreign Service is to upgrade the quality of its personnel system.

Conclusions

Most corporations realize that people are their main capital. This should be true also of the State Department. Instead the Department separates personnel from other central policy-making functions. This has to change. We simply must pay more attention to managing the Department's only resource -- people.

Our proposals would require more centralized direction to the personnel system. The assignment process, while retaining flexibility, would become more responsive to the Service's needs. In return, the Department would make a commitment to officers: their career development would be fair and professional.

Our recommendations are not radical. But experience suggests that even small improvements will demand strong, continuing commitment from the Department's management and from the fine men and women of the Foreign Service. The result can be a more predictable, equitable and credible personnel system. Such a system can attract talented recruits and inspire once more a sense of discipline and dedication in the Foreign Service.

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## INTRODUCTION

The Department's new leadership directed this study on March 1. Our task was to examine the Foreign Service generalist corps and to recommend actions that would improve its ability to meet the needs of the country, the Service, and its members. We were asked in particular to examine the impact of the "cone" system on the generalist corps, considered the lynchpin of the Foreign Service. Other concerns centered on the operation of the current assignment, promotion, career development, training, and recruiting/hiring systems.

Although staffing responsibilities (requirements for positions) were placed outside the scope of the study in the initial phase, it soon became apparent that functional needs and position requirements for generalists were central to decisions about the structure of the generalist corps. Accordingly, the study was expanded in scope to include manpower staffing (requirements and positions) issues.

Our Study Group included mid-level representatives from all four cones in the generalist corps (political, economic, consular, administrative), two senior Foreign Service Officers, and a member of the senior staff of the RAND Corporation with experience in manpower and personnel analysis.[1]

We wish to thank our many colleagues in the Foreign and Civil Service who gave us their time and advice. We owe a special debt of gratitude to the men and women in the Bureau of Personnel for their willingness to answer our many questions [2].

Methods used in the study included:

- o A review of prior studies (e.g., Wriston, Herter, Heinemann, Murphy, Woodruff, Walker, Bacchus, Grove, Stearns) and concurrent efforts (the Thomas Commission, the Staffing Gap Study).
- o A review of the personnel management methods of other U.S. organizations with international representation responsibilities (e.g., military services, multinational corporations).

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[1] Appendix 1 lists the study group members.

[2] Appendix 2 lists the personnel interviewed in connection with the study.

- o Interviews with managers and key staff members of State Department bureaus for their perspectives on problems, constraints on change and remedies.
- o Roundtable discussions with a cross section of Foreign Service Officers on issues such as the generalist/expert mix, recruitment, promotions, and career development.
- o Interviews with experts on Foreign Service personnel management issues.

After these reviews, interviews, and discussions, the study group members arrived at a consensus on the nature of the problems facing the generalist corps and on the shape of needed and feasible remedies. That consensus is reflected in the report.

We are aware that the Foreign Service is a "closed" system; any changes to one part of the system will impact on other parts, too. Recommended changes, therefore, must be assessed in light of their impact on the whole system. We tried to develop specific recommendations that were practical and benefit the system as a whole. None of our recommendations requires changes in the basic law governing the personnel system, the Foreign Service Act of 1980. Few require major increase in resources, with the exception of recruiting and pipeline management.

The focus of this study is on Foreign Service generalists. Parallel issues in the Foreign Service specialist corps and with the Department's Civil Service component are important, but they are for other studies to address. Given the focus of our study and the short time (60 days) that we had to conduct it, we were not able to delve into other subjects of general concern, such as compensation and the impact of spousal employment and tandem couples on assignments.

Despite this study's focus on problems, we found that there is much that is right with the Foreign Service, the way it is managed, and the way it performs. It is a priceless asset that needs to be managed, nurtured, and skillfully employed in the national interest.

The very importance of the Foreign Service -- in spite of its problems -- explains why there have been so many studies and commissions to consider ways to improve it. As we turn to an examination of these problems in Chapter I, the reader is asked to view this study as an effort to better serve America by better managing a national resource -- the dedicated and skilled corps of Foreign Service generalists.

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CHAPTER I

PROBLEMS IN THE PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT  
OF THE FOREIGN SERVICE GENERALISTS

A. Defining Requirements and Managing Positions

The Service has not adequately defined its workload requirements. Therefore it does not have a good way to allocate positions or fill staffing gaps. Until it does, the Service cannot adequately manage the size and shape of the generalist corps on the basis of defined requirements, management objectives, position/personnel match and service needs.

B. Structure of the Generalist Corps

The current structure of the Foreign Service does not sufficiently encourage the development of generalist and expert skills. Nor does it provide the flexibility to meet specific needs.

C. Recruitment/Hiring

The Service is too slow to offer jobs; it lacks an aggressive strategy to attract the best candidates representing a broad spectrum of U.S. society and from all regions of the country.

D. Career Development, Assignments and Training

The Foreign Service does not have a coherent career development system that meets management objectives, service needs and the best career interests of its officers. This weakness is reflected in the market nature of the assignment process and the neglect of career development and training.

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These problems are not new or newly discovered. Previous study groups and commissions have already examined them. We do not intend to duplicate their efforts, but to summarize briefly those issues which point the way to improvements in personnel management.

We have taken a systems analysis approach to our study, looking at the personnel system as a whole and at the links among its various components. We have suggested improvements with an eye to their effect on the entire system.

Some important issues in the Foreign Service personnel system are outside the scope of our study. These include the morale and image of the Foreign Service; societal changes; two career couples; and issues related to spousal employment, tandem assignments, and compensation. Problems in these areas are left for future studies.

In the sections to follow we will look in more detail at the issues outlined above.

\* \* \* \* \*

**A. DEFINING REQUIREMENTS AND MANAGING POSITIONS**

**1. Workload Requirements are Not Defined**

Personnel managers face three fundamental questions:

- o What personnel do we need -- in numbers and specific skills?
- o What personnel are available -- again in numbers and skills?
- o How can we get a better match between need and availability?

There is no authoritative statement of the workload requirements of the Foreign Service beyond the general statement in Section 101 of the 1980 Foreign Service Act. With one notable exception, the current manpower management system for generalists does not address workload requirements except as it classifies individual position descriptions [1]. And the Department has no plans to undertake a Functional Needs study, a major tool used to determine such requirements, despite the recommendations of two recent study groups (Grove, Thomas). William Bacchus, in his 1985 draft Research Design for a Functional Needs Study, recommended such a study and discussed the impediments to the effort.

The Director General has created a workload measurement section to begin looking at the Department as a whole. Because of competing priorities, however, the Bureau of Personnel is not likely to assess generalist workload issues soon.

Therefore, the burden of defining those needs falls on a "skill code/staffing indicator" and a position classification system that is not credible to many managers and members of the Foreign Service. The inadequacy of this "skill code/staffing indicator" method is evident in attempts to deal with the interfunctional positions. Prior attempts to reclassify interfunctional positions have uncovered inconsistent application of interfunctional skill codes (e.g., in 1986 32 Deputy Assistant Secretary positions were labeled interfunctional and 13 were labeled functional.)

[1] The exception is in the management of consular positions and personnel where workload is identified and personnel requirements are formulated as part of the budget development process.

## 2. Position Management is Decentralized

The basic tool of manpower management is the position management (or control) system. PER/RMA technically has final authority on managing positions. In reality, however, PER/RMA records decisions made largely by the bureaus, with the result that it can rarely recoup positions in excess of requirements, or shift positions across bureaus to meet priority needs. In part, this lack of authority is due to a lack of information on staffing requirements.

Fortunately, neither OMB nor Congress have focused on the justification for the Department's manpower requirements. But without a clear sense of those requirements, the Department's ability to justify increases in personnel or to reallocate positions is weak.

The State Department's shortcomings in defining requirements and managing positions have been compounded by a liberal promotion and Limited Career Extension (LCE) policy. The result is dislocation in the personnel structure particularly at the senior levels. Though most attrition occurs at the senior threshold, the number of senior officers greatly exceeds the number of established positions at those levels. Eighteen percent of all Foreign Service officers are in the Senior Foreign Service (Table 1). Sixty-six percent of all officers listed as overcomplement are at the FO-01 level or above. And there is a significant mismatch of officers and positions in each senior grade (see Table 2).

This over-staffing is often blamed on a large number of political appointees in senior positions. The number of political appointees has been relatively stable over the past 10 years (Table 3). However, the Service's promotion policies have resulted in a severe mismatch in which 54 career ministers and 52 political appointees are chasing 62 established positions at the career minister level [2].

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[2] While it is true that the number of political appointees is not precisely predictable, it is usually predictable within 20% of the total of the positions. The Service could select, if it chose, a lower number (e.g., an average of the positions historically filled by the career Service). If it underestimated the number of openings, it could promote from a waiting list. The real problem appears to be the Service's continual willingness to promote on the most optimistic assumption of openings and then to complain when it is not realized.

Liberal LCE use has adverse effects; it bloats the size of the senior staff inventory beyond the number of positions, forces higher attrition at the senior threshold, and adversely affects promotion opportunities for mid-level officers through the cascade effect. Over the past two years 100% of CMs have been given LCEs, 55% of MCs, and over 40% of OCs (Table 4).

Another indication of confusion over position grades is the prolific use of stretch assignments. In January 1989, 615 generalists were stretched up and 712 were stretched down (in total, almost a third of the entire generalist corps). Of those, 55 mid-level officers were stretched up to SFS positions and 92 SFS officers were stretched down to mid-level positions (Table 5).

### 3. "Pipeline" is Not Adequately Funded

The Department's "pipeline" manpower account (covering employees not in an actual job, e.g., personnel in transit, training, holding status, etc.) is under-resourced and contributes, along with assignment practices, to a significant gapping problem. A major reason for the gaps is that there are no positions to underwrite personnel in transit between posts, which in 1988 averaged 188 at any given time (4.5% of the generalist corps).

The cumulative effect of insufficient pipeline positions is striking.

- o The average number of gapped positions in 1988 was 383 (9.1% of total positions). The highest number of gaps occurred in August 1988 with 594 (14.1%) (Table 6).
- o 73% of all European positions and 78% of all African positions turning over in 1988 experienced gaps. 36% of the European and up to 19% of the African positions were generalist positions. [3]

The gapping in turn raises questions about the quality of position descriptions. How necessary are positions which are habitually left empty?

[3] The Director of the on-going "staffing gap study" briefed our Study Group. His study addressed gapping throughout the Foreign Service (including specialists). Because of the magnitude of the data requirements to conduct a full study, it used sampling techniques. The study indicates that the Foreign Service as a whole faces a serious gapping problem. For example, 20% of the positions in the European Bureau which turned over in 1988 were gapped for more than three months. Although the study shows that the gapping problem among Foreign Service generalists is less severe, it is nevertheless significant.

Gaps also put pressure on officers to curtail necessary training, including language instruction for Language Designated Positions (LDPs). The urgent need to fill empty posts has contributed to our current drop in language skills.

#### 4. Inadequate Management Informations Systems (MIS)

Top management does not receive regular reports on the performance of the systems that govern requirements, position management, pipeline and assignments. Management's information needs apparently are met by its personal familiarity with the details and also by personal contacts with responsible officials. But this situation holds the system hostage to the memories, skills, and extended tours of a few of the top staff.

An example of the type of information that might be useful to top management is a list of positions that are currently empty, how long they have been vacant, and the average period they have been empty over specified periods of time. The current management information system was unable to respond to a request by the Study Group for a list of positions that had been vacant for 3, 6, 9, and 12 months. The reason given was that position and personnel files are not suitable for producing that type of information [4].

A fuller description of the important role of manpower issues in guiding manpower management is included in Appendix III.

### B. STRUCTURE OF THE GENERALIST CORPS

#### 1. Cone System Is Too Rigid

The Foreign Service needs language and area expertise as well as operational, management and functional skills. The Service also needs generalist officers, especially at the senior levels, who can integrate policy and resource issues. The cone system, however, has become rigid, particularly in the assignment process. It no longer adequately fosters the needed expert and generalist skills. In addition, it does not always assure that the best available officer is assigned to any given job.

But the system has tried to redress the rigidity problem. The gradual increase in interfunctional positions reflects the perceived need for assignment flexibility and provides a way for conal specialists to get interfunctional experience.

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[4] In some cases, there is a more fundamental problem: personnel and position codings are not sufficiently correlated.

Almost one third of all generalist positions are now classified as interfunctional. And management has clearly been reluctant, despite a 1986-87 interfunctional base study, to redesignate interfunctional positions to cones. Management has further eroded conal rigidity by increasing multifunctional promotions [5].

## 2. Decline of Skills Development

a. Loss of Expertise: The Foreign Service generalist corps has lost some of its "expert" skills. Some "expert" functions previously performed by the Foreign Service have been absorbed by other departments and agencies (e.g., Agriculture, Commerce, USTR). Other functions, such as consular work, may be targets for transfer. In addition, there has been a serious decline in core language skills in the past decade:

- o the percent of LDPs filled with language certified officers dropped from 75% to 66% in the past 3 years. The decrease runs across all regions (Table 8).
- o between 1986-1988, about 30% of SFS promotees did not have 3/3 proficiency in even one language, despite senior threshold precepts encouraging promotion of language officers (Table 9).

b. Lack of Management Skills: The cone system does not foster the development of management skills for most mid-and senior level Foreign Service generalists, despite the clear need for such skills.

The Grove Report last year cited numerous management deficiencies, such as duplicative elements in the bureaucracy and lack of clear lines of authority and responsibility. These are not new problems and their persistence points to the need for better management skills in the Foreign Service generalist corps, which manages most of the Department's activities.

We believe that officers must develop management skills before reaching the senior threshold, for once over the threshold, an officer must manage people and programs. There is general agreement that many DCMs encounter difficulties in performing their management duties precisely because they have not received significant management experience at mid-level.

[5] Belief is widespread in the Service that officers are significantly advantaged if they compete multifunctionally. In fact, promotion data suggests that officers are much more likely to be promoted within their function than multifunctionally. Table 7 shows the comparative promotion rates.

### 3. Career Stability Is Lacking

a. Inadequate Guidance in Junior Years: Perceptions of stability begin in the early years of an officer's career. At present, officers are invited into the Service in a cone for which they may feel little affinity or suitability and tenured with little professional guidance and insufficient evaluation. Some officers are then assigned to work for 20 years in a functional field for which they believe themselves to be unsuited. The brief and unfocused junior years do not comprise a solid building block, either in length of time or quality of evaluation, for a coherent long-term career.

b. Instability at Mid-Grades: At the mid-grades, we lose FO-01 officers who may have useful skills. These officers are forced to choose between possible promotion to the SFS or a guaranteed 22 year career. A choice to open a "window" one year rather than the next can doom an officer to early separation, often a loss to both the individual and the Foreign Service.

c. Loss of Senior Officers: Many rapidly promoted officers find themselves penalized when they reach the Minister Counselor level. If an officer has been promoted from OC to MC in, say, two years, he will then likely TIC out in five years after only seven years in the Senior Foreign Service and sometimes after less than 20 years in the Foreign Service. (Between 1984 and 1987, 78 MCs were involuntarily separated from the Service.)

### 4. High Performance Standards are Inadequately Enforced

a. Inadequate Selection-Out: Selection-out is used only minimally at the Junior threshold and mid-level grades. More than 95% of all entrants make it across the junior threshold (Table 10). Comparable forced attrition by the military services at the tenure point is 20-25%. Few of the remaining officers are eliminated at mid-level through the selection-out process. Promotion boards are reluctant to refer files to the Performance Standards Board (PSB). In 1987, promotion boards referred only 4/10 of 1 percent of files reviewed to the Performance Standards Board. The number of files referred to the PSB has actually declined in each of the past three years, during which time not a single senior officer has been referred to the PSB (Table 11). In 1987 only one officer left the service via the selection-out process. In 1988 three left from among seven officers referred to the PSB.

b. Senior Threshold Bears Attrition Burden: The Service uses the Senior Foreign Service threshold as its major means of honing its officer corps, in preference to a higher junior threshold and more stringent mid-level selection out. This affects officers during the critical middle years of professional life and is costly to the Service because it carries sub-standard performers for a number of years. (Table 12 shows attrition data at the senior threshold in recent years.)

c. Promotions Precepts Vague: Promotions, at least in the mid-levels, are not used to manage the shape of the generalist corps or to bring forward the skills the Service needs. Promotion precepts are often vague and reflect too many special interests or problems rather than clear management objectives. Boards complain in particular about the lack of clear guidance in the multifunctional precepts [6].

Finally, there is no system for holding promotion boards accountable to the precepts' guidance. This further reduces the effectiveness of promotion precepts.

### C. RECRUITMENT/HIRING

The Foreign Service must recruit its career candidates in an increasingly competitive hiring market. Some of the Foreign Service's problems in recruitment/hiring are beyond the Service's control. Among the general populace there is a low image of public service. Higher salaries are offered by the private sector. This forces the Foreign Service to develop a more competitive recruitment and hiring process.

The Service's hiring procedures select progressively fewer candidates at each step until the Department has a pool from which to hire career candidates. The written exam, taken by about 14,000 people, is open to any American over 20. In accordance with Department instructions, results are curved so that about 2,500 pass the exam (a number keyed each year to the number to be hired at the end of the process). These applicants are subjected to a day-long oral assessment which about 600-650 candidates pass each year. From this group the Service hires about 200 men and women.

[6] There is a perception promotions work against adequately shaping the generalist corps by not being fair across conal lines; however, the data does not bear this out (Table 13).

### 1. Selection Process Too Lengthy

The lengthy selection/hiring process (from 12-15 months at best) makes the Foreign Service uncompetitive with other employers for undergraduate or graduate students entering the job market. Yet these are precisely the people the Department should target because they are preparing to make a career commitment. (Table 14 shows the average length of time for each stage in the current hiring process.) Partly because of the time it takes to make a job offer some good candidates take other offers. Informal statistics indicate the Department makes three job offers for every acceptance into a Foreign Service class.

A look at the average age of junior officers provides stark evidence of this problem: the average age of written exam passers is 27 (about the age many students first enter the job market). Yet the average age of incoming Junior Officers has risen to over 32 from 28 only 10 years ago (Table.15).

The Foreign Service does not maintain enough systematic contact with potential candidates as they move through this lengthy process. Yet the Service must encourage continued interest and educate candidates about Foreign Service career opportunities.

### 2. Written Exam Is Invalid

The Foreign Service written exam (in particular the general background test) has been invalidated by the courts for alleged discrimination against women. Some of the current problems with the exam might have been avoided if there had been sustained interest, advice and assistance from the Legal Adviser's office. A new test, or new means, must be devised to reduce the many candidates with an interest in a Foreign Service career down to a manageable number.

### 3. Interpersonal Skills Are Inadequately Assessed

Many supervisors say that officers often lack interpersonal skills. Though the complaint is not quantifiable, it has been voiced frequently enough to cause concern. The Department needs to determine if the complaint is well founded. If so, the Department should determine its cause (the hiring process alone may not be to blame) and do something about it.

No assessment process can be 100 per cent effective. So we cannot expect the Foreign Service selection procedure to eliminate all who do not possess those personal attributes (such as maturity, motivation, cultural and social sensitivities and enthusiasm for overseas life) which are important in the Foreign

Service. But the current hiring process does not permit the examination of a potential candidate's overall qualifications, experience and suitability until the end of the process, when a Final Review Panel (FRP) reviews the candidate's file. However, the FRP has no personal contact with the candidate and receives no account from the oral assessors about the candidate's personal qualities. The oral assessors, for their part, see the candidate in person but are given no background information about him or her and are severely constrained as to what subjects they can raise. Thus, unlike most employers, the Department of State has no real interview with job candidates.

#### 4. Comprehensive Recruitment Effort is Lacking

Though about 14,000 applicants take the written exam each year, we need to assure that these are the right candidates. Our recruiting effort has improved markedly in recent years. However, it is still not a systematically-planned, dynamic and comprehensive effort keyed to management objectives, using various sophisticated marketing and media techniques. Our recruitment budget is only about \$40,000, though we do draw on the services of FSOs administering the oral assessment in various U.S. cities each spring to do some recruiting.

One college placement officer at a major university pointed out that the Department provides information to only a limited number of students, thereby overlooking many potentially qualified career candidates. This is supported by statistics: only 3% of the exam takers in 1987 said they heard about the exam from a Foreign Service recruiter. (Another 15%, however, said they had learned of the exam from an FSO.)

#### 5. Minority Recruitment is Inadequate

Too few minority candidates take the written exam to ensure an adequate pool of exam passers. Although the Department does have a minority recruitment program, the generalist corps still does not reflect the diversity of the U.S. population, though at the lower grades progress is evident (Table 16).

Our minority recruitment effort has relied too much on the "Near-Passer" program which allows minority near passers of the written exam to go on to the oral assessment. In fact, in 1987 we had to reach down to the 46th percentile to get a sufficient number of minority candidates. The Department instituted this program about a decade ago as a stopgap measure. It should not be a substitute for an aggressive recruitment program that brings the best minority candidates into the Service through the written exam.

The Service has recently recognized that it needs to attract career candidates with economic training by establishing entry level qualifications for those coming into the economic cone. When it began this exercise, the Department hoped to require 21 credit hours in economics. Unfortunately it was quickly forced to reduce the requirement to 12 credit hours to ensure an adequate pool of entrants.

**D. CAREER DEVELOPMENT**

**1. Department Has No Coherent Career Development System**

There is no coherent career development program for FSO generalists comparable to those existing in other services (e.g., USIA, AID, the military forces). Career Development Officers (CDOs) are overworked, largely because the multi-bid process is so time consuming [7]. CDOs are not given sufficient professional counseling training and their turnover is rapid.

As a result, career development is the individual officer's own responsibility. There are few authoritative guidelines and little official counseling. This promotes entrepreneurial careerism. Also, insufficient recognition is given to an FSO who opts for an unconventional career pattern, even though this may best fit both the Service's and the FSO's needs.

**2. Assignment Process is Employee-Driven**

The assignment process depends on a voluntary match of individual officer's interests and the positions that will become vacant. Since some positions are desirable from a promotion perspective and others are either hardship positions or reputed career "death traps," it is not surprising that supply and demand are not in balance, and that at the margin the market mechanism fails.

The Department has no authoritative way to highlight the most important jobs in an upcoming assignment cycle. The system may miss getting the best officers in the most important positions and officers may be unaware which jobs the Department considers to be its most significant.

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[7] Average CDO caseload is 250-300 clients (Table 17). The Navy, which uses a single bid process, copes with an average caseload of 600 per assignment officer. This suggests that the CDO workload problem is caused less by the number of clients than by the repetitious bidding system.

The open assignments system was implemented to provide a "level playing field" for officers. The concept was to make the process transparent to officers both overseas and at home. While the process is not always "bid decided", an employee is rarely sent to any assignment on which he has not bid. This leads to a bid "treadmill" where officers often submit additional bid lists as the system moves through successive layers of candidates. An inordinate amount of time is spent coaxing officers to submit additional bids appropriate to their assignment possibilities.

CDOs -- and by extension the central personnel system -- have become job placement agents without decision-making authority, rubber stamping about 75% of assignment decisions negotiated between officers and the bureaus. As one of the Cohort Grievants pointed out, filling positions with qualified officers "now depends on the functioning of the Foreign Service's internal job market, and is sometimes left almost entirely to chance...there is a surfeit of qualified officers for some jobs; others go begging."

The Service uses the "hard-to-fill" process to assure that selected positions are filled. But the Director General rarely resorts to directed assignments (only about a dozen in the last two years). The result is (inevitably) gapped positions -- usually those that are not desirable but still do not fit the "hard to fill" criterion.

There is tension between the central personnel system and the bureaus over control of the assignment process. The bureaus want their interests represented on the assignments panels as does central personnel. The Assignments Officer (AO), who works for personnel but presents the bureaus' positions to the panel, tries to represent both interests. The assignment panel chair (PER/FCA Director or Deputy Director) represents central personnel through a non-voting, ombudsman role. [8]

Because the assignment system is bifurcated (between the personnel system and the bureaus) and prone to be employee-driven, service needs often take a back seat to individual desires. Key senior positions may go unfilled for long periods because officers do not view them as career enhancing (e.g., Econ Counselor in Mexico in 1988).

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[8] The Grove Report recommended doing away with AOs and putting bureau representatives directly on the panels. We disagree. That would, we think, severely curtail the already-weak role central personnel has in assignments.

This "bidder-driven" assignments system has contributed to the impression of some Department managers that Foreign Service generalists are losing their sense of service "discipline." They point as evidence to the increasing numbers of grievances (130 in 1986, 170 in 1987, 210 in 1988), to the fact that there are few or no bidders for some posts, and to the large number of "negotiated" assignments that do not necessarily reflect the overall prioritized needs of the Foreign Service.

### 3. Decline in Training

Lack of a coherent career system affects the Service's ability to develop officers to meet key needs. Though the Service has many highly-skilled, intelligent officers, it must "grow" some of the skills it needs, particularly language and management skills. Yet, training is in decline. Enrollments at FSI have gone down by 10% between 1983 and 1987, dropping in every category except consular training (see Table 18). According to FSI figures, the amount of time an officer spends in training has, on average, dropped by 23% since 1980. There are two reasons for this decline: lack of incentive for training and declining FSI resources.

The Foreign Service system does not reward training. Officers see few institutional incentives, such as prime assignments and faster promotions, if they "detour" from their promotion tracks for training. Management's laudable decision to suspend TICs for hard language and economic training does not appear yet to have had a measurable impact. Moreover, many senior managers give little emphasis to training as an important element in an officer's development. Instead they often view education and training time as complicating their efforts to fill jobs (particularly overseas).

Mid-level officers are not required to take management or supervisory courses -- despite frequent lamentations about lack of management skill among senior FSOs. Only 6 political officers have been among the 84 participants in the Foreign Affairs Leadership Seminar since it began in January, 1988. There are no enforced competency requirements for entry into the Senior Foreign Service. And although senior threshold precepts mention training, almost half of the DCMs and Principal Officers serving in late 1988 had received none of the three major types of professional training -- senior training, university training and economic training (Table 19).

Moreover, the Department has cut resources for training. FSI has lost 125 FTE student positions since the 1980 Act, reducing the system's ability to provide training. FSI's budget as a percentage of the Department's budget also has dropped 14% since 1979 (Table 20). Put another way, if FSI were still receiving the same portion of the State's budget today, FSI's budget would be \$5.5 million higher.

Even the key area of language training, in which the Service traditionally has excelled, is suffering (though the percent of its budget FSI spends on language training has actually increased). Only 66% of FSOs depart fully qualified for assignments in language-designated posts. Over the past three years, the number of LDP positions encumbered by language capable officers has declined in every region (Table 8).

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## CHAPTER II

### DEFINING REQUIREMENTS AND MANAGING POSITIONS

#### A. Recapitulation of the Problems

1. Defining Workload Requirements: The Department has not defined its functional needs for generalists, the workload that flows from those needs, and the positions required to perform the work. There is no current system to review periodically post or bureau workload and to determine requirements for positions. [1] As a result, the Foreign Service cannot know with confidence whether the overall personnel structure meets its needs or not.

2. Position Management: Central personnel is only one of several players in determining the number, grade, type and distribution of positions in the Service. There is little programming in the Department's personnel budget development process, so that budget is not significantly influenced by workload and manpower requirements [2]. As a result, positions are moved around with insufficient knowledge of overall departmental needs.

3. Pipeline Management: The current system does not provide for an adequate number of positions to underwrite personnel who are not, at a given time, in an authorized Department or overseas position (e.g., transients between posts). As a result, many positions are gapped. Positions which are habitually vacant may not be valid.

4. Management Information Needs: Top management does not periodically receive reports to monitor the systems that govern generalist requirements, position management, pipeline assignments and hiring. Top management's information needs appear to be met by monthly aggregated statistical summaries, by its personal familiarity with the details, and by personal contacts with the responsible officials.

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[1] The Grove Commission Report recommended that such a system be instituted and it appears likely that the Thomas Commission will do likewise. An encouraging development is PER/RMA's efforts to set up a "workload measurement staff" that would address some of the needs for requirements analysis identified here.

[2] Programming in this context is the time-phased application of resources to meet an organization's objectives (requirements) in a coherent, rationalized and balanced manner. A program is built from a plan that assesses requirements and available resources and lays out the best approach to maximizing effectiveness in reaching organizational objectives. Personnel strength planning and budgeting currently fill this role in managing Foreign Service generalists.

## **B. Proposals for Improvement**

### **1. Defining Workload Requirements**

The difficulties of manpower and personnel management, plus the need to make careful changes, require concentration on a few fundamentals: a better understanding of the functional needs for Foreign Service generalists; translating these needs into a defined workload, and finally establishing position requirements to reflect that workload. Then management could make more rational and auditable position, personnel, and budget decisions. To do this management would:

- a. Conduct a functional needs analysis for Foreign Service generalists. A draft work plan for such an analysis was developed in 1985, but the analysis was not done.
- b. Determine Departmental and overseas post workload based on the functional needs analysis. The workload analysis should be developed through a comprehensive and systemic program of work measurement, position classification, and position requirements definition. The Study Group recognizes the inherent difficulty of conducting a workload analysis of requirements for generalists. Nevertheless, some staffing standards can be developed and applied in establishing position requirements. This workload study would be staffed by Foreign Service Officers with knowledge of overseas workloads, position classifiers, and workload measurement specialists.
- c. Compare Departmental and overseas post workload and associated position requirements with current written positions in order to make adjustments in current position descriptions and allocation.

Option "a" (above) should be undertaken in any event. If resources are insufficient to do all the activities of option "b", work should proceed as they become available. Option "c" would be exercised as work under option "b" progressed.

### **2. Managing Positions**

Positions can be managed in several ways. They may be used:

- a. to influence (not control) the distribution of the Foreign Service staff and to provide a basis for promotion, recruiting, and assignment plans;
- b. to assist with budget development;

- c. to allocate available resources to meet the most pressing needs of the State Department.

Option "a" is in use today. It involves little observable programming of manpower; that is to say, the budget for Foreign Service generalists does not adequately reflect the positions the Service needs and the people it should be developing to meet those needs. As noted above, the current system does not provide for strong centralized position management.

Option "b" would use centrally-directed position management to build a manpower program on which to base the budget. It would then use that budget system to carry out the manpower program (e.g., control allocation of positions). Option "b", together with option "c", would help remedy some defects in the current system (e.g., excessive gaps, unconvincing rationale for most staffing increases, skeptical use of the current position description file by the career development staff).

Under option "c", PER/RMA would control position increases and decreases among the bureaus. It would ensure that compensation is identified for all positions that exceeded authorized budgeted personnel numbers.

### 3. Pipeline Management

The current system of pipeline management leaves the structural gap problem unresolved. A solution would involve: (a) expanding the number of authorized positions for students, transients, patients, etc.; and (b) increasing recruit and lateral entry intake. Because some 375 additional staff would be needed to eliminate the current average pipeline shortfall, a gradual phase-in would make sense -- perhaps 75 additional recruits or lateral entry personnel over each of five years.

The new pipeline positions should be applied to the "hardest" requirements first -- probably training positions. Eventually, when convincing requirements data are available, the problem of positions for transients should be addressed.

### 4. Management Information Systems (MIS)

The current management information system serves a few parts of the bureaucracy and the needs of mid-level planners. To serve the needs of top management better, however, top managers must use the information system, and insist on high quality. [3] This suggests that: (a) management must be educated on the types of products that an effective system would provide; and (b) management must outline the decisions for which it wants information support.

Preliminary even to the above, a separate study group could identify MIS problems and suggest possible remedies to management. (A piecemeal approach to MIS remedies and modifications, however, is expensive and often ineffective.)

### C. Recommendations

The recommendations outlined below are intended to fill a gap in the current manpower and personnel management system. Most of them are not new. Many echo the Grove and Thomas Commissions and countless internal studies. Our Study Group recommendations would be relevant irrespective of the decision State Department management makes regarding the structure of the Foreign Service generalists corps.

Except for the funding needed for a viable personnel pipeline, the recommendations avoid the usual call for funds. They call for changes in the way the Department and the Foreign Service conduct their business: using control mechanisms and information to achieve organizational objectives.

#### II.1. Defining Workload Requirements

II.1.a. Director General: conduct a functional needs study for the Foreign Service, to include both the generalist and specialist corps. [4]

II.1.b. Director General: expand the workload requirements measurement unit within PER/RMA and start a periodic cycle of workload validation activities, (including surveying the generalist corps' workload). This unit should be able to conduct all needed workload surveys on a cycle not to exceed 3 years. To minimize lead times, this recommendation could be taken in conjunction with the preceding one.

[3] It is an axiom of information management that an MIS will be no better than the attention that top management pays to it and the degree to which the information generated is used to support decision-making.

[4] This recommendation is generally consistent with many of the recommendations made by William Bacchus in 1985. A draft study directive is available.

II.1.c. PER/RMA: as an interim measure, establish a file of all validated, but not yet funded, positions and use them incrementally to begin carrying out personnel plans (input and strength) used in developing the Departmental budget.

II.2. Position Management

II.2.a. Under Secretary for Management: direct PER to manage centrally the position system as the executive agent for the Priorities Planning Group (PPG). This authority would be exercised after consultation with the cognizant State Department bureaus. The PPG would act on bureau appeals. PER would approve all new positions, changes of skill codes, class, etc. In addition it would prioritize unfunded positions to draw up personnel strength/input plans for use in budget development.

II.3. Pipeline Management

II.3.a. Director General: designate PER/RMA as the pipeline manager for the Foreign Service. PER/RMA would ensure that pipeline capacity was sufficient for students, transients, patients, etc.

II.3.b. Under Secretary for Management: incrementally fund additional positions to cover the pipeline starting with the next available strength-planning and budget window. The additional positions, and associated funding, should be set up as identifiable requirements to facilitate joint OMB-Departmental budget implementation.

II.3.c. PER/RMA: establish pipeline "accounts" to specify types of position that are only vaguely described now (e.g., complement, detail out).

II.3.d. Under Secretary for Management: extend the current Staffing Gap Study (based on sampling) to provide a more comprehensive view of the problem and to provide more detail on the specifics of which generalist positions are usually gapped and for how long.

**II.4. Management Information Systems**

II.4.a. Under Secretary for Management: sponsor an analysis of management's requirements for information [5]. This analysis would be used to define the changes needed in the current manpower and personnel MIS and give the MIS staff a target to shoot for. The analysis would start with concerns specified by management; it would identify reports that might assist management resolve them. [6]

II.4.b. Director General: direct PER/RMA to develop a plan to rationalize the current MIS file structure and content, consistent with the other recommendations in this report.

[5] The Study Group could not find out if this had been done recently. Done or not, there is little evidence that top management depends on the position and personnel MIS for the information it needs to shape manpower and personnel options and decisions (except in promotion and input planning). With a new administration taking office, this is an ideal time to review previous work.

[6] Example: A monthly report to top management containing a list of positions that are currently vacant, how long they have been gapped, and the average period they have been vacant over specified periods of time. This report might illuminate pipeline problems in the assignment process. At a minimum it would quantify the manpower shortage at overseas posts and bureaus.

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CHAPTER III

STRUCTURE OF THE GENERALIST CORPS

A. Recapitulation of the Problems

1. Cone System: The rigid cone system often hinders the assignment of the best available officer at a place and time required by the Service. The skills and experience an officer might bring to a particular job are often ignored because the officer's conal designation does not match the job's. The system discourages approximately 50% of the generalist corps from acquiring the management and operational skills essential to success in the SFS. And it prevents many officers from gaining analytical and policy development experience they will need later as program directors and DCMs [1].

2. Skills Development: The personnel system does not insist on training and assignment patterns that ensure that officers develop superior professional skills.

3. Career Stability: The Service does not assure officers reasonable career stability. They begin their junior years with an inadequate pre-tenuring development and evaluation period; in their senior years some professionals who advance rapidly across the senior threshold, or within the Senior Foreign Service, may TIC out in their mid-40's/early 50's -- when they are often most valuable to the Service.

4. Performance Standards: Finally, the Service retains a significant number of substandard performers (perhaps as high as 10-15%) up to the senior threshold because selection-out procedures at lower levels are rarely used. Management relies on the senior threshold to weed out substandard officers just when they are most dependent on continued employment.

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[1] The Service recognizes these inflexibilities and has begun to modify the cone system by creating interfunctional positions and by establishing multifunctional promotions. Interfunctional positions -- into which an officer from any cone can be assigned -- now represent 33% of all positions. Their growth is a clear recognition that officers of all cones possess useful skills outside their primary field of expertise. Although interfunctional jobs have given many more operational officers the opportunity to work on policy development, they seldom enhance management skills.

## B. Proposals for Improvement

We propose a new personnel structure to break down the inflexibility of the cone system, to better prepare officers for their SFS responsibilities, to assure a reasonable and satisfying career path and to improve job performance. The goal is to produce senior officers who demonstrate "strong policy formulation capabilities, executive leadership qualities, and highly developed functional and area expertise". (Section 603b, Foreign Service Act of 1980.)

### 1. Replacing the Cones with Two Disciplines

The cones do reflect the different expert skills in Foreign Service work. But they overlook a deeper reality -- that Foreign Service generalist jobs can be grouped into two broad disciplines, each of which relies on a different but inter-related set of skills: 1) Policy Development (PD) (including reporting, analysis, and policy integration) and 2) Operations/Resource Management (ORM). We recommend basing the personnel structure on these two disciplines.

Within each of these two disciplines there are areas of specialization. Our system would require officers to pursue a career emphasis in one or two areas of sub-specialization, just as they do now, to assure expertise at the senior levels [2]. For example, a PD officer might develop expert skills in politico-military work, Soviet affairs or petroleum economics. An ORM officer might specialize in consular, refugee or administrative affairs, while developing strong language skills. Although we do not want to encourage dilettantism, our proposal would also avoid locking officers into their sub-specialities.

A personnel structure based on two disciplines would help break down the current conal rigidity. Assignments would depend primarily on matching a position's required skills with an officer's actual skills (i.e., language mastery, area/functional skills or a combination thereof) without reference to a narrow (and perhaps artificial) conal specialization.

[2] Before implementing this model, the functional needs study we have recommended should identify the major discipline and skills component for each FSO job. Not all refugee or narcotics jobs are operational, for example; some have a very high policy content.

Because each discipline comprises many positions requiring similar skills, officers would have many jobs to choose from within their particular disciplines. To broaden their utility to the Service, they would be encouraged to move around within their discipline. Likewise, our proposal would not bar them from serving in the alternative discipline or other sub-specialization fields.

Promotions into the Senior Foreign Service would be on a classwide basis. Any candidate for the Senior Foreign Service, however, should have skills in both disciplines. Consequently, with our proposal, all officers who wished to compete for the promotion into the SFS would be required to have served at least one two-year mid-level tour in the second discipline (or to have had an equivalent training assignment).

For example, officers in the PD discipline would be required to serve at least one mid-level tour in a consular, administrative, EX or other operations/resource management position. (Such jobs at 03 or above normally provide some management responsibility.) We realize that one mid-grade ORM tour by a PD officer would not necessarily produce a highly skilled manager; nor would one PD tour by an ORM officer create a finished analyst. But we do believe that such tours, together with classroom training, would improve on the current system's skill development.

To assure an appropriate mix of skills in the generalist corps, recruitment would target disciplines and sub-specializations. Recruiting literature should clearly describe each discipline and the written exam should test candidate skills in each discipline. When they enter the Foreign Service, officers would give a preliminary indication of which discipline they might specialize in. The assignment of an officer to a discipline, however, would occur only after careful evaluation at the junior threshold. (The tenuring process itself will be discussed in section 3.)

## 2. More Attention to Skills Development

Our proposal would develop expert and other skills by emphasizing training, career development and coherent assignment patterns based on Service need. A well-integrated assignment and training package for the mid-grades would include at least four tours: one cross-discipline tour, including related training, and three tours in an officer's discipline.

This assignment profile is essential if officers at the SFS threshold are to demonstrate the full range of skills required at the senior level [3]. The need for a balance of cross-disciplinary, in-discipline, training and language requirements would be precisely reflected in the SFS promotion precepts. We would also re-emphasize and enforce the requirement for 3/3 competency in two languages or a 4/4 in one as a prerequisite for promotion to the SFS.

Since the average tour is now three years, under our proposal officers would be required to spend a minimum of 12 years at the mid grades. (From 1986-1988, the average number of years for promotees in the mid-level was 13.1. See Table 21). To remove disincentives for training and broadening assignments, we would establish a minimum time in grade for promotion consideration at each of the three mid-level grades. Our initial review suggests the following formula:

FO-03 to FO-02	minimum of three years at grade
FO-02 to FO-01	minimum of four years at grade
FO-01 to SFS	minimum of five years at grade

These minimum requirements parallel the promotion averages under the present system over the past three years. The expanded mid-career years would provide a more predictable career path for all officers. Most important, a minimum TIC would encourage officers to take training and out-of-agency assignments immediately after promotion.

### 3. Toward a More Stable Career Pattern

All tenured officers who meet performance standards, whether or not they are accepted into the SFS, would be guaranteed a 25-year career (a five year junior officer probationary period followed by a 20-year mid-level TIC). However, we would not allow more than ten years at either FO-03 or FO-02 grades.

Junior officers would be eligible for tenure only after five years, including two two-year tours, one as a consular officer and the other in the officer's anticipated discipline [4]. The

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[3] Attached in appendix IV are three illustrative career paths which demonstrate the diversity requirement.

[4] Officers with an anticipated ORM/consular discipline should serve one of their pre-tenuring tours, wherever possible, in the PD discipline.

current probationary period is about 4 years. The slightly extended tenuring period would permit more careful assessment of an officer's suitability for a discipline before final assignment to the discipline. [5]

The Foreign Service Act of 1980 requires that officers at the FO-01 level request consideration for promotion to the SFS. The Act further requires the Secretary to prescribe the dimensions of that promotion window. We do not believe the window serves any useful purpose. An increasing number of FO-01s are rendering the window irrelevant by not opening their windows until six years before the end of their multi-class TIC (Table 22).

But we do want to preserve the senior threshold concept. Since the law requires the window, we recommend that each FO-01's window be automatically defined as coinciding with the remaining time an FO-01 has to the end of his or her mid-grade multi-class TIC. This simple procedure would assure all officers (who want it) of consideration for the SFS without forcing them to choose between advancement potential and the certainty of a 25-year career.

To address the early TIC-out problem in the SFS, we recommend a 15-year multi-class TIC at the OC, MC and CM levels, with a seven-year in-grade maximum for OC only. The enhanced SFS career should require fewer LCEs, though we strongly recommend retention of the LCE as a management tool [6].

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[5] The five year tenuring period would apply to all junior officers, regardless of age or prior experience. Each component of our proposed system fits into another. In this case the length of the tenuring period balances with the design of the mid-grade years and with total career length.

[6] Management might be able to use LCEs better by giving precise guidance to the promotion boards each year on the types of expert skills needed among SFS officers in the short-term. This information would then be used by the boards to assist in recommending officers for LCEs based on a combination of concrete needs and overall ranking. According LCEs based on real skill need, rather than across the board to a fixed percentage of senior officers regardless of positions available, would be a more rational application of the LCE provisions in the Act.

The Department has used a senior multi-class TIC in the past. Then management succumbed to the temptation to extend its length. This stultified flow-through in the senior Service and caused a negative cascade effect on promotions throughout. Therefore, a senior multi-class TIC should be set and left at 15 years [7].

#### 4. Re-emphasizing High Performance Standards

On the whole, the promotion system seems to work well. The best officers do, as a rule, advance more rapidly than their colleagues. This means that the performance evaluation system, despite the skepticism with which it is universally viewed, also works. Certainly, the EER form could be improved by adopting some of the suggestions made by Charlie Bray [8]. However, our guess is that these changes would have only a marginal (albeit beneficial) effect on the overall promotion process [9].

Accordingly, our recommendations instead focus on adherence to clear performance standards, precisely expressed in the promotion precepts, and enforced by a stringent junior threshold and revived selection-out. To better assure adherence to promotion precepts, promotion boards should also be held accountable for their implementation.

##### a. More non-selection at the junior threshold

At present the Service effectively defers selection out decisions to the senior threshold when they are more difficult for both officer and Service. In our model, selection out decisions would be made earlier.

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[7] In order to assess the combined effect of the 20 year multi-class mid-grade TIC, the 15-year multi-class SFS TIC and the extended JO period on promotions, PER/RMA developed several projections. These projections indicate that our model would slow down promotions slightly but this would be offset by a 25 year minimum career for tenured officers. These preliminary projections assure us that our proposals would not seriously dislocate promotion percentages.

[8] Ambassador Bray's suggestions would force officers to identify more clearly (by rank ordered forced distribution) rated officers' skills.

[9] The Service should, however, do better getting EERs submitted on time. In 1988, for example, only 56% of Departmental EERs were submitted on time, compared to 98% of reports prepared in the field.

First, we would establish a mandatory 15% non-selection at the junior tenuring threshold. This percentage roughly equals that of JOs currently not tenured (4-5%) plus an estimate of the percentage of mid-grade officers whose recurring placement and counseling problems reflect inferior performance (about 10%).

To assure that the Foreign Service can staff its middle grades, we recommend hiring 112% of our JO needs every year. The increased number of recruits would be matched by additional JORP positions designed specifically to enhance exposure and training at the entry level. The 5% shortfall [10] between selection out and mid-career needs would be met by increased lateral entry hiring, which could be used to increase the number of fully-qualified minority officers at the upper grades.

The greater costs of hiring over-complement junior officers, in our opinion, would be much less than the present cost of carrying substandard officers to the senior threshold.

We would continue to require a junior officer to have a 3/3 in a language to be tenured.

b. Revived selection out at mid and senior levels

We propose to revive selection-out at the mid and senior grades. Each promotion panel would be required to low rank 5% of its candidates. These would be referred to a Performance Standards Board (PSB) for consideration for selection out. The PSB would have clear precepts regarding performance. It would select out those low-ranked officers whose files show repeated substandard performance. The PSB would continue to be guided by current equity and appeals mechanisms. The actual selection-out rate would doubtless be lower than 5% (in 1988 only three officers -- or less than one/one hundredth of a percent of the corps -- were selected out by the PSB). But the possibility of selection out would, in our view, improve performance throughout the Service.

c. Clarified promotion precepts

We believe that promotion precepts have become nearly meaningless. They are so all-encompassing that in effect everything is important -- and therefore nothing is. The precepts are due for renegotiation next year; management should try to distill them into clear, concise desiderata which can usefully guide promotion boards.

Although senior promotions would be based on class-wide competition in our model, the senior promotion precepts would also require demonstrated skill in a sub-specialization needed by the Senior Foreign Service.

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[10] Selecting in 85% of an initial pool of 112% would leave us with 95% of our needs.

#### d. Accountability of promotion boards

Finally, we want to hold the Senior Threshold Promotion Board accountable for its recommendations. As is done in each of the military services, the Board would be required to report to the Director General on how its recommended list of promotees reflects (or does not reflect) the precepts. This procedure will keep the Board focused on those characteristics management has identified as important for the Senior Foreign Service [11].

This system might initially lead to more grievances. In any case, management must do a better job in two areas which account for many successful grievances today: assuring that EERs do not contain inadmissible comments and better maintaining individual officer's files [12]. But avoiding grievances is no reason not to improve our current system.

#### 5. Phasing-In

Full implementation of our proposed system would take a number of years. Nonetheless, it contains many elements already in, or easily made part of, the current system. Many officers could immediately begin to meet the requirement of diversity and of assignment to a discipline. "Grandfathering" would permit retention and promotion of senior officers who could not meet the diversity and training requirements. But most officers at the 03 level and below could be converted to the proposed new system.

#### C. Recommendations

##### III.1. Replacing Cones with Two Disciplines

The Under Secretary for Management and the Director General should:

- III.1.a. Revise the structure of the generalist personnel system around the concept of two disciplines -- Policy Development (PD) and Operations/Resource Management (ORM).

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[11] This report would describe percentages and aggregate numbers of promotees meeting the requirement of the precepts -- not why any particular individual was or was not on the promotion list.

[12] In 1987, 36% of all grievances were based on deficiencies in the EER's themselves and another 9% involved flaws in the content of an officer's performance file. Thus almost half of the grievances filed that year were avoidable.

- III.1.b. Conduct a functional needs analysis to assist in categorizing each position as part of either the PD or ORM discipline (see Chapter II).
- III.1.c. Establish hiring policies on the basis of long-range needs but defer final assignment to a discipline until tenuring.
- III.1.d. Base assignments on matching skills required by a position with skills an officer has acquired through background, previous assignments, and training.
- III.1.e. Require applicants for the SFS to complete at least one two-year mid-grade tour (or an equivalent training assignment) in the alternate discipline.

### III.2. Skills Development

The Under Secretary for Management and the Director General should:

- III.2.a. Require officers to spend a minimum of 12 years at the mid grades, and establish appropriate minimum time-in-grade requirement for FO-03s, 02s and 01s.
- III.2.b. Require officers to acquire and maintain proficiency in two languages at the 3/3 level or one at the 4/4 level for entry into the SFS.

### III.3. Career Stability

The Under Secretary for Management and the Director General should:

- III.3.a. Revise junior officer tenuring to occur only after five years and completion of two two-year tours.
- III.3.b. Adjust the mid-grade multi-class TIC to 20 years, with no longer than 10 years at FO-03 or FO-02 levels.
- III.3.c. Require that the Secretary prescribe a flexible SFS "window" equal to the number of years remaining in each officer's mid-grade multi-class TIC when the officer reaches FO-01.
- III.3.d. Establish a 15-year multi-class TIC at the OC, MC and CM levels, with a seven-year in-grade maximum for OC only.

**III.4. Performance Standards**

The Under Secretary for Management and the Director General should:

- III.4.a. Deny tenure to the lowest ranked 15% of each junior officer class.
- III.4.b. Hire 112% of junior officer needs every year.
- III.4.c. Create and fund additional JORP positions to enhance the training and rotation of the JO surfeit.
- III.4.d. Augment the lateral entry program to meet the shortfall created by increased selection out at the junior threshold.
- III.4.e. Require that each mid-level and senior promotion panel refer the lowest ranked 5% of officers reviewed to the Performance Standards Board for consideration for selection out.
- III.4.f. Develop promotion precepts which are more concise and useful to promotion boards.
- III.4.g. Hold the Senior Promotion Board more accountable to the Director General to following the guidance in precepts.
- III.4.h. Re-emphasize the importance of accurate EERs and handling of officer files to avoid unnecessary grievances.

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CHAPTER IV

RECRUITMENT/HIRING

A. Recapitulation of the Problems

1. Selection Process is Too Lengthy: The key to attracting the best qualified candidates in today's competitive market is a streamlined selection process. The present system is not competitive because it takes us 12-15 months to make a job offer. The Department does not maintain sufficient systematic contact with potential candidates to keep them interested as they move through this lengthy process. So by the time the Department makes an offer, many good candidates have already begun careers elsewhere.

2. Written Exam is Invalid: The courts have invalidated the current general background section of the written exam for alleged discrimination against women, a step which invalidates the entire exam. The Department must develop another means to screen a large number of people for further assessment, one that eliminates any cultural, sex, racial and other biases and which management is prepared to defend.

3. Interpersonal Skills Inadequately Assessed: Some senior and mid-level officers say that some officers often lack key interpersonal skills necessary for Foreign Service work. We think the assessment process should do more to measure these qualities.

4. Comprehensive Recruitment Effort is Lacking: Although better recruitment efforts have been initiated in recent years, there is no strategically planned recruiting program. Private sector efforts are far more purposeful.

5. Minority Recruitment is Inadequate: Though the recruitment effort focuses on attracting minorities, too few qualified minorities take the Foreign Service exam to establish a pool of "exam qualified" minorities. The Department relies instead on the "Near-Passer" program to fill minority recruitment goals [1].

Some of the recruiting problems have causes beyond our control, in particular the private sector's ability to offer higher salaries, the relatively small pool of qualified minorities

[1] A laudable step is the State Department's new internship program for 20 minority interns, a program that will be conducted this year in conjunction with the Sloan Foundation. We have started to do a better job at recruiting economists, but focus less on other skills such as management.

interested in a Foreign Service career, and the declining image of public service. These factors only strengthen the argument for a redoubled and streamlined recruitment effort. Senior State managers must maintain a strong and continuing interest in the process and must be prepared to defend that process when challenged.

**B. Proposals for Improvement**

**1. Streamlining the Process/Following-up with Candidates**

The Foreign Service must shorten the 12-15 month hiring process. To be a competitive employer the Department must make job offers when competitors are making theirs and when most new graduates complete their studies and make their first career decisions, i.e., May/June. We emphasize timely offers to students because the average age of written exam passers is 27, an age when many leave graduate school [2].

There are some candidate-driven reasons for the length of this hiring process. Some candidates elect to delay taking the oral assessment (most have one year; active duty military/Peace Corps have two). Security clearances for candidates with complex overseas residence histories can involve delays.

Nonetheless, the Foreign Service can meet a May deadline for most job offers and shorten the process by several months by doing the following:

--give the written exam in early October;

--require submission of security and other documentation at the time of the oral assessment; and

--streamline other elements of the process [3].

The Department should make most job offers in May, though it could still hire year-round to accommodate candidate-driven delays. And if the Department cannot meet a May deadline with an early October exam, it should adjust the timing of the exam to meet the May deadline.

[2] Although there is -- rightly, we believe -- no educational requirement for entry into the Service, in fact 99% of entrants have college degrees; 67% have graduate degrees.

[3] Appendix V outlines our ideas for streamlining the hiring process.

To be competitive with other employers during the selection process, the Department must stay in close communication with potential candidates. This could easily be done through special mailings and by phone. An experimental program is already underway with top candidates. This should be expanded. Meanwhile, PER/REE's information management and information services could be improved by assigning FSO oral assessors to respond promptly to non-routine telephone queries from prospective candidates.

PER/REE should also identify FSOs in the Department who are willing to answer more detailed questions and put them in touch with prospective candidates.

## 2. The Written Exam

The legal challenge has invalidated the entire exam. The Foreign Service must develop an effective replacement and should use the Job Analysis Survey, to be completed by late 1989/early 1990, to assist in this effort.

We believe that a written exam should remain the initial screening device for Foreign Service Officer candidates. A written exam makes the selection system open to all. And it is the best way to screen the approximately 14,000 exam takers each year down to a manageable number for further assessment. A written exam also helps assure that all FSOs have a common body of knowledge relevant to the job of representing all facets of our society abroad.

Our study group examined other methods of screening candidates, in particular application systems similar to those used by the Civil Service and AID. However, we rejected these methods because none offered the opportunity for access and pluralism of an exam. They would inject more subjectivity into the selection process and do so much earlier than is now the case.

We urge management to involve the Legal Adviser in designing the new screening process, since it is likely to be challenged and the Foreign Service should be prepared to defend it. The Under Secretary for Management should instruct the Legal Adviser to assign a qualified attorney to handle BEX matters and to play a key role in the process.

The new test should be based on the Job Analysis study. The Department should put the test design and administration out to open bid. The test should also be validated by a third qualified entity for cultural, sex and racial bias.

### 3. Measuring Interpersonal Skills

The Department needs to determine to what degree and why some Junior Officers lack essential personal qualities such as maturity, motivation, cultural and social sensitivities and enthusiasm for overseas life. If many officers lack these qualities, the hiring system alone may not be to blame.

The Department needs, nonetheless, to assure that the hiring process measures interpersonal skills better. Out of a desire to be completely objective, the current process does not provide for assessment of the whole person (overall qualifications, experience and suitability) until the final stages. Even then the Final Review Panel (FRP), which is charged with the overall assessment, has no contact with the candidate and receives no account from the oral assessors about the candidate's personal qualities. The oral assessors, on the other hand, see the candidate in person but are given no personal information about him or her; they are severely constrained as to what subjects they can raise.

Some legally sanctioned and defensible means must be found whereby experienced officers on the oral panel who are familiar with a candidate's file can take that candidate's measure face-to-face. The Department might copy CIA's program which brings candidates who have passed the oral assessment to Washington for a personal interview with senior officers. Another less expensive alternative would be to conduct an exit interview on the same day as the oral assessment.

### 4. Comprehensive Recruitment Effort

The Department needs to develop a broad, comprehensive plan to enhance recruitment. The effort should be energetically and centrally directed and use sophisticated marketing and media techniques. Its major goal should be to develop a pool of qualified potential candidates who reflect American regional, racial and ethnic diversity.

o Control of Overall Effort: The Director General should appoint a senior FSO as Director of the enhanced recruitment program. That program should include general recruiting, attracting and developing minorities and recruiting for specific skills, such as economics and management. The Director would coordinate with other bureaus and might establish a recruitment "task force" drawing on all resources of the Department. The DG should require early progress, frequent status reports and a deadline for implementation of the program.

o Recruitment Coordination with the Bureau of Public Affairs: The Office of Recruitment and the Bureau for Public Affairs have a common goal: educating the U.S. public, including recruitment targets, about U.S. foreign policy and the role of the Foreign Service. Coordination can be further expanded and institutionalized. For example:

--officers who participate in PA's speakers programs should actively recruit on their travel;

--PA-coordinated student events that involve Department officers should be exploited, for example, desk officer briefings of Model UN groups should include a recruitment pitch and follow-up with the professors/teachers/students involved.

o Attract High Quality BEX Officers: BEX oral assessors are also asked to recruit when they conduct oral assessments in various U.S. cities. Top quality officers should be doing this traditionally unpopular work. The Department might require that only those promoted in the past year serve in BEX.

o Volunteer FSO Home Leave Recruitment Program: Officers on home leave could recruit at local universities, receiving per diem for each day they recruit. The Recruitment Division would, however, carefully screen officers for their recruitment skills. The program could be publicized through Department Notices, the Newsletter, and the FS Journal, and should be coordinated with FCA on home leave transfers. Officers should be encouraged to develop contacts with professors, college placement officers or high quality recruits for systematic recruitment office follow-up. They should submit brief after-action reports.

o Junior Year Abroad Recruitment Effort: Recruiters should meet with students involved in Junior Year Abroad and other overseas programs. They should contact the students before their travel and then coordinate with the appropriate Embassy/Consulate for follow-up, such as invitations to Embassy/Consulate functions such as the July 4th celebration, or USIS-sponsored events.

o Foreign Affairs Seminar: PER should coordinate with PA to develop an intensive one-week Foreign Affairs Seminar each year for about 15 college placement officers and/or deans and professors. The focus of the seminar could vary (one year it might be on economics, the next on campuses with strong potential minority exam passers, etc.) The seminar would examine in-depth key foreign policy issues, discuss the foreign policy apparatus in

Washington and explore the ways to attract more and better students to Foreign Service careers. The program would help develop long-term contacts on campus with influential people who are vital to any recruitment effort.

o State's Internship Program: State's regular and minority intern program and the new minority program with the Sloan Foundation are good sources of potential candidates. The recruitment effort should maintain contact with these interns.

o Diplomats in Residence (DIRs): DIRs should continue their on-campus efforts to popularize Foreign Service careers.

#### 5. Attracting Qualified Minority Candidates

The Department, including PER and S/EEOCR, must work with universities so that a greater number of well-qualified minorities take the written exam -- thereby creating a larger pool of minority exam passers. The current Near-Passer program could be phased out when enough minority candidates take and pass the written exam. Two proposals are:

o The Secretary's Foreign Service Fellowships: We recommend the establishment of The Secretary's Foreign Service Fellowship Program. These prestigious fellowships would be granted to 20 top minority graduate students each year studying key disciplines such as economics or public administration. For a relatively modest cost, this program would soon provide strong, competitive minority candidates and allow the phase-out of the near-pass system [4].

o Foreign Affairs Summer Study Program: In the current Authorization Bill, management has proposed a summer Foreign Affairs study program for minority college students. Minority students from all over the country would spend a summer studying in a college foreign affairs program designed in conjunction with the Department. We should carefully select the college or university to achieve maximum exposure for the Department among minorities. Lincoln College has been mentioned as one possibility. Another might be a Washington area school such as Howard University. The Department should lobby the Hill to obtain funding for the program.

### C. Recommendations

#### IV.1. Streamlining the Process/Following-Up

IV.1.a. PER/REE: make most job offers by May. This will require giving the exam in October, and streamlining further the processing of successful exam passers.

[4] Details of the program are in Appendix VI.

- IV.1.b. PER/REE: maintain contact with candidates as they move through the system, by sending information about Foreign Service structure, Department publications (the Newsletter, GISTS), and the Foreign Service Journal. Improve the information delivery system by better briefing REE employees who answer candidates' questions, by assigning oral assessors to more Q and A work, and by developing names of FSOs in the Department willing to respond to more detailed questions.
- IV.2. The Written Exam
  - IV.2.a. The Under Secretary for Management: instruct the Legal Adviser to assign a qualified attorney to BEX.
  - IV.2.b. The Director General: decide on an initial screening device that can be defended. The Legal Adviser should work closely with Justice to prepare a strong defense. If a new exam is developed, management should vet it with another outside entity for cultural, sex, racial bias.
- IV.3. Interpersonal Skills
  - IV.3.a. PER/REE, Board of Examiners: improve methods for assessing and rewarding interpersonal skills in the selection process, with the help of testing professionals and legal counsel.
- IV.4. Comprehensive Recruitment Effort
  - IV.4.a. DG and Board of Examiners: appoint a senior FSO to lead recruitment effort and develop a comprehensive, coordinated recruitment plan.
  - IV.4.b. DG: personally recruit top newly-promoted officers for one-year assignments in BEX.
  - IV.4.c. PER/REE and PA: institutionalize coordination on the recruitment effort.
  - IV.4.d. PER/REE, PA and PER/FCA: develop a "Volunteer FSO Home Leave Recruitment Program". Carefully screen officers for recruitment skills.

IV.4.e. PER/REE: implement a Junior-Year Abroad recruitment effort that includes contact with students before, during and after their overseas studies.

IV.4.f. PER/REE and P/: develop an annual one-week Foreign Affairs Seminar for college placement officers, university deans and professors.

IV.5. Minority Recruitment

IV.5.a. PER/REE: recruit actively among State's college interns, including contact before, during and after their work at the Department.

IV.5.b. DG and PER/REE: develop and fund The Secretary's Foreign Service Fellowships to pay half tuition for 20 minority graduate students in special skills.

IV.5.c. DG, PER/REE and H: work to get Congressional authorization for Foreign Affairs Summer Study Program and coordinate closely on development of the program.

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CHAPTER V

CAREER DEVELOPMENT, ASSIGNMENTS AND TRAINING

A. Recapitulation of the Problems

1. Lack of a Coherent Career Development Program: The Department of State does not have a coherent, goal-directed career development program, a fault noted in studies of the Foreign Service for over ten years. [1] The result is a market-driven, open bidding system and a laissez-faire attitude toward training.

2. Assignment System is Employee-Driven: The decentralized assignment process is driven by employee preferences often at the expense of service needs. The assignment process is lengthy, repetitive and sometimes combative.

3. Training is Declining: There are few perceived reasons for FSOs to take training and several why they should not. Officers think training will hurt their promotion prospects. And FSI has lost resources. Key courses have been dropped and others, such as Foreign Service Leadership training, are underbid as officers pursue the "right" assignment instead of developing expertise and needed skills.

B. Proposals for Improvement

1. Career Development

a. More top management attention to career development

The State Department's culture resists the concept of career development. There have been few concrete signals to officers that training is important to them and to the Service. To correct this impression the Secretary and top management need to identify career development as a priority and recognize mentoring as a key factor in its successful implementation.

The Secretary could do this through public statements and memoranda to the Department's top managers. Senior managers in turn should be measured on how well they develop their staffs through:

- specific advice to employees by conscious mentoring,
- attention to EEO concerns,
- specific counseling on training and on developmental jobs.

[1] The Vine Report, 1976, DG Barnes Study, 1978, Walker Study, 1984, Woodruff Report, 1988.

Mentoring is particularly important as the Service becomes more representative of our national diversity. Management must ensure that officers from varying cultural backgrounds learn the institution's formal and informal codes of behavior and expectations.

To measure whether senior officers are effectively handling career development, EERs might refer to their subordinates' achievements, e.g., awards, special assignments, and recognition from principals, as is done in other organizations. (The Woodruff Report in 1988 noted that senior managers in the private sector spend up to 25 per cent of their time on personnel matters, and staff development in particular.)

Management needs to signal its interest in career development from the beginning of an officer's career. The A-100 course should give special attention to potential career paths, anticipated training and credentials needed to cross the senior threshold.

b. Improving the quality of career development counseling

The job of Career Development Officers (CDOs) must become a high-priority and rewarding assignment. Management has taken some useful first steps and as a result is attracting better candidates to the CDO functions. To further emphasize the importance of these jobs, we recommend upgrading all CDO positions to the FO-01 level and above. This would put more experienced officers into these positions. Additionally, CDOs need more comprehensive and professional training before they begin their tours. AID offers an initial 4-6 week training period and subsequent professional training in career counseling to its CDOs (who are FO-01s). We recommend the Department establish similar courses.

To provide needed continuity in career counseling, we recommend hiring a professional counselor and selected Civil Service development officers. These staff members would be available as resources to both CDOs and officers.

CDOs are already reluctant to provide frank advice to clients for fear they may be sued. If the CDOs are to be given more responsibility, they must be protected from liability for the advice given. Management should examine whether a waiver could be granted to protect the CDOs.

2. Assignments

We recommend moving toward a more centralized personnel structure that would invest the Director General with the authority to avoid the problems of the bid treadmill. We

believe the Department can meet these objectives by moving to a Job Preference System, by establishing a Star Assignments system, and by strengthening the Director General's role in the assignment panel process.

a. The Job Preference System

The assignment process should be based on the annual submission of a Job Preference List (JPL). The assignments process would begin early in the year with Career Review Letters from CDOs to officers. Each letter would review the officer's long-term career path, the required language, management training or cross-disciplinary tours needed and offer initial recommendations on what the officer's next assignments should be. In the fall, the officer would submit his or her JPL, indicating preference for a limited number of jobs (perhaps 5). There would be no additional bidding.[2]

b. The Star Assignments System

We believe the Department should set up a Star Assignments system. Each year the Secretary would designate 100 jobs at all grades which he deems the most significant to (a) meet special policy needs or (b) remedy deficiencies in the system.

A majority of the jobs on the list would be policy-oriented or management positions. Others might be jobs for which recruitment has been a chronic problem or which the Secretary believes have special priority (e.g., the Director of the Board of Examiners or CDOs for the economic and political cones). The Secretary would publish the Star Assignments list at the time the assignment packages were sent out.

Selection for Star Assignments would be exempt from the usual stretch and fair share rules. All Star Assignments would be filled at the beginning of an assignment cycle. EERs would reflect that the officer was chosen for a Star Assignment.

c. Stronger Director General role in assignments

To best match officers and positions, an explicit stretch quota would be allocated to each bureau. After stretch assignments were filled and all possible matches had been made between bureau and officer preferences, unassigned officers would be assigned to remaining slots by the assignments panel.

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[2] Appendix VII shows in more detail our proposed assignment cycle.

To assure that assignments adequately meet the Service's needs, we recommend that the assignment panel's chairman have the final authority over assignments, after taking into account the interest of the individual officer and relevant bureaus.

### 3. Training

#### a. Incentives for training

We would lessen the disincentives to training by requiring a minimum time in grade during the mid-level years. After a mid-level promotion, an officer would know he or she would not be eligible for another promotion for several years. Therefore training would not interfere with the officer's promotion chances. Indeed, with more emphasis on training in the senior threshold precepts, training should help with promotions.

To counter declining language skills, officers should not be allowed to depart for language-designated positions until they have reached the 3/3 level. USIA already enforces this requirement. [3]

We also recommend changing the promotion board precepts to insure that training reports receive consideration equal to that of performance reports. Boards might even be asked to withhold promotions if an officer had ignored recommendations for training by CDOs or supervisors.

Other incentives such as monetary awards and special consideration for good assignments would help alleviate officers' indifference to training. Step increases -- now used as incentives for successful language training -- could also be given for university, management/public administration training and congressional fellowships.

Key jobs should be designated as requiring specific, job-related training. Officers who have had required training should receive special consideration for assignment to such positions.

#### b. Resources for training

A second major cause of declining training is the reduction of resources provided to the Foreign Service Institute. We recommend the Department restore to FSI student-year funded positions that it has lost since the 1980 Act. The State Department should

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[3] We have elsewhere recommended that management fund the system's transient positions which should ease pressure on officers to leave language training early.

strongly support FSI's request in the FY 90 budget for 50 additional language instructors.

One way to stretch limited resources would be to develop on-site training at embassies. AID, for example, has developed a portable module for mid-level officers' which it offers at posts around the world. The Department should support FSI's proposal for training in the workplace during the next budget submission.  
[4]

**C. Recommendations**

**V. 1. Career Development**

- V.1.a. The Secretary and the Under Secretary for Management: set career development as a priority and note the key role of mentoring in ensuring fully developed and capable Foreign Service officers.
- V.1.b. The Secretary: indicate publicly and consistently the high priority he attaches to professional development.
- V.1.c. The Under Secretary for Management and the Director General: require that evaluations of supervisors, including office directors and Deputy Assistant Secretaries include demonstrated examples of supervisors' actions to develop employees, with specific reference to achievements attained by those individuals under their guidance.
- V.1.d. The Director General: require specific courses on supervisory techniques and EEO sensitivities for first-time supervisors.
- V.1.e. The Director General: upgrade CDO positions to the FO-01 level and above, and establish professional career development training prior to assumption of duties and during the course of the CDO tour.
- V.1.f. The Director General: hire a professional counselor with social work or counseling background to work in career development. Also establish a Civil Service professional development officer cadre in PER to ensure continuity and stability in monitoring and developing officers' career paths.

[4] FSI proposed workplace training for FY 1990. It was included in the Department's submission to OMB but has not been funded.

- V.1.g. The Director General: examine whether a w.river or other system can be developed to protect CDOs from law suits.

## 2. Assignments

- V.2.a The Director General: establish a Job Preference List system and eliminate multiple bidding.
- V.2.b. The Director General: begin the assignment process in Spring with Career Development Review Letter from CDOs.
- V.2.c. The Director General: allocate and fill bureau stretch positions by December.
- V.2.d. The Director General: use directed assignments as needed to meet service needs.
- V.2.e. The Secretary, the Under Secretary for Management and the Director General: establish Secretary's Star Assignments system.
- V.2.f. The Under Secretary for Management: instruct the Director General to authorize assignment panel chairmen to make assignments, after due consideration of officer and bureau preference.

## 3. Training

- V.3.a. Under Secretary for Management and Director General: establish minimum time-in-class guidelines to encourage training at the mid-level (see Chapter III).
- V.3.b. The Director General: use monetary awards to encourage training.
- V.3.c. The Director General: do not allow officers to leave for language-designated posts until they have a 3/3 level in the language.
- V.3.d. The Under Secretary for Management: develop the precepts of the promotion boards to ensure that training reports would get equal weight with performance reports.
- V.3.e. Under Secretary for Management: designate certain key positions as requiring specific levels of training.
- V.3.f. The Under Secretary for Management: give FSI 50 instructor positions and increase student-year funded positions.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS  
(by chapter)

II. DEFINING REQUIREMENTS AND MANAGING POSITIONS

II.1. Defining Workload Requirements

II.1.a. Director General: conduct a functional needs study for the Foreign Service, to include both the generalist and specialist corps.

II.1.b. Director General: expand the workload requirements measurement unit within PER/RMA and start a periodic cycle of workload validation activities, (including surveying the generalist corps' workload). This unit should be able to conduct all needed workload surveys on a cycle not to exceed 3 years. To minimize lead times, this recommendation could be taken in conjunction with the preceding one.

II.1.c. PER/RMA: as an interim measure, establish a file of all validated, but not yet funded, positions and use them incrementally to begin carrying out personnel plans (input and strength) used in developing the Departmental budget.

II.2. Position Management

II.2.a. Under Secretary for Management: direct PER to manage centrally the position system as the executive agent for the Priorities Planning Group (PPG). This authority would be exercised after consultation with the cognizant State Department bureaus. The PPG would act on bureau appeals. PER would approve all new positions, changes of skill codes, class, etc. In addition it would prioritize unfunded positions to draw up personnel strength/input plans for use in budget development.

II.3. Pipeline Management

II.3.a. Director General: designate PER/RMA as the pipeline manager for the Foreign Service. PER/RMA would ensure that pipeline capacity was sufficient for students, transients, patients, etc.

- II.3.b. Under Secretary for Management: incrementally fund additional positions to cover the pipeline starting with the next available strength planning and budget window. The additional positions, and associated funding, should be set up as identifiable requirements to facilitate joint OMB-Departmental budget implementation.
- II.3.c. PER/RMA: establish pipeline "accounts" to specify types of position that are only vaguely described now (e.g., complement, detail out).
- II.3.d. Under Secretary for Management: extend the current Staffing Gap Study (based on sampling) to provide a more comprehensive view of the problem and to provide more detail on the specifics of which generalist positions are usually gapped and for how long.

#### II.4. Management Information Systems

- II.4.a. Under Secretary for Management: sponsor an analysis of management's requirements for information. This analysis would be used to define the changes needed in the current manpower and personnel MIS and give the MIS staff a target to shoot for. The analysis would start with management specified concerns; it would identify reports that might assist management resolve them.
- II.4.b. Director General: direct PER/RMA to develop a plan to rationalize the current MIS file structure and content, consistent with the other recommendations in this report.

### III. STRUCTURE OF THE GENERALIST CORPS

#### III.1. Replacing Cones With Two Disciplines

The Under Secretary for Management and the Director General should:

- III.1.a. Revise the structure of the generalist personnel system around the concept of two disciplines -- Policy Development (PD) and Operations/Resource Management (ORM).

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- III.1.b. Conduct a functional needs analysis to assist in categorizing each position as part of either the PD or ORA discipline.
- III.1.c. Establish hiring policies on the basis of long-range needs but defer final assignment to a discipline until tenuring.
- III.1.d. Base assignments on matching skills required by a position with skills an officer has acquired through background, previous assignments, and training.
- III.1.e. Require applicants for the SFS to complete at least one two-year mid-grade tour (or an equivalent training assignment) in the alternate discipline.

### III.2. Skills Development

The Under Secretary for Management and the Director General should:

- III.2.a. Require officers to spend a minimum of 12 years at the mid grades, and establish appropriate minimum time-in-grade requirement for FO-03s, 02s and 01s.
- III.2.b. Require officers to acquire and maintain proficiency in two languages at the 3/3 level or one at the 4/4 level for entry into the SFS.

### III.3. Career Stability

The Under Secretary for Management and the Director General should:

- III.3.a. Revise junior officer tenuring to occur only after five years and completion of two two-year tours.
- III.3.b. Adjust the mid-grade multi-class TIC to 20 years, with no longer than 10 years at FO-03 or FO-02 levels.
- III.3.c. Require that the Secretary prescribe a flexible SFS "window" equal to each officer's remaining mid-grade multi-class TIC when the officer reaches FO-01.

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III.3.2. Establish a 15-year multi-class TIC at the OC, MC and CM levels, with a seven-year in-grade maximum for OC only.

**III.4. Performance Standards**

The Under Secretary for Management and the Director General should:

III.4.a. Deny tenure to the lowest ranked 15% of each junior officer class.

III.4.b. Hire 112% of junior officer needs every year.

III.4.c. Create and fund additional JORP positions to enhance the training and rotation of the JO surfeit.

III.4.d. Augment the lateral entry program to meet the shortfall created by increased selection out at the junior threshold.

III.4.e. Require that each mid-level and senior promotion panel refer the lowest ranked 5% of officers reviewed to the Performance Standards Board for consideration for selection out.

III.4.f. Develop promotion precepts which are more concise and useful to promotion boards.

III.4.g. Hold the Senior Promotion Board more accountable to the Director General in following the guidance in precepts.

III.4.h. Re-emphasize the importance of accurate EERs and handling of officer files to avoid unnecessary grievances.

**IV. RECRUITMENT/HIRING**

**IV.1. Streamlining the Process/Following-Up**

IV.1.a. PER/REE: make most job offers by May. This will require giving the exam in October, and streamlining further the processing of successful exam passers.

IV.1.b. PER/REE: maintain contact with candidates as they move through the system, by sending information about Foreign Service structure, Department publications (the Newsletter, GISTS), and the Foreign Service Journal. Improve the information delivery system by better briefing REE employees who answer candidates' questions, by assigning oral assessors to more Q and A work, and by developing names of FSOs in the Department willing to respond to more detailed questions.

IV.2. The Written Exam

IV.2.a. The Under Secretary for Management: instruct the Legal Adviser to assign a qualified attorney to BEX.

IV.2.b. The Director General: decide on an initial screening device that can be defended. The Legal Adviser should work closely with Justice to prepare a strong defense. If a new exam is developed, management should vet it with another outside entity for cultural, gender, racial bias.

IV.3. Interpersonal Skills

IV.3.a. PER/REE, Board of Examiners: improve methods for assessing and rewarding interpersonal skills in the selection process, with the help of testing professionals and legal counsel.

IV.4. Comprehensive Recruitment Effort

IV.4.a. DG and Board of Examiners: appoint a senior FSO to lead recruitment effort and develop a comprehensive, coordinated recruitment plan.

IV.4.b. DG: personally recruit top newly-promoted officers for one-year assignments in BEX.

IV.4.c. PER/REE and PA: institutionalize coordinated action in the recruitment effort.

IV.4.d. PER/REE, PA and PER/FCA: develop a "Volunteer FSO Home Leave Recruitment Program". Carefully screen officers for recruitment skills.

- IV.4.e. PER/REE: implement a Junior-Year Abroad recruitment effort that includes contact with students before, during and after their overseas studies.
- IV.4.f. PER/REE and PA: develop an annual one-week Foreign Affairs Seminar for college placement officers, university deans and professors.

IV. 5. Minority Recruitment

- IV.5.a. PER/REE: recruit actively among State's college interns, including contact before, during and after their work at the Department.
- IV.5.b. DG and PER/REE: develop and fund the Secretary's Foreign Service Fellowships to pay half tuition for 20 minority graduate students in special skills.
- IV.5.c. DG, PER/REE and H: work to get Congressional authorization for Foreign Affairs Summer Study Program and coordinate closely on development of the program.

V. CAREER DEVELOPMENT

V. 1. Career Development

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18. FSI Training
19. Percent of Principal Officers and DCMS Without Professional Training
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21. Average Years in Grade for Mid-Level Promotees
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Table 1

STRUCTURE OF FOREIGN SERVICE GENERALIST CORPS  
(January, 1989)

SFS

CM = 106  
MC = 346  
OC = 331  
783 = 18%

Mid Level

O1 = 789  
O2 = 870  
O3 = 778  
2437 = 57%

Junior Officers

O4 = 731  
O5 = 243  
O6 = 48  
1022 = 24%

Total FSO Generalists = 4242 = 100%

Source: January 1989 Personnel Inventory Report

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Table 2

CAREER SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE & FSO-1  
OFFICER/POSITION MATCH  
(January, 1989)

<u>GRADE</u>	<u>NUMBER OF OFFICERS</u>	<u>NUMBER OF POSITIONS</u>
CM	54	31
MC	346	361
OC	323	280
FS-1	781	736
TOTAL	1504	1408

Source: January 1989 Personnel Inventory Report

.66

Table 3

PERCENT OF SENIOR PRESIDENTIAL APPOINTMENTS  
HELD BY CAREER FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICERS  
1979 - 1988

	<u>Sept</u> <u>1979</u>	<u>March</u> <u>1982</u>	<u>March</u> <u>1985</u>	<u>March</u> <u>1988</u>
Under Secretaries and Ambassadors-at-Large	25%	12%	30%	33%
Asst. Secretaries and Equivalent	46	46	44	49
Ambassadors	65	62	58	58
DAS and Equivalent	67	62	69	70
Overall Average	62%	59%	57%	61%

Source: PER/RMA

61'

Table 4

PERCENT OF ELIGIBLE SFS OFFICERS  
GIVEN LCEs  
(1983 -1988)

<u>GRADE</u>	<u>1983</u>	<u>1984</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1987</u>	<u>1988</u>
CM	91.7	83.3	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
MC	77.2	63.8	64.0	74.1	55.9	54.7
OC	33.3	58.3	52.9	69.2	46.7	43.5

Source: PER/RMA

Table 5

STRETCH ASSIGNMENTS

<u>Stretch Category</u>	<u>MC</u>	<u>OC</u>	<u>O1</u>	<u>O2</u>	<u>O3</u>	<u>O4</u>	<u>O5</u>	<u>O6</u>	<u>Total</u>
	(Class of Position Occupied)								
<u>No. of Officers Stretched Up</u>									
1 Grade Up		69	48	88	135	139	95	5	579
2 Grades Up			7		3	7	3	16	36
Total		69	55	88	138	146	98	21	615
<u>No. of Officers Stretched Down</u>									
1 Grade Down	63	87	160	185	86	103			684
2 Grades Down	3	2	6	10	3	1			25
3 Grades Down				3					3
Total	66	89	166	198	89	104			712

Senior Stretches

Midlevel up to SFS		55							55
SFS Down to Midlevel	3	89							92

Percent of SFS Positions Occupied by Midlevel Officers = 8.2%  
 Percent of SFS Officers Downstretched to Midlevel Pos. = 12.8%  
 Percent of Net Stretches over Senior Threshold = 5.5%

Source: January 1989 Personnel Inventory Report

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Table 6

GAPPING IN THE FOREIGN SERVICE

UNFILLED POSITION DATA

	<u>Lowest Gap (Jan 89)</u>	<u>Highest Gap (Aug 88)</u>	<u>Average Gap (Mar 88-Feb 89)</u>
a. Full-Time Positions	4183	4224	4222
b. Included Pipeline Positions	401	401	401
c. Employee Total	4155	4224	4190
d. Employees in Pipeline	643	995	752
e. Unfilled Positions (a-b) - (c-d)	270	594	383
f. % Positions Not Filled (e/a)	6.5%	14.1%	9.1%

Source: Personnel Inventory Reports-March 1988/February 1989

Table 7

MULTIFUNCTIONAL/FUNCTIONAL PROMOTIONS  
 (1986 - 1988)  
 (Percent of Eligibles from Class Promoted)

<u>TO CLASS</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1987</u>	<u>1988</u>	<u>86/87/88</u>
<u>FE-OC</u>				
OVERALL AVERAGE	N/A	N/A	12.70%	12.70%
MULTIFUNCTIONAL	N/A	N/A	4.00%	4.00%
<u>FS-01</u>				
OVERALL AVERAGE	15.20%	16.70%	16.40%	16.10%
MULTIFUNCTIONAL	12.70%	11.40%	9.70%	11.27%
<u>FS-02</u>				
OVERALL AVERAGE	20.20%	21.10%	21.40%	20.90%
MULTIFUNCTIONAL	8.70%	7.50%	5.80%	7.33%

SOURCE: Department of State Newsletter

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Table 8

LDP COMPLIANCE RATES  
(% of LDP Positions Encumbered by  
Language-Capable Officers)  
(1985 vs 1988)

	<u>AF</u>	<u>ARA</u>	<u>EAP</u>	<u>EUR</u>	<u>NEA</u>
1985	63%	80%	64%	77%	61%
1988	53%	73%	62%	71%	49%

SOURCE: 1988 Language Compliance Report

Table 9

SFS LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

(Promotions To SFS Without  
3/3 In At Least One Language)

	<u>1986</u>	<u>1987</u>	<u>1988</u>	<u>Average</u>
No. Promoted	63	72	71	67
No. Without 3/3	20	27	14	21
Pct Without 3/3	31.7%	37.5%	19.7%	31.3%

SOURCE: PER/RMA

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<u>CONES</u>	<u>NUMBER DESELECTED</u>	<u>DESELECTED AS PCT OF TOTAL GROUP</u>
Overall	18	4%
Admin	6	6% of Admin Cand.
Political	9	5% of Pol Candidates
Economic	2	2% of Econ Cand.
Consular	1	1% of Cons Cand.

SOURCE: PER/FCA/JO

Table 11

NUMBER OF FSO'S REFERRED TO PERFORMANCE STANDARDS BOARD  
FOR BELOW STANDARD PERFORMANCE  
 (1986 - 1988)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Referred to PSB</u>	<u>Total Referred</u>
1986	MC	None	15
	OC	None	
	01	2	
	02	9	
	03	None	
	04	4	
	05	<u>None</u>	
1987	MC	None	9
	OC	None	
	01	2	
	02	4	
	03	2	
	04	1	
	05	<u>None</u>	
1988	MC	None	7
	OC	None	
	01	None	
	02	1	
	03	2	
	04	4	
	05	<u>None</u>	

SOURCE: PER/PE

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ATTRITION AT THE SENIOR THRESHOLD  
(Number of FO-1 Officers Leaving Involuntarily)

<u>1981</u>	<u>1982</u>	<u>1983</u>	<u>1984</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1987</u>	<u>1988</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
15	15	14	11	3	89	67	48	262

Source: PER/PE

Table 13

PROMOTION RATES BY CONE  
(Percent of Eligibles Promoted by Year)

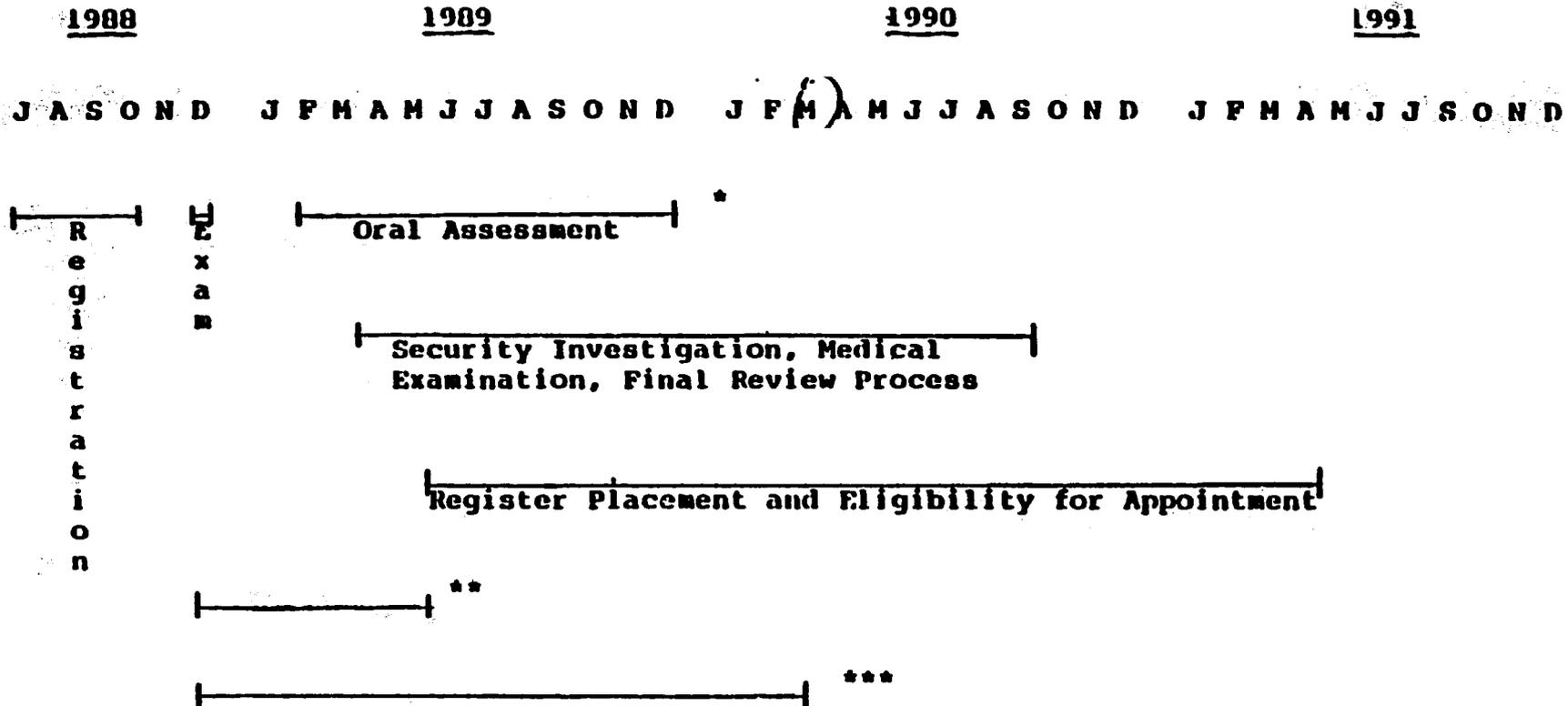
<u>Promoted To Class</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1987</u>	<u>1988</u>
<u>TO OC</u>			
Admin	7.5%	14.0%	13.4%
Consular	12.7	11.9	10.3
Economic	9.4	13.3	13.7
Political	14.8	22.7	13.4
Average	11.7	16.6	12.7
<u>TO O1</u>			
Admin	14.6%	16.8%	16.6%
Consular	15.4	16.6	16.2
Economic	15.3	16.9	16.1
Political	15.4	16.7	16.4
Average	15.2	16.7	16.4
<u>TO O2</u>			
Admin	20.4%	21.1%	21.7%
Consular	20.4	20.6	22.5
Economic	20.3	21.5	21.1
Political	19.8	21.1	20.5
Average	20.2	21.1	21.4
<u>TO O3</u>			
Admin	55.2%	30.3%	36.2%
Consular	54.0	37.2	43.6
Economic	48.2	48.6	33.0
Political	46.1	42.2	46.5
Average	50.6	40.0	40.4

SOURCE: Department of State Newsletter

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Table 14

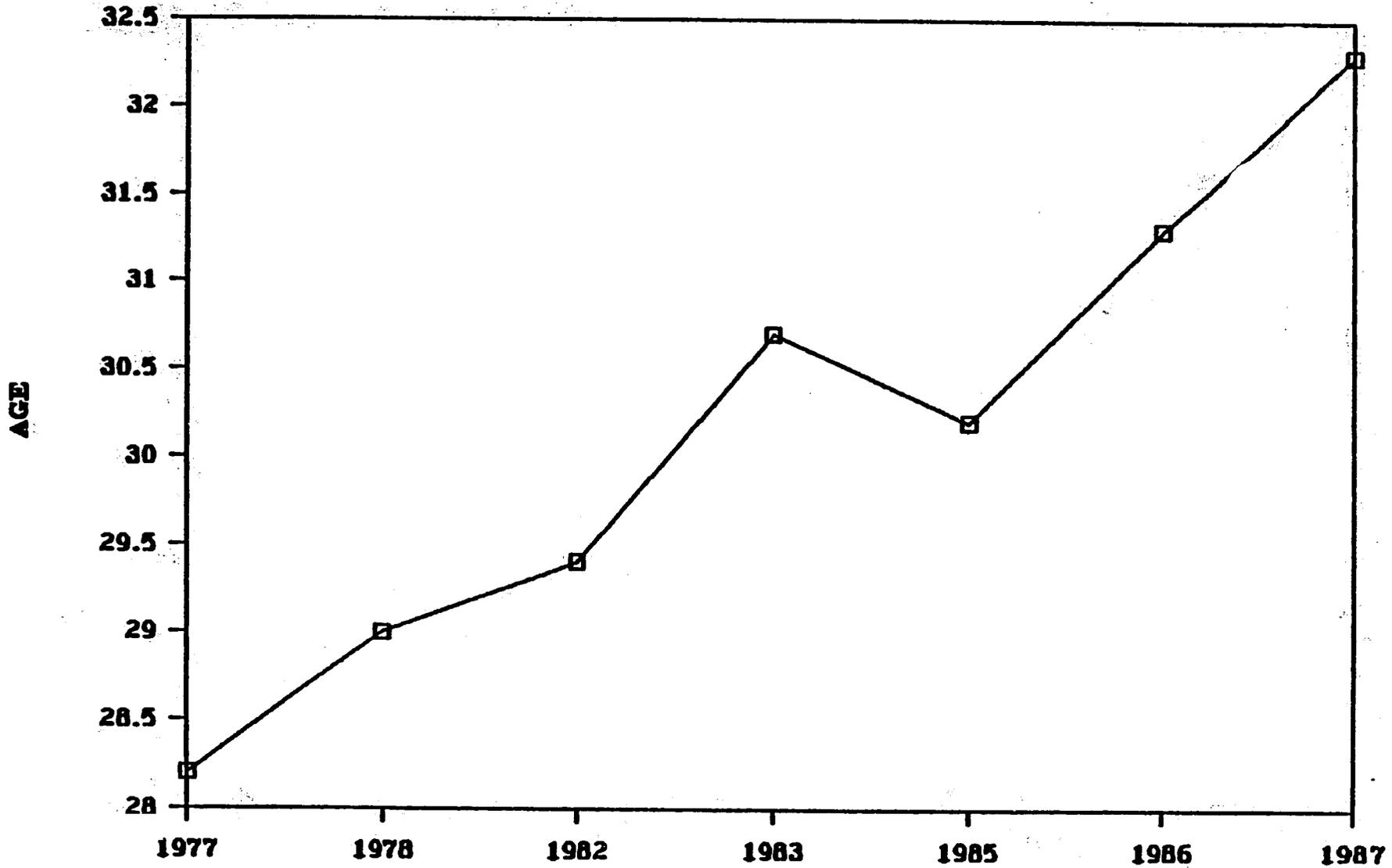
NORMAL SEQUENCE AND TIMING OF EVENTS FOR THE  
FOREIGN SERVICE JUNIOR OFFICER SELECTION PROGRAM



- \* Candidates in the U.S. military and those who reside abroad have 24 months, rather than 12 months, in which to undergo the Oral Assessment.
- \*\* Minimum time for a candidate to receive an offer of appointment to the Foreign Service.
- \*\*\* Average time for a candidate to receive an offer of appointment to the Foreign Service.

Table 15

# AVERAGE AGE OF ENTERING JO'S



Source: PER/RMA

Table 16

MINORITY AND FEMALE REPRESENTATION  
IN FSO GENERALIST CORPS  
(January, 1989)

	<u>OVERALL</u>	<u>FSO-3</u>	<u>FSO-4</u>	<u>FSO-5</u>	<u>FSO-6</u>
Male	76%	69%	63%	68%	67%
Female	24%	31%	37%	32%	33%
Minority	13%	20%	14%	18%	13%

SOURCE: PER

40

Table 17

CAREER DEVELOPMENT OFFICER (CDO) WORKLOAD  
(April 1989)

<u>CDO Category</u>	<u>Number of FSO Clients</u>
Senior Officer CDO's	250
Consular Officer CDO's	322
Administrative Officer CDO's	290
Political Officer CDO's	286
Economic Officer CDO's	225

SOURCE: PER/FCA

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NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN SELECTED FSI COURSES  
(1983 VS 1987)

	<u>1983</u>	<u>1987</u>	<u>INCREASE OR DECREASE</u>
FSI/Washington	12175	10521	
Overseas	8335	8424	
Universities	66	40	
Armed Forces Colleges	3	33	
Other (Extension, Congressional Internships, Etc.)	<u>2231</u>	<u>1634</u>	
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>22830</u>	<u>20652</u>	<u>-9.5%</u>

Professional and Area Studies Indicators:

Area Studies	1852	1319	-29%
Admin Training	2037	1170	-43%
Consular Training	556	720	+30%
Econ/Commercial Training	147	110	-25%
Political Training	209	151	-28%
Mid-Level Officer Training	175	13	-93%

SOURCE: FSI

Table 19

PERCENT OF PRINCIPAL OFFICERS AND  
DCM'S WITHOUT PROFESSIONAL TRAINING  
(Fall, 1988).

<u>Grade of Officer</u>	<u># w/Training</u>	<u># Without</u>	<u>PCT Without</u>
<u>Senior Training</u>			
MC	24	23	49%
OC	34	45	57
O1	6	61	91
TOTALS	64	129	50%
<u>University Training</u>			
MC	21	26	55%
OC	12	67	85
O1	11	56	84
TOTALS	44	149	71%
<u>FSI Economic Training</u>			
MC	11	36	77%
OC	19	60	76
O1	10	57	85
TOTALS	40	153	74%

SOURCE: M/DGP

Table 20

FSI BUDGET  
(Including Staff Salaries and Management)

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>FSI</u>	<u>DEPARTMENT</u>	<u>FSI is % of Dept. Budg.</u>	<u>% FSI Budget spent on Lang. Trng.</u>
1979	\$14,004,000	\$640,000,000	2.2%	48%
1980	14,538,000	780,000,000	1.9	53
1981	17,860,000	890,000,000	2.0	57
1982	22,598,000	990,000,000	2.3	51
1983	23,170,000	1,100,000,000	2.1	50
1984	23,086,000	1,190,000,000	1.9	51
1985	26,535,000	1,400,000,000	1.9	47
1986	27,295,000	1,600,000,000	1.7	46
1987	29,902,000	1,500,000,000	2.0	52
1988	31,986,000	1,694,000,000	1.9	54
1989	33,879,000	1,789,000,000	1.9	Est. 55

SOURCE: FSI/BUDGET

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Table 21

AVERAGE YEARS IN GRADE FOR MID-LEVEL PROMOTEES  
(1986 - 1987)

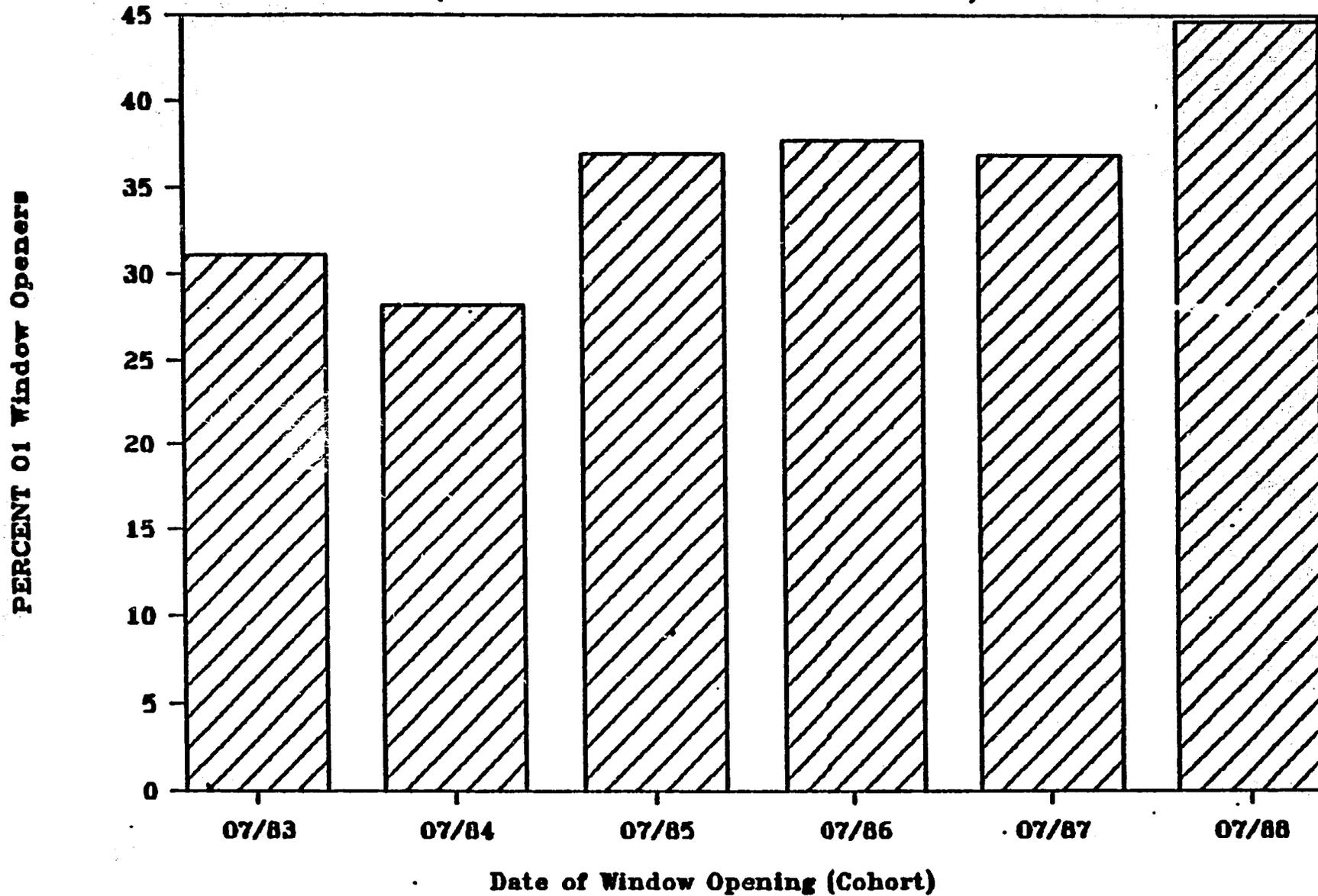
<u>PROMOTEES TO CLASS</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1987</u>	<u>1988</u>	<u>3-YEAR AVERAGE</u>
FE-OC	5.3	5.2	4.6	5.0
FS-01	4.2	4.5	4.4	4.4
FS-02	3.7	3.7	3.8	3.7
IN MID GRADES	13.2	13.4	12.8	13.1

SOURCE: Department of State Newsletter

Table 22

# PCT 01's OPENING 6 YR WINDOW VS M/C TIC

(Window End coincides w/Multiclass TIC)



Source: PER/RMA

**APPENDIX I**

**STUDY GROUP MEMBERS**

**Ambassador L. Paul Bremer, III, Chairman**

**Ambassador Hume Horan**

**James Winnefeld, RAND Corporation**

**David Burns**

**Kathleen Fitzpatrick**

**Leslie Gerson**

**Ronald Main**

**June Carter Perry**

APPENDIX II

PERSONNEL INTERVIEWED BY THE STUDY GROUP

Morton I. Abramowitz	Ambassador-Designate to Turkey
Robert Agrasta	OPM/Training Development
Michael Armacost	Ambassador to Japan
Anthony Arredondo	OES/SCT
Alfred L. Athertor	The Thomas Commission
Marshall Atkins	PER/FCA/TL
William Bacchus	Office of the Under Secretary for Management
Jeff Bader	EAP/C
Graeme Bannerman	The Thomas Commission
Beatrice Barthelemy	PM/TTC/STA
Gene Batt	PER/RMA
Vince Battle	PER/FCA/CON
Larry Baer	NEA/EX
Mark Bellamy	AF/S
Feggy Blackford	PM/EX
Kenneth Bleakley	RP/IA
Wayne Bobby	FSI
Steve Block	PER/G
John Bolton	Assistant Secretary Designate/IO
Laurance Bond	Director of Personnel/AID
Parker Borg	CIP
Dick Bowers	M/MP
Peter Burleigh	NEA/DAS
Bill Burns	S/P
Prudence Bushnell	Director, Executive Development Program/FSI
Ray Caldwell	M
Frankie Calhoun	AF/W
Paul Canney	PER/REE/EXAM
Marc Carlisle	EB/IFD/OIA
Kevin Carroll	IO/EX
Mary Ann Casey	NEA/AFN
Bill Clark	EAP/DAS
Joan Clark	Assistant Secretary/CA
Janice Clemens	PER/REE/REC
Lou Cohen	INR
Paul Coran	S/EEOCR
Mary Daly	EUR/WE
James Davidson	Supervisory and Management Occupation, OPM

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Alex de la Garza  
Velia De Pirro  
Brian Dickson  
Mark Dion  
Clark Dittmer  
John Dzak

PER/FCA  
INR/IAA/MAC  
ARA/CEN  
INM/DAS  
DS  
OIG

Lawrence S. Eagleburger  
Steve Ecton  
Madeline Ehrman  
John Evans  
Trevor Evans  
Ray Ewing

Deputy Secretary of State  
EB/IFD/ODF  
FSI  
EUR/SOV  
EB  
PER/FCA

Robert Farrand  
Dick Faulk  
John Ferriter  
Bart Flaherty  
Chas Freeman  
Robert Funseth

HA/DAS  
A/OPR  
EB  
M/EX  
AF/DAS  
RP/DAS

Mac Gerlach  
Skip Ghnem  
Stephanie Gillespie  
Robert Graninger  
Deborah Graze  
Marc Grossman  
Brandon Grove

A/FBO  
DOD/ISA/NESA  
PER/FCA/CC  
PER/RMA  
EUR/WE  
FSI  
FSI

Kirke Harper

Director of Executive  
Development/OPM

Roger Harrison  
William Harrop  
Bill Haugh  
Irv Hicks  
Robin Hinson-Jones  
Clarence Hodges  
Bob Holley  
Lisa Schreiber Hughes  
Patricia Hughes

PM  
Ambassador to Zaire  
S/S-S  
PER/DAS  
D  
S/EEOCR  
ARA/CAR  
ARA/EX  
POL/Mid-Level CDO

Gloria Jackson

S/EEOCR  
VO/L/C

Barry Kefauver  
Barry King  
Harmon Kirby  
Sheldon Kryz  
Gil Kulick

CA/EX  
M/MP  
Acting DAS/IO  
A  
AF/S

John Lange  
Gib Lanpher  
Vlad Lehovich  
Melvin Levitsky

M  
AF/S  
PM/DAS  
Executive Secretary of the  
Department

Joe Linneman  
Linda Lipscomb  
Scott Loney  
Ken Longmyer  
Jerry Luders

M/COMP  
AF/EX  
EB/ITC  
EUR/NE  
FSI Dep. Coordinator, A-100

Victor Maffett  
Eugene McAllister  
Noel McCaman  
John McCaslin  
Carl McCollum  
Joe McLaughlin  
Richard Melton  
Tom Miller  
Don Minyard  
Day Mount  
Pierce Myers

PER/University Training  
Assistant Secretary/EB  
Peace Corps Recruitment Director  
EB/TDC/OT/TEX  
Retirement  
PER/RZE  
ARA/DAS  
S/CT  
CA/VO  
A/ISO  
House Post Office & Civil  
Service Committee

Cynthia Nelson  
Wanda Nesbitt  
Torla Newland

PER/RMA  
S/S-S  
EUR/SOV

Allan Otto  
E. Parks Olmon

Former FSO  
EAP/EX

David Passage  
Mildred Patterson  
Robert Peck  
Edward Perkins  
Blossom Perry  
Laurie Peters  
Chet Philips  
Thomas Pickering

AF/RA  
War College  
M  
Ambassador to South Africa  
JO/A-100 Course  
PER/FCA/EC  
PER/RMA  
Ambassador to the UN

Sally Pitts  
Ersa Poston  
Norma Powers-Palmer

NEA/EX  
The Thomas Commission  
FSI Registrar

Anthony Quainton

OIG

Robert Rachmales  
Leo Reddy  
Charles Redman  
Diana Ritter  
J. Stapleton Roy  
Eric Rubin

POL/Senior CDO  
CSIS  
Amb-Designate to Sweden  
PER/FCA/A  
EAP/DAS  
EUR/SOV

Robin Sanders  
Howard Schaffer  
Mark Scheland  
Pat Schittulli  
Chuck Schmidt  
Richard Scissors  
Margaret Scobey  
Ivan Selin

AP  
NEA/DAS  
NEA/RA  
The Thomas Commission  
AFSA  
EB  
NEA/IAI  
Under Secretary for  
Management-Designate

Andy Semmel  
Perry Shankle  
Fred Sheppard  
Mike Skol  
Shaw Smith  
Ron Sommerville  
Ronald I. Spiers  
John Sprott  
David Stewart  
Kay Stocker  
Russell Surber  
Bill Swing  
Betty Swope

Senator Lugar's Staff  
AFSA  
PER/FCA  
ARA/DAS  
IO/DAS  
Retired CA/EX Director  
Under Secretary for Management  
M/FSI  
CA/PC  
EUR/CE  
PER/FCA/JO  
M/DGP/DAS  
CA/EX

Harry Thayer  
Charlie Thomas  
John Thomas  
Marian Tipton  
Laurie Tracy  
Jim Tull  
Thomas Turgman  
David Tyler

FSI  
EUR/DAS  
Chairman, The Thomas Commission  
PER/REE (Former Registrar)  
EUR/EEY  
PER/FCA  
Chief of Staff/IO  
CA

Chris Van Holland  
George Vest  
Sandy Vogelgesang

SFRC  
Director General  
DAS/IO

Lannon Walker  
Ned Walker  
Kerry Weiner  
Sharon Weiner  
Sharon Wilkinson  
Dick Williams  
Larry Williamson  
Bruce Witter  
Don Woodward

CSIS  
NEA/DAS  
Senator Kostmeyer's Office  
NEA/AFN  
CA/VO/P  
CA/VO  
PER  
DS  
Retirement

Johnnie Young

Senior Seminar

John Zielkowski

Senate Committee on Agriculture  
Nutrition and Forestry

qv

## APPENDIX III

### THE ROLE OF POSITION REQUIREMENTS AND MANAGEMENT

The usual approach in formulating staffing requirements is to start with an examination of the workload to be performed. The next step is to determine "raw" staff requirements, using a mixture of work analysis techniques and expert knowledge of the tasks. These are requirements that have not been shaped by funding (e.g., Do I have enough funds to pay for the workforce I need?) or by personnel management considerations (e.g., Is the market such that I can recruit and retain the needed staff?).

Managers would then subject these "raw" requirements to funding and personnel management constraints to define the actual "positions" that can be paid for and filled. (Some call this "manpower programming.") These positions, when matched with the inventory of personnel, shape a variety of critical personnel plans and actions, including:

1. An input (hiring) plan and process that attempts to build up the personnel inventory (mainly at the entry level in a closed system) to match the numbers and skills required by the aggregate of the positions.
2. A promotion plan and process that works to match the numbers of people by grade with the positions by grade.
3. A career development and training plan and process that imparts the necessary skills and experience to the staff to match the skills associated with the aggregate of the positions.
4. An assignment plan and process that attempts to match individual skills and grade with corresponding position skill and grade specifications.

Position requirements and management thus are critical to effective personnel management. Unfortunately, this crucial task is often neglected as managers try to get real work done and find real people to do it. Positions don't do the work; people do. But positions define which people the system recruits, promotes, assigns, and retains to do the work. The Foreign Service shares with many other organizations some neglect of this "front end" of personnel management.

## A PREFERRED FOREIGN SERVICE MANPOWER MANAGEMENT SYSTEM [1]

The system described below is intended to provide a baseline against which to measure the current manpower management system and to point the way toward needed improvements. Though this study focuses on the generalist corps, our discussion of manpower management is applicable to the entire Foreign Service.

### 1. Defining Workload Requirements

In the preferred system, management would begin by sponsoring and conducting: (1) a functional needs study to define the tasks that need to be done by Foreign Service generalists; and (2) workload surveys to see how those tasks translate into staff requirements. The products of these efforts are basic to the position classification and management process. Indeed, position classifiers should be made a part of a workload requirements system. An integrated system of position classifiers and workload analysis staff would alert management to corrective actions needed to match workload, positions and personnel (e.g., more/fewer positions supported in the budget, reallocation of existing positions, realignment of personnel assignment priorities).

The manager of this system would report directly to the Director General (or be placed under the Undersecretary for Management if the system is also to serve non-Foreign Service staff). Posts and bureaus would be surveyed on a set schedule (3-5 years is typical in other organizations), perhaps tailored to the Inspector General's visit cycle. Between surveys all position reallocations, additions and subtractions would be considered against a backdrop of the requirements baseline.

It is sometimes said -- as a criticism of such a system -- that the work content of the Foreign Service is so position-specific and so policy-oriented that the usual work measurement techniques do not apply -- or would be misused. This criticism should be taken seriously. There are unique aspects of the work performed by the Foreign Service. Workload analysis might be limited to applying general criteria (e.g., frequency and breadth of reporting, span of control for management positions, listings of organizational duties). Considerable progress has been made in workload measurement techniques beyond the usual time

[1] "Manpower" is the term the management literature applies to personnel requirements and positions. "Personnel" refers to the people intended to fill the positions that one hopes will meet the requirements.

and motion images dating back to classical industrial management literature. Industry, academe and the military have benefitted from the careful application of the newer techniques as they are applied to policy and management positions. There is reason to believe that both the Congress and OMB would applaud a more systematic approach to the Foreign Service's workload and the associated staffing requirements [2].

## 2. Position Management [3]

Position management includes the functions of authorizing or approving, establishing, allocating, eliminating, or otherwise changing positions and the necessary support functions of bookkeeping and reporting. The preferred system would provide for centralized management with input from posts and bureaus. The director of the system would have authority (subject to appeal and review) to allocate positions and would be the overall "traffic cop" for all position decisions. Good position management requires good information and clout. The position management agency should be placed within the organization so that both these requirements are met.

Regarding bookkeeping, position requirements must be shown in terms that are compatible with the various skill codes attached to personnel. Ideally, there would be a one-for-one correspondence between the coded identifiers of each authorized position and the codes borne by the records of individual personnel [4]. It follows that the Management Information System (MIS) should be able to deal readily with matches and mismatches between the position and personnel data bases.

[2] The Interim Report of the Commission on the Foreign Service Personnel System (The Thomas Commission) reflects this interest. The Commission expressed "concern...whether all agencies (utilizing the Foreign Service personnel system) had adopted satisfactory requirements determination and review processes which take into account all factors affecting workload productivity." (p. 8) See also the report of the Grove Commission (Recommendation B-1) which recommends that the Under Secretary for Management "assign responsibility for conducting a regular review, on a cyclical basis over a three year timeframe, of workload-based position and FTE requirements for the foreign and civil services."

[3] Some in the Department use the term "position control."

[4] The system would provide more inclusive codes where a given position could accommodate personnel with different skill codes.

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### 3. "Pipeline" Management

The pipeline includes all positions that are used to account for Foreign Service personnel who are not currently occupying positions in the line and staff divisions of the Department and overseas posts. These positions include students, transients, patients, required dual incumbency slots (e.g., where face to face turnover is required because of financial accountability), and personnel awaiting termination, grievance, or other special processing.

An "ideal" system would have a pipeline position under every individual who was not in an authorized line or staff position. As a practical matter, complete coverage is unattainable because of assignment peaks and valleys inherent in the transfer cycle and associated fluctuations in student training loads. However, the preferred system would have a computed person/year average of pipeline positions to support personnel not in regular positions.

### 4. Management Information

A necessary adjunct to any successful personnel management system is a Management Information System that provides timely information in a format that is useful to managers. A good position requirements and management MIS should provide at least the following:

- o A list of required positions by post/organization, class, skill codes which notes when the requirements were last reviewed and/or changed. This list represents the Foreign Service's workload. With its back-up data accumulated during periodic surveys and position reviews, the list provides the fundamental justification for increases or decreases in positions and in the skills needed.
- o A list of currently authorized positions which notes when the positions were last reviewed and/or changed. This list represents the budgeted numbers and grades of Foreign Service personnel. Changes to this list within a given budget year would require "compensation" to keep the system in balance (e.g., upgrades or position increases require commensurate downgrades or decreases elsewhere).
- o A periodic list of unfilled positions. This list should indicate how long the positions have been unfilled and (ideally) the average length of time they have been unfilled over specified periods (e.g., the past two years). This list indicates to management the relative need for the positions and suggests adjustments in position descriptions and/or personnel allocation including the pipeline. It might also suggest where additional pipeline positions or tighter assignment management is needed.

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**APPENDIX IV**

**ILLUSTRATIVE CAREER PATHS**

**I. PD/Econ Officer (Spanish Language Focus)**

**Junior Years**

Spanish language training  
Vice Consul Caracas - 2 years  
Pol/Econ Officer Buenos Aires - 2 years

**Mid-Career**

Econ training - 32 weeks  
Econ Officer London - 3 years  
EB - 2 years  
Principal Officer Mazatlan (Con/Econ focus) - 3 years  
Econ Officer Mexico City - 3 years  
University management training - 1 year

**SFS**

EB Office Director  
DCM Bogota

**II. ORM/Consular Officer (French and ARA Sub-specializations)**

**Junior Years**

French language training  
Vice Consul Port-au-Prince - 2 years  
Pol Officer Paris - 2 years

**Mid-Career**

ARA/PM or HA - 2 years  
Conoff Antigua (USIS, narcotics, pol components) - 3 years  
CA/EX Management Analyst ARA - 2 years  
Portuguese language training - 5 months  
Consular section chief Rio - 3 years  
Conoff VO - 2 years

**SFS**

Principal Officer Marseille  
DCM Brasilia

**III. PD/Chinese Language Officer**

**Junior Years**

Chinese language training - 1 year  
Vice Consul Hong Kong - 2 years  
Pol/Econ Officer Singapore - 2 years

**Mid-Career**

Desk Officer EAP - 2 years  
RP Coordinator Bangkok - 2 years  
Chinese language training Taiwan - 1 year  
Pol Officer Beijing - 3 years  
University management training - 1 year  
H - 2 years  
Pol Officer Taiwan - 3 years

**SFS**

DCM Beijing  
DAS EAP



This appendix makes suggestions on how to streamline the hiring process so we could offer the exam in October and then--in most cases--offer jobs in May.

Central to our proposal is the recommendation that candidates submit necessary security background and other material at the time of the oral assessment. At present, candidates submit this material after the oral assessment, usually taking at least 2-3 months to do so. According to DS, security clearances are now granted in less than 90 days on average--although more than 20 percent take over 120 days. We must accelerate security clearances for all candidates. Medical clearance forms could be submitted later. We currently make job offers pending medical clearance.

We need also to expedite the oral assessment. This may require additional FSO assessors, but the additional resources would help make the service more competitive in the hiring market-place. ETS should be given a two week deadline to grade the in-basket part of the oral assessment. The oral assessments could then be graded and security clearances requested immediately for those who passed.

#### ILLUSTRATIVE STREAMLINED PROCESS

Early October: Written Exam

Early November: Notification of written exam results. At same time, candidates receive security clearance forms, SF-171, etc., and instructions to have these prepared for the oral assessment.

Mid-November: Oral assessments begin in Rosslyn and countrywide (to take advantage of Thanksgiving/Christmas holidays). Oral assessments continue as long as necessary. Candidates bring completed security clearance forms, fingerprints, SF-171, autobiography.

Late November/December: In-basket tests graded for early oral assessments. Security clearances initiated for passers.

February-March: Security clearances granted for early oral assessment passers. FINAL REVIEW PANEL FOLLOWS IMMEDIATELY. JOB OFFERS BEGIN WITHIN THE MONTH.

April-May: Security clearances granted for later oral assessment passers. FINAL REVIEW PANEL FOLLOWS IMMEDIATELY. JOB OFFERS BEGIN WITHIN THE MONTH.

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**NOTES:**

1. The system pre-supposes, in accordance with recommendations in this report, that all candidates would be on one register, thereby making it easier and faster to fill classes starting from the top of register.
2. Some career candidates may find it inconvenient to supply these forms before they know they will continue in the process. Nevertheless, we believe the greater objective of reducing the length of the hiring process justifies the procedure. It should be made clear to candidates at the oral assessment that these forms will be examined only if a candidate passes the oral.

## APPENDIX VI

### SECRETARY'S FOREIGN SERVICE FELLOWSHIPS

The Secretary's Foreign Service Fellowships would be established to help attract qualified minorities to the Foreign Service. The Secretary's Fellowships should be prestigious and highly competitive. They could be based on high GRE scores, demonstrated leadership, interpersonal skills, interest in other cultures and a high grade point average in a curriculum related to the work of the Foreign Service (economics, political science, public administration, international science issues.)

The Department would offer to pay for one-half of a student's graduate studies (up to \$10,000 a year for up to two years). In return, the student would agree to take the written and oral exams. If the student passed these exams, he or she would immediately be offered a job and security clearances could be done during the course of study. In exchange, fellowship recipients would agree to stay in the Foreign Service for a minimum number of years (probably six in order to get the candidate over the junior threshold). If they fail the exam, recipients would be required to repay the scholarship, as one would repay a student loan.

For the program to succeed, there must be close and continuing contact between recipients and the Department. Each Secretary's Fellow would be assigned a State Department "don", a senior Foreign Service Officer in the Fellow's area of interest. For example, a student studying for her M.A. in international economics would be assigned the ranking Deputy Assistant Secretary in EB as her "don". The "don" would maintain contact with the recipient through phone calls, meetings during visits to Washington or the recipient's university, and the like.

Recipients could also serve as summer interns in the Department or at posts overseas as part of their programs.

The Department should also identify on-campus professors to work with recipients in a "professor-mentor program". In the best of budgetary times, programs in Washington could be developed for both scholarship recipients and professor-mentors.

If we took 20 students a year into the program, and most studied two years for a Masters Degree and used the maximum \$10,000 per year, our annual cost would be under half a million dollars. The program should have sufficient appeal to allow the Department to seek special funding from Congress.

For a relatively modest amount, this program would yield considerable benefits: college juniors and seniors would become aware of the Foreign Service, the Service's image among students would be less stuffy, we would confer positive distinction on minorities in the Foreign Service.

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## APPENDIX VII

### PROPOSED ASSIGNMENT CYCLE

#### April-August:

CDOs prepare and send Career Review Letter to individual officers indicating the next steps to take for overall career development. Letter should include "heads up" on any priority, Star Assignments or other key assignments expected in the fall bid package.

#### September 1:

- o The Secretary releases Star Assignments List
- o DG sends letter with bid package highlighting:
  - broad career development objectives of the service,
  - experience required to cross threshold (e.g., diversity tour), and
  - language requirements.

#### November 1:

- o FSOs send in Job Preference List (JPL)

#### December 1:

- o PER makes Secretary's Star Assignments
- o CDOs identify potential candidates for hard-to-fill positions
- o PER fills stretch quota assignments
- o CDOs counsel officers if Job Preference Lists are unrealistic or unrelated to long-term career development and service needs

#### December 31:

- o System brokers assignments, taking into account employee preferences; not necessary for officer to have bid on a position to be assigned to a particular slot

#### January-March:

- o CDOs review officers' assignments, begin considering/projecting career paths after the current assignments process, share with officers and prepare memos for individual files
- o Assignment panel chairman makes directed assignments as necessary to fill service needs

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