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ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

SUBJECT: (Optional)

Comments on NAPA Study of CIA Personnel Management System

FROM: [redacted] C/CRG/ISAS

EXTENSION: [redacted]

NO.

DATE: 4 April 1979

TO: (Officer designation, room number, and building)	DATE RECEIVED	DATE FORWARDED	OFFICER'S INITIALS	COMMENTS (Number each comment to show from whom to whom. Draw a line across column after each comment.)
1. AC, ISAS/DDA 5B2828 HQS				
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4 April 1979

MEMORANDUM FOR: Acting Chief, ISAS, DDA

STAT FROM : [redacted]
Chief, Classification Review Group, ISAS

SUBJECT : Comments on NAPA Study of CIA Personnel Management System

1. Considering the study as a whole we are in general agreement with the overall favorable assessment of the Agency personnel system and also believe that the recommendations made by the study team merit consideration by Agency management. The following comments offered on various parts of the study are the result of personal knowledge and experience.

2. Although the team interviewed 95 present and former Agency personnel they apparently did not consult any line manager below office level. It is possible that the team would have uncovered other problem areas had personnel on the receiving end of personnel policies been given an opportunity to provide input. However, it may be that time constraints precluded a more extensive interviewing process. Many such lower level supervisors, who must implement the personnel system, are frequently frustrated because of what they perceive as inequities or inadequacies within the system, even though such perceptions may result from ignorance. To some extent this comment is corroborated on page 1 of Appendix F, where the following response is cited, inter alia, to a NAPA query re the Personnel Development Program (PDP): "... constructed on a very-close held basis with little participation from the division or branch level." Also, one of the responses quoted on page 4 of Appendix F states: "The PDP should include a good mechanism to plan separate tracks for the analytical and managerial comers...." Such a distinction would appear to be particularly necessary, for there are all too many instances where analysts or technicians have been assigned to supervisory or managerial roles on the basis of their proven competence as analysts or technicians, and not as managers.

3. The following comments relate and are keyed to PART II - CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS, beginning on page 84 of the study.

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a. We agree with the statement that the present system is essentially sound (p. 84), but also agree that "There should be maximum line management involvement in personnel management" and, "Roles and relationships of all involved in personnel management should be clarified." (p. 86) Those who formulate policy are not necessarily fully conversant with the problems encountered by line managers who must implement policy and contend with morale problems that often result from such policies. A note of caution, however: there must exist a workable appeals procedure to insure that line managers do not arbitrarily or capriciously interpret or implement such policies.

b. Section B. on pp. 88-89 discusses "... confusion on the part of management and employees about the CIA system..." with regard to the "... diversity of basic practices and procedures resulting from adopting parts of other personnel management systems." A case in point is that of employees separated involuntarily on short notice, many of whom believe that the deck is stacked against them. One belief is that the Agency adopts those parts of Civil Service Regulations that benefit top level management but not those that would provide a measure of protection to individual employees. A thorough explanation, understood by all, is required.

c. Career development and career opportunities are discussed beginning with page 96 and many of the recommendations appear sound. However, once an employee is earmarked as of potential Executive caliber, then perhaps his development and eventual assignment should be determined by a multi-disciplinary, intra-Agency group of some kind, and not solely by his Career Service. Many employees, particularly those at the GS-15 level, have experience in more than one discipline or activity and in more than one Directorate. Many could well fit into managerial positions in another Directorate, although the parent Career Service will not necessarily be aware of what lies beyond its own sphere of activity. Consideration should not be given only to what is described as "the same occupational family." We also agree with the comment on use of vacancy notices, but add that the system should be closely monitored to assure that the search to fulfill specific positions is genuine and not made solely to meet the letter of the notice requirement. Many employees lack faith in the integrity of the system. Perhaps a vacancy notice should not be issued in those instances where a component can convince some regulatory body that it actually has a suitable candidate within the component.

d. Among other subjects, personnel reductions are discussed beginning on p. 98. The study states that "there is no adequate system for dealing with personnel reductions." A great many Agency employees would be in total agreement with this statement. Many believe that reasons such as "you have been found to be in excess of..." and "you're being in the lower 3% (or 5%) is no reflection on your performance." to be gross subterfuges and in many cases are manifestly unfair. Many believe they are the victims of a personal dislike by an immediate

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superior. It is imperative that the rationale behind the selection process for those to be separated be clearly understood by all personnel and that those whose performance and proven competence merit retention be given a genuine opportunity for assignment elsewhere in the Agency.

e. Re the discussion of "performance" and "potential", beginning on p. 100, we fully agree that they should be "differentiated" but also believe that an employee's potential for employment in a different career service should be considered. The "Precepts for Promotion Panels" submitted by Dr. Bernard Mooney merit serious consideration. We particularly agree that "Firsthand knowledge of those being evaluated must be adequately represented in a panel." Also, those panel members who express opinions based on ancient knowledge should generally be excluded as having little bearing on an employee's current performance, qualifications, or potential.

f. The recommendation is made on p. 103 that recruiters be encouraged to talk directly to components having vacancies. This is an excellent suggestion and was practiced to some extent in the Agency in bygone years, to the benefit of all.

g. Another recommendation (p. 107) is that line managers be more involved in personnel policy implementation. This worthwhile suggestion should also result in a method of identifying early in their careers those employees whose talents and inclinations are more suitable to another activity. Such early recognition would insure more effective utilization of employees and proper placement would, among other benefits, preclude having an employee separated after many years of service in an activity that he should not have been assigned to to begin with.

h. On p. 115 the recommendation is made that "Consideration be given to further delegation of operational activities, now carried out in the Office of Personnel, to personnel officers in the Directorates." Although the precise meaning of this recommendation is not quite clear, it should be approached with caution. Many personnel officers assigned to the Directorates are not sufficiently knowledgeable in the disciplines or activities of their Directorate, particularly when newly assigned, and have little responsibility for the success or failure of a given activity.

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