

United States

Merit Systems Protection Board



FY 2000 and 2005 Strategic Plan

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AGENCYWIDE MISSION

The U. S. Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB) is an independent quasi-judicial agency established to protect the integrity of the Federal merit systems against partisan political and other prohibited personnel practices and to ensure adequate protection for employees against abuses by agency management. This responsibility is carried out principally by, among other things:

1. Adjudicating employee appeals of personnel actions such as removal, suspensions, furloughs, and demotions;
2. Adjudicating cases brought by the Special Counsel;
3. Adjudicating actions brought under the Whistleblower Protection Act, USERRA, the Veterans Employment Opportunities Act;
4. Ordering compliance with final orders where appropriate;
5. Conducting studies of the Federal civil service to determine whether they are free from prohibited personnel practices; and
6. Reviewing regulations of the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to ensure that they do not require or result in the commission of a prohibited personnel practice.

ACCEPTANCE OF RESPONSIBILITY

The MSPB provides a system of accountability herein, that requires each of the program managers, in coordination with the Members of the Board, to accept responsibility for identifying program objectives and for setting realistic, measurable goals for future performance. It has been established to ensure the customers of the agency that a systematic measurement of results and reporting of program performance will take place.

BUDGET ACTIVITY -ADJUDICATION

REGIONAL OPERATIONS -FIRST LEVEL REVIEW/INITIAL APPEALS

Mission

The Office of Regional Operations (ORO) through a network of 10 Regional and Field offices is responsible for adjudicating appeals which arise under the Federal civil service laws and other related laws.

Outcomes

In order to ensure that merit principles are protected, the intended results (outcomes) of ORO's efforts are to:

1. Increase assurances through the adjudicatory process that agencies comply with Civil Service laws; and
2. Provide better service to our appellate customers through efficient operations.

Overall Goals

Protect and promote merit system principles in Federal personnel activities through fair, timely, and efficient adjudication and dispute resolution.

Resources Needed To Meet The Performance Goals

The resources required to accomplish the performance goals listed in this plan consist of administrative judges, attorneys, support staff, and technological support such as electronic legal research capability, electronic mail, electronic case processing capability, a case management system, and video conferencing capabilities. In addition, funds are needed for travel to hearings and for court reporting services. This will allow for the efficient, timely, processing of appeals filed with the agency.

Inputs

The ORO's appropriations will be used to fund approximately 120 FTE. The ORO receives approximately 8,400 initial appeals per year.

Outputs

Primary outputs are decisions and settlement agreements.

Secondary Outputs include instances of outreach efforts to educate our constituent parties to the developments in our caseload, with the objective of clarifying our process and practice and our caselaw, by which agencies and employees can model their adherence to merit principles.

Systems

The ORO depends on several MSPB information/management systems to accomplish its mission efficiently and effectively. These systems include the Case Management System (CMS) that provides a wide range of reports for managing the case workload; various electronic sources including financial, EEO, and human resources systems reports; the LAN/WAN, and ORO Web site.

External Factors Which Could Affect Achievement Of General Goals And Objectives

The ORO has limited control over the number of cases filed. Government downsizing and legislative changes could significantly impact our workload. Also, as OPM is devolving personnel authority to the agencies, this may have some unforeseeable impact on the Board's operations. Further, since most of our expenses are personnel costs, reductions in appropriations will affect staff size and thus impact the achievement of our goals.

Internal Factors Which Could Affect Achievement Of General Goals And Objectives

There are no known major management problems or high-risk areas within ORO that should impact negatively on our achieving our goals and objectives.

Customers

The ORO's primary customers are Federal employees, applicants for employment, annuitants, applicants for annuities, agencies, representatives of parties appearing before the ORO, the courts, the President, the Congress, and the public.

Consultation With Congress And Stakeholders

This strategic plan includes input obtained from our managers and employees, our partnership council and professional association, focus groups of customers (including OPM), exchanges of draft plans with FLRA and the Office of Special Counsel to assure there is no duplication or overlap, and review received from OMB and the House Committee on Government Reform and Oversight. Each has helped us fine-tune our focus. We realize that this is a living document and subject to continuing refinements and revisions as circumstances may change.

Goals

Goal 1

Protect And Promote The Federal Merit Systems Through Fair, Timely, And Efficient Adjudication And Alternative Dispute Resolution

1. Issue high quality decisions, i.e., decisions that are held to be legally sound upon [review by the Board and by the courts](#).
2. Issue initial decisions within 120 days.
3. Cut costs devoted to adjudicating appeals.

Strategies

1. Evaluate regional decisions to determine if categories of cases can be identified where decisions are overturned, and/or remanded more often. Implement corrective action in appropriate situations.

2. Evaluate ways to reduce the processing time by encouraging the use of emerging electronic file technology (e.g., e-mail filings; electronic appeal form).
3. Analyze costs of various types of appeals and direct action at reducing these costs.
4. Provide guidance and assist with training of Federal employees and agencies, unions, bar associations, etc., on the appeals process and dispute resolution.
5. Promote use of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) procedures in order to resolve appealable matters at the lowest practicable level both during the ORO processing, and in other Federal agencies:
 - Encourage agencies to attempt to resolve disputes in house;
 - Establish a simplified appeal process(s) which allow quicker decisions in ORO; and
 - Sponsor lessons learned symposia and other activities to share experiences and promote in house dispute resolution techniques.
6. Identify legislative changes that are helpful to allow ORO to adapt to a changing personnel management environment.
7. Apply technology to make the adjudicatory process more understandable and available:
 - Put precedential decisions and regulations on line;
 - Facilitate on-line legal research; and
 - Develop an interactive electronic appeal form and an electronic case file.
8. Relate individual and organizational goals, objectives, and performance standards and measures to annual performance goals.

Performance Measures

1. Percentage of decisions upheld upon review of the Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit; i.e., the assumption is that the higher the number of decisions upheld, the higher the apparent quality of the decision.
2. Average case processing time; i.e., the sooner an appeal is resolved, the sooner justice is served.
3. Unit costs; i.e., lower ORO unit costs per total case would tend to indicate more efficient processing.
4. Feedback from agencies and our other constituents on the number of disputes resolved and costs saved by agency ADR processes.

Program Evaluation

1. Data maintained in our financial and case management systems will allow us to establish a baseline and provide the information needed to consistently monitor progress.
2. Periodic customer surveys and focus groups.
3. Comparative evaluations of agencies which have implemented dispute prevention programs with ORO's assistance.

APPEALS COUNSEL - SECOND LEVEL REVIEW/ PETITION FOR REVIEW

Mission

Appellants and/or agencies who are unhappy with the outcome of an appeal at the Initial Appeal stage may file a Petition for Review. The Office of Appeals Council (OAC) is responsible for providing the three members of the Merit Systems Protection Board with recommended decisions in these cases which assists the Board in performing its adjudicatory functions.

OAC is responsible for:

1. Recommending to the Board appropriate dispositions in cases pending before the three member Board;
2. Complying with instructions by the Board to rewrite OAC's recommendations and providing the Board with further legal and factual analysis prompted by those rewrite instructions;
3. Providing individual Board members with further legal or factual analysis of cases in which OAC has made recommendations;
4. Identifying cases pending before the full Board which may be amenable to settlement by the parties to those cases and attempting to mediate settlement agreements in those cases and in cases where a majority of the Board or one of the parties requests that mediation be attempted;
5. Providing Board Offices and the customers of the Board a weekly synopsis of Board decisions and regulations of federal agency, and court decisions and regulations that may impact on the Board; and
6. Providing outreach efforts to the customers of the Board, especially regarding the Board's petition-for-review process.

Outcomes

OAC's efforts should result in:

1. The Board issuing decisions in a timely manner;

2. Decisions of the Board being sustained on judicial review;
3. Decisions of the Board being viewed by parties as fair, legally correct, and clearly written;
and
4. A high rate of settlement in cases mediated by OAC.
5. [A reduction in the number of rewrites by the Board.](#)

Overall Goals

To have all three Board members find OAC's work product acceptable.

Resources Needed To Meet The Performance Goals

The Office needs sufficient staff and financial resources to adjudicate the approximately 1,800 appeals are brought for adjudication each year.

Inputs

OAC currently has approximately 38 FTE's. It receives approximately 1,800 new cases a year in which it makes recommendations to the Board. Other than personnel costs, OAC's budget is minimal as most of its support (computers, personnel support, etc.) are supplied through centralized Board funding.

Outputs

Primary outputs are recommended decisions, proposed Orders and legal memoranda,.

Systems

OAC depends on systems provided by other Board Offices, including computer systems, information systems, and library services, to carry out its functions.

External Factors Which Could Affect Achievement Of General Goals And Objectives

OAC has no control over the number of cases filed in which it must make recommendations to the Board. OAC has little control over its personnel budget. OAC has little control over the expectations of individual Board members concerning the nature and extent of analysis that each Board member feels is sufficient to enable that Board member to decide cases submitted by OAC. OAC has little control over the quality of decisions rendered by administrative judges or of the PFR's filed by the parties and thus over the resulting amount of effort which will be required by OAC to make an acceptable recommendation to the Board when those decisions are being reviewed.

Internal Factors Which Could Affect Achievement Of General Goals And Objectives

There are no known major management problems or high-risk areas within MSPB that should impact negatively on our achieving our goals and objectives.

Customers

OAC's primary customers are the three Board members.

Consultation With Congress And Stakeholders

This strategic plan includes input from all of OAC's managers.

Goals

Goal 2

Dispute Resolution

Protect and promote the Federal merit systems through fair, timely, and efficient dispute resolution by promptly and efficiently providing the Board with high quality recommendations in cases pending before the Board.

Objectives

1. Increase the number of initial recommendations to the Board by 5% each year.
2. Maintain the current rate of settlement and attempt 8% more settlements each year.
3. Reduce average case processing time by 15 days each year.
4. Reduce the average case processing cost by 3% each year.
5. Reduce the percentage of rewrites by 12% each year.

Strategies

1. Analyze rewrite instructions to determine whether there is any pattern of recommendations by individual attorneys, teams, or OAC as a whole, where changes need to be made.
2. Seek ways to reduce the processing time through the use of technology, more efficient assignment and supervision of cases, and training of attorneys, paralegals, and support staff.
3. Examine ways to reduce the burden of non-case processing activities on managers, attorneys, and paralegals.
4. Work with the Professional Association to assure that the professional needs and expectations of attorneys are being met, consistent with the agency's goals and requirements.

5. Prepare briefer recommendations and recommended decisions, where appropriate, consistent with the expectations of the Board.
6. Relate individual and organizational goals, objectives, and performance standards and measures to annual performance goals.
7. Improve communications with the Board members and their staffs, other offices of the Board, and external customers to be more aware of problems and concerns with the staff's work products.

Performance Measures

1. The number of recommendations made to the Board, i.e., the number of discrete cases processed by OAC.
2. The number of settlements attempted and the number and percentage achieved.
3. Average case processing time, i.e., the sooner a case is forwarded to the Board, the sooner it can be decided by the Board.
4. Average processing cost with OAC, i.e., lower OAC unit costs would tend to indicate more efficient processing.
5. The percentage of cases returned for rewriting.

Program Evaluation

1. Data maintained in our financial and case management systems will allow us to establish a baseline and provide the information needed to consistently monitor progress.
2. Periodic customer surveys and focus groups, especially with reference to settlement efforts.

BOARD OFFICES

Mission

To timely and efficiently make decisions relative to petitions for review and other legal matters before the Board.

Outcomes

The intended outcome of the Board Office's efforts are timely resolution on the merits of cases.

Overall Goals

Protect and promote the merit system principals in Federal personnel activities through fair, timely, and efficient adjudication and dispute resolution and timely publication of relevant

reviews of Federal human resources management systems, programs, policies, and initiatives, as well as review of the actions of OPM.

Resources Needed To Meet The Performance Goals

The offices need sufficient staff and financial resources to adjudicate the approximately 1,800 appeals that are brought for adjudication each year.

Inputs

The Offices consist of the Chairman, Vice Chair, Member, Chief of Staff, Counsels, and administrative support staff.

Outputs

The primary output is decisions on appeals.

Systems

The Office depends on several information and management systems to accomplish its mission including the Case Management System which provides a wide variety of reports for managing the case workload and various electronic sources including financial, human resource systems, the LAN/WAN and Web site.

External Factors Which Could Affect Achievement Of General Goals And Objectives

As is true for all of the adjudication offices, the Board Officers have little control over the number of cases filed.

Internal Factors Which Could Affect Achievement Of General Goals And Objectives

There are no known major management problems or high-risk areas within MSPB that should impact negatively on our achieving our goals and objectives.

Customers

The primary customers are Federal employees, applicants for employment, annuitants, applicants for annuities, agencies, representatives of parties appearing before the MSPB, the courts, the President, the Congress, and the public.

Consultation With Congress And Stakeholders

This plan is being discussed with the Congress, MSPB managers and employees, the professional association, and focus groups of customers including OPM.

Goals

Goal 3

Facilitate The Reduction Of The Backlog Of Pending Appeals

Objectives

1. Track and provide feedback as to the status of pending cases throughout headquarters to assist other offices in identifying problem areas.
2. Identify systems inefficiencies and suggest modifications to improve the case flow.

Performance Measures

1. Amount of time to process cases in Board offices.
2. Number of cases pending for over one year at headquarters.

Program Evaluation

The majority of the performance measures will be obtained from data collected by the case management system, feedback from the Chairman **and other Members**, the staffs of the Members, Federal Circuit decisions, **and constituent outreach**.

GENERAL COUNSEL

Mission

The Office of the General Counsel provides quality legal, legislative, and information services in a timely fashion to the U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board.

Outcomes

The staff provides legal, legislative and information services and is responsible for:

1. Providing the Board with legal advice on a broad range of issues;
2. Preparing proposed decisions;
3. Achieving effective enforcement of decisions;
4. Providing information to the public in plain English;
5. Coordinating legislative policy; and
6. Providing congressional liaison functions.

Overall Goals

Providing quality, timely legal, legislative and information services to the Board.

Resources Needed To Meet The Performance Goals

The Office of General Counsel needs sufficient staff and supporting equipment to provide the advice, proposed decisions, litigation, and representational responsibilities assigned to the office.

Inputs

OGC has a staff of 16 FTE. In FY 1999, OGC received over 500 requests for legal and legislative advice, litigated over 100 cases in the U. S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, monitored over 600 Federal Circuit cases, and received almost 300 requests for work on case-related matters. OGC also monitored and provided status reports on about 150 bills, drafted regulations on matters ranging from revisions of current practices to regulations to implement new laws, provided ongoing contacts with Congress, fielded Congressional inquiries about Board operations, provided comments to OMB on legislative matters, and drafted information publications.

Outputs

Primary work products include: advice, proposed decisions, litigation, labor-management relations, representation of the Board in connection with internal complaints and investigations, enforcement of Board decisions, information publications, draft regulations, legislative matters, and Congressional liaison.

Systems

OGC uses the full range of agency electronic systems and selected public information systems.

External Factors That Could Affect Achievement Of General Goals And Objectives

OGC has limited control over its workload levels. Budget and resource levels could affect planned operational changes and training goals.

Internal Factors That Could Affect Achievement Of General Goals And Objectives

Unanticipated loss of key staff.

Customers

OGC's primary customers are the Board and its employees, Federal employees, agencies, representatives of parties in Board cases, the courts, the President, the Congress and the public.

Consultation with Congress and Stakeholders

The plan incorporates input received from consultation with Congress and our various stakeholders including employees, appellants, the public, and other Federal agencies.

Goals

Goal 4

Efficiently Produce And Deliver Quality Work Products

Objectives

1. Maximum efficiency, timely completion of work, and excellent work products through:
 - Highly qualified staff.
 - Technology applications--a paperless office; and

Strategies

1. Convert internal paper files to electronic systems; e.g., brief bank, subject matter files.
2. Obtain commercial electronic services for application in staff work, e.g., legislative tracking services.
3. Identify priority training needs and target training to address specific technical and legal needs, including training to support supervisory functions.
4. Fill vacancies with employees with first-rate legal and computer skills.
5. Increase use of ADR techniques in enforcement cases.

Performance Measures

1. Percentage of staff documents electronically stored.
2. Percentage of legislative tracking function performed through commercial electronic service.
3. Percentage of priority training needs addressed.
4. Amount of time to process all non-litigation cases.

Program Evaluation

Periodic analysis and evaluation.

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE

Mission

The Administrative Law Judge protects the merit-based civil service system through adjudication of cases arising under federal laws and regulations.

Outcomes

In order to ensure that merit principles are protected, the intended results (outcome) is to increase assurances through the adjudicatory process that agencies comply with civil service Laws.

Overall Goals

Protect and promote merit system principles in Federal personnel activities through:

Resources Needed To Meet The Performance Goals

The Office needs the Administrative Law Judge, an attorney, clerical support, and the IT network to accomplish its goals.

Inputs

OALJ's appropriation will be used to fund approximately 2 FTE. OALJ receives approximately 23 cases per year. Resources are devoted to adjudicating cases and performing related legal and administrative work.

Outputs

Primary outputs consist of decisions and orders.

Systems

OALJ depends on MSPB's information/management systems to accomplish its mission efficiently and effectively.

External Factors Which Could Affect Achievement Of General Goals And Objectives

OALJ has limited control over the number of cases filed. Government shutdowns, downsizing and legislative changes could significantly impact our workload. Further, since most of our expenses are personnel costs, reductions in appropriations will affect staff size and thus impact the achievement of our goals.

Internal Factors Which Could Affect Achievement Of General Goals And Objectives

There are no known major management problems or high-risk areas within OALJ that should impact negatively on our achieving our goals and objectives.

Customers

OALJ's primary customers are Federal employees, applicants for employment, annuitants, applicants for annuities, agencies, representatives of parties appearing before the MSPB, the Board and its offices, the courts, the President, the Congress, and the public.

Consultation With Congress And Stakeholders

This strategic plan includes input obtained from some of our customers.

Goals

Goal 5

Provide Fair, High-Quality, Timely, Customized, And Efficient Adjudication And ADR

Objectives

1. Insure that adjudication and ADR processes are fair, efficient, customized to meet variety of customer needs, and result in resolution at lowest level.
2. Insure that parties are aware of their rights and obligations.
3. Insure that products (e.g., decisions, orders, rulings at hearings, and actions regarding settlement) are fair, have the appearance of fairness, are of high quality, and are issued/made in timely manner.

Strategies

1. Offer **and assist in arranging** ADR in appropriate cases providing for quicker decisions and earlier finality.
2. Issue orders and rulings providing clear and comprehensive information to parties concerning their rights and obligations.
3. Issue high-quality decisions with pre-issuance quality review.

Performance Measures

1. Number of cases in which ADR is providing for quicker decisions and earlier finality is offered and agreed to by parties.
2. Number of Board and court decisions finding error in ALJ's decisions.
3. Number of decisions finding error.

Program Evaluation

Data maintained in case management systems.

MINISTERIAL OPERATIONS

Mission

The Office of the Clerk of the Board is responsible for ensuring the timely and efficient accomplishment of the ministerial operations of the Board in support of its adjudicatory role; effectively manage its records, legal research, information, directives, and disclosure programs; and provide appropriate reference and research services through the law library.

The office accomplishes its mission through a staff of legal, professional and technical personnel. Responsibilities include:

1. Maintaining a system for the timely processing, recording and issuing of appellate and original jurisdiction cases; preparing and certifying records and indices to the appropriate court or administrative agency; providing timely, accurate and consistent rulings on procedural motions; making legal service of final Board orders and opinions and orders; and providing efficient and appropriate legal research and reference services;
2. Providing timely, accurate and consistent response to requests for information under the various disclosure laws and disseminating information and guidance to our general public; publishing regulatory documents in the Federal Register; and
3. Maintaining a formal system for the organization, maintenance and disposition of official records.

Outcomes

The intended outcomes of the staff's efforts are to ensure that:

1. Cases are timely processed and issued;
2. Board staff has appropriate and efficient management and research tools available;
3. Information is appropriately disseminated in accordance with applicable laws and regulations; and
4. Official records are appropriately maintained and disposed of.

Goals

1. Timely process appellate, original jurisdiction, EEOC and court cases.
2. Make precedential MSPB decisions widely and easily accessible to external customers.

3. Enhance the use of legal research tools through the efficient use of technology.
4. Timely and efficiently disseminate information to Board customers consistent with applicable disclosure laws.
5. Ensure that MSPB automated case tracking, case management and legal research systems remain technically current and are consistent with MSPB needs and budgetary considerations.

Resources Needed To Meet The Performance Goals

The Office of the Clerk requires a staff of attorneys, a librarian, a program management specialist, and legal support staff and an IT infrastructure to accomplish its goals.

Inputs

The MSPB FY 1999 FTE ceiling is 16. Annually, OCB receives approximately 2600 PFR, OJ, EEOC and court cases; responds to over 2,000 information requests; handles over 6,500 customer contacts (visitors and telephone calls); processes over 57,000 pieces of incoming and outgoing mail; reviews over 2,000 final Board decisions before issuance; and retires over 4,500 records. Over 90% of the OCB resources are devoted to accomplishing its mission; approximately 10% is devoted to management and administration. Contractor resources will also be utilized.

Outputs

Primary outputs include certified cases to the Office of Appeals Counsel and the Office of the General Counsel; certified indices and records for courts; processed and retired cases, decisions and proposed decisions; and general information. System of ordered records, tools for research, and solved problems.

Systems

OCB depends on several information/management systems to accomplish its mission efficiently and effectively. These systems include the Case Management System (CMS) that provides a wide range of reports for managing the case workload reports; various electronic resources including email, the MSPB web site, software systems, and various databases.

External Factors Which Could Affect Achievement Of General Goals And Objectives

Changes in applicable laws and regulations could significantly impact OCB's ability to achieve its goals and objectives. Increased case receipts could also impact its workload as could the availability of funds for technological enhancements must also be available.

Internal Factors Which Could Affect Achievement Of General Goals And Objectives

Reductions in FTE and/or operating budget allocations and reduced or limited technological enhancements could impact negatively on OCB's achieving its goals and objectives.

Customers

OCB's primary customers are the Board members, MSPB staff, Federal employees, applicants for employment, annuitants, applicants for annuities, agencies, representatives of parties appearing before the MSPB, the courts, the President, the Congress, and the public.

Consultation With Congress And Stakeholders

This strategic plan includes input from OCB managers, employees and some of our customers.

Goals

Goal 6

Timely Process Appellate, Original Jurisdiction, EEOC And Court Cases

Objectives

1. Consistently process appellate, original jurisdiction, EEOC and court cases within authorized time frames. Ensure that not more than 5% of the cases exceed existing time standards due to administrative processing delays.
2. Reduce the number of voluminous records required to be reproduced for EEOC review.

Performance Measures

1. Timely Case Processing.
2. Volume of EEOC Records.

Program Evaluation

1. Workload reports will be monitored on an ongoing basis to measure progress. These reports show the average processing time for all Board cases and are indicators of the staff's success in achieving its goal.
2. Ongoing feedback from both internal and external customers will provide additional information as to progress. Ongoing dialog is maintained with other Board legal staff and feedback is constant. Ongoing dialog as to progress is also maintained with the Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit and the EEOC through OCB liaisons.
3. Ongoing evaluation of case processing will be conducted to eliminate unnecessary steps and to expand employee empowerment where appropriate.
4. Monitoring with data maintained in our case management system.
5. Periodic discussions with internal customers.

6. External customer feedback.

Goal 7

Make Precedential MSPB Decisions Widely And Easily Accessible To External Board Customers

Objectives

1. Reduce the number of paper copies of MSPB decisions by 50%.
2. Implement ListServ.
3. Electronic distribution to publishers.

Performance Measures

1. Reduction in the number of paper copies reproduced.
2. Implement ListServ.
3. Electronic Distribution of Information.

Program Evaluation

1. Success in accomplishing goals will be based on external customer feedback and on the willingness of publishers to accept electronic versions of decisions through the MSPB website or by email.
2. The staff currently reproduces an average of 20 copies of each final order issued for distribution to the parties, regional and field offices, publishers and other agencies. A reduction of copies will indicate that electronic distribution is being implemented.

Goal 8

Enhance The Use Of Legal Research Tools Through The Efficient Use Of Technology

Objectives

1. Convert parts of the library collection to electronic technology to achieve cost efficiencies and improve research capabilities.
2. Create optimal legal research tools for MSPB staff using electronic information.

Performance Measures

1. Conversion of collection to electronic format.

2. Conversion of MSPB Decisions for Legal research.

Program Evaluation

1. Progress in implementing the five-year Modernization Plan for the Library. By the end of FY2000, a variety of paper copies of the collection will be **converted to electronic technology**.
2. **Enhanced and cost efficient research** should be deployed Boardwide in FY2000.
3. Ongoing feedback **from customers**.

Goal 9

Timely And Efficiently Disseminate Information To Board Customers Consistent With Applicable Disclosure Laws

Objectives

1. Ensure that the public has timely and equitable access to the agency's public information. This applies to information disclosed, disseminated, or otherwise made available to the public--regardless of form or format.
2. Maximize the dissemination of information by email or through the MSPB website.

Performance Measures

1. Maximize Dissemination of Information

Program Evaluation

1. Paper copies of a variety of information is currently distributed to requesters. Although some of the information is available in electronic form on our website, the website will be expanded to include a Freedom of Information Act Reading Room. More documents and publications will become available and requesters will be encouraged to download required information from the website. As requesters become more familiar with the information available on our website, the number of requests for paper copies should decrease.
2. MSPB intends to implement a "listserv" for certain information such as Board opinions and orders. Requesters would be able to subscribe to the service and automatically receive copies as opinions as issued. Availability of listServ will be advertised via website and Federal Register notice.
3. Assessment of MSPB website "hit" reports. These comprehensive reports provide information about visitors to the website including information being downloaded.
4. Workload reports.

5. Ongoing customer feedback should tell us if they have problems with downloading information, or that they have difficulty with the format of information sent by email.

Goal 10

Ensure That MSPB Automated Case Tracking, Case Management And Legal Research Systems Remain Technically Current And Are Consistent With MSPB Needs And Budgetary Considerations

Objectives

1. Upgrade of word processing software and implementation of document assembly and document management products.
2. Replace current case management system.

Performance Measures

1. Upgrade to Word 97, HotDocs & PC Docs.
2. Replace CMS with Law Manager 98.

Program Evaluation

1. With contractor assistance, the Clerk of the Board has planned a phased installation of new software. Each phase will include a pilot period in which product performance will be evaluated and verified.
2. Workgroups, composed of a cross-section of MSPB employees, will provide continuous monitoring and feedback.
3. Regular progress briefings will occur with contractors, program and project managers. A schedule has been established for formal written reports.
4. After user training and full deployment of products, the Clerk of the Board will institute a system to monitor, evaluate, and assess user acceptability, adaptability and suggestions for changes/enhancements.
5. Personal assessment of product integration.

BUDGET ACTIVITY - MERIT SYSTEMS STUDIES

POLICY AND EVALUATION

Mission

The U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board was created by the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978 to protect the public's interest in a civil service that is free of prohibited personnel practices and that operates in accord with the statutory merit system principles. Accordingly, one of the two major mission activities assigned to the Board is the conduct of special studies of the Federal merit systems and oversight reviews of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management.

The staff of the Office of Policy and Evaluation carries these reviews and is responsible for:

1. Conducting periodic studies of various aspects of the Federal civil service and other merit systems. These studies are typically Governmentwide in scope and the data and information gathered are used to make sound, supportable judgments about the health of the merit systems and to identify opportunities for improvements in the efficiency and effectiveness of government operations through better workforce management;
2. An annual review of the "significant actions" of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to determine whether those actions are in accord with the merit system principles and free from prohibited personnel practices;
3. Reviewing rules and regulations of OPM to determine if a regulation on its face, or any agency's policy in conformity with the regulation, results in the commission of a prohibited personnel practice; and
4. Issuing reports and other written or electronic publications that document the results of OPE's studies and oversight activities, including recommendations for improvements. These reports are addressed to Congress and the President and widely disseminated to other interested individuals and organizations.

Outcomes

In order to ensure that the Federal merit systems operate in accord with the merit system principles and are free of systemic prohibited personnel practices, the intended results (outcomes) of OPE's efforts are to:

1. Strengthen the merit system and the effectiveness of Federal HRM by identifying problems with the policies and practices of federal agencies, including OPM, which may compromise adherence to the merit system principles;
2. Have a significant constructive impact on future Federal HRM policies, practices, and programs in the Federal Government in order to foster improvements and to promote and maintain the health of the merit systems; and

3. Identify and encourage the continuation of good or “best” HRM practices that are consistent with the merit system principles.

Overall Goals

Protect and promote merit system principles in Federal personnel and workforce management activities through timely and relevant review and analysis of Federal human resource management systems, programs, policies, and initiatives, including the activities of the Office of Personnel Management.

Resources Needed To Meet The Performance Goals

The Office needs a staff of personnel management specialist, personnel research psychologists, support staff, and the IT infrastructure to accomplish its goals.

Inputs

The Office of Policy and Evaluation consists of an interdisciplinary staff of 10 individuals including personnel research psychologists, personnel management specialists, and an attorney. In addition to salary and administrative expenses, the Office has a budget to fund survey research and other relevant activities. Approximately 90% of the Office of Policy and Evaluation’s resources are devoted directly to its statutory function. The remaining 10% represents administrative support and support activities (e.g., customer surveys and organizational evaluation activities on behalf of the adjudicative side of the U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board.

Outputs

Primary outputs include reports of its studies and OPM oversight activities and outreach activities to enhance the constructive impact of the Office’s findings and recommendations. More specifically:

The Office produces three to six major reports a year addressed to Congress and the President. Approximately 4,000 to 10,000 printed copies (depending on the number of requests received) of each report are distributed to congressional and executive branch policy officials and staff, including agency heads, directors of personnel, congressional staff, academicians, management and employee organizations, and other interested individuals and organizations. Electronic copies are also posted on the MSPB website and are typically picked up and made available on other subject matter websites or links to the MSPB website are provided. Through this means and depending on the subject matter of the report, electronic “copies” of each of the Office’s reports are accessed by another 5,000 to 20,000 individuals and organizations.

The Office also produces a periodic (at least quarterly) newsletter to further disseminate the results of its research. Approximately 1,500 printed copies of each newsletter are mailed to a targeted audience (most of whom receive the newsletter at their request). The newsletter is also made available electronically and at least another 15,000 to 20,000 copies downloaded annually

by interested individuals and organizations (in addition to a larger number of individuals who access and read the newsletter “on line” without downloading).

An active outreach program involving media relations, collaboration with other organizations, speaking engagements, and publication in professional journals also spreads the constructive impact of the Office’s findings and recommendations.

Systems

The Office of Policy and Evaluation depends on several information/management systems to accomplish its mission efficiently and effectively. These systems include the various electronic sources including financial, EEO, and human resources systems reports, a LAN/WAN, and Office website, and customer survey databases.

External Factors Which Could Affect Achievement of General Goals and Objectives

The Office of Personnel Management is actively devolving personnel authority through delegations and decentralization to the agencies and more agencies are developing unique personnel systems, programs, and operations. Other agencies (e.g., the Federal Aviation Administration) are being granted waivers from the statutory requirements of title 5 U.S.C. but are still expected to adhere to basic merit system principles. This diffusion of activities increases the difficulty of tracking the changes (e.g., data and information must be obtained from multiple points rather than from a centralized source). Also, since most of our expenses are personnel costs for our small staff, any reductions in appropriations will affect staff size and significantly impact the achievement of our goals.

In like manner, it is becoming more difficult to obtain reliable information about programs and operations in general. In the past, such information could be obtained fairly easily through such means as: surveys of the workforce (with surveys distributed by staff in HR offices); interrogatories soliciting the experiences and opinions of those in the HR and management arenas; face-to-face interviews with HR specialists and managers; and on-site reviews of personnel records. Now, however, we are no longer assured of the assistance we need in gathering information. Despite technological advances such as the ability to share information and ideas quickly over the internet, HR staffs are finding it difficult to be responsive to requests for data necessary to make solid assessments. A number of events contribute to this difficulty, including a 25 percent average reduction in HR staffs, outsourcing of HR functions, and the increased workload demands on remaining HR staff.

Internal Factors Which Could Affect Achievement of General Goals and Objectives

Given the relatively small size of our staff, there are some very real practical limits to the scope and complexity of the evaluation studies that we can conduct. Other than that, there are no known major management problems or high-risk areas within OPE that should impact negatively on our achieving our goals and objectives.

Customers

The Office of Policy and Evaluation's primary customers are the President, the Congress, Federal employees (particularly supervisors, managers, and HRM staff), applicants for employment, top agency management, and the public.

Consultation With Congress And Stakeholders

This strategic plan includes input obtained from our own staff, inputs from our customers through both formal and informal customer surveys, consultations with OPM, the General Accounting Office (GAO), the National Academy of Public Administration, and others engaged in research or study of civil service issues to assure there is no duplication of efforts or any other unnecessary overlap.

Goals

Goal 11

Promote And Protect Merit Systems Principles

Protect and promote merit system principles in Federal personnel and workforce management activities through timely and relevant review and analysis of Federal human resource management systems, programs, policies, and initiatives, including the significant activities of the Office of Personnel Management.

Objectives

1. Determine whether OPM and agency human resource management policies and practices are in compliance with the merit principles and conducive to the health of the merit system, and ensure that our stakeholders (particularly the President, Congress, and executive branch policy officials) are aware of those findings.
2. Obtain the maximum constructive impact (relative to resources used) from OPE's studies, reports, and recommendations and avoid any unnecessary duplication of effort with other government organizations (particularly the General Accounting Office (GAO) and the Office of Personnel Management (OPM)).

Strategies

Establish and/or build on OPE's unique Governmentwide baseline data concerning adherence to the merit principles in order to gauge progress and problems over time.

Examine Executive Branch personnel policies, practices, or systems to identify possible "root causes" of merit system problems or to identify "best and worst practices."

Provide information, develop recommendations, and follow-up on prior recommendations to promote effective, merit-based Federal human resources management.

Periodically survey primary customers to ascertain their views on the relevance, quality, readability, and usefulness of MSPB's study reports.

Raise issues in public forums--especially on topics ignored or overlooked by other reviewers--to ensure a strong voice in the debate concerning effective HR in federal agencies.

Relate individual and organizational goals, objectives, and performance measures to annual performance goals.

Performance Measures

1. OPE reports and studies examine relevant programs, policies and practices in order to evaluate Federal agencies' compliance with the merit principles and significant actions of OPM.
2. Federal policy makers and others find OPE evaluation reports and recommendations useful.
3. OPE studies efforts provide a unique and supportable perspective which has not otherwise been provided by oversight organizations such as GAO and OPM.

Program Evaluation

1. Track the dissemination of its findings and recommendations through the number of published or electronic copies of its reports that are being requested or accessed. Additionally, the staff will scan the media and professional literature to identify instances where MSPB's products are being cited as authoritative sources of information or analyses, or where our recommendations are being endorsed or suggested.
2. Monitor agency and congressional actions which reflect the impact and results achieved from the information, analyses, and recommendations derived from the studies and oversight function on an annual basis.
3. Conduct periodic customer surveys and focus groups.

Means To Be Used To Verify And Validate Performance Measures

The staff has developed and uses a number of measurement strategies in conjunction with its self-assessment efforts to improve its performance as an organization. As such, we have developed several useful measures to provide us with feedback concerning our performance. Because the essence of our success depends on our ability to influence constructive changes in Federal human resources management policies and practices in keeping with the intent of the statutory merit system principles, it is important that the recipients of our reports and recommendations view them as thorough, useful, and convincing. A periodic survey to obtain the views of our "customers," therefore, is one measure. The degree to which our findings and recommendations are relied upon and referenced by other agencies, policy officials, researchers, and others (e.g., in the media or professional literature) is another measure. Evidence that policy and program changes have actually occurred or that "best practices" are spreading is another

indication. By taking a multifaceted approach to the measurement of these perspectives, we are able to ensure that the assessments we make of our performance are reliable and valid measures of our success.

Survey experts on the staff will be involved in the development and administration of our customer satisfaction surveys to ensure that the effort meets accepted professional survey design, administration, analysis and interpretation standards.

As a second measure of whether our stakeholders are finding our publications relevant, we will systematically collect data on the demand for our publications. This demand can be verified by a physical count of the number of published copies that are requested as well as through statistical data provided by the administrators of the office's website along with periodic input from other websites that load office publications for their viewers.

An annual review of the literature on Federal civil service issues (including issues discussed in OPM and GAO publications) is also conducted to ensure that we are offering a unique perspective on these issues. Our impressions are also periodically corroborated by interviews, focus groups, or formal inquiries to knowledgeable officials in other federal agencies and in non-federal organizations with involvement in civil service issues (e.g., the National Academy of Public Administration, the International Personnel Management Association, and so on).

Actions to Mitigate Factors Adversely Affecting the Accomplishment of Performance Goals

One factor which can negatively impact the ability to accomplish these performance goals is the occasional situation wherein a proposed final draft report needs to undergo either substantial rewriting or multiple rewrites based on feedback from the MSPB Board Members (or other outside reviewers) who find that draft report either unclear or unsupportable as written. To avoid this situation, the staff of the Office of Policy and Evaluation will actively seek opportunities to involve all stakeholders in a particular study as early as possible in order to anticipate and address any problems or objections prior to drafting the final report.

It is becoming increasingly difficult to obtain reliable data and information about Federal HR programs and operations and the operation of Federal merit systems in general. In the past, such information could be obtained fairly easily through such means as: surveys of the workforce (usually distributed by HRM staff in each department and agency); interrogatories soliciting the experiences and opinions of those in the HR and management arenas; face-to-face interviews with HR specialists and managers; and on-site reviews of personnel records.

Currently, however, we cannot be assured of the help we need in gathering information. A 25 percent reduction in the number of HR staff members, deregulation and decentralization of personnel authorities combined with a centralization of personnel operation activities; outsourcing of HR functions in some agencies; and increased diversity (e.g., one size doesn't fit all) in personnel practices and programs all contribute to an increased difficulty in obtaining and analyzing data and information, despite technological advances such as the ability to share information and ideas quickly over the Internet.

In the interest of ensuring that we are able to obtain the information we need to conduct sound analyses and make useful recommendations about HR issues, we are pursuing more efficient and effective ways of gathering data about HR programs and operations. We are actively seeking to develop new and viable data gathering strategies during FY 2000 that will not be as burdensome for all concerned, but will still provide us with sound data for evaluating HR policies and operations.

BUDGET ACTIVITY - MANAGEMENT SUPPORT

INFORMATION RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Mission

The mission of the Information Resources Management staff is to support the Merit Systems Protection Board through the efficient and cost-effective use of information technology. It is responsible for:

1. Designing, developing, implementing, and maintaining automated information systems that meet the needs of MSPB staff;
2. Operating and managing the MSPB data network including local and wide area networks and connectivity to the Internet;
3. Operating and managing a centralized computer facility comprising multiple LAN servers, data base management software, and electronic mail;
4. Providing MSPB staff with personal computer hardware and software
5. Providing technical support and training;
6. Managing the computer security program; and
7. Managing IT contractual services.

Outcomes

The outcome (results) of the information technology program at MSPB is the availability of appropriate and cost-effective information technology tools to assist agency staff in protecting the merit principles.

Overall Goals

To support MSPB's mission and strategies, the following IRM goals have been established:

1. Achieve the strategic needs of the agency;
2. Satisfy the needs of individual customers;

3. Address internal information technology functions; and
4. Accomplish information technology innovation and learning.

The first two goals address whether the staff is providing the right products and services for MSPB and the latter two goals address how well those products and services are delivered.

Resources Needed To Meet The Performance Goals

The Office needs sufficient staff and financial resources to support the agency's growing IT capacity.

Inputs

The office consists of a staff of 13. In addition there is an IT system with a LAN/WAN that is available to MSPB employees.

Outputs

The primary output is service to users of the IT system as well as investments in the continuing upgrade of the various systems.

Systems

The Office manages several systems to accomplish its mission including the Case Management System, Lotus Notes, a legal data base,

External Factors Which Could Affect Achievement of General Goals and Objectives

If the office did have the financial resources to maintain the staff or utilize necessary outside assistance the Office's goals and objectives would be adversely effected.

Internal Factors Which Could Affect Achievement of General Goals and Objectives

There are no known major management or high risk factors that should impact negatively on our achieving our goals and objectives.

Customers

Our customers are the MSPB staff which depends on the IT infrastructure to accomplish its goals and objectives. It also provides information to other Federal agencies and the public.

Consultation with Congress and Stakeholders

The strategic plan was developed with input from MSPB employees, outside contractors, other Federal agencies, the Congress, and the public.

Goals

Goal 12

Achieve The Strategic Needs Of The Agency

Objectives

1. Implement information technology that will assist the agency in issuing initial decisions within 120 days and decisions on petitions for review within 110 days.
2. Implement information technology that will assist the agency in reducing the amount of resources devoted to resolving disputes.
3. Make the adjudicatory process more understandable and available to MSPB customers.

Strategies

1. Through the use of client-server technology, implement an integrated electronic case file to replace the existing Case Management System and integrate case management with document preparation and storage.
2. Increase data sharing among components of the integrated electronic case file and between new systems and Lotus Notes, thus reducing redundant data entry and case processing costs.
3. Implement computer systems that are easier to maintain and modify thus reducing agency costs.
4. Provide capabilities for appellants to file appeals electronically and for case documents to be received and distributed electronically using the Internet.

Performance Measures

1. Number of document templates using data directly from CMS or Lotus Notes databases, where data sharing is applicable.
2. Amount of time required to modify text in standard board documents (compared to amount of time required in existing system).
3. Percent of MSPB case documents available in an electronic case file.

Program Evaluation

As the new systems are implemented, data concerning the number of documents integrated with case management or other data will be compared with the number currently integrated. Data for the current documents will be obtained from CMS statistics showing the number of documents generated by CMS (counted as the number of templates that will replace them, i.e., if 12 CMS Acknowledgment Orders are being replaced by 1 template in HotDocs, it is counted as 1

document in FY98) plus Microsoft Word documents that already use CMS data, such as the Case Memo. The time required for recent modifications of standard Board documents will be compared to the time required in the new system. As the document management system is implemented to store case documents electronically, the number of documents in the new system will be compared to the number of documents in a sample case files.

Goal 13

Satisfy Needs Of Individual Customers

Objectives

1. Improve accessibility to information systems and the data contained in the systems.
2. Increase IRM awareness of and responsiveness to user needs.
3. Use technology to increase customer satisfaction with IRM services.

Strategies

1. Introduce new systems in a phased approach to promote user acceptance and gain experience with the new technology.
2. Utilize the “user-friendly” capabilities of personal computers and client software (use of the mouse, buttons, drop-down lists, menus, etc.) to make information systems easier to use and the data in those systems more accessible for end-user query and reporting.
3. Increase face-to-face contact between users and IRM staff through visits to regional offices and working sessions.
4. Replace paper-based forms and approval cycles with computer applications for procurement requests, personnel requests, awards, training, requests for administrative services, and similar processes.
5. Implement computer-based document libraries to provide easy and immediate access to documents currently in paper form or scattered among several systems, network shares, directories and subdirectories.
6. Provide flexiplace users with laptop computers/docking stations to provide maximum support and access to MSPB systems with reduced expense and effort by employees.

Performance Measures

1. Percent of MSPB staff using CMS on a regular basis.
2. Number of reports/graphs prepared by MSPB staff independently of IRM.
3. Number of days spent in regional offices analyzing needs and responding to user concerns.

4. Number of computer applications replacing paper-based systems.
5. Percent of flexiplace employees with laptop/docking stations.

Program Evaluation

As new systems are implemented, data concerning their use will be compared with comparable statistics for current systems. Monitoring systems will be implemented to count visits to regional offices, new computer applications, and use of laptop/docking stations.

Goal 14

Address Internal Information Technology Functions

Objectives

1. Reduce the time required to implement new systems.
2. Reduce the cost and/or staff resources required to maintain systems.
3. Maximize access to information system capabilities by HQ, regional, and flexiplace users during normal work hours.
4. Ensure that all hardware, software, networks, and applications are Y2K compliant.

Strategies

1. Use off-the-shelf software and outside services to reduce the elapsed time and IRM staff time for new systems implementation.
2. Use technology to improve internal IRM effectiveness, such as using an automated software distribution system to install software rather than physically visiting each PC to install.
3. Provide adequate backup and recovery services to maintain uninterrupted service to customers.
4. Modify application software, upgrade system software, and modify/replace hardware as needed for Y2K compliance.

Performance Measures

1. Percent uptime by system (notes, CMS, DMS, DAS, legal research, LAN shares) and location of user (HQ, region, flexiplace).
2. Number of problems resolved or installs completed remotely.
3. Amount of time and/or elapsed time required to upgrade PC's.

4. Number of Y2K problems surfacing after 1/1/2000.

Program Evaluation

Statistics currently maintained on system availability and installation will be used to establish a baseline and will be compared against statistics for new systems. Y2K problems will be monitored.

Goal 15

Accomplish Information Technology Innovation, Training, And Learning

Objectives

1. Maximize effective use of information technology through training and on-line resources.
2. Maintain currency in information technologies.

Strategies

1. Provide end-user classroom training for all new systems.
2. Send staff to technical training for new technologies and software.
3. Purchase or develop interactive training modules that can be used by MSPB staff on their own time, as refresher training and for new employees (both end-user and IRM technical training).
4. Maintain user guides and other software documentation in on-line libraries (both for end-users and for technical staff).
5. Promote sharing of knowledge by MSPB staff through Lotus Notes discussion databases and working meetings.
6. Evaluate new technology for applicability to MSPB environment and needs.

Performance Measures

1. Percent of staff receiving classroom training in new technologies.
2. Percent of applications where on-line training is available.
3. Percent of applications where on-line documentation is available.
4. Number of new products or technologies evaluated by IRM staff.

Program Evaluation

Existing data on training and on-line documentation will be used as a baseline to compare against comparable statistics with the new systems. Exploration of new technologies will be monitored and counted.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

Mission

The Office of Equal Employment Opportunity's mission is to promote equal opportunity in employment by enforcing the Federal civil rights employment laws through administrative actions, education and technical assistance.

OEEEO accomplishes its mission through a staff of 1.5 employees. OEEEO is responsible for the enforcement of key Federal statutes prohibiting discrimination in the workplace:

1. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex or national origin or retaliation;
2. The Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, which protects those age 40 and over from discrimination;
3. The Equal Pay Act of 1963, which prohibits sex-based wage discrimination between men and women in the same establishment who are performing equal work under similar working conditions; and,
4. Sections 501 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, which prohibits employment discrimination against people with disabilities in the Federal sector.

The OEEEO's mission includes a wide range of activities designed to promote equal opportunity in employment through the enforcement of the Federal laws prohibiting discrimination in employment. Significant functions associated with the administrative actions of enforcing the laws include:

1. Counseling, investigation, adjudication, settlement and conciliation of complaints; resolving complaints using other forms of alternative dispute resolution; and
2. Educational and technical assistance, i.e., outreach to employees, training sessions, and information and guidance on employment discrimination issues and law, and affirmative employment issues.

In addition, the OEEEO is tasked with the responsibility of overseeing and monitoring the MSPB's Career Transition Center (CTC). The mission of the CTC is to maintain current self-directed employment computer programs to assist MSPB employees who are attempting to transition to other employment opportunities.

Outcomes

The intended outcomes of the OEEO's Federal civil rights efforts are to ensure that:

1. Former and present employees and applicants for employment are aware of their EEO rights and responsibilities;
2. Counseling are conducted in a timely and legally sufficient manner;
3. Complaints are resolved at the earliest opportunity;
4. Investigations are conducted in a timely and legally sufficient manner;
5. Resolutions are fair, impartial, and appropriate;
6. Decisions are impartial/based solely on the evidentiary record and legally sufficient;
7. EEOC hearings requested by complainants are properly and promptly facilitated;
8. EEOC appeals are properly coordinated and all issues are addressed; and,
9. MSPB's workforce is reflective of the population as a whole.

The intended outcome of the OEEO's CTC effort is to ensure that employees are provided access to necessary tools to assist them in their self-directed job search.

Overall Goals

Effectively and efficiently produce high quality work products which promote Equal Employment Opportunity.

Resources Needed To Meet The Performance Goals

The Office needs counselors and support staff to meet the goals of promoting the equal employment opportunity goals.

Inputs

The OEEO's FY 1999 FTE goal is 1.5. Annually OEEO receives approximately 10 counseling actions and 5 formal complaints, and coordinates from two - six annual special emphasis educational programs. Resources are devoted to administratively processing EEO actions, performing related administrative functions, and funding and/or coordinating outreach/educational programs.

Outputs

Primary outputs consist of advice, counselor's reports, notices of final interview, acknowledgments, transmittals of files, analyses of investigative files, recommended decisions, final decisions, notices, policies and procedures, annual reports, settlements, correspondence with other Federal agencies, special emphasis programs, and, increased numbers of potential career opportunities.

Systems

The OEEO depends on interaction/information exchange with other agencies' EEO Directors and EEOC, research of current EEOC publications, discussions with EEOC's Office of Legal Counsel, coordination of work with/through MSPB's Office of General Counsel, research of EEOC case law, EEO rules and regulations, use of outside investigators, interaction with APHIS, interaction with all Board offices' personnel for information/administrative support, and other MSPB information/management systems to accomplish its civil rights mission.

The OEEO depends on the services of MSPB's IRMD personnel in a technical advisory capacity to assist in keeping the CTC's computer/equipment and self-directed employment programs current and up-to-date.

External Factors Which Could Affect Achievement Of General Goals And Objectives

Any changes in applicable laws and regulations and/or increased numbers of counseling actions and complaints could significantly hamper the OEEO's ability to achieve its goals and objectives.

Internal Factors Which Could Affect Achievement Of General Goals And Objectives:

Any reduction in staffing.

Customers

The OEEO's primary customers include all the Board's current and former employees, applicants for employment, appellants, complainants'/agency representatives and EEOC.

Consultation With Congress And Stakeholders

This strategic plan includes input obtained from a current collateral-duty EEO Counselor and the responses obtained from previous surveys from employees, counselees and complainants. It is to be considered an evolving document and, therefore, subject to any necessary changes.

Goals

Goal 16

Efficiently Produce And Deliver Quality Work Products

Objective

1. Efficiently process counseling and complaints of discrimination.
2. Develop data base to accurately capture timeliness of case processing sequence.
3. Timely revise MSPB's implementing regulations, when necessary, to conform with EEOC's changes to 29 CFR 1614 and management directive.
4. Efficiently conduct a review of MSPB's recruitment policy, procedure, practice and make any necessary recommendations.
5. Efficiently review MSPB's electronic information systems to determine that EEO information is included, easy to read, and accessible, and make any necessary recommendations.
6. Efficiently assess and address Career Transition Center users' needs.

Performance Measures:

1. The percentage of counseling complaints completed within 30 days of initial contact with a counselor.
2. The percentage of complaints investigated/closed with 180 days from filing.

Program Evaluation

Performance measures will be obtained from information collected by (soon to be developed) counseling/complaint data base, and by periodic assessment and users' surveys.

FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGEMENT

Mission

The Financial and Administrative Management Division will provide Financial and Administrative Support to MSPB to assist in promoting:

1. Fair, timely, and efficient dispute resolution; and
2. Timely and relevant review of Federal human resource management systems, programs, policies, and initiatives.

Outcomes

Offices throughout MSPB have sufficient and increasingly more efficient resources to support their missions.

Overall Goals

1. Manage the MSPB budgetary process to ensure the availability of funds to support major missions and spending priorities.
2. Improve services, reduce costs and save time in provision of services.
3. Ensure management systems have sound internal and management controls.
4. Providing effective and efficient personnel management services.

Resources Needed to Meet The Performance Goals

The Office needs a variety of administrative staff, such as accountants and procurement specialist, together with an IT infrastructure to support the MSPB employees, other Federal agencies, and the Congress which require information or assistance from the Office.

Inputs

FAMD receives requests for administrative support from all offices within MSPB in the following areas: budget, procurement, accounting, travel, printing, space, telecommunications, personnel, etc. In all of these areas FAMD also attempts to anticipate what will be required by other offices and to have the materials or services available when requested.

Outputs

The primary outputs include services and materials provided to other offices with MSPB. In addition, FAMD provides reports and information to the President, Congress, and other Federal agencies on behalf of MSPB.

Systems

FAMD uses the systems available to all offices with MSPB. It also uses the systems available from the National Finance Center (NFC) and APHIS Business Services (ABS). In addition, the division has developed some systems for internal use, principally to track transaction being processed within the division.

External Factors Which Could Affect Achievement Of The Goals And Objectives

FAMD has limited control over the number of requests made by either other MSPB offices or by outside organizations. Also if the agency budgetary resources are reduced the division's ability to respond to requests would be reduced. In addition, FAMD is limited by the capabilities of NFC and ABS. New emerging technology could increase FAMD's efficiency and effectiveness.

Internal Factors Which Could Affect Achievement Of General Goals And Objectives

There is no known major management problem or high-risk areas within MSPB that should impact negatively on our achieving our goals and objectives.

Customers

FAMD's customers are other offices within MSPB, other Federal agencies, the President, Congress, and the general public.

Consultation With Congress And Stakeholders

The portion of the plan which is incorporated into the agency plan will be shown to Congress and our stakeholders to obtain their input.

Goals

Goal 17

Manage The MSPB Budgetary Process To Ensure The Availability Of Funds To Support Major Missions And Spending Priorities

Objective

Ensure individual office have needed funds to operate on a daily basis and that MSPB has needed funds to support short and long range improvement efforts.

Strategies

1. Budgets sent to OMB in September and Congress in February accurately reflect MSPB's needs and are well written, complete, accurate, and timely.
2. Available funds are allocated efficiently, to reflect agency priorities, and adjustments are made timely when needed.
3. Needed adjustments to the allocations are made as necessary.
4. All of the funds made available are efficiently used.

Performance Measures

Budgets are submitted on time, supplementals are submitted as needed, and allocations presented in a timely fashion.

Program Evaluation

We will record the dates of budget submissions and comments received from OMB, Congress, and our other customers.

Goal 18

Improve Services, Reduce Costs And Save Time In Provision Of Services

Objective

Reduce the time and expense associated with the provision of administrative services while improving their overall quality.

Strategies

1. Improve voice communications thorough use of digital technology.
2. Reduce costs by making effective use of the FTS2001 contract.
3. Improve video-conferencing by ensuring all systems have same software versions.
4. Explore new video technologies such as desk top and implement where it is appropriate and cost effective.
5. Improve the T&A process by working with Kronos to improve the system and to expand use of Kronos to other offices not currently using it, if appropriate.
6. Improve the timelines and accessibility of financial data for use by FAMD and individual offices.
7. Ensure MSPB makes use of the latest systems and technologies available to us from NFC and ABS.
8. Reduce financial reporting requirements without adversely impacting budget execution.
9. Automate as many administrative systems and processes as possible including such things as processing credit cards, assisting travel payments, improving budget data.
10. Use the Internet to secure an disseminate procurement and related information.

Performance Measures

1. Improve voice and video communications.
2. Improve the T&A process.
3. Make financial information readily available.
4. Improve credit card program.
5. Simplify travel payment systems.

6. Make use of the Internet

Program Evaluation

We will examine various types of billing and cost information as well as monitoring total orders process and percent processed via credit card and other electronic means.

We will perform a customer survey to determine needs for training and information needs.

Goal 19

Ensure Management Systems Have Sound Internal And Management Controls

Objective

We provide adequate review of internal systems to identify potential vulnerabilities and assure that we have reasonable safeguards in place.

We provide adequate review of management controls to identify potential vulnerabilities and assure that we have reasonable safeguards in place.

Strategies

1. We will determine which areas should be studied in depth and procure contractor assistance in performing the studies.
2. We will analyze the recommendations made by the consultants and take appropriate follow-up action.
3. We will maintain a multi-year schedule so assure that all the important areas are covered in a systematic way.
4. We will provide accurate and timely information in our annual report to OMB.

Performance Measures

Internal and management controls.

Program Evaluation

We will conduct reviews in accord with Generally Accepted and Government standards.

Goal 20

Providing Effective And Efficient Personnel Management Services

Objectives

Provide human resource management services and information that meet the needs of MSPB managers, supervisors and employees.

Strategies

1. The cost of services provided by APHIS continues to be less expensive than having in house staff perform the work.
2. Information, services, and material from OPM and APHIS are provided timely to MSPB staff.
3. Services provided by APHIS are of high quality and are timely.
4. Special services, such as retirement counseling, are provided as needed.
5. Review the range of services provided and expand APHIS' role as possible and necessary.
6. Work with APHIS to identify and correct any problem issues regarding quality and timeliness.

Performance Measures

1. Cost and Range of Services.
2. The timeliness of services.

Program Evaluation

We will record the results of timeliness measures and compare them with the base we are establishing.

We will consult with other offices and employees within MSPB to gauge their perceptions of service levels.