

decades the Commission has been involved in the program, despite the fact that salary rates have doubled during that period.

15. Are there any outstanding GAO reports on this program?

No.

16. What significant problems, if any, are you facing in accomplishing the program objectives?

As always, we are faced with the challenges of producing a quality product economically and quickly in the face of increasing salary and travel costs. At the same time, in our treatment of applicants and employees, we must remain consistently objective, neutral and fair in an arena that is marked by increasing concern for safeguarding the rights and privacy of individuals, and we must be continually alert to keep our practices responsive to a succession of court decisions dealing with constitutional issues affecting the program.

17. Do you administer any grants, loans, or other disbursed funds related to this program?

No.

18. If your appropriations were reduced, how would you absorb the cut—by an overall reduction or by cutting or by curtailing certain activities?

Our investigative caseloads are uncontrollable, in that they are generated by agency appointing actions and thus are related to overall Federal employment levels and hiring rates. Every person entering the service is required to be investigated. We would have these possible alternatives if our funds were cut:

Backlog our work, which means delaying completion of investigations and providing less than timely service in furnishing results to employing agencies.

Close out NACI cases to employing agencies without resolving suitability questions.

19. If additional funds were available, what would you do with the new money?

Additional funds would be used to computerize the investigation indices and to conduct additional qualifications investigations on applicants for key positions.

PROGRAM CATEGORY C—PROVIDING PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT LEADERSHIP

1. What is the nature of and authority for this program?

The nature of this total program is best characterized by its emphasis on providing positive leadership to Federal personnel management.

The interrelated goals of such leadership are several. They include (1) keeping Federal merit personnel management generally abreast of modern developments in the profession of personnel management itself and contributing to such developments; (2) seeing that Federal personnel management is properly responsive to social, technological, educational, labor market, and other relevant changes in the national environment; (3) stimulating individual agencies to develop personnel and manpower programs that meet the needs of their respective missions within the overall Federal merit personnel management framework; (4) assuring that Federal personnel practices properly implement law and public policy; (5) making sure that Federal personnel are equipped to meet new and changing demands in their occupations and fields of work; and (6) assuring that Federal employees and applicants are treated fairly. This list of positive leadership goals could be further expanded or refined.

This is not to say that a leadership responsibility is not importantly involved in other Commission program categories; it is. Nor is it to say that only a leadership responsibility is involved in this program category; obviously a number of other functions—inspecting, classifying positions, conducting training, regulating, to name a few—are also involved. It is to say, however, that a primary thrust in this program area is one of providing positive leadership—this program represents the focus of general personnel management leadership in the executive branch. If coordinated leadership does not come from this program, it will not come from anywhere else.

The individual nature of some of the major subcategories of this overall program category include—

Guidance and direction of a Government-wide training effort.

Development of a modern executive manpower system for Government.