1997 NATIONAL ACADEMY OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION (NAPA) EVALUATION OF THE CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL SERVICE TWO-LEVEL APPRAISAL SYSTEM

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Background

The Corporation for National and Community Service was established by Congress in 1993 to implement President Clinton's new national service program. It merged ACTION, the Commission on National and Community Service, the White House Office of National Service, and added a collection of new programs to be known as AmeriCorps. Congress granted the Corporation authority to implement an alternative personnel system that would be exempt from title 5 of the U.S. Code in hiring, classification and compensation. Further, because of its status as a government corporation, it was exempt from chapter 43 performance management provisions. In its FY 1996 appropriation language, Congress directed the Corporation to commission the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA) to study the Corporation's structure, organization, management and to make an interim assessment of the Corporation's Alternative Personnel System.

NAPA's Methodology

- Mail-in surveys to all staff.
- Interviews with selected managers, employees, and union officials.
- Site reviews in Headquarters and selected Field offices.

Managers' Views

- Majority of managers favored a pass-fail system because it simplified the appraisal process but did not favor it for their own appraisals.
- Majority believed that Corporations feedback-oriented performance appraisal system helped career growth.
- Minority felt most employees wanted a more definitive rating such as the previous 5-level system.
- Most said the new system made it easier to deal with poor performers.

- Many supervisors did not understand their performance appraisal responsibilities. They received training upon its implementation but did not absorb much because there was no context for information on a pass-fail system.
- Managers had conflicting views about whether performance plans were linked to mission and organizational objectives. The absence of a results-oriented strategic plan at the time of NAPA's study made it difficult for managers to link performance plans to agency objectives.
- Several supervisors criticized other managers for not dealing with well-known poor performers. They said managers, not the system, were at fault.

Significant Findings

- 73% of employees had written performance plans.
- 77% of employees received annual ratings.
- Two-level appraisal system emphasizes feedback and employee development.
- Considerably more performance improvement plans have been issued since the implementation of pass/fail.
- Reason: Benchmarks for successful performance are established when the improvement plan is issued, not when the work plan is developed, thus, eliminating predetermined standards and elements.
- Corporation's primary use of term appointments helps managers release problem employees without resorting to adverse actions. Most supervisors indicated that is their preferred route to take with poor performers.
- Unlike other pass/fail systems evaluated, the Corporation did not utilize 360-degree appraisals nor require quarterly reviews.

Conclusions and Recommendations

- This system had been running for two years at the time of the evaluation. Based on NAPA research , major organizational system change takes four to ten years to achieve full implementation. Weak spots are attributable to the newness of the system.
- Continue the pass/fail system.
- Require quarterly progress reviews.
- Execute performance contracts with top managers that specifically define human resources expectations.
- Incorporate in every supervisor's performance plan a critical element for managing the organization and its human resources.
- Supervisors should not receive a passing rating unless they are current with performance plans, ratings, and progress reviews for all subordinates.
- Monitor compliance with the appraisal system through management chain, not Human Resources. [**Note: This has proven to be very effective.**]

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A Report from a Panel of the
NATIONAL ACADEMY OF
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL SERVICE: STRENGTHENING ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AND SERVICE DELIVERY

NAPA
National Academy of
Public Administration

May 1988

The Balanced Budget Down Payment Act of 1996 contains a provision permitting the Corporation for National Service (the Corporation) to use funds from its appropriations for the National Academy of Public Administration (the Academy) to conduct a study on various aspects of the Corporation. The Corporation contracted with the Academy on March 3, 1997, to conduct a study "with emphasis on the structure, organization, and management." The Corporation also requested that the Academy conduct an interim assessment of its Alternative Personnel System (APS).

The National Community and Service Trust Act of 1993 (the 1993 Act) created the Corporation as a wholly owned government corporation under the Government Corporation Control Act. The law provides for a 15-member, bipartisan Board of Directors appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate. Members serve five-year staggered terms. The Corporation's Board meets three times a year, provides advice on a range of issues, and carries out one operational function: approving individual grants for the AmeriCorps and Learn and Serve programs.

The Corporation's most senior manager is the chief executive officer (CEO), a presidential appointee. Ten offices, including the inspector general (IG), currently report to the CEO and the chief operating officer (COO). The COO and IG also are presidential appointees.

The Corporation supports 10 service programs created by the 1993 Act and the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973 (DVSA). The newer 1993 Act programs include AmeriCorps*State, AmeriCorps/National Direct, AmeriCorps*National Civilian Community Corps, and three Learn and Serve America programs. The older. DVSA programs include AmeriCorps*VISTA the Foster Grandparent Program, the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program, and the Senior Companion Program. These two sets of programs have varying sizes and purposes; operate with different funding streams and calendars; involve different state and or local partners; have their own regulations, and procedures; and function in different ways in the field.
The Corporation has organized its ten programs into three departments-AmeriCorps, Learn and Serve America, and National Senior Service Corps. These departments represent three of the nine organizations

reporting to the COO. They are responsible for matters such as setting program policy; providing guidance and technical assistance; and developing budgets for their respective programs.

Both the Corporation and state entities have a role in administering the 1993 Act programs.

The Corporation's role is carried out largely by various headquarters offices. The state role is primarily carried out by state commissions, which were established by the Act. Corporation offices in 46 states manage the DVSA programs. Excluding California, New York, and Texas, which have larger staffs and more projects 1than the remaining states, the average size of state offices is about three people.

Under a February 1997 reorganization, the Corporation created five area manager positions that are responsible for supervising clusters of state offices. The Corporation has filled the positions on a two-year rotating basis. The area managers have authority to assign work among state offices and allocate resources to some extent. They report to the director of the Planning and Program Integration Department in headquarters. The Corporation has not allocated staff to support the area manager positions.

Five field service centers provide administrative and grant award and management services for the state offices. The service centers report to the deputy chief financial officer, who reports to the chief financial officer in headquarters.

[1] Data on state office size and number of projects are based on information the Corporation provided the Academy staff in July 1997.

The Academy panel has developed a series of recommendations relating to the Corporation's structure, functions, and grant-making processes, which are summarized below. Corporation officials were furnished advance copies of a draft of this report to provide them an opportunity to comment on the study findings, conclusions and recommendations. The Corporation's comments have been incorporated, where appropriate, into the final report.

The Academy panel understands that many of the problems these recommendations address are symptoms of a situation in which top Corporation staff felt it necessary to devote their time primarily to issues and concerns more related to the continued existence of the Corporation than to its internal management. The panel believes that it is now time to devote more attention to internal management issues that impede the effectiveness of the programs and which, in the final analysis, could be of far reaching importance-to the future if the Corporation.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF THE CORPORATION

The Board of Directors

Functionally, the Corporation Board has elements of both a strong, policy-setting, decision- making entity, and an advisory body. The level of board involvement in programmatic issues varies considerably depending on the program. This; is most noticeable in the grant approval process, where the Board approves all new AmeriCorps and Learn and Serve grants, but plays no direct role in approving VISTA or Senior Corps programs. Many board members and other individuals interviewed by the Academy staff' question whether the board's extensive involvement in the approval of individual grants is still needed, or is an appropriate function for the Board of Directors.

Although not a statutory responsibility, the board has become more involved in management issues as Congress, the inspector general, and others continue to raise concerns over program costs, financial system shortcomings, weak internal controls, and other matters related to management effectiveness. While its involvement in management issues has increased the board has no authority to compel action in this area.

The Academy panel believes the board would have a greater positive impact on the overall management of the Corporation if it concentrated its energies and skills on policy-making and direction setting for all the Corporation programs, and extracted itself from operational functions. The board could also facilitate the strengthening of corporate accountability by ensuring that the CEO is properly executing Board policies.

The Academy panel recommends (pg. 45) that the Corporation:

- seek legislation to discontinue board approval of AmeriCorps and Learn and Serve grants
- establish a board role for developing policy and setting grant approval criteria for all Corporation programs
- re-examine the range of policy matters currently considered by the board to ensure that the board is concerned with issues central to the Corporation's future success
- institute a policy requiring the CEO to provide to the board written feedback on the operational status of all board policies

The Corporation's Top Management Team

The Corporation has been criticized both externally and internally for its management practices. The CEO and COO must forge a solid union to provide the leadership the Corporation needs to best meet the many challenges it faces. To do that, the Academy panel believes that the destiny of the COO should be closely tied to the CEO. Because the COO has primary responsibility for managing operations, it is also important that the COO have experience in managing a large organization, preferably in government, and be required to meet specific performance expectations.

The Academy panel recommends (pg. 46) that the Corporation take the necessary steps to:

- develop specific managerial competencies for the COO position
- have the CEO appoint the chief operating officer to a term appointment
- have the CEO and COO develop an annual performance plan that sets organizational and individual goals for the COO

- allow the CEO to terminate the COO's appointment if performance goals are not met

The panel wishes to emphasize that the above recommendations are not intended to reflect on either the current CEO or COO, who is a relatively new appointee. Rather, it is intended *to* institutionalize a procedure to give the CEO more control over the selection and appointment *of* the Corporation's key internal management official.

The Corporation has a cadre of knowledgeable and talented individuals in its senior management ranks. But at the time the study was conducted these resources were not harnessed into an effective top management team. The Academy panel believes the Corporation needs to formally identify its senior management team members by position, and define their roles and responsibilities. This team should meet on a regular basis to exchange information, participate in the decision making process, and review progress toward the Corporation's objectives; and they need to have access to the agency's top leadership. The Corporation would also benefit from some routine mechanism to ensure that those affected by decisions are appropriately involved in the decision making process.

The Academy panel recommends (pg. 47) that the: CEO:

- formally identify the top Corporation executive positions that represent the senior management team and disseminate this information, together with the current organization chart, throughout the Corporation

- continue to schedule and preside over regular meetings of the senior management team that focus on major issues affecting the Corporation

- appoint issue-specific senior management committees and councils, as appropriate, to review important management issues and provide recommendations

- establish an "Executive Secretariat" function in the department of the CEO/COO to ensure that all documents presented to the CE:O and COO for decision are reviewed, cleared, and/or commented on by all affected Corporation offices

Communication and Decision making Practices

With slightly more than 500 employees, the Corporation is not a large organization by federal government standards. But between its own state offices and its state partners, Corporation programs are managed in over 100 locations across the United States. This factor alone presents challenges for communications, decision making and management.

The Academy panel believes that the Corporation and its employees would benefit from communication and decision making practices that share relevant information in a timely manner, make individuals feel more a part of their employing organization, and calm anxieties in an agency that has been under threat of extinction for much of its short life. Communication and decision making processes that address staff needs for information, and give staff opportunities to have input into agency practices will reinforce a single corporate culture, help raise employee morale, and improve productivity.

The Academy panel recommends (pg. 48) that the CEO:

- continue to expand the practice of seeking headquarters and field staff input when developing or changing policies and procedures

- establish an internal communications strategy that includes at a minimum, transmitting regular, frequent electronic and written notices to employees of proposed management actions that affect their work life

REALIGNMENT OF FUNCTIONS AND STRUCTURE COULD ENHANCE PROGRAM INTEGRATION, OPERATIONS, AND DELIVERY

A Stronger Field Structure is Needed

Organizationally and functionally, the Corporation is split along the lines of the old versus the new programs. The Corporation state offices manage the DVSA programs, and headquarters program departments manage the 1993 Act program. Program officers are not well versed in each other's programs, even though the programs often work side by side in a community, and program members perform similar services. The small pockets of Corporation staff scattered throughout its state offices are, for the most part, not well positioned to mount the type of effort needed to be a significant player in the states' national service endeavors.

The existing area manager concept adds much needed focal points for the Corporation's widespread state level activities. But the part time, rotational nature of the positions, coupled with the lack of resources to support them, will seriously limit their ultimate effectiveness.

The Academy panel believes that the nature of the Corporation's mission calls for a more focused field presence to promote, develop, and institutionalize national service nationwide. However, while the Academy panel believes a regional structure is the preferred field organization, it is mindful of the cost and operational impact associated with such a major reorganization. Among the many considerations are human resources implications, financial and program management reconfiguration, and the time required to put a new structure in place. The panel is also very much aware that a great deal of data gathering, dialogue, analysis and planning must presage the implementation of a restructuring of this magnitude. For these reasons, the panel believes that regionalization is an objective the Corporation should move toward after appropriate study and preparation. The following field restructuring recommendations are to be read in this context.

The Academy panel recommends (pg. 73-74) that the Corporation:

- use the cluster boundaries as a guide as it moves toward consolidation of its state offices into regional offices

- eventually replace the area manager positions with regional director positions that have term appointments under the Alternative Personnel System

- delegate all necessary authorities to the region directors to manage their regions and hold the regional directors accountable for all Corporation activities in their regions

Devolving Greater Program Authority to the Field

The Corporation's current organizational structure and functions in headquarters and the field are arranged in stovepipes, and the Academy staff's research shows that its program officials and staff do not communicate nor work with one: another in an optimum fashion. This ': functional alignment leaves Corporation state offices generally out of the loop for the AmeriCorps and Learn and Serve programs, which weakens the Corporation's field presence and promotes program separation rather than coordination. The Academy panel believes that the Corporation should delegate greater responsibility and authority to its field structure for the AmeriCorps*State and Learn and Serve programs.

- Regarding consolidation, the Academy panel recommends (pg. 74-75) that the Corporation assign regional offices responsibilities to:
- perform the peer review for AmeriCorps*State competitive grants
- determine the adequacy of state commissions' grant review, selection, and management processes
- approve the community-based Learn and Serve K-12 grants approve the commissions' administrative budgets
- determine the level of Program Development and Training funds for each state
- approve the state plan for Learn and Serve formula funds

The Academy panel also believes that the grants' management function -the award and administration of the grant -should be performed at the same organizational level (headquarters or field) as the grant review and selection process. Such an arrangement would maintain as close a relationship as possible between the selection and management of a given project. In addition, the current bifurcated field structure, with state offices and service centers reporting through separate chains of command into headquarters, has contributed to operational problems that have left the state offices in two clusters without the necessary data needed to run their programs.

The Academy panel recommends that when the Corporation delegates to its field offices authority to review and approve AmeriCorps*State and other applications, it also should reassign to the service centers the associated grants' management function (pg. 75). With field restructuring, the Academy panel recommends that the Corporation reorganize the service centers to report to the area managers or regional directors. The Academy panel further recommends that the service centers report to the area managers even before a regional consolidation (pg. 75).

Emphasizing Coordination Between Headquarters and the Field

The Planning and Program Integration Department is a critical focal point in the Corporation where program direction and collaboration can intersect field activities. It also is the voice of the Corporation's field structure -representing the field's views and interests to the rest of the organization. Yet, these important functions encompass but one aspect of that department's responsibilities. The Academy panel believes that the: Corporation needs to enhance and give greater visibility and support to the field office coordination and representational functions by expressly identifying staff to handle these activities.

The regional directors, with the increased authority mid responsibility envisioned by the panel, are a critical part of the Corporation's senior management team. While a headquarters staff office can represent the regions' interests in headquarters and facilitate communication, the regional directors also need direct access to the COO. They also should meet on a regular basis with the rest of the Corporation's top managers to discuss issues and help set future directions.

The Academy panel recommends (pg.76) that the CEO:

- identify an office reporting to the COO that has the staff function of facilitating

- communication with the regions and coordinating programs and activities among the headquarters program departments and offices and the field

- clearly define and communicate to the rest of1he agency the field coordination office's responsibilities and authorities

- emphasize that the regional directors should have direct access to the COO

- convene periodic meetings of the regional directors with the rest of the Corporation's senior management team

SIMPLIFY THE GRANT REVIEW, SELECTION, AND AWARD PROCESSES

The Corporation distributes funds in two ways, via grants or, in the case of AmeriCorps*State/National program, cooperative agreements. The grants' review and award processes for the Corporation's programs vary considerably. The process for the DVSA programs is highly decentralized, with state office personnel dealing directly with the grant requirements and making decisions at the state office level. The process for the 1993 Act programs is highly centralized in Corporation headquarters, but with the added complexity of the state commissions being involved in the initial identification of potential recipients. The process to award AmeriCorps and Learn and Serve programs also is marked by detailed and lengthy up-front analysis, aimed at ensuring a high quality that will stand up to intense scrutiny. A major component of that analysis is a headquarters peer review of new AmeriCorps and Learn and Serve applications using panels of experts which, for the most part, parallel a process carried out at the state level. The result is a set of complex and duplicative grant review processes, and highly prescriptive grant management procedures that fundamentally do, or redo, the work of the state entities and contribute to delaying grant awards.

The Academy panel believes that the Corporation's decision to forgo headquarters peer review of AmeriCorps*State formula funds if a state commissions' review process meets acceptable standards is a step in the right direction. Major savings in time and expense could accrue if state commissions meeting performance standards did not have to submit details on a project- by-project basis for their formula allocation.

Many Corporation officials are concerned about the state commissions' capacity to effectively manage the grant review and selection processes. To respond to these concerns, the Academy panel believes that the Corporation should~ formally certify state commission program review procedures against agreed-upon standards, and develop an overall strategy to improve systematically the commissions' abilities to perform these functions. In addition, the Corporation should exercise authority to impose sanctions for state nonperformance, in lieu of stepping in and redoing the work at the Corporation headquarters level.

The Academy panel recommends (pg.93-95) that tile Corporation:

- develop criteria and implement a formal process to evaluate the adequacy of state commissions' capacity and processes

- include in its strategic plan an objective to systematically develop and maintain state commissions' capacities to manage and support national service programs

- forgo the project-by-project review on formula grants for states that meet the Corporation's criteria. Instead, states should submit to the Corporation's regional offices as recommended earlier and in Chapter Four for review and approval their plans for using formula grant funds

- seek legislation to establish as formal policy the authority to refuse AmeriCorps*State competitive grant applications from any state that does not meet the Corporation's criteria

- seek legislation to allow the Corporation Board of Directors to amend the formula for AmeriCorps*State formula grants to reflect the state commissions' abilities to administer those projects

- explore with OMB and appropriate congressional committees options to simplify administrative cost requirements, or possibly substitute a single administrative fee in lieu of detailed amounts derived using the federal cost principles

- delegate grant approval authority for National Direct grants to the director of AmeriCorps programs

- request the Board to consider the extent to which reforms made in handling AmeriCorps*State programs also might be applied to National Direct grant providers

The Corporation's enabling legislation does not mandate a peer review for individual Learn and Serve grants. For example, for the K-12 formula grants, the states submit only their proposed plans for awarding those grant funds. These plans do not need the same intensive level of review by outside experts as the more complex AmeriCorps grants. Similarly, the Learn and Serve community-based grants or the Funds for the Advancement of Service Learning (F ASL) grants do not need such extensive reviews.

Many state commissions have the state education agency (SEA) administer the community- based K -12 program for them. To eliminate the additional organizational layer, the Academy panel believes that SEAs should be allowed to apply directly for these funds.

The number of eligible recipients for Learn and Serve higher education funds is large and the amount of money is relatively small. In states without consortia that apply for these funds on behalf of their members, the Corporation retains decision making authority for individual grants awarded within those states. This results in a large workload for a small program.

The Academy panel recommends (pg. 95-96) that the Corporation:

- eliminate the peer review requirement for Learn and Serve formula grant plans and F ASL and community-based grant programs

- propose legislation to allow state education agencies to apply directly for Learn and Serve K-12 community-based funds

- propose legislation to require states to identify a limited number of entities eligible to apply on behalf of the colleges and universities within the state

Under the current organizational structure, service centers have no formal relationship with each other or the headquarters grants office. A single focal point for grants policy would ensure consistency and compatibility of policies across Corporation programs, which would be particularly important when the Corporation reassigns increased grant functions to the service centers.

The Academy panel recommends (pg. 96) that the Corporation:

- identify a headquarters office that would have the responsibility for developing grants policy for all Corporation programs

- formalize a relationship between the headquarters grants policy office and the organizations that provide grant management services to help ensure that policies are appropriately implemented

THE ALTERNATIVE PERSONNEL SYSTEM

When the proponents of the Corporation drafted the: 1993 Act, they gave the Corporation the authority to design and implement a new personnel system. Freed from some of the restrictions in Title 5 of the U. S. Code, it was envisioned that this authority would enable the Corporation to operate more like a private sector organization.

The structural design of APS provides Corporation management with a modern capability for managing its human resources effectively and in consonance with the Corporation mission and strategic objectives. The Academy supports the system design and endorses its continued use. With effective implementation the system can be a model for other agencies.

Although APS has been in existence for only two years, managers report numerous successes. Processes, such as classification and hiring, are simpler. Managers have more control over the processes, and have greater flexibility to hire staff, set entry pay, and adjust pay. APS also makes it easier to handle employee performance and discipline issues. In general, APS provides department heads with broadened authority, with the potential for further delegation within the organization.

Yet, Corporation management has not aggressively pursued implementation of the system, leaving many employees unenthusiastic about APS and much of its potential unrealized. In addition to functionally specific recommendations, the Academy panel identified general areas where changes could have a broad impact on improving the new system and its use.

At the rate the Corporation is currently converting staff into APS, full implementation will take several years. Meanwhile, the co-existence of two personnel systems reinforces the differences between GS and APS employees, and decreases the overall effectiveness of the new system. The Academy panel believes that the Corporation's top leadership, the CEO and COO, must reexamine how best to approach the implementation of APS and develop a definitive strategy to accomplish it. Such a strategy must make the full implementation of APS a priority action item, and involve top management as champions in word and action for all the Corporation's employees and the new system.

The Academy panel recommends (pg. 122-123) that the CEO and COO:

- reexamine the Corporation's approach to implementing APS and develop a definitive strategy to accomplish implementation

- mount a holistic and aggressive campaign to inform the remaining GS employees of .the importance of their converting to APS

- take steps to ensure that APS compensation and conversion policies are fully funded, broadly publicized, and clearly attractive to GS employees

APS gives department heads broad authority in the areas of position classification, initial pay setting and salary adjustments, and employment incentives. Except for the latter, the Corporation's policy allows department heads to redelegate those authorities to line managers below them. Few have chosen to do so. The Academy panel believes that the Corporation's line managers have a key role in human resources management activities, and, as such, they should have the authority and resources to effectively carry out that role.

The Academy panel recommends (pg. 123) that the CEO and COO:

- document and implement administrative and dollar delegations to line managers, as outlined in the Personnel Handbook, to give them the responsibility, authority, and accountability to manage their employees

- develop the needed oversight and accounting systems to support the delegations periodically communicate these delegations to managers and employees to ensure that everyone is aware of them

- execute performance contracts with departments and offices that specifically define expectations for human resource management

The Compensation Committee is a critical APS management tool. Properly used, it can be a principal vehicle to help Corporation management shape the untapped potential of its personnel system, and provide good stewardship of the related human and dollar resources. To date, however, the Committee has met irregularly, and has not dealt with the full range of compensation issues its charter allows. In addition, the Committee has not adequately informed the staff about its activities, which has generated concern and feelings of distrust throughout the workforce.

The Academy panel recommends (pg. 123-124) that the CEO and COO direct the Compensation Committee to:

- change its current policy and designate the COO as the committee's permanent chair

- hold regular, scheduled meetings to review the cost trends and equity of operations of APS' classification and compensation elements provide regular reports of its assessment, and recommendations to the CEO, managers, and employees

Managers interviewed support continuation of the term appointment policy, but say the policy of making term appointments for accessions to APS from both external and internal candidate sources is very controversial and can present recruiting problems. Several managers identified specific occupations that have presented early recruitment difficulties. Namely the computer, procurement, and grants management specialist occupations. The primary source of candidates, experienced in those occupations and in the technical systems the Corporation uses, is other federal agencies.

The Academy panel recommends (pg.124) that the CEO:

- continue the policy of making term appointments of one to five years in length, renewable by department heads

- avoid blanket exceptions for certain occupations that have encountered early recruitment problems

- consider an individual exception to the term appointment policy only when a department head demonstrates that recruitment from current Corporation employees, calculated and expanded recruitment to candidates from outside the Corporation, and the approved use of recruitment or relocation bonuses have not produced a highly qualified candidate

- monitor attrition trends on at least an annual basis; consider using exit interviews or post resignation questionnaires to help the Corporation understand the reasons for attrition

In general, Corporation employees are not very knowledgeable about APS. For those already in the system, the lack of current information has created confusion and concern. Without comprehensive information on the features and benefits of APS, it is unlikely employees still in the OS system will want to convert to the new system.

The Academy panel recommends (pg. 125) that the Corporation:

- update and issue the Corporation Personnel System document (personnel Handbook) annually, and notify employees when the document is current

- develop an all-employee document on "Frequently Asked Questions" about the Corporation's human resources policies and procedures. This document should include telephone numbers and e-mail addresses where supervisors and employees can receive additional information.

- develop additional supervisor training in APS that focuses primarily on the use of the flexibilities available to them under their APS authorities and responsibilities

Training the workforce - both supervisors and staff - is vital to having an effective, productive organization. The Corporation established the Training/Continuous Quality Improvement Working Group to address staff training and development needs. The Working Group's report presented several specific recommendations that, if implemented, would help the Corporation develop an overall training strategy for the agency. Although the Corporation's top management endorsed the recommendations, few have been implemented.

The Academy panel recommends (pg. 125) that the CEO and COO:

- reinforce the current designation of the HRO director as the Corporation's focal point for staff training

- require the development of a training philosophy to guide decisions on the investments required to train and develop its human resources

- require the HRO director to identify and use other Corporation components with training capability to assist in training opera1ions where such assistance will make

- effective and efficient use of available resources

- adopt the remaining recommendations of the Training/Continuous Quality Improvement Working Groups as soon as possible