

Schedule employees under section 5304 of title 5, United States Code. The Council's recommendations cover the establishment or modification of locality pay areas, the coverage of salary surveys, the process of comparing Federal and non-Federal rates of pay, and the level of comparability payments that should be paid.

The Council will continue its review of the new metropolitan statistical areas announced by the Office of Management and Budget in June 2003, new commuting pattern data, and other information related to establishing or modifying locality pay area boundaries begun at the Council's September 3, 2003 meeting. The Council anticipates completing its discussion of whether any changes should be recommended in locality pay area boundaries and which geographic locations should be surveyed for locality pay purposes. The Council will also review the results of pay comparisons and formulate its recommendations to the President's Pay Agent on pay comparison methods, locality pay rates, and locality pay area boundaries for 2005. The Council anticipates it will complete its work for this year at this meeting and has not scheduled any additional meetings for 2003. The public may submit written materials about the locality pay program to the Council at the address shown below. The meeting is open to the public.

DATES: October 7, 2003, at 1 p.m.

ADDRESSES: Office of Personnel Management, 1900 E Street NW., Room 5303 (Pendleton Room), Washington, DC.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Donald J. Winstead, Deputy Associate Director for Pay and Performance Policy, Office of Personnel Management, 1900 E Street NW., Room 7H31, Washington, DC 20415-8200. Phone (202) 606-2838; FAX (202) 606-0824; or email at pay-performance-policy@opm.gov.

For the President's Pay Agent:

Kay Cole James,
Director.

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**OFFICE OF PERSONNEL
MANAGEMENT**

**Personnel Demonstration Project;
Alternative Personnel Management
System for the U.S. Department of
Commerce**

AGENCY: Office of Personnel Management.

ACTION: Notice of Amendment to expand coverage of all provisions of the Department of Commerce Personnel Management Demonstration Project to include additional organizations within the Department of Commerce.

SUMMARY: Section 4703 of title 5 U.S.C. authorizes the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to conduct demonstration projects that experiment with new and different human resources management concepts to determine whether changes in policies and procedures result in improved Federal human resources management. OPM approved a demonstration project covering several operating units of the U.S. Department of Commerce (DoC). The Code of Federal Regulations (5 CFR 470.315) requires that modifications to approved demonstration project plans be approved by OPM. This notice proposes to expand the coverage of the demonstration project to include additional organizations within the Department and to increase the number of participants to the legal maximum of 5,000 participants. This notice serves to list all organizations within DoC that will be included in the Demonstration Project during its expansion phase. This notice also lists additional occupational series to be included as part of the expansion. The Department will follow the final plan as published in the **Federal Register** dated December 24, 1997, and the **Federal Register** Notice of Modification dated September 30, 1999, except for minor changes noted in Section III of this **Federal Register** Notice. These changes do not require waivers.

DATES: This notice may be implemented October 5, 2003.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Department of Commerce: Edward Liverani, U.S. Department of Commerce, 14th and Constitution Avenue, NW., Room 5004, Washington, DC 20230, (202) 482-0272. Office of Personnel Management: Delmar White, U.S. Office of Personnel Management, 1900 E Street, NW., Room 7660, Washington, DC 20415, (202) 606-1578.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

1. Background

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) approved the Department of Commerce (DoC) Demonstration project and published the final plan in the **Federal Register** on Wednesday, December 24, 1997, Volume 62, Number 247, Part II. The project was implemented on March 29, 1998, and modified in the **Federal Register** on Thursday, September 30, 1999, Volume

64, Number 189 (Notices) (Pages 52810-58212.)

OPM approved a request to extend the DoC demonstration project for 5 years as stated in an administrative letter from OPM, dated February 14, 2003. The key features of the project involve increased delegation of authority and accountability to line managers, simplified classification and broad banding, pay for performance, hiring and pay setting flexibilities, and modified Reduction-in-Force (RIF) procedures.

This **Federal Register** Notice covers 1,505 additional employees. Currently, the demonstration project has 2,900 employees. The remaining additional employee slots are being reserved for the near future, pending reorganization. In the event more employees are added up to the maximum limit of 5,000, another **Federal Register** Notice will be published to provide employee notification.

Office of Personnel Management.

Kay Coles James,
Director.

I. Executive Summary

The Department of Commerce (DoC) demonstration project utilizes many features similar to those implemented by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) demonstration project in 1988. The DoC project supports several key objectives: To simply the classification system for greater flexibility in classifying work and paying employees; to establish a performance management and rewards system for improving individual and organizational performance; and to improve recruitment and retention to attract highly qualified candidates. The DoC project is designed to test whether the interventions of the NIST project, which is now a permanent alternative system, could be successful in other DoC environments. The current participating organizations include the Technology Administration, the Bureau of Economic Analysis, the Institute for Telecommunication Sciences, and three units of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration: Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research, National Marine Fisheries Service, and the National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Service.

II. Introduction

A. Purpose

The Department's personnel demonstration project is designed to provide managers at the lowest organizational level the authority, control and flexibility needed to recruit,

retain, develop, recognize, and motivate its workforce, while ensuring adequate accountability and oversight. Expansion of the demonstration project will allow the DoC to broaden the scope of this test to additional organizations with different missions. This should improve the Department's assessment of the effectiveness of its interventions in its efforts to compete more effectively for high quality personnel, while strengthening the manager's role in human resources management.

All provisions of the Department's personnel demonstration project, as published in the **Federal Register** Notice, dated December 24, 1997, and the Notice of Modification dated September 30, 1999, will apply. This notice also serves to make changes to the plan to accommodate the expansion. These changes include the addition of specific occupational series, Departmental Personnel Management Board composition, and pre-project cost formulas for the CFO/ASA organization.

Employee notification will be made by delivery of a copy of the December 24, 1997, final plan, any subsequent modifications and this notice. Training for supervisors and employees will be accomplished by informational briefings and training sessions prior to implementation.

B. Participating Employees

Employee notification of this expansion proposal has been accomplished by providing a full set of briefings to employees and managers and providing them electronic access to all Demonstration Project policies and procedures including the two previous Demonstration Project **Federal Register** Notices. We will also provide employees with a copy of this proposed **Federal Register** Notice upon approval. Subsequent supervisor training and informational briefings for all employees will be accomplished prior to the implementation date of the expansion.

The demonstration project will be expanded to cover all nonbargaining unit employees in the following organizations at all duty locations. The following organizations are added to the final plan, Section II.D. Participating Organizations: Within the Office of the Chief Financial Officer and Assistant Secretary for Administration (CFO/ASA), approximately 450 new employees from the following offices covering all their duty locations will be added at this time to the demonstration project as part of the expansion:
Office of Security
Office of Management and Organization
Office of Financial Management

Office of Human Resources Management
Office of Administrative Services
Office of Acquisition Management

The DoC demonstration project will also be expanded to include 1,055 additional employees in the following organizations and locations within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA):

Within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration:

Program Planning and Integration
Office, Silver Spring, MD

Within the Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research:

Geophysical Fluid Dynamics Research
Laboratory, Princeton, N.J.

Within the National Marine Fisheries Service:

Pacific Islands Regional Office,
Honolulu, HI.

Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center,
Honolulu, HI.

Nonbargaining unit employees in the following organizations:

Northeast Fisheries Science Center,
Woods Hole, MA, and Laboratories in
Narragansett, RI, Milford, CT, Sandy
Hook, NJ, and Washington, DC.

Southeast Regional Office, St.
Petersburg, FL.

Southeast Fisheries Science Center,
Miami, FL, and Laboratories at
Panama City, FL, Pascagoula and Bay
St. Louis, MS, and Galveston, TX.

Southwest Fisheries Science Center, La
Jolla, CA, and Laboratories in Santa
Cruz and Pacific Grove, CA.

Northwest Fisheries Science Center,
Seattle, WA, and Laboratories in
Newport and Hammond, OR, and
Manchester, Pasco, and Mukilteo,
WA.

Alaska Fisheries Science Center, Seattle,
WA, and Auke Bay Laboratory in
Juneau, AK.

Within the National Environmental
Satellite, Data and Information Service:
Nonbargaining unit employees in the
following organization:

Wallops Island Command and Data
Acquisition Station, Wallops Island,
VA.

C. Changes to the Plan

(1) Section II. E: Participating
Employees

The following series are added to
Table 2.

Scientific and Engineering (ZP) Career Path

0410	Zoology Series.
0413	Physiology Series.
0440	Genetics Series.
0690	Industrial Hygiene Series.

0808	Architecture Series.
0819	Environmental Engineering Series.
0871	Naval Architecture Series.
0896	Industrial Engineering Series.
1370	Cartography Series.
2210	Information Technology Management Series.
2299	Information Technology Student Trainee Series.

Scientific and Engineering Technician (ZT) Career Path

0350	Equipment Operator Series.
0817	Surveying Technician Series.
1371	Cartographic Technician Series.
1374	Geodetic Technician Series.
1862	Consumer Safety Inspection Series.

Administrative (ZA) Career Path

0080	Security Administration Series.
0083	Police Series.
0085	Security Guard Series.
0018	Safety and Occupational Health Management Series.
0150	Geography Series.
0170	History Series.
0201	Human Resources Management Series.
0399	Administration and Office Support Student Trainee Series.
0505	Financial Management Series.
0599	Financial Management Student Trainee.
0828	Construction Analyst Series.
0963	Legal Instruments Examining Series.
1008	Interior Design Series.
1015	Museum Curator Series.
1016	Museum Specialist and Technician Series.
1020	Illustrating Series.
1060	Photography Series.
1102	Contracting Series.
1104	Property Disposal Series.
1152	Production Control Series.
1170	Realty Series.
1176	Building Management Series.
1361	Navigational Information Series.
1640	Facility Operations Services Series.
1701	General Education and Training Series.
2001	General Supply Series.
2010	Inventory Management Series.
2030	Distribution Facilities and Storage Management Series.
2101	Transportation Specialist Series.
2130	Traffic Management Series.

Support (ZS) Career Path

0086	Security Clerical and Assistance Series.
0203	Human Resources Assistance Series.
0351	Printing Clerical Series.
0356	Data Transcriber Series.
0361	Equal Opportunity Assistance Series.
0503	Financial Clerical and Assistance Series.
0544	Civilian Pay Series.
1106	Procurement Clerical and Technician Series.
1421	Archives Technician Series.
1802	Compliance Inspection and Support Series.

(2) Section VII: Project Management

The Departmental Personnel Management Board will expand to include additional board members representing the new major operating units included in the project. It is the intent of the DoC to ensure the composition of the board reflects the diversity of employee groups to ensure the objectives of the demonstration project are achieved in an equitable and consistent manner.

(3) Section V: B. Base Cost Assessment

The current plan identifies Fiscal Years 1994, 1995, and 1996 as the basis of analysis of pre-project costs to determine whether project costs are being maintained at acceptable levels. Since CFO/ASA has never participated in the demonstration project, costs will be computed as annual averages over the past three pre-project fiscal years immediately preceding implementation, within CFO/ASA offices. NOAA will continue using FY 1994–96 as its cost basis, since it was part of the demonstration project during these years.

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SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
Proposed Collection; Comment Request

Upon Written Request, Copies Available From: Securities and Exchange Commission, Office of Filings and Information Services, Washington, DC 20549.

Extension:

Rule 17Ad–4(b) and (c), SEC File No. 270–264, OMB Control No. 3235–0341.

Notice is hereby given that pursuant to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*), the Securities and Exchange Commission (“Commission”) is soliciting comments on the collection of information summarized below. The Commission plans to submit this existing collection of information to the Office of Management and Budget for extension and approval.

Rule 17Ad–4(b) and (c): Notices Regarding Exempt Transfer Agent Status

Rule 17Ad–4(b) and (c) is used to document when transfer agents are exempt, or no longer exempt, from the minimum performance standards and certain recordkeeping provisions of the

Commission’s transfer agent rules. Rule 17Ad–4(c) sets forth the conditions under which a registered transfer agent loses its exempt status. Once the conditions for exemption no longer exist, the transfer agent, to keep the appropriate regulatory authority (“ARA”) apprised of its current status, must prepare, and file if the ARA for the transfer agent is the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System (“BGRS”) or the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (“FDIC”), a notice of loss of exempt status under paragraph (c). The transfer agent then cannot claim exempt status under Rule 17Ad–4(b) again until it remains subject to the minimum performance standards for non-exempt transfer agents for six consecutive months. The ARAs use the information contained in the notice to determine whether a registered transfer agent qualifies for the exemption, to determine when a registered transfer agent no longer qualifies for the exemption, and to determine the extent to which that transfer agent is subject to regulation.

The BGRS receives approximately twelve notices of exempt status and six notices of loss of exempt status annually. The FDIC receives approximately eighteen notices of exempt status and three notices of loss of exempt status annually. The Commission and the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (“OCC”) do not require transfer agent to file notice of exempt status or loss of exempt status. Instead, transfer agents whose ARA is the Commission or OCC need only to prepare and maintain these notices. The Commission estimates that approximately sixteen notices of exempt status and loss of exempt status are prepared annually by transfer agents whose ARA is the Commission. Similarly, the OCC estimates that the transfer agents for which it is the ARA prepare and maintain approximately fifteen notices of exempt status and loss of exempt status annually. Thus, a total of approximately seventy notices of exempt status and loss of exempt status are prepared and maintained by transfer agents annually. Of these seventy notices, approximately forty are filed with an ARA. Any additional costs associated with filing such notices would be limited primarily to postage, which would be minimal. Since the Commission estimates that no more than one-half hour is required to prepare each notice, the total annual burden to transfer agents is approximately thirty-five hours. The average cost per hour is approximately \$30. Therefore, the total cost of

compliance to the transfer agent community is \$1,050.

Written comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency’s estimates of the burden of the proposed collection of information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology. Consideration will be given to comments and suggestions submitted in writing within 60 days of this publication.

Please direct your written comments to Kenneth A. Fogash, Acting Associate Executive Director, Office of Information Technology/CIO, Securities and Exchange Commission, 450 5th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20549.

Dated: September 11, 2003.

Margaret H. McFarland,
Deputy Secretary.

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SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
Sunshine Act Meetings

FEDERAL REGISTER CITATION OF PREVIOUS ANNOUNCEMENT: 68 FR 53618, September 11, 2003.

STATUS: Open Meeting.

PLACE: 450 Fifth Street, NW., Room 6600, Washington, DC.

DATE AND TIME OF PREVIOUSLY ANNOUNCED MEETING: Wednesday, September 17, 2003.

CHANGE IN THE MEETING: Rescheduled Item.

AGENDA FOR THE WEEK OF: September 22, 2003.

The following item previously scheduled for the Open Meeting on September 17, 2003 has been rescheduled and will be considered at the Open Meeting of Wednesday, September 24, 2003 at 10 a.m., in Room 1C30, the William O. Douglas Room: Proposal for public comment of new rules 12d1–1, 12d1–2, and 12d1–3 under the Investment Company Act of 1940.

Notice is hereby given, pursuant to the provisions of the Government in the Sunshine Act, Pub. L. 94–409, that the Securities and Exchange Commission