



COMPARISON OF
CENTRAL PERSONNEL DATA FILE
AND
OFFICIAL PERSONNEL FOLDER RECORDS

FISCAL YEAR 1994

OFFICE OF PERSONNEL
MANAGEMENT

OFFICE OF WORKFORCE
INFORMATION

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COMPARISON OF CENTRAL PERSONNEL DATA FILE AND
OFFICIAL PERSONNEL FOLDER RECORDS -- FISCAL YEAR 1994

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INTRODUCTION

The Central Personnel Data File is an automated personnel information system containing information on most of the Federal civilian workforce. The system was established in 1972 and covers approximately 2.1 million employees. Central Personnel Data File consists of two major files - the status file which is a "snapshot" record of each employee as of a specific date and the dynamics file which consists of copies of each personnel action taken (hire, promotion, separation) during a three month period. Personnel actions are taken in individual Government offices throughout the world and entered into agency personnel systems. These actions are then reported through the agency systems to Central Personnel Data File.

The same personnel actions are also recorded on Standard Forms 50 and other forms filed in the Official Personnel Folder. Each Federal employee has an Official Personnel Folder that documents his or her employment history. The Official Personnel Folder contains long-term records that might impact an employee's status or service. Most of the data reported to the Central Personnel Data File are also in the employee's Official Personnel Folder.

This study is designed to determine how accurately information in the Central Personnel Data File status and dynamics files matches the information in the Official Personnel Folders. The Study is designed to assess Government-wide data only. It is **not** designed to estimate the accuracy of data from individual agencies nor of individual code values.

This Study covers the September 1994 Central Personnel Data File Status file and the fiscal year 1994 Central Personnel Data File Dynamics files.

Sample

The Study sample was drawn from separated rather than active employees. We did this because we can obtain the Official Personnel Folders of separated employees from a single source, the National Personnel Records Center. This simplifies the study process without influencing the results. In past studies, we found no statistically significant differences between error rates for active and separated employees.

The sample was drawn from employees who:

- separated between September 1 and December 31, 1994;
- were on the September 1994 Central Personnel Data File status file;

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- were not on the December 1994 Central Personnel Data File status file.

For this purpose, transfers were not included as separations. The sample included 135 employees.

Error Definition

An error is defined as a value found in the Central Personnel Data File that is not the same value as that found in the Official Personnel Folder. For this Study, the data element value must have been available in both Central Personnel Data File and the Official Personnel Folder. If the particular data element value could not be found¹ in the Official Personnel Folder, it was excluded from the Study. If the data element did not have a value in Central Personnel Data File, that is, it was either blank or asterisks, it was excluded from the error counts. The value either matched or it did not match. If it did not match, it was an error. The error rate is the number of values that do not match divided by the total number of available values (matches + non-matches), expressed as a percentage.

This is a different calculation than normally used in determining Central Personnel Data File error rates. For this Study, Central Personnel Data File errors - that is, values identified as invalid by Central Personnel Data File edits² and replaced by asterisks in Central Personnel Data File files - were treated as unavailable. They were excluded from the error counts and error rate calculations.

This Study focused solely on whether or not data element values found in both Central Personnel Data File and the Official Personnel Folder matched. There was no effort to determine if the Official Personnel Folder data element value was itself correct. For example, if an Official Personnel Folder document (Standard Form 50) showed no frozen service, we did not research the employee's history to determine if there actually were 2 years and 3 months of frozen service.

¹Some values were clearly identified on forms in the Official Personnel Folder; others were computed or derived from information in the Official Personnel Folder as part of the study process. The computation process may have introduced differences in values. As appropriate, specifics on the identification of data values are included in the discussions of the error rates by data element.

²Central Personnel Data File edits check on data validity - whether the coding meets standard coding conventions and whether the specific code may be used in relationship with other data on the record.

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If Official Personnel Folder coding showed that the employee's education level was recorded as high school graduate in the agency personnel system but the application showed that the employee actually had a Bachelor's Degree, we matched the Central Personnel Data File value against the Official Personnel Folder coding (high school), not against the actual value (Bachelor's Degree). The only variation on this practice occurred when the Official Personnel Folder did not have a code indicating how the data were recorded in the agency personnel system. In those cases, we constructed an Official Personnel Folder code based on the actual value. The differences in the comparison (Central Personnel Data File value with Official Personnel Folder value or Central Personnel Data File value with actual value) may have impacted the error rates for specific data elements.

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STATUS FILE

Data Element Coverage

Agencies submit 48 data elements on each Central Personnel Data File status file record. One data element, social security number, was used to identify the appropriate record; it was not, therefore, used in the Study. Of the remaining 47 data elements, 35 are included in the Study. The other 12 data elements were not included either because they are not part of the Official Personnel Folder or because the data applied to such a small number of employees Governmentwide that the sample would be insufficient to give an accurate result.

The following data elements were excluded because they are not part of the Official Personnel Folder:

- a. Organizational component;
- b. Race or national origin;
- c. Handicap;
- d. Functional classification;
- e. Supervisory status;
- f. Special pay table identifier.

The following data elements were excluded because of insufficient sample size:

- a. Retained pay plan;
- b. Retained grade;
- c. Retained step;
- d. Staffing differential;
- e. Supervisory differential;
- f. Retention allowance.

Data Sources

Central Personnel Data File data were identified by social security number and extracted from the September 1994 status file. Most of the comparable Official Personnel Folder data were extracted from the last Standard Form 50, "Notification of Personnel Action," with both effective and approval dates prior to September 30, 1994. If there were actions dated between September 17 and September 30, 1994, we used the September 17 action for employees in agencies that

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submit Central Personnel Data File data as of the end of the pay period and the September 30 action for those in agencies that submit as of the end of the month.

The following data elements were extracted from sources other than the Standard Form 50 closest to September 1994:

Data Element	Source
Creditable Military Service	Remark on the latest accession or conversion. If not available, computed from the Standard Form 144 (Statement of Prior Federal Service), information on the application, DD 214, and/or Standard Form 180
Current Appointment Authority	Legal authority on the last accession or conversion prior to September 1994
Education Level	Application, including school transcript or list of college courses (Office of Personnel Management Form 1170)
FERS Coverage	Remark on latest appointment or change in retirement plan. If not available, determined from information on Standard Form 50's documenting earlier retirement coverage and presence/absence of employee's FERS election
Frozen Service	Remark on latest accession or conversion. If not available, computed from information on the application and earlier personnel actions
Health Plan	Standard Form 2809 (Health Benefits Registration Form) in effect in September 1994. If not available, Standard Form 1150 (Record of Leave Data)
Instructional Program	Application, including school transcript or list of college courses (Office of Personnel Management Form 1170)

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Data Element	Source
Pay Status	Determined based on whether Leave Without Pay action was still in effect in September 1994. All intermittent employees were treated as in pay status as required by Central Personnel Data File submission requirements.
Rating of Record	Agency performance rating form with appraisal ending date or approval date closest and prior to September 30, 1994
Sex	DD 214 or Standard Form 2809 (Health Benefits Registration Form) or Name on the application or a reference to husband/wife on any forms in Official Personnel Folder
US Citizenship	Application or Standard Form 61-B (Declaration of Appointee)
Veterans Status	Determined based on information on the application and/or DD 214
Year Degree or Certificate Attained	Application, including school transcript or list of college courses (Office of Personnel Management Form 1170)

Error Rate by Data Element

The following table shows the data elements included in the Study, the number of values that matched (Central Personnel Data File and Official Personnel Folder values were the same), the percent that matched (using the total of matched and non-matched values as a base), the number of values that did not match, and the percent errors (percent that did not match).

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PERCENTAGES OF MATCHES AND ERRORS BY DATA ELEMENT				
Data Elements	Match	% Match	Not Match	% Error
Agency/Subelement	134	99.3%	1	0.7%
Annuitant Indicator	135	100%	0	0%
Bargaining Unit	135	100%	0	0%
Basic Pay	135	100%	0	0%
Creditable Military Service	105	95.5%	5	4.5%
Current Appointment Authority	127	95.5%	6	4.5%
Date of Birth	135	100%	0	0%
Duty Station	135	100%	0	0%
Education Level	123	91.8%	11	8.2%
FEGLI	135	100%	0	0%
FERS Coverage	134	99.3%	1	0.7%
FLSA	135	100%	0	0%
Frozen Service	128	99.2%	1	0.8%
Grade	135	100%	0	0%
Health Plan	122	96.8%	4	3.2%
Instructional Program	130	100%	0	0%
Locality Adjustment	135	100%	0	0%
Occupation	135	100%	0	0%
Pay Basis	135	100%	0	0%
Pay Plan	134	99.3%	1	0.7%
Pay Rate Determinant	135	100%	0	0%
Pay Status	134	100%	0	0%
Personnel Office Identifier	134	99.3%	1	0.7%
Position Occupied	135	100%	0	0%
Rating of Record	75	94.9%	4	5.1%
Retirement Plan	135	100%	0	0%
Service Computation Date	133	99.3%	1	0.7%
Sex	133	98.5%	2	1.5%
Step	135	100%	0	0%
Tenure	134	99.3%	1	0.7%
US Citizenship	135	100%	0	0%

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PERCENTAGES OF MATCHES AND ERRORS BY DATA ELEMENT				
Data Elements	Match	% Match	Not Match	% Error
Veterans Status	128	94.8%	7	5.2%
Veterans Preference	135	100%	0	0%
Work Schedule	134	99.3%	1	0.7%
Year Degree	128	98.5%	2	1.5%

The following table summarizes the range of errors by data element.

Percent of Errors	Number of Data Elements	Percentage of Data Elements
0	19	54
Less than 1%	8	23
1 - 4.9%	5	14
5% and above	3	9

Appendix 1 shows the total number of records for which values could be derived from Official Personnel Folder data, the number of values that matched, the number of blanks in Central Personnel Data File, the number of asterisks in Central Personnel Data File, and the number of values that did not match.

Appendix 2 shows the individual data elements by error range.

Appendix 3 shows the error rate by data element for this Study - September 1994 - compared to the error rate for the last study - September 1991.

Discussion of Error Rate by Data Element

General:

Comparisons of Central Personnel Data File values with values that were recorded in standard codes and could be taken directly from a form in the Official Personnel Folder are more reliable than comparisons with values that were recorded in nonstandard terms or were computed from other information in the Official Personnel Folder. In the latter case, the differences in

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information available when the data were recorded by the employing agency and during this study may have caused value mismatches. This may account in part for the difference in error rates between data elements found on the Standard Form 50 and all other data elements. Data elements on the Standard Form 50 are also subject to an additional quality control review. The employee receives a copy of the Standard Form 50 and may ask the agency to correct erroneous information. Information that is only retained in the agency personnel information system is not readily available for the employee's review. Of the 22 data elements found on the Standard Form 50, 16 or 72% had no errors. Only three or 23% of the 13 data elements not found on the Standard Form 50 had no errors. Where appropriate, the more detailed information below discusses the possible impact of the data source(s) on the error rate.

Data Elements With No Errors:

<i>Data Element</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Bargaining Unit	Central Personnel Data File code "6666" may be submitted when an activity is being reorganized and the bargaining unit is being impacted. This code was considered a match for any code in the Official Personnel Folder.
Instructional Program	The value for this data element was taken from the major field of study listed on the application. Since there are many instructional programs that are very similar, we believed we would introduce errors by selecting a value and then comparing it with the Central Personnel Data File value. For this field, we verified the Central Personnel Data File value, that is, checked that the meaning of the Central Personnel Data File code was the same as the field of study listed on the application.
Locality Adjustment	The value for this data element was taken from the Standard Form 50 but instructions for recording this value on that form differ from those for reporting the value to the Central Personnel Data File. On the Standard Form 50, "0" is used for all employees who do not receive a locality adjustment. In the Central Personnel Data File, "0" is used for employees who are eligible for a locality adjustment but do not receive any additional money (usually because their special rate is higher than locality pay). Blanks are used for employees who are not eligible for locality adjustments (for example, wage system employees). Central Personnel Data File blanks were counted as matching Official Personnel Folder "0's" when the employee was not eligible for locality pay.

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Data Elements With Errors:

Data Element

Comments

Agency/Subelement

Errors: 1

The value for this data element was taken from the Standard Form 50. Certain agencies used subelement codes on the Standard Form 50 that did not match the code in the Central Personnel Data File but had the same meaning or used subelements internally but used "00" as the subelement code in the Central Personnel Data File. These values were counted as matches.

The only unmatched record showed a value in the Central Personnel Data File that did not appear in the Official Personnel Folder until October 1994. Because agencies frequently resubmit their Central Personnel Data File data using later effective dates, we believe this error was the result of a resubmission using the October subelement.

Creditable Military Service

Errors: 5

Creditable military service must be reported to the Central Personnel Data File on all employees who were appointed or converted on or after October 1, 1986. A remark showing the creditable military service is required on all Standard Form 50's effective on/after October 1986 that document appointments, conversions and changes in service computation date due to military service. For employees who were last appointed prior to October 1986, the Central Personnel Data File field is to be blank - indicating not required; the creditable military service can be reported on a voluntary basis at the agency's option.

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Data Elements With Errors:

Data Element

Comments

Creditable Military Service
(continued)

If the data were required but there was no remark on the appropriate Standard Form 50, we computed the creditable military service from the Official Personnel Folder records (application, declaration of appointee, DD 214, previous personnel actions). Of the 84 records where creditable military service was required, we computed 50. We also computed the value for all 51 records where creditable military service was voluntarily reported to the Central Personnel Data File.

Central Personnel Data File blanks were counted as matches if creditable military service was not required (for example, if the employee were last appointed prior to October 1986). There were 28 such records. If the data were required but were reported to the Central Personnel Data File as blanks, the record was counted as blank and excluded from the error computations. There were 25 such records.

In all five cases counted as errors, the Central Personnel Data File had a value of "0" and there was no remark documenting the creditable military service. (We computed the service from Official Personnel Folder documents.) In four of the five cases, the creditable military service was reported on a voluntary basis, that is, blanks would have been correct but "0" was not. Agencies appear to be confused between blanks and zeroes - they appear to be submitting them interchangeably, for example, 22 of the 25 blank records should have had values of "0."

Of the total 135 cases, only 21 had values other than "0" or blank. Of these 21, 13 had Central Personnel Data File values that matched Official Personnel Folder values; 3 were blank; and 5 were unmatched or errors.

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Data Elements With Errors:

Data Element *Comments*

Current Appointment Authority Errors: 6

Current appointment authority (CAA) must be reported to the Central Personnel Data File for all excepted service and Senior Executive Service employees and for competitive service employees appointed or converted since January 1, 1982. For employees appointed prior to 1982, the CAA may be reported as "ZZZ."

Of the six errors, three could have been reported as "ZZZ," that is, the employee was appointed prior to 1982. The legal authority code structure changed in 1982 and the errors on these three cases could be due to differences between the agency's selection of the most appropriate code from the revised structure and the selection made during the study process.

The three other errors involved use of related codes but not the exact code found on the appointment. These were codes for: (1) miscellaneous law in lieu of Schedule A agency-specific authority; (2) Office of Personnel Management delegated authority in lieu of Office of Personnel Management authority delegated by specific region; (3) first year in multi-year temporary appointment in lieu of second year in multi-year temporary appointment.

Education Level Errors: 11

The Central Personnel Data File does not require that education level be reported on temporary employees. Central Personnel Data File blanks were counted as matches for such employees.

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Data Elements With Errors:

Data Element

Comments

Education Level (continued)

In four cases, the Central Personnel Data File showed the employee with a high school education or some college while the Official Personnel Folder showed the employee had a college degree or higher. In the other seven cases, the educational attainment was within the same grouping (for example, less than high school, some college but no degree) but not the same education level. Nine of the 11 errors showed the employee with less educational attainment in the Central Personnel Data File than was shown in the Official Personnel Folder.

There is no way to trace the coding of education level so we could not develop any explanation for the high error rate on this data element.

FERS Coverage

Errors: 1

The Central Personnel Data File requires FERS coverage be reported only on employees covered by one of the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) retirement plans. Central Personnel Data File blanks were counted as matches for employees for whom this item is not required.

The only error was a Central Personnel Data File value showing automatic coverage for an employee whose Official Personnel Folder contained a Change in Retirement Plan documenting FERS election. The agency system probably did not use this action to generate the correct value for the Central Personnel Data File.

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Data Elements With Errors:

Data Element

Comments

Frozen Service

Errors: 1

The definition of frozen service has changed at least four times since it was first required on accessions and conversions dated on/after July 1987 where the employee had Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) retirement coverage. If the data were required in the Central Personnel Data File but there was no remark on the appropriate Standard Form 50, we computed the frozen service from earlier personnel actions in the Official Personnel Folder. In computing frozen service, we used the definition in effect at the time the data element was first required for that employee. Of the 28 records where frozen service was required, we computed 11.

Central Personnel Data File blanks were counted as matches if frozen service was not required (for example, if the employee was not covered by FERS or was last appointed prior to July 1987). There were 47 such records.

There were also 55 records where the employee was not covered by FERS and where blanks would have been the appropriate frozen service value but "0" was submitted to Central Personnel Data File. We counted these records as matches.

If the data were required but were reported to the Central Personnel Data File as blanks, the record was counted as blank and excluded from the error computations. There were 6 such records.

The only error was a case where frozen service was required, was not shown in a remark on the personnel action, was computed during the Study as 9 years and 7 months but reported to the Central Personnel Data File as "0".

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Data Elements With Errors:

<i>Data Element</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Health Plan	<p>Errors: 4</p> <p>Eight Official Personnel Folders did not include documentation of health insurance.</p> <p>All four errors were shown in the Central Personnel Data File as pending (eligible but has not selected health plan). Three of the four were shown as ineligible in the Official Personnel Folder; one had declined coverage.</p> <p>All of the records that showed specific enrollment (choice of a particular plan and option) had the same values in the Official Personnel Folder and the Central Personnel Data File.</p>
Pay Plan	<p>Errors: 1</p> <p>The Official Personnel Folder showed pay plan "GG" (similar to General Schedule) while the Central Personnel Data File showed "CG" (corporate graded - also similar to General Schedule but limited to a specific agency).</p>
Personnel Office Identifier	<p>Errors: 1</p> <p>The Official Personnel Folder contained a realignment action effective prior to September 1994 and this action had a different personnel office identifier than the value reported to the Central Personnel Data File. The Central Personnel Data File value was on an earlier action in the Official Personnel Folder. It appears that the system reporting to the Central Personnel Data File did not update the personnel office identifier when the realignment action was processed.</p>

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Data Elements With Errors:

Data Element

Comments

Rating of Record

Errors: 4

There are two Central Personnel Data File codes that indicate there is no rating of record - one for employees not yet rated and one for those excluded from ratings. Since there is no Official Personnel Folder documentation of either of these situations, we could not include those codes in the comparisons. 41 records had Central Personnel Data File codes indicating there was no rating of record; there was no Official Personnel Folder documentation of a rating for any of these employees.

There were 15 records where the Central Personnel Data File indicated a rating of record had been issued but there was no documentation of the rating in the Official Personnel Folder.

Of the four errors, two were shown as outstanding or level 5 in the Official Personnel Folder but as exceeds satisfactory or level 4 in the Central Personnel Data File and two were shown as exceeds satisfactory or level 4 in the Official Personnel Folder but as outstanding or level 5 in the Central Personnel Data File.

There are possible explanations for two errors. In one case, the rating in the Official Personnel Folder was 2 years old; since employees are generally rated every year, the mismatch could have been due to missing Official Personnel Folder documentation. In another case, the rating was changed in July 1994; the Central Personnel Data File reflected the pre-July rating. Since there was no indication of when the rating was updated in the agency's system (there are no effective dates or processing dates on the Official Personnel Folder documentation of ratings), the lag time between when the rating was effective and when it was recorded could account for the mismatch.

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Data Elements With Errors:

<i>Data Element</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Service Computation Date	<p>Errors: 1</p> <p>The erroneous record showed a date of May 1980 in the Central Personnel Data File compared to July 1993 in the Official Personnel Folder. The employee was an intermittent who did not earn leave and had been employed in 1980, separated, and reemployed in 1993.</p>
Sex	<p><u>Errors: 2</u></p> <p>One erroneous record showed the employee as female in Central Personnel Data File but he was identified as a male from Official Personnel Folder documents (reference to a wife on SF 61B, check of Mr. as title in application). The other erroneous record showed the employee as male in the Central Personnel Data File but she was identified as female from Official Personnel Folder documents (reference to husband on application). Both employees were intermittents.</p>
Tenure	<p>Errors: 1</p> <p>The erroneous record showed tenure code "0" in the Official Personnel Folder and code "3" in the Central Personnel Data File. The employee was on a temporary appointment.</p> <p>One record was counted as a match because the latest Official Personnel Folder document (a Reduction in Force notice) showed the same tenure code as was in the Central Personnel Data File. An earlier action in the Official Personnel Folder showed that the tenure code changed from "2" to "1" but this change was not reflected in later Official Personnel Folder documents nor in Central Personnel Data File.</p>

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Data Elements With Errors:

Data Element

Comments

Veterans Status

Errors: 7

Five of the seven errors were records where the Central Personnel Data File showed the employee was not a veteran while the application showed military service prior to the Vietnam era. These five records were for Agriculture County Committeemen, local farmers who are given intermittent appointments so they can review and approve farm loans. All County Committeemen were: coded with no veterans' preference (Standard Form 50 and Central Personnel Data File); given no service credit for military service (Standard Form 50 and Central Personnel Data File); and coded as non-veterans for veterans status. It appears that all County Committeemen were given a standard coding because of the unusual nature of their appointments whether or not that coding was applicable to the individual employee.

The sixth error showed an employee as a non-veteran in the Central Personnel Data File when the employee had served in Vietnam. At the time the employee's record was coded, the employee did not have veterans preference. Some agency personnelists believed that if the employee did not have veterans preference, he/she was not a veteran for veterans status purposes either. This may account for the difference in this case.

The seventh error showed the employee had service before Vietnam (code B) in the Central Personnel Data File while the Official Personnel Folder showed the service was after Vietnam (code P). This appears to be a coding error.

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Data Elements With Errors:

<i>Data Element</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Work Schedule	Errors: 1 The erroneous record showed the employee was part-time in the Central Personnel Data File but full time in the Official Personnel Folder.
Year Degree	Errors: 2 Central Personnel Data File blanks were counted as matches if the education level was one for which the Central Personnel Data File does not allow submission of the year degree (that is, education level less than college degree for appointments prior to October 1993, other than college degrees, associate degrees, or completion of an occupational program for appointments on/after October 1993). One erroneous record showed a date of 1965 in the Official Personnel Folder compared to 1968 in the Central Personnel Data File; the other showed 1949 in the Official Personnel Folder compared to 1947 in the Central Personnel Data File.

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DYNAMICS FILE

Selection of Records

The dynamics records included in this Study were the personnel actions and rating of record updates found in the 135 Official Personnel Folders in the sample. The actions were those effective and approved during fiscal year 1994, that is, October 1, 1993 thru September 30, 1994. Rating of record updates do not have official effective dates. Central Personnel Data File submission instructions require that agencies use the end of the rating period as the effective date on the Central Personnel Data File action but some agencies use other dates - the date approved by a reviewing official, date processed. Rating of record updates were included in the Study if the end of the appraisal period or the latest signature date (employee, reviewing official, etc.) was within the fiscal year.

Appendix 4 shows the personnel actions included in the study by nature of action code. The appendix includes the number of actions found only in the Official Personnel Folder (not reported to the Central Personnel Data File) and the number found only in the Central Personnel Data File (no Official Personnel Folder record). Data element comparisons were done only for actions that were in both the Official Personnel Folder and the Central Personnel Data File. There were 418 such actions.

Data Element Coverage

Agencies submit 57 data elements on each Central Personnel Data File dynamics file record. Three data elements (nature of action, effective date, and social security number) were used to identify the appropriate record; that is, those items must have matched for the action to have been included in the data element comparison. They were not, therefore, used in the Study.

Employee name is submitted with the dynamics file records but is not part of the Central Personnel Data File dynamics files used for statistical output. Employee name was excluded from the Study.

Four other data elements are used only for data processing purposes (to identify and process corrections and cancellations) and were excluded from the Study.

Of the remaining 49 data elements, 40 were included in the Study. The other nine data elements were excluded either because they are not part of the Official Personnel Folder or because the

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data applied to such a small number of employees Governmentwide that the sample would be insufficient to give an accurate result.

The following data elements were excluded because they are not part of the Official Personnel Folder:

- a. Organizational component;
- b. Race or national origin;
- c. Handicap;
- d. Supervisory status;
- e. Individual/group award;
- f. Benefit amount.

The following data elements were excluded because of insufficient sample size:

- a. Staffing differential;
- b. Supervisory differential;
- c. Retention allowance.

Data Sources

The Central Personnel Data File values were taken from the dynamics records for the employee, identified by social security number, in the December 1993, March 1994, June 1994, and September 1994 files. The Official Personnel Folder values were generally taken from the Standard Form 50's effective and approved during the period October 1, 1993 through September 30, 1994. Central Personnel Data File dynamics records included actions documenting issuance of a performance rating (nature of action code 009). Agency performance rating forms were matched to the Central Personnel Data File 009 actions for the value of the rating. If the agency reported any other data on Central Personnel Data File 009 actions, the Official Personnel Folder values were taken from the Standard Form 50 effective closest and prior to the effective date of the 009. Prior data³ were generally taken from the Standard Form 50 effective closest and prior to the date of the action.

³Prior data include: prior basic pay, prior duty station, prior grade, prior locality adjustment, prior occupation, prior pay basis, prior pay plan, prior pay rate determinant, prior step, and prior work schedule. Prior duty station and prior work schedule were never shown on a Standard Form 50. The other prior data were generally shown if they were being changed by the particular action being documented.

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The following data elements were extracted from a source other than the Standard Form 50 documenting the action or, for prior data, the Standard Form 50 documenting the most recent previous action:

Data Element	Source
Creditable Military Service	Remark on the latest accession or conversion. If not available, computed from the Standard Form 144 (Statement of Prior Federal Service), information on the application, DD 214, and/or Standard Form 180
Current Appointment Authority	For an accession or conversion, the legal authority on the action. For all other actions, the legal authority on the last accession or conversion prior to the effective date of the action
Education Level	Application, including school transcript or list of college courses (Office of Personnel Management Form 1170)
Frozen Service	If not shown in a remark on the action, taken from a remark on a previous action or computed from information on the application and earlier personnel actions
Instructional Program	Application, including school transcript or list of college courses (Office of Personnel Management Form 1170)
Previous Retirement Coverage	If not shown in a remark on the action, taken from a remark on a previous action or determined based on review of retirement plan on earlier actions
Rating of Record	Agency performance rating form with appraisal ending date or approval date closest and prior to the effective date of the action

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Data Element	Source
Sex	DD214 or Standard Form 2809 (Health Benefits Registration Form) or Name on the application or a reference to husband/wife on any forms in Official Personnel Folder
Veterans Status	Determined based on information on the application
Year Degree or Certificate Attained	Application, including school transcript or list of college courses (Office of Personnel Management Form 1170)

Error Rate by Data Element

In the Central Personnel Data File status file, each data element is reported on each record with blanks generally equivalent to the code for not applicable. In the study of status data elements, we attempted to compare each data element's Official Personnel Folder and Central Personnel Data File values, including Central Personnel Data File blanks that meant not applicable. We excluded only those cases where we were not able to compute a value from the Official Personnel Folder data. (See Appendix 1.) In the Central Personnel Data File dynamics file, the particular data elements reported vary depending on the type of action. For example, creditable military service is reported on accessions, conversions, and changes in service computation date due to military service. It is not required on any other actions. Central Personnel Data File blanks on the dynamics file do not necessarily equate to not applicable as they do in the status file. In the study of dynamics data elements, we compared Official Personnel Folder and Central Personnel Data File values only if the data element was either required on that particular action or was voluntarily reported to the Central Personnel Data File on the action. Because of these differences in reporting requirements, the base for determining the error rate on dynamics data elements can vary significantly from data element to data element. For example, the base for year degree is 107 so that 7 errors equal a 6.5% error rate. The base for current appointment authority is 374 so that 16 errors equal a 4.3% error rate.

In the Central Personnel Data File status file comparisons, one record equaled one employee. If an employee's veterans status was miscoded, that would equate to one error. In the dynamics file comparisons, each personnel action was counted separately. An employee could have no personnel actions, two actions, or ten actions. If one employee's veterans status was miscoded, that miscoding could appear not at all, twice, or ten times. The dynamics file comparison deals

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with personnel actions, not employees.

The following table shows the data elements included in the study, the number of values that matched (Central Personnel Data File and Official Personnel Folder values were the same), the percent that matched (using the total of matched and non-matched values as a base), the number of values that did not match, and the percent errors (percent that did not match).

PERCENTAGE OF MATCHES AND ERRORS BY DATA ELEMENT				
Data Elements	Match	% Match	Not Match	% Error
Agency/Subelement	417	99.8%	1	0.2%
Award Amount	58	100%	0	0%
Basic Pay	376	99.2%	3	0.8%
Creditable Military Service	105	95.5%	5	4.5%
Current Appointment Authority	358	95.7%	16	4.3%
Date of Birth	417	100%	0	0%
Duty Station	380	100%	0	0%
Education Level	347	92.8%	27	7.2%
Frozen Service	96	100%	0	0%
Grade	380	100%	0	0%
Instructional Program	109	100%	0	0%
Legal Authority	341	98.3%	6	1.7%
Locality Adjustment	205	98.6%	3	1.4%
Occupation	377	100%	0	0%
Pay Basis	377	100%	0	0%
Pay Plan	374	98.7%	5	1.3%
Pay Rate Determinant	380	100%	0	0%
Personnel Office Identifier	415	99.5%	2	0.5%
Position Occupied	379	100%	0	0%
Previous Retirement Coverage	102	100%	0	0%
Prior Basic Pay	347	98.0%	7	2.0%
Prior Duty Station	348	99.4%	2	0.6%
Prior Grade	352	98.9%	4	1.1%
Prior Locality Adjustment	147	98.0%	3	2.0%
Prior Occupation	355	100%	0	0%

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PERCENTAGE OF MATCHES AND ERRORS BY DATA ELEMENT				
Data Elements	Match	% Match	Not Match	% Error
Prior Pay Basis	352	99.7%	1	0.3%
Prior Pay Plan	351	98.6%	5	1.4%
Prior Pay Rate Determinant	359	100%	0	0%
Prior Step	356	99.4%	2	0.6%
Prior Work Schedule	350	98.9%	4	1.1%
Rating of Record	270	95.7%	12	4.3%
Retirement Plan	382	100%	0	0%
Service Computation Date	368	98.4%	6	1.6%
Sex	377	98.7%	5	1.3%
Step	379	99.7%	1	0.3%
Tenure	381	100%	0	0%
Veterans Status	379	99.0%	4	1.0%
Veterans Preference	381	100%	0	0%
Work Schedule	377	99.0%	4	1.0%
Year Degree	100	93.5%	7	6.5%

The following table summarizes the range of errors by data element.

Percent of Errors	Number of Data Elements	% of Data Elements
0	16	40
Less than 1%	7	17.5
1 - 4.9%	15	37.5
5% and above	2	5

Appendix 5 shows the total number of records for which values could be derived from Official Personnel Folder data, the number of values that matched, the number of blanks in the Central Personnel Data File, the number of asterisks in the Central Personnel Data File, and the number of values that did not match.

Appendix 6 shows the individual data elements by error range.

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Appendix 7 shows the error rate by data element for this Study - fiscal year 1994 - compared to the error rate for the last study - fiscal year 1989.

Discussion of Error Rate by Data Element

Although most of the Official Personnel Folder data element values were taken from the Standard Form 50, they were not always taken from the Standard Form 50 documenting that particular action. Standard Form 50 completion instructions differ significantly from Central Personnel Data File reporting requirements. Standard Form 50 instructions allow almost any data element to be blank on some action. In most cases, the Standard Form 50's showed the values for most data elements but there were some exceptions.

- **Prior data**
The Central Personnel Data File requires that prior data be reported on all actions other than accessions, returns to duty, and rating of record updates. Standard Form 50 instructions require the prior pay data be completed only if it is changing; prior duty station and prior work schedule are not on the Standard Form 50. We extracted the appropriate Official Personnel Folder prior data element values from the closest Standard Form 50 that was effective and approved prior to the date of the action **and** had values in the field. Prior data (one or more data elements) were computed on 79% of the records in the Study.

- **Pay adjustments**
The Central Personnel Data File requires that pay adjustment actions documenting a general pay increase include most data elements, including all prior and current pay fields. These actions may be documented in the Official Personnel Folder with printouts or a copy of the wage schedule on which only the revised basic pay may be shown. On pay adjustments documented with a printout or similar form, we extracted as many of the Official Personnel Folder pay data values as possible from the Official Personnel Folder document but used most values from the closest Standard Form 50 that was effective and approved prior to the general pay increase **and** had values in the field. In cases where we could not determine what the appropriate Official Personnel Folder value should have been, we excluded that data element from the comparison.

- **Awards**
The Central Personnel Data File requires that all regular pay data and the award amount be reported on each award action. The Standard Form 50 documents the award amount in the basic pay field and leaves all other pay data blank. On these actions, we extracted the Official Personnel Folder pay data values from the closest Standard Form 50 that was

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effective and approved prior to the award's effective date **and** had values in the field. Awards were 14% of the records in the Study.

- Rating of record updates
The Central Personnel Data File requires only minimal data on all rating of record updates (date of birth, personnel office identifier, rating of record) but allows any other data elements to be reported on an optional basis. These actions are not documented on Standard Form 50's but on agency forms. There are generally no data other than the rating on the Official Personnel Folder documents. We extracted appropriate Official Personnel Folder values for **all** data elements from the closest Standard Form 50 (or 50's) that was effective and approved prior to the action's Central Personnel Data File effective date **and** had values in the field. Rating of record updates were 13% of the records in the Study.

The relatively extensive reconstruction of Official Personnel Folder data for the dynamics comparisons may have impacted error rates. In some cases, the data we extracted were taken from actions that predated the record being compared by several months.⁴ If changes in data values were not documented properly in the Official Personnel Folder, the resulting comparison could be erroneous. Discussion of the possible impact on particular data elements is included in the appropriate notes below.

⁴The lag could be caused by normal processing, that is, no actions were processed for a significant time, or by the compound effect of blank fields on the Standard Form 50. For example, assume an employee had a within-grade increase in June, an award the previous March, and a conversion the previous November. We would have to extract the previous step for the June action from the November conversion because that data would not have appeared on the June award action.

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Data Elements with Errors:

Data Element *Comments*

Agency/Subelement Errors: 1

The value for this data element was taken from the Standard Form 50. Certain agencies used subelement codes on the Standard Form 50 that did not match the code in the Central Personnel Data File but had the same meaning or used subelements internally but used "00" as the subelement code in the Central Personnel Data File. These values were counted as matches.

The only unmatched value was on a reassignment that changed the employee from one subelement to another. The Central Personnel Data File showed the old subelement (the subelement prior to the reassignment). Subsequent actions showed the correct subelement.

Basic Pay Errors: 3

In two of the three erroneous records, pay data were not recorded on the Official Personnel Folder form documenting the specific action but were extracted from previous records. (One action was an award; the other a rating of record update.) In both cases, the pay data appeared to be correct for the date the actions were processed but not for their effective dates. (In one case, a general pay increase occurred in the period between effective and processing dates; in the other, the employee received a Within Grade Increase between the two dates.)

Awards and rating of record updates are not generally processed in the same way as other actions. The time that elapses between initiation (effective date) and approval (processing date) may be significantly longer than for other actions. Agency internal processing systems do not generally process retroactive actions, that is, actions that predate the last action processed, without extensive intervention. Given these circumstances, it appears that the agency systems report the pay data current as of the processing date rather than the effective date on many of the awards and rating of record updates submitted to the Central Personnel Data File.

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OFFICIAL PERSONNEL FOLDER RECORDS -- FISCAL YEAR 1994

Data Elements with Errors:

<i>Data Element</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Creditable Military Service	<p>Errors: 5</p> <p>All five errors were cases where the Central Personnel Data File value was "0" but Official Personnel Folder documents indicated there was creditable military service. In all five cases, we calculated the service. None of the Standard Form 50's documenting the action had a remark showing the creditable military service. The absence of the remark may indicate that the agency did not calculate the service and reported a default value of "0."</p>
Current Appointment Authority	<p>Errors: 16</p> <p>Current appointment authority (CAA) code "ZZZ" is the equivalent of not applicable; it can be reported to the Central Personnel Data File for competitive service employees last appointed or converted prior to January 1, 1982.</p> <p>Seven of the 16 CAA errors could have been reported as "ZZZ." The legal authority code structure changed in 1982 and these seven errors could be due to differences between the agency's selection of the most appropriate code from the revised structure and the selection made during the study process.</p> <p>Seven other errors involved use of related codes but not the exact code found on the appointment. These involved reporting Central Personnel Data File codes for: (1) miscellaneous law in lieu of the Official Personnel Folder code for Schedule A agency-specific authority (four errors); and (2) Office of Personnel Management (OPM) delegated authority in lieu of the Official Personnel Folder code for OPM authority delegated by specific region (three errors).</p> <p>Two errors were reporting to Central Personnel Data File the code indicating an appointment from a Civil Service Certificate rather than the Official Personnel Folder code for conversion from a TAPER appointment.</p>

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Data Elements with Errors:

Data Element *Comments*

Education Level Errors: 27

Of the 27 erroneous records, 10 had Official Personnel Folder and Central Personnel Data File codes that indicated the same educational attainment grouping (less than high school, high school graduate, etc.) but not the same education level (specific code).

Five errors were records where the Central Personnel Data File showed the employee had a high school degree and the Official Personnel Folder showed completion of 10 hours of college work.

Another five errors were records on a temporary intermittent employee reported to the Central Personnel Data File as a high school graduate but who was actually an M.D.

Legal Authority Errors: 6

Four of the errors may have been caused by agencies correcting inappropriate legal authority codes in their Central Personnel Data File submissions but not reflecting those corrections on the Standard Form 50's. Two codes shown in the Official Personnel Folder were not authorized for use with the corresponding nature of action (realignment and removal); two other Official Personnel Folder codes were inappropriate for the specific situation (performance awards for wage system employees with legal authority for General Schedule employees). The Central Personnel Data File codes were the appropriate codes.

The other two errors involved submitting Central Personnel Data File codes for: the current appointment authority rather than the legal authority on a pay adjustment action; and the legal authority code indicating a resignation rather than the code for a resignation caused by Reduction in force.

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Data Elements with Errors:

Data Element *Comments*

Locality Adjustment Errors: 3

In one error, the difference between the Official Personnel Folder and the Central Personnel Data File locality adjustment amount was \$1.

In another error, the locality adjustment was reported to the Central Personnel Data File as "0" rather than the accurate amount for a special rate employee.

In the third error, the amount was correct for the date the rating of record update was processed but not the date it was effective. (See discussion under basic pay.)

Pay Plan Errors: 5

In each of the errors the Official Personnel Folder showed pay plan "GG" (similar to General Schedule) while the Central Personnel Data File showed "CG" (corporate graded - also similar to General Schedule but limited to a specific agency).

Personnel Office Identifier Errors: 2

Both errors were on actions (pay adjustment and rating of record update) that were processed after a realignment changed the personnel office identifier. The Central Personnel Data File value on both actions was the Official Personnel Folder value prior to the realignment.

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Data Elements with Errors:

<i>Data Element</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Prior Basic Pay	Errors: 7

(Prior pay data were not generally shown on the Official Personnel Folder record documenting the action. We extracted the data from earlier documents. See general discussion.)

In five of the seven errors, prior pay data were copied from the current pay data when the action was reported to the Central Personnel Data File. Since the action changed one or more of the prior pay fields (prior basic pay, prior grade, prior locality adjustment, prior step), whichever field(s) changed were mismatches between the Central Personnel Data File and the reconstructed Official Personnel Folder data.

In one case, the prior pay data were taken from the employee's last promotion rather than the most recent prior action.

In one case, the prior data were correct for the date the action was processed but not for the effective date. (See discussion under basic pay.)

The errors in the prior pay data elements⁵ are all due to the same causes but the number of errors varies depending on which field(s) the action changed.

Prior Duty Station	Errors: 2
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In both records with errors, the action changed the duty station but the Central Personnel Data File value for prior duty station was copied from the new (changed) duty station rather than the duty station immediately prior to the action.

⁵Prior pay data elements include: prior basic pay, prior grade, prior locality adjustment, prior occupation, prior pay basis, prior pay plan, prior pay rate determinant, and prior step.

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OFFICIAL PERSONNEL FOLDER RECORDS -- FISCAL YEAR 1994

Data Elements with Errors:

<i>Data Element</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Prior Grade	Errors: 4 See prior basic pay.
Prior Locality Adjustment	Errors: 3 See prior basic pay.
Prior Pay Basis	Errors: 1 The Official Personnel Folder document showed the employee changing from pay basis PW (piecework) to PH (per hour) on a form documenting a wage system pay increase. The current pay basis was reported to Central Personnel Data File as the prior pay basis.
Prior Pay Plan	Errors: 5 In each of the five errors the Official Personnel Folder showed pay plan "GG" (similar to General Schedule) while Central Personnel Data File showed "CG" (corporate graded - also similar to General Schedule but limited to a specific agency).
Prior Step	Errors: 2 See prior basic pay.
Prior Work Schedule	Errors: 4 Three of the erroneous records showed the employee as part time in the Central Personnel Data File but full time in the Official Personnel Folder. One showed the employee as full time in the Central Personnel Data File but part time in the Official Personnel Folder.

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Data Elements with Errors:

Data Element *Comments*

Rating of Record Errors: 12

Five of the erroneous records showed the employee was not yet rated in the Central Personnel Data File but there was a rating in the Official Personnel Folder. Because there is no real effective or processing date on Official Personnel Folder rating documents, we used the end of the rating period or the last signature date as the effective date. The ratings may not have been processed by the effective date used in the Study, thus causing the errors.

Five of the erroneous records showed ratings of exceeds fully successful in the Central Personnel Data File but outstanding in the Official Personnel Folder. Processing/effective date differences (delays in updating agency systems) appear to have caused at least two of these errors.

The other two erroneous records showed ratings of outstanding in the Central Personnel Data File but exceeds fully successful in the Official Personnel Folder.

Service Computation Errors: 6
Date

Five of the erroneous records showed a date of July 1956 in the Central Personnel Data File but a date of August 1954 in the Official Personnel Folder. This employee had a change in service computation date that changed the day but not month/year. It is not clear if this change could have resulted in the erroneous date being reported to the Central Personnel Data File.

The other erroneous record reported the appointment date (April 1994) to the Central Personnel Data File rather than the service computation date (March 1983).

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Data Elements with Errors:

<i>Data Element</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Sex	<p>Errors: 5</p> <p>Four erroneous records showed the employee as female in the Central Personnel Data File but the employee was determined to be a male from Official Personnel Folder records.</p> <p>The other error showed the employee as male in the Central Personnel Data File but the employee was determined to be female from Official Personnel Folder records.</p>
Step	<p>Errors: 1</p> <p>The erroneous step was on a rating of record update. The Central Personnel Data File step appeared to be correct for the date the rating of record update was processed but not for its effective date (the end of the rating period). The employee received a Within Grade Increase changing the step during the period between the rating of record's effective date and its processing date.</p> <p>See basic pay.</p>

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Data Elements with Errors:

<i>Data Element</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Veterans Status	Errors: 4

In three of the four errors the Central Personnel Data File showed service before Vietnam (code B) while the Official Personnel Folder showed service after Vietnam (code P). These mismatches appear to be the result of a coding error. Since veterans status coding does not appear on any Official Personnel Folder forms, we cannot verify what information was actually contained in the agency personnel system.

In the other error the Central Personnel Data File showed no military service while the Official Personnel Folder showed service before Vietnam. This employee was a County Committeeman. These employees' records appear to have followed a standard coding practice where military service data were not collected or credited.

Work Schedule	Errors: 4
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In three of the errors the Central Personnel Data File showed part time but the Official Personnel Folder showed full time. The other error showed full time in the Central Personnel Data File but part time in the Official Personnel Folder.

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Data Elements with Errors:

<i>Data Element</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Year Degree	Errors: 7

In three of the errors the year degree reported to the Central Personnel Data File was 1900, while the date extracted from Official Personnel Folder documents was 1987 (one record) or 1990 (two records).

In two of the errors the Central Personnel Data File showed 1947 while the Official Personnel Folder showed 1949. In two other errors the Central Personnel Data File showed 1968 while the Official Personnel Folder showed 1965. All four appear to involve coding errors. Since year degree coding does not appear on any forms, we cannot verify what information was actually contained in the agency personnel information system.

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CONCLUSIONS

In general, the values for the data elements in the Central Personnel Data File match those found in the Official Personnel Folders. There are, however, certain discrepancies about which users of Central Personnel Data File data should be cautioned.

Status File

- **Creditable Military Service and Frozen Service**
Although blanks and zeroes technically have different meanings, the distinctions do not appear clear to those calculating the creditable military and/or frozen service. Blanks and zeroes appear to be reported to the Central Personnel Data File interchangeably. Central Personnel Data File data do not reliably distinguish between those who have no creditable military or frozen service and those for whom the service was not calculated.
- **Education Level**
Education level values appear reliable for determining general educational groupings (less than high school, high school graduate, some college, etc.) but less reliable when used to determine the precise education level.
- **Health Plan**
Health plan values for those enrolled in a particular health plan appear reliable. There are differences in the Official Personnel Folder and Central Personnel Data File values indicating the reasons employees are not enrolled - ineligible, cancelled, pending.
- **Veterans Status**
Veterans status data for Department of Agriculture county committeemen appear to be unreliable. Data for other employees appear adequate.

Dynamics File

- **Awards and Rating of Record Updates**
Central Personnel Data File data on awards and rating of record updates may not reflect the employee's actual status as of the effective date of the action. Those using Central Personnel Data File records in longitudinal studies should consider excluding awards and rating of record updates if the focus of the study is on when grade or other pay data changes occurred.

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- **Education Level**
Education level values appear reliable for determining general educational groupings (less than high school, high school graduate, some college, etc.) but less reliable when used to determine the precise education level.
- **Prior Data**
Central Personnel Data File prior data values are frequently copies of the current data values rather than reflections of the values as they were immediately prior to the action being reported. Users should be cautious in drawing conclusions from comparisons of Central Personnel Data File prior and current values.
- **Veterans Status**
Veterans status data for Department of Agriculture county committeemen appear to be unreliable. Data for other employees appear adequate.

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Appendix 1

STATUS FILE RECORDS BY DATA ELEMENT

Data Elements	Official Personnel Folder Records	Official Personnel Folder & Central Personnel Data File Values Match	Central Personnel Data File Blank	Central Personnel Data File Value Is Asterisks	Official Personnel Folder & Central Personnel Data File Values Do Not Match
Agency/Subelement	135	134			1
Annuitant Indicator	135	135			
Bargaining Unit	135	135			
Basic Pay	135	135			
Creditable Military Service	135	105	25		5
Current Appointment Authority	135	127		2	6
Date of Birth	135	135			
Duty Station	135	135			
Education Level	134	123			11
FEGLI	135	135			
FERS Coverage	135	134			1
FLSA	135	135			
Frozen Service	135	128	6		1
Grade	135	135			
Health Plan	127	122		1	4
Instructional Program	132	130	2		
Locality Adjustment	135	135			
Occupation	135	135			
Pay Basis	135	135			
Pay Plan	135	134			1
Pay Rate Determinant	135	135			
Pay Status	134	134			
Personnel Office Identifier	135	134			1
Position Occupied	135	135			

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Appendix 1

STATUS FILE RECORDS BY DATA ELEMENT

Data Elements	Official Personnel Folder Records	Official Personnel Folder & Central Personnel Data File Values Match	Central Personnel Data File Blank	Central Personnel Data File Value Is Asterisks	Official Personnel Folder & Central Personnel Data File Values Do Not Match
Rating of Record	79	75			4
Retirement Plan	135	135			
Service Computation Date	134	133			1
Sex	135	133			2
Step	135	135			
Tenure	135	134			1
US Citizenship	135	135			
Veterans Status	135	128			7
Veterans Preference	135	135			
Work Schedule	135	134			1
Year Degree	134	128	3	1	2

COMPARISON OF CENTRAL PERSONNEL DATA FILE AND
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Appendix 2

STATUS DATA ELEMENTS BY ERROR RANGE

0 Errors

Annuitant Indicator	Grade	Pay Status
Bargaining Unit	Instructional Program	Position Occupied
Basic Pay	Locality Adjustment	Retirement Plan
Date of Birth	Occupation	Step
Duty Station	Pay Basis	US Citizenship
Federal Employees	Pay Rate Determinant	Veterans Preference
Group Life Insurance		
Fair Labors Standards Act		

Less Than 1% Error

Agency/Subelement	Pay Plan	Tenure
FERS Coverage	Personnel Office Identifier	Work Schedule
Frozen Service	Service Computation Date	

1 - 4.9% Error

Creditable Military Service	Health Plan	Year Degree
Current Appointment Authority	Sex	

5% and Above Errors

Education Level	Rating of Record	Veterans Status
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COMPARISON OF CENTRAL PERSONNEL DATA FILE AND
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Appendix 3

STATUS FILE CHANGES IN ERROR RATES

Data Elements	% Error Fiscal Year 1994	% Error Fiscal Year 1991	Change 1994-1991
Agency/Subelement	0.7%	2.3%	-1.6%
Annuitant Indicator	0.0%	1.2%	-1.2%
Bargaining Unit	0.0%	2.3%	-2.3%
Basic Pay	0.0%	2.3%	-2.3%
Creditable Military Service	4.5%	Not available	
Current Appointment Authority	4.5%	5.2%	-0.7%
Date of Birth	0.0%	1.2%	-1.2%
Duty Station	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Education Level	8.2%	2.5%	5.7%
FEGLI	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
FERS Coverage	0.7%	0.0%	0.7%
FLSA	0.0%	3.5%	-3.5%
Frozen Service	0.8%	Not available	
Grade	0.0%	1.2%	-1.2%
Health Plan	3.2%	2.1%	1.1%
Instructional Program	0.0%	1.2%	-1.2%
Locality Adjustment	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Occupation	0.0%	1.2%	-1.2%
Pay Basis	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Pay Plan	0.7%	0.0%	0.7%
Pay Rate Determinant	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Pay Status	0.0%	2.3%	-2.3%
Personnel Office Identifier	0.7%	1.2%	-0.5%
Position Occupied	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Rating of Record	5.1%	16.3%	-11.2%
Retirement Plan	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Service Computation Date	0.7%	2.3%	-1.6%
Sex	1.5%	2.3%	-0.8%

COMPARISON OF CENTRAL PERSONNEL DATA FILE AND
OFFICIAL PERSONNEL FOLDER RECORDS -- FISCAL YEAR 1994

Appendix 3

STATUS FILE CHANGES IN ERROR RATES

Data Elements	% Error Fiscal Year 1994	% Error Fiscal Year 1991	Change 1994-1991
Step	0.0%	2.4%	-2.4%
Tenure	0.7%	0.0%	0.7%
US Citizenship	0.0%	1.2%	-1.2%
Veterans Status	5.2%	2.3%	2.9%
Veterans Preference	0.0%	1.2%	-1.2%
Work Schedule	0.7%	0.0%	0.7%
Year Degree	1.5%	1.2%	0.3%

COMPARISON OF CENTRAL PERSONNEL DATA FILE AND
OFFICIAL PERSONNEL FOLDER RECORDS -- FISCAL YEAR 1994

Appendix 4

DYNAMICS RECORDS BY NATURE OF ACTION

Nature of Action Code	Used in Study (Found in both Official Personnel Folder & Central Personnel Data File)	Found in Official Personnel Folder only	Found in Central Personnel Data File only	Total
009	56	1	19	76
100			1	1
101	1			1
108	1			1
115	7			7
117	3			3
140	1			1
171	16			16
280	3			3
292	2			2
302	6		1	7
303	3			3
304	4			4
312	2			2
317	7			7
330	1			1
350	1			1
355	11			11
356	9			9
357	2			2
430	6			6
460	8			8
472	1			1
501	1			1
508	1			1

COMPARISON OF CENTRAL PERSONNEL DATA FILE AND
OFFICIAL PERSONNEL FOLDER RECORDS -- FISCAL YEAR 1994

Appendix 4

DYNAMICS RECORDS BY NATURE OF ACTION

Nature of Action Code	Used in Study (Found in both Official Personnel Folder & Central Personnel Data File)	Found in Official Personnel Folder only	Found in Central Personnel Data File only	Total
515	8		1	9
571	9			9
702	3			3
703	2			2
713	3			3
721	7	1		8
760	10			10
769	1			1
780	3			3
781	11	1		12
782	2			2
790	11		3	14
792	2	2		4
800	2		4	6
825	7	2		9
866	1			1
872	4		2	6
877	20		2	22
880	2			2
881	4			4
882	11			11
883	1			1
885	22		4	26
889	5			5
891	12			12

COMPARISON OF CENTRAL PERSONNEL DATA FILE AND
OFFICIAL PERSONNEL FOLDER RECORDS -- FISCAL YEAR 1994

Appendix 4

DYNAMICS RECORDS BY NATURE OF ACTION

Nature of Action Code	Used in Study (Found in both Official Personnel Folder & Central Personnel Data File)	Found in Official Personnel Folder only	Found in Central Personnel Data File only	Total
892	1			1
893	23		1	24
894	27	1		28
895	51	11	2	64
TOTAL	418	19	40	477

Notes on Records Not Used in the Study:

The Study was not designed to assess the completeness of Central Personnel Data File dynamics files nor to identify the reasons records might be found in the Official Personnel Folder but not in Central Personnel Data File or vice versa. There are, however, circumstances that may have impacted on the availability of some records. Readers of this report should be aware of those circumstances before drawing any conclusions about Central Personnel Data File file completeness.

Over half of the actions found in the Official Personnel Folder but not in the Central Personnel Data File were locality pay actions (nature of action code 895). Locality pay was initiated in January 1994. Prior to that, nature of action code 895 had been used to grant Interim Geographic Adjustments (IGA). Agencies were **not** required to submit personnel actions documenting the initial IGA's in their Central Personnel Data File dynamics files. Some agencies assumed that this exemption applied to the initial locality pay actions as well.

DYNAMICS RECORDS BY NATURE OF ACTION

Approximately half of the actions found in the Central Personnel Data File but not in the Official Personnel Folder were rating of record updates (nature of action code 009). Rating of record documentation is not kept in the Official Personnel Folder during active service. These documents are added to the Official Personnel Folder when the employee separates. They are added to the "temporary" portion of the Official Personnel Folder and all other temporary documents are removed. This procedure was in place in 1994 but was overlooked or misunderstood by some personnel offices.

Realignments (nature of action code 790) and Changes in data element (nature of action code 800) are often system-generated actions that affect very large numbers of employees, for example, everyone in an agency. Because so many actions are created at once and are not personal (specific to the employee), the personnel office may be exempted from filing the actions in the Official Personnel Folder or may miss some actions when filing.

COMPARISON OF CENTRAL PERSONNEL DATA FILE AND
OFFICIAL PERSONNEL FOLDER RECORDS -- FISCAL YEAR 1994

Appendix 5

DYNAMICS FILE RECORDS BY DATA ELEMENT

Data Elements	Official Personnel Folder Records	Official Personnel Folder and Central Personnel Data File Values Match	Central Personnel Data File Blank	Central Personnel Data File Value Is Asterisks	Official Personnel Folder and Central Personnel Data File Values Do Not Match
Agency/Subelement	418	417			1
Award Amount	58	58			
Basic Pay	380	376		1	3
Creditable Military Service	119	105	9		5
Current Appointment Authority	382	358		8	16
Date of Birth	417	417			
Duty Station	380	380			
Education Level	374	347			27
Frozen Service	96	96			
Grade	381	380		1	
Instructional Program	117	109	4	4	
Legal Authority	351	341		4	6
Locality Adjustment	217	205		9	3
Occupation	378	377		1	
Pay Basis	378	377		1	
Pay Plan	381	374		2	5
Pay Rate Determinant	380	380			
Personnel Office Identifier	417	415			2
Position Occupied	379	379			
Previous Retirement Coverage	126	102	24		
Prior Basic Pay	357	347		3	7
Prior Duty Station	350	348			2
Prior Grade	359	352		3	4
Prior Locality Adjustment	165	147	13	2	3

COMPARISON OF CENTRAL PERSONNEL DATA FILE AND
OFFICIAL PERSONNEL FOLDER RECORDS -- FISCAL YEAR 1994

Appendix 5

DYNAMICS FILE RECORDS BY DATA ELEMENT

Data Elements	Official Personnel Folder Records	Official Personnel Folder and Central Personnel Data File Values Match	Central Personnel Data File Blank	Central Personnel Data File Value Is Asterisks	Official Personnel Folder and Central Personnel Data File Values Do Not Match
Prior Occupation	356	355		1	
Prior Pay Basis	356	352		3	1
Prior Pay Plan	358	351		2	5
Prior Pay Rate Determinant	359	359			
Prior Step	361	356		3	2
Prior Work Schedule	354	350			4
Rating of Record	282	270			12
Retirement Plan	382	382			
Service Computation Date	374	368			6
Sex	382	377			5
Step	381	379		1	1
Tenure	381	381			
Veterans Status	383	379			4
Veterans Preference	381	381			
Work Schedule	381	377			4
Year Degree	120	100	5	8	7

COMPARISON OF CENTRAL PERSONNEL DATA FILE AND
OFFICIAL PERSONNEL FOLDER RECORDS -- FISCAL YEAR 1994

Appendix 6

DYNAMICS DATA ELEMENTS BY ERROR RANGE

0 Errors

Award Amount	Occupation	Prior Occupation
Date of Birth	Pay Basis	Prior Pay Rate
		Determinant
Duty Station	Pay Rate Determinant	Retirement Plan
Frozen Service	Position Occupied	Tenure
Grade	Previous Retirement Coverage	Veterans Preference
Instructional Program		

Less Than 1% Error

Agency/Subelement	Prior Duty Station	Prior Step
Basic Pay	Prior Pay Basis	Step
Personnel Office Identifier		

1 - 4.9% Error

Creditable Military Service	Prior Basic Pay	Rating of Record
Current Appointment Authority	Prior Grade	Service Computation Date
Legal Authority	Prior Locality Adjustment	Sex
Locality Adjustment	Prior Pay Plan	Veterans Status
Pay Plan	Prior Work Schedule	Work Schedule

5% and Above Error

Education Level	Year Degree
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COMPARISON OF CENTRAL PERSONNEL DATA FILE AND
OFFICIAL PERSONNEL FOLDER RECORDS -- FISCAL YEAR 1994

Appendix 7

DYNAMICS FILE CHANGES IN ERROR RATES

Data Elements	% Error Fiscal Year 1994	%Error Fiscal Year 1989	Change 1994 - 1989
Agency/Subelement	0.2%	Not available	
Award Amount	0.0%	Not available	
Basic Pay	0.8%	3.3%	-2.5%
Creditable Military Service	4.5%	Not available	
Current Appointment Authority	4.3%	3.4%	0.9%
Date of Birth	0.0%	1.6%	-1.6%
Duty Station	0.0%	1.2%	-1.2%
Education Level	7.2%	1.6%	5.6%
Frozen Service	0.0%	Not available	
Grade	0.0%	1.2%	-1.2%
Instructional Program	0.0%	0.9%	-0.9%
Legal Authority	1.7%	3.3%	-1.6%
Locality Adjustment	1.4%	Not available	
Occupation	0.0%	1.0%	-1.0%
Pay Basis	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Pay Plan	1.3%	0.0%	1.3%
Pay Rate Determinant	0.0%	0.7%	-0.7%
Personnel Office Identifier	0.5%	0.4%	0.1%
Position Occupied	0.0%	0.9%	-0.9%
Previous Retirement Coverage	0.0%	Not available	
Prior Basic Pay	2.0%	8.6%	-6.6%
Prior Duty Station	0.6%	Not available	
Prior Grade	1.1%	1.8%	-0.7%
Prior Locality Adjustment	2.0%	Not available	
Prior Occupation	0.0%	1.0%	-1.0%
Prior Pay Basis	0.3%	0.2%	0.1%
Prior Pay Plan	1.4%	0.3%	1.1%

COMPARISON OF CENTRAL PERSONNEL DATA FILE AND
OFFICIAL PERSONNEL FOLDER RECORDS -- FISCAL YEAR 1994

Appendix 7

DYNAMICS FILE CHANGES IN ERROR RATES

Data Elements	% Error Fiscal Year 1994	%Error Fiscal Year 1989	Change 1994 - 1989
Prior Pay Rate Determinant	0.0%	Not available	
Prior Step	0.6%	3.0%	-2.4%
Prior Work Schedule	1.1%	Not available	
Rating of Record	4.3%	33.7%	-29.4%
Retirement Plan	0.0%	2.1%	-2.1%
Service Computation Date	1.6%	3.5%	-1.9%
Sex	1.3%	0.6%	0.7%
Step	0.3%	2.6%	-2.3%
Tenure	0.0%	1.6%	-1.6%
Veterans Status	1.0%	1.9%	-0.9%
Veterans Preference	0.0%	0.7%	-0.7%
Work Schedule	1.1%	0.9%	0.2%
Year Degree	6.5%	Not available	