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Comments on Proposed Revisions to the Merit Promotion Program

This special issue of FLY-BY has been prepared to give all employees an opportunity to review and submit their comments on proposed major changes in the FAA Merit Promotion Program. For your convenience, a summary of the most significant proposals, as well as a description of the present procedures, are included for comparison.

You are asked to study these proposals carefully. If you have any comments about the proposed changes, please forward them to PT-24, Washington Headquarters Office. To be considered, your comments must be received by November 28, 1962.

The following is a summary of the proposed revisions along with a brief description of the present practice.

1. PROMOTION EVALUATIONS

Present—Employee Promotion Appraisals are prepared on each employee by two supervisors rating independently of one another on separate forms. Each employee is rated on promotability and supervisory suitability according to a scale of one to five. The employee must be rated four or better on each item in order to be placed in the well-qualified group for promotion.

EPA's are administratively restricted and are not shown to employees.

Proposed—The EPA form will be discontinued and a new revised form will take its place. Promotion evaluations will be completed on all employees but one form will be used instead of two which will reflect the combined judgment of two

or more supervisors. The rating of one supervisor will be accepted if no other supervisor has first hand knowledge of the individual. A notation to that effect will be made on the form.

At the option of the appropriate administrative official, promotion evaluations may be prepared by a panel of FAA supervisors who are well qualified to evaluate the promotion potential of all employees in a selected grade and occupation. Promotion evaluations will no longer be administratively restricted. Supervisors will be urged to discuss promotion evaluations with their employees and to counsel them regarding their career development. It will be required that they do so at the request of their employees.

2. NOMINATIONS BY MANAGEMENT

Present—Although it is agency policy to fill each position with the best qualified person available, supervisors and managers in the

FAA do not nominate employees for promotion under our present promotion plans.

Proposed—Management has the responsibility for evaluating employees and identifying those who are best qualified for advancement. Therefore, it is proposed to permit any supervisor or administrative official in a direct line of authority above the vacancy to be filled to nominate any qualified FAA employee or outside applicant for promotion or appointment regardless of whether they applied for consideration.

3. CONCURRENT CONSIDERATION OF OUTSIDE CANDIDATES

Present—Outside applicants cannot be considered when there are five or more candidates for promotion unless a written justification is approved by the personnel office.

Proposed—The Federal Personnel Manual is quoted as follows: "Concurrent consideration shall be given to qualified individuals outside the agency who might be available." It is proposed, therefore, to eliminate the written justification requirement and permit well-qualified outside applicants to be considered for appointment at the same time that FAA employees are considered for promotion.

4. PROMOTION RANKING

Present—Employees are classified into "well qualified" and "qualified" categories according to numerical ratings received on EPA forms.

Proposed—The combined evaluation prepared by a minimum of two supervisors will indicate whether the employee is "well qualified," "qualified" or "not recommended" for promotion. The supervisors will also specify the types of positions they had in mind when they classified the individuals into a particular promotion category.

5. COMMITTEE REVIEW ON INDIVIDUAL RATINGS UNDER SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Present—A numerical rating on the EPA, once assigned, cannot be changed except by the supervisor who assigned the rating in the first place and the rating applies to all promotion actions, without exception, until a new EPA is prepared.

Proposed—Now and then an employee applies for a vacancy which is different than that which the supervisors had in mind when the individual was rated for promotion. When this occurs, a selecting official may reasonably believe that the employee is ranked too high or too low for the specific vacancy to be filled. The selecting official may, under these circumstances, request that a committee be formed to re-evaluate the employee's promotability for the specific vacancy. The committee is authorized to change the employee's competitive standing in a single instance but cannot permanently alter the supervisors' evaluation of the employee's promotability. Future promotion considerations will continue to be based on the promotion evaluation form which was prepared by the employee's supervisors.

6. AREAS OF CONSIDERATION

Present—The areas of consideration for the Executive and National Promotion Plans are agency-wide. Under the Washington Promotion Plan, vacancies are advertised throughout the Washington Office and IAS field activities. The normal area of consideration under

the Field Promotion Plan includes all activities serviced by the same personnel office.

In addition, vacancies at Grades GS-12 and GS-13 are announced in the Alaskan and Pacific Regions, the Aeronautical Center, and NAFEC.

Proposed—Practically speaking, the area of consideration should be the smallest organizational unit necessary to obtain a sufficient number of well-qualified candidates. It is proposed, therefore, to establish the minimum area of consideration as (1) a facility in the recognized field structure of a Region; (2) a division in the headquarters of a regional office or Center; and (3) an office or service, or a field facility attached to the Washington Headquarters Office but located outside the Washington metropolitan area, e.g., International District Offices. Any of these proposed areas of consideration can always be extended at the option of the appointing authority.

Additional studies are underway concerning reemployment rights, return rights and employee rotation policies which are expected to eliminate the need for automatic advertising to the Alaskan and Pacific Region, the Aeronautical Center and NAFEC. These advertising requirements are, therefore, not included in the revised plan.

7. METHODS OF CONSIDERATION

Present—The only method currently authorized for determining which employees will be considered for a particular vacancy is the advertising method.

Proposed—To authorize the establishment and use of promotion registers as an additional method of determining which employees will be considered for a specific vacancy.

A promotion register is a roster of all eligibles in an area of consideration who have been ranked for promotion to a specific grade and class of positions in descending

order with the best qualified first. Ranking factors are used to determine the competitive standing of each eligible on the list. Written tests or other numerically weighted factors may be used or, if preferred, more subjective factors may be used to determine the competitive standing of each candidate.

If neither the advertising nor the promotion register method is used as a means of considering promotion candidates, all eligibles within the area of consideration must be considered.

8. ABOLISH THE NATIONAL PROMOTION PLAN

Present—The coverage of the Executive Promotion Plan includes Grades GS-16 and above; the National Promotion Plan covers Grades GS-14 and GS-15; and the Washington and Field Promotion Plans include Grades GS-13 and below.

Proposed—To extend the coverage of the Executive Promotion Plan to include GS-15s and to extend the coverage of the WPP and FPP to include GS-14s.

There would no longer be a need for the National Promotion Plan and it would be discontinued.

9. VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Present—Vacancies at Grades GS-12 and GS-13 in the Washington Office and domestic regions are announced in the Alaskan and Pacific Regions, the Aeronautical Center, and NAFEC. Vacancies occurring in GS-10 and GS-11 positions which require flight service specialist background are announced to the Aeronautical Center.

Proposed—Separate plans are underway to establish Agency policy governing the return of employees from overseas assignments, including Alaska and Hawaii, and granting reemployment rights to personnel at the Centers. It is proposed, therefore, to delete the mandatory requirements of announcing certain vacancies to the Alaskan and Pacific Regions, the Aeronautical Center and NAFEC from the revised plan.

CORRECTION

There is an error in the center-spread of FLY-BY's Special Edition No. 5 of November 1962. The article is entitled, "Relocation Plan Announced For ARTCC Personnel."

Please change the legend accompanying the chart to read: Solid line represents Planned Boundaries; dotted line represents Present Boundaries.

For your information, the minute dots throughout the chart represent state boundaries.