F. Description of Military-Like Public Sector Organizations

Introduction

This appendix provides detailed information regarding four federal military-like organizations (Federal Bureau of Investigation; Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms; Secret Service; and Bureau of Prisons) and one nonfederal organization (Fairfax County Police Department); the findings were summarized in Section 5. The organizations were studied to determine prevailing personnel policies and procedures. For each system, we describe flows and personnel functions.

Dramatic changes to organizational design and management practices are taking place throughout the private sector and starting to be seen in certain public sector activities. Characteristics of these changes include streamlining and the reduction of management layers with the resulting elimination of many middle managers. Emphasis is on quality and customer service with results achieved by empowering operators or employees who deal directly with customers to take independent action. Decisions are results-oriented and based on data that focus on process improvement, quality, and customer satisfaction. The new role of managers is to develop a vision and plan for future activities linked to the organization’s business strategy. This focuses managers’ attention upward in the organization rather than on the more traditional role of overseeing production or supervising subordinates.

Other public sector activities are experimenting with some of the emerging management practices and new organizational approaches from the private sector. These organizations—typically called “paramilitary” because of their close relationship to the military in both functions and purposes—have each developed their own officer career management system. These organizations are fertile ground for identifying useful concepts for consideration in the future officer career management system.

Many of these paramilitary systems have “professionals” with responsibilities, values, and challenges similar to military officers. While each has a personnel management system unique to its mission and responsibilities, there are several characteristics of each that might be considered in evaluating and developing a career management system for military officers. This section evaluates the personnel management process and policies of four federal agencies and one
local police department. Each evaluation considers each agency’s flow system and the processes used to perform the primary personnel functions. Where appropriate, inferences are made regarding applicability of concepts or procedures to the military officer career management process.

**The Federal Bureau of Investigation**

**Organization.** The Federal Bureau of Investigation (hereafter referred to as the bureau or the FBI) is responsible for investigating crimes against the United States. About 9,000 of the FBI’s 24,000 employees are law enforcement officers. The bureau has an outstanding reputation in law enforcement circles for its expertise and effectiveness. The FBI (part of the Department of Justice) has its headquarters in Washington, D.C., and operates 57 field divisions that cover the United States; it also has thirteen small overseas offices. To accomplish its mission, the FBI works in close coordination with law enforcement officers in other federal agencies as well as state and local groups. The director of the FBI is a political appointee selected by the attorney general, normally with agreement of the president; the director must be confirmed by the Senate. The director is assisted by 13 assistant directors; overall the FBI has up to 179 senior executive service (SES) managers, most of them in law enforcement.

Each of the 57 field divisions is managed (led) by a special agent in charge (SAIC); all are SES, and those in New York City and Washington, D.C., are also assistant directors. Each SAIC has one or more deputies called assistant special agent in charge (ASIC). First-line supervisors are called field supervisors and typically supervise 8 to 30 agents. Field supervisors and above are considered managers and are competitively selected by the headquarters in Washington, D.C.

The next subsection will discuss the personnel management practices and procedures within the FBI. It should be noted that the FBI is currently going through a major reorganization and restructuring that are having a significant effect on agent personnel management. The number of agents in the bureau is being reduced, the headquarters is being reorganized, the method of recruitment is being changed, and a new human resources development process is being developed.

**Accession.** The FBI accession process is primarily at the beginning of careers. Annual recruitment is affected by both vacancies (positions) and budget constraints; recent annual accessions have averaged 600 per year with a range of 500–800. Because of the aforementioned downsizing, there were no new agents hired in 1993 and no hiring is projected in 1994 or 1995. The FBI has an extensive
recruiting network that focuses on young professionals with some job experience. While candidates have a wide range of backgrounds, requirements demand many lawyers and accountants; average entry age is 28 years old. Candidate agents must have at least a baccalaureate degree.

The FBI has an ambitious recruitment program that focuses on increasing the diversity of bureau agents. Until recently it targeted different groups by having different minimum standards; that was precluded by recent changes to civil rights laws and the bureau is investigating other alternatives to increase diversity. There is very limited lateral transfer from other federal agencies and the military, and rarely does this occur at the managerial level. There are no formal internal development (upward mobility) programs, so most new agents come from outside government.

**Education and Development.** The FBI is different from other federal law enforcement agencies in several ways. First, it is much larger. And while most other federal law enforcement agents are general service, those in the FBI are in the excepted service. Many of the other agencies use a variety of different training activities; the FBI conducts most of its own training. (By law there can be only two federal law enforcement training activities; the FBI operates one in Quantico, VA, and all other agencies use the Federal Law Enforcement Center in Georgia as well as the FBI Academy.)

All FBI agents enter the government as GS-10s and begin their training in the entry-level residence course (17 weeks) at the FBI Academy. After initial training, agents begin a three to five year assignment in one of the field offices. (Current policy precludes this assignment from being near the agent’s home of record.) During this time, agents receive on-the-job training conducted at the local level, normally by a first-line supervisor. They also gain experience in the various functions of the field offices by working in different mission areas. The field supervisor (also called squad leader) serves as mentor to agents under his or her supervision. And while each agent works to develop a functional specialty, emphasis in developing FBI agent competencies is on the “generalist” approach.

The second assignment for most agents is typically to another field office (often one of the “top 12” offices that are larger, have broader operational requirements, and are sometimes difficult to staff) or to the headquarters in Washington, D.C. By then, most agents are GS-13s (it takes two years to advance from GS-10 to GS-13). Although agent preference is considered, final decision on reassignment and relocation is made by the headquarters in Washington, D.C., based on organizational needs, projected vacancies, and opportunities to broaden agent experience. All agents sign mobility agreements upon entry into the FBI.
Subsequent training is more technical or functional and averages about one week per agent each year; this is managed at the local level based on operational requirements and funds. When an agent is selected for a management position, other training options become available. The FBI has extensive leadership and executive development programs that are managed by the Washington headquarters and directed by the FBI Academy, which also conducts much of the training. The training is in three parts: formal organizational training activities as encompassed by the comprehensive bureau management training (CBMT) program, self-development activities of FBI managers, and subordinate development activities of FBI managers with their employees. The individual manager is expected to prepare a management development strategy (or program) tailored to his or her background, education, experiences, and expectations. The CBMT consists of a series of management courses and seminars covering such subjects as post-shooting incident trauma, ethics, public speaking, total quality management, and negotiation.

There is also an external executive development program that provides opportunities for future senior managers (selected by the FBI Executive (SES) Career Board) to attend a variety of different external programs. The Center for Creative Leadership, Stanford University, and General Electric leadership development programs are benchmarks for the FBI program. The FBI also expects its future managers to have an individual self-development program that includes everything from professional reading to off-duty graduate training. While an advanced degree is not mandatory for advancement, nearly all FBI managers at the SES level have masters degrees. Most were earned during off-duty time.

The FBI Academy is the focal point for most of the education and development of the bureau. Located in Quantico, Virginia, the academy has a small faculty; its primary mission is training of FBI agents. In addition, the academy annually trains over 20,000 other law enforcement officers from local, state, and federal agencies. The academy has a relationship with the University of Virginia, which provides some faculty, assistance in curriculum development, and consulting support.

Civilian education is not important for development or promotion. Management training is provided for those selecting/competing in the management track. For those choosing to serve their entire careers as journeyman agents, limited training is available to increase competencies.

Except for short courses in field divisions, all education and development programs are centrally managed. Individuals are selected to attend these
programs by the Executive Career Board; criteria for selection include record of performance and demonstrated leadership potential. There is some concern that agents are not as actively involved in their own career development as they should be and that they are waiting for “Quantico to call” and tell them when they have their next training rather than proactively seeking opportunities for development.

**Assignment.** Since FBI agents sign mobility agreements when hired, reassignment is based on the needs of the FBI and whether agents choose to compete for management positions in other locations. Potential managers need one or more assignments to the headquarters in Washington, D.C., to provide the broad staff experience required for promotion and management options. For those selected to be managers, reassignment and relocation is more frequent. Even those agents choosing not to compete for management positions are assigned to Washington, D.C., often against their preference.

As noted earlier, a typical “career path” begins with assignment as an agent in a small field division and is followed by a broadening assignment to one of the “top 12” field divisions. Those selecting the management track then normally have two supervisory assignments—one in a field division and one at the headquarters in Washington, D.C. Agents then are assigned to a management position in headquarters with responsibility for a major program, e.g., heading a white-collar crime division. This is typically followed with assignment as ASIC at one of the 57 field divisions. The preceding assignments prepare an agent for senior management positions (SES level) in the headquarters or as the SAIC of a field division. Headquarters is responsible for development with overall focus throughout on the generalist.

All agents are reassigned or relocated at regular intervals. Among managers and those on a fast track, duration of assignment can be as short as two years. Normal duration of a management tour is four to five years, but it is not uncommon for an SAIC to spend his or her last six to eight years serving in that capacity. A typical SAIC is 45 to 50 years old.

**Promotion.** Initial promotion from entry level (GS-10) through GS-13 is routine, based on meeting minimal standards (fully qualified) and following the standard career path. Thereafter, promotion is based on competition for specific positions (best qualified). Those choosing the management track compete for specific management positions (e.g., a supervisor’s position in Dallas). Selection and assignment is centrally managed and discussed below. Those opting to remain agents continue as GS-13s until retirement.
As noted earlier, the FBI is restructuring many of its human resource processes, including the promotion process. The current system is described below. As previously mentioned, managers in law enforcement are “generalists” and supervise the field agent specialists (e.g., arson specialty). When vacancies occur for management positions, announcements describing the qualifications and experience required are prepared and widely circulated. Individuals apply for these management/supervisory positions by advising headquarters. (As noted, agents not interested in serving as a manager can continue as a field agent until retirement; they are not likely to advance beyond GS-13.) A headquarters panel screens all applicants against the prerequisites for the particular position (appropriate competencies, “superior” ratings for three years on annual appraisals, and no administrative actions).

For promotions in the field divisions, all files for qualified candidates are sent to the appropriate SAIC. Each SAIC has a career board that goes through a formal proceeding to select the best candidate. The career board is composed of managers and supervisors who are selected/appointed by the SAIC. The board makes a recommendation to the SAIC, who reviews it and forwards the recommendation to the Headquarters Career Board for final decision. Recommendations of the field are rarely overturned.

Selection for senior management positions (such as SAIC of a field division) is made by the headquarters career board, consisting of deputy assistant directors in the Washington headquarters. In making its evaluations, the career board considers information provided by the candidate on his or her application, an assessment provided by the individual’s supervisor, the individual’s record (including annual performance evaluations), training, and individual competencies. Using a scoring system or other basis for comparing each candidate’s qualifications with the job requirements, the board makes a decision (selection) by consensus. An executive career board follows similar procedures when selecting persons for SES positions.

There are no standard criteria for promotion or management positions; specific qualifications for each position are listed in the vacancy announcement. Once an individual is accepted by the headquarters panel (or selecting official) he or she is eligible for selection for management positions without competition. The next subsequent competition comes when entering the SES pool.

FBI agents are required to qualify with their weapons twice each year. There are no requirements to pass fitness tests or physical exams. The FBI does encourage agents to remain physically fit; it allows duty time for exercise and will reimburse membership in a fitness center.
Compensation. FBI agents are general schedule employees (excepted service) and are compensated accordingly based on rank and step; in addition, as federal law enforcement personnel in series 1811, each receives a 25 percent pay supplement for unscheduled overtime. All personnel in certain geographical areas (Los Angeles, San Francisco, New York City, and possibly Washington, D.C.) receive location pay. Other additional compensation is based on specific job responsibilities and location.

Separation. As federal law enforcement officers (series 1811) all FBI agents are eligible to retire at age 50 and must retire by age 57. There is no “tenure point,” and the FBI operates under an up-and-stay policy. Overall attrition in the bureau is low; most complete initial training, but some resign (or are separated) in the first five years. Most agents either retire at the earliest opportunity or remain in the bureau until mandatory retirement.

The FBI uses the formal termination process based on OPM guidelines for both nonperformance and discipline. Like other federal agencies, the bureau is frustrated by the cumbersome and time consuming process. Agent appeal rights to adverse personnel actions follow normal Office of Personnel Management (OPM) guidelines.

In the early 1980s, the FBI developed/defined the characteristics sought in FBI agents based on competencies, skills, and values. These were used by the headquarters panel when selecting future managers. The shifting values of the bureau and society have caused them to be less valid and less useful. They are not currently used but may be updated in the near future.

Professional Considerations. The FBI has a written code of ethics. There are several professional organizations unique to FBI agents, but none has a role in establishing standards for professional conduct or behavior; none of the agents are members in a union. As mentioned previously, there is no examination or certification necessary to be in the profession nor are there written contracts of employment.

Summary. The FBI has an up-and-stay flow system with essentially no lateral entry and few voluntary (or involuntary) departures before retirement. Like other federal law enforcement agencies, the FBI has a large number of agents who spend extended periods of their service at the same grade (GS-13).

The development program in the FBI focuses on short, functional training courses and on-the-job training; there is little emphasis on postgraduate education. The FBI operates its own training facility for entry-level and
management training. Most of the FBI’s executive development is with outside training organizations.

All FBI agents receive annual performance evaluations. Agents qualify with their weapons quarterly; beyond that there is no periodic professional certification nor must they pass fitness or health examinations. Promotion beyond GS-13 is limited to those choosing to be managers; they also receive additional training as do SES candidates. Termination for poor performance or disciplinary reasons is in accordance with OPM guidelines.

All major personnel decisions regarding assignment, promotion, and training are made at the headquarters level. Agents are general schedule government employees (excepted service) and receive regular compensation based on grade; all receive a 25 percent bonus for overtime. As law enforcement officers (series 1811) they are eligible to retire at age 50 and must retire by age 57.

**Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (ATF)**

ATF is responsible for law enforcement and investigations relating to violation of federal laws regarding arson and the sale, shipment, and use of firearms, alcohol, tobacco products, and explosives. This section addresses the 2,500 law enforcement officers in ATF. Another 1,800 members of ATF focus on tax compliance.

**Organization.** ATF is part of the Department of Treasury with headquarters in Washington, D.C., and 24 field divisions that cover the United States; it also has several small overseas offices. To accomplish its mission, ATF works in close coordination with law enforcement officers in other federal agencies such as the FBI and Secret Service. ATF is led by the director, an SES career appointee who is selected by the Secretary of the Treasury. The director is assisted by two deputies (who also serve as associate directors—one for law enforcement) and three assistant directors; ATF also has 25 SES managers with 12 in law enforcement.

Each of the 24 field divisions is managed (led) by an SAIC (normally a GM-15, but the larger field divisions are led by an SES). Each district also has one or more deputies called ASIC. First line supervisors are called resident agents in charge/group supervisor and typically supervise 4–10 agents. Resident agents and above are considered managers and are competitively selected by the headquarters in Washington, D.C.
The next subsection will discuss the personnel management practices and procedures within ATF.

**Accession.** The ATF accession process is primarily up-and-stay. Annual recruitments are affected by both vacancies (positions) and budget constraints; recent annual accessions have averaged 100 agents per year with an annual range of 50–200 agents. Most new agents come directly from colleges and universities, often from one of the many schools with a strong program in criminal justice. There are some lateral transfers from other federal agencies and the military, but rarely does this occur at the managerial level.

Although not required by law, all accessions in recent years have had baccalaureate degrees. This is possible because the large number of applicants allows ATF to be very selective; two years ago, 7,000 candidates passed the federal test required for Treasury Department law enforcement personnel; since that time additional tests have not been given. There are no formal internal development (upward mobility) programs, so most new agents come from outside government.

**Education and Development.** New ATF agents begin their service and development with 15 weeks of mandatory training. All federal law enforcement officers (except FBI) must attend the seven week entry level course at the Federal Law Enforcement Center in Georgia (the FBI has its own course at the FBI Academy in Virginia). ATF agents must also attend an eight week course that focuses on ATF policies and procedures. Individuals must successfully complete these two courses to remain agents. As federal employees, ATF agents begin as GS-5/GS-7 and serve in a probationary status for one year.

After initial training, agents begin a three to five year assignment in one of the 24 field divisions. During this time, agents receive on-the-job training conducted at the local level, normally by a senior agent assigned as an on-the-job instructor. They also gain experience in the various functions of the field offices by working in different ATF law enforcement mission areas.

The second assignment for most agents is typically to another district or to the headquarters in Washington and requires a relocation. By then most agents are GS-13s (with promotion at its earliest opportunity, it takes a minimum of four years to advance from GS-7 to GS-13). Although agent preference is considered, final decisions on reassignment and relocation are made by the headquarters in Washington, D.C., based on organizational needs and projected vacancies. All agents sign mobility agreements on entry into ATF, so directed reassignment is not a problem. Criteria for reassignment include broadening the agent’s experience and providing exposure to different mission areas.
After basic training, subsequent training is more technical or functional and averages about one week per agent each year; this is managed at the local level based on operational requirements and fund allocation. Funding is controlled at the headquarters.

A recent GAO report said the ATF training program “exceeded our expectations.”1 The report identified three reasons for the strong program: employee involvement, optimization of training resources, and dedication to career development rather than just training.

ATF has several leadership and executive development programs as well as an SES candidate program. When first selected for management position (the management selection/promotion process is discussed later), other training and development options become available. Those entering the management ranks receive basic supervisory training and management skills training. For senior managers (and SES candidates), the executive training focuses on managerial/leadership competencies; options include the Federal Executive Institute and the Center for Creative Leadership.

Except for short courses in the field divisions, all subsequent education and development programs are centrally managed and funded. Individuals are selected by an executive resources board in Washington; criteria for selection include record of performance and demonstrated potential.

Within ATF, civilian education is not perceived as important for development or promotion. Management training is provided only for those selecting/competing in the management track. Those choosing to serve their entire career as an agent receive limited training to increase competencies.

Assignment. Since ATF agents sign mobility agreements when hired, reassignment is based on the needs of ATF and whether agents choose to compete for management positions in other locations. Potential managers are expected to have assignments to the headquarters in Washington, D.C., where they receive the broad staff experience required for promotion and management opportunities. For those selected to be managers, reassignment and relocation is more frequent. Even those choosing not to compete for management positions may be assigned to Washington, D.C., often against their preference. While managers and first line supervisors provide some input in the reassignment process involving other agents—those agents assigned to their district or joining their district—final decisions are made at the headquarters.

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All agents are reassigned or relocated at regular intervals. Among managers and those on a fast track, duration of assignment can be as short as two years. Normal duration of a management tour is 4–5 years, but it is not uncommon for an SAIC to spend his or her last 6–8 years serving in that capacity. A typical SAIC is 45–50 years old. Interestingly, current policy precludes individuals from serving as SAIC in a district in which he or she served as deputy. Normal tour length for field agents (not on the management track) is longer, averaging 6–8 years. There is considerable variability in tour length for all agents.

Since it is possible to get promoted in the field (outside of Washington) up to GS-14 supervisory positions, there is less incentive to come to Washington; many agents avoid a headquarters assignment; hence, the necessity for involuntary assignment to Washington. Both the reassignment and relocation processes are controlled by the Washington headquarters.

In general, headquarters is responsible for the development and assignment processes, and while there is no standard career pattern, focus is on developing generalists in the law enforcement field as opposed to specialists in arson or firearms investigations. All agents are trained in all specialties and are expected to be able to handle responsibilities in all areas.

**Promotion.** Initial promotion from entry level (GS -5–7) through GS-12 is routine based on meeting minimal standards (fully qualified) and follows the normal career ladder. Thereafter, promotion is based on competition for specific positions (best qualified). Those choosing the management track compete for specific management positions (e.g., ASIC of Kansas City office) announced by the headquarters. Selection and assignment to management positions is centrally managed; the process is discussed below. Those opting to remain agents continue as GS-13 until retirement. Like all federal law enforcement personnel (in series 1811), they are eligible to retire at age 50 and reach mandatory retirement at age 57.

As previously mentioned, ATF managers in law enforcement are generalists and supervise the field agent generalists and specialists (e.g., arson specialty.) When vacancies occur for management positions, announcements are prepared and widely circulated; they describe the qualifications and experience required for the vacant position. Individuals apply for these management/supervisory positions by advising headquarters. (As noted, agents not interested in serving as a manager can continue as a field agent until retirement; they are not likely to advance beyond GS-13.) About half of the 2,500 law enforcement agents are at the GS-13 level.
A headquarters panel reviews all applicants and selects the best qualified. There are no standard criteria for promotion or management positions; specific qualifications for each position are listed in the vacancy announcement. Information considered by the selection panel includes the agent’s annual appraisal, a statement prepared by the agent describing his or her qualifications and competencies, an endorsement by the agent’s supervisor, and background information from the individual’s file (e.g., training, experience, disciplinary action, if any).

At the conclusion of its deliberations, the panel assigns a numerical score (ranking) to each agent, identifies the best qualified, and provides a list of recommended agents to the selecting official (normally an associate or assistant director) in the headquarters. In making the selection from those best qualified, the selecting official frequently consults with an SAIC in whose district the vacancy exists as well as other key managers. Once an individual has been recommended by the headquarters panel (or selecting official) he or she is eligible for selection for other management positions without competition. The next subsequent competition is when entering the SES group.

While there are no periodic certification/qualification examinations, ATF agents are required to qualify with their weapons twice each year. There are no requirements to pass fitness tests or physical exams. ATF does encourage agents to remain physically fit; it allows duty time for exercise programs and will reimburse membership in a fitness center.

In the early 1980s, ATF developed (defined) the supervisory/managerial characteristics, competencies, skills, and values for its management positions. These were used by the headquarters panel and senior officials when selecting future managers. The shifting values of the bureau and society have eroded the extent to which they are used. However, they are still taught in supervisory training and may be reemphasized under the new director of ATF.

**Compensation.** ATF agents are general schedule employees and are compensated accordingly based on rank and step; in addition, as federal law enforcement personnel in series 1811, each receives a 25 percent pay supplement for administratively unscheduled overtime. Other additional compensation is based on specific job responsibilities and location. There is no hazardous duty pay for ATF agents.

The GAO report indicates that ATF did not use compensation flexibility under the Federal Employees Comparability Act because of budget constraints and acceptable alternatives.
Separation. As federal law enforcement officers (series 1811) all ATF agents are eligible to retire at age 50 and must retire by age 57. There is no “tenure point” and the ATF operates under an up-and-stay policy.

ATF does not have a special program to terminate agents. It uses the formal termination process based on OPM guidelines for both nonperformance and discipline. Like other federal agencies, it is frustrated by the cumbersome and time-consuming nature of the processes. This is particularly troublesome in dealing with marginally satisfactory agents who are unmotivated to improve and where management has little leverage. Agent appeal rights to adverse personnel actions follow normal OPM guidelines.

Professional Considerations. ATF does have a written code of ethics. There are several professional organizations unique to ATF agents, but none has a role in establishing standards for professional conduct or behavior; none of the agents are members in a union. As mentioned previously, there is no examination or certification necessary to be in the profession nor are there written contracts of employment.

Summary. ATF has an up-and-stay flow system with essentially no lateral entry and few voluntary (or involuntary) departures before retirement. Like other federal law enforcement agencies, ATF has a large number of agents who spend extended periods of their service at the same grade (GS-13). The typical agent retires after 25–30 years of service at age 53. About half go on to second careers.

The development program in the ATF focuses on short, functional training courses and on-the-job training; there is little emphasis on postgraduate education, and it is often discouraged. ATF uses the Federal Law Enforcement Center for law enforcement training; it also operates its own training facility at the center. ATF’s management and executive development training (for GS-14s and GS-15s) is done by internal staff and with outside training organizations. Agents not choosing the management track continue to serve at the GS-13 level until retirement.

Those agents choosing to be SES executives compete for management positions though a board selection process controlled by the headquarters in Washington and following government-wide SES policies. Selection normally includes promotion and the opportunity for special training. All senior managers (SESs) are developed within ATF.

All ATF agents receive annual performance evaluations. Agents qualify with their weapons twice each year; beyond that there is no periodic professional certification, nor must they pass periodic fitness or health examinations.
Promotion beyond GS-13 is limited to those choosing to be managers; they also receive additional management training. Termination for poor performance or disciplinary reasons is in accordance with OPM guidelines; there are few discharges.

All major personnel decisions regarding assignment, promotion, and training are made at the headquarters level. Agents are general schedule government employees and receive regular compensation based on grade; all receive a 25 percent bonus for unscheduled overtime. As law enforcement officers (series 1811), they are eligible to retire at age 50 and must retire by age 57.

**Secret Service**

There are about 2,000 agents in the Secret Service, which is responsible for criminal investigation, security, and protection of the president, vice president, foreign dignitaries, and other designated personnel. In performing its mission, the Secret Service works in close coordination with law enforcement officers in other federal agencies such as the FBI and ATF.

The Secret Service is part of the Department of Treasury and has its headquarters in Washington, D.C. It is led by an executive-level director (politically appointed, however, always a special agent) who is supported by 10 assistant directors, and an administrative staff of about 200. The Secret Service field operations are organized into 56 field offices; each is commanded by an SAIC at the GM-15 or SES level, depending on size. Each SAIC has one or more ASICs (normally GM-14 or GM-15). The individual field agent’s first line supervisor (or squad leader) is an ASIC (GM-14) with functional responsibility (investigation, fraud, counterfeit, protection, forgery). All regular field agents (GS-13 and below) have the same position description.

The next subsection discusses the personnel management practices and procedures within the Secret Service.

**Accession.** Most candidate agents join the Secret Service with some prior law enforcement experience, often in a police department or the military. Others come directly from college, often schools with programs in criminal justice. While there is no legal requirement for a college education, almost all candidate agents have degrees. A few agents join the Secret Service from other federal agencies, but there are very limited opportunities for lateral entry at middle and upper levels. During the 1980s, accessions averaged 150 per year with 100 candidates to replace losses and the remainder to support growth in force structure. Currently, accessions are more stable.
Education and Development. After joining the Secret Service (normally as a GS-5 or GS-7) candidates attend 16 weeks of entry-level training. The first seven weeks are with other new law enforcement officers at the Federal Law Enforcement Center in Georgia. The last nine weeks are conducted by the Secret Service at their Maryland training facility and focus on Secret Service policies and procedures.

After initial training, agents begin a five to eight year assignment in one of the field offices; the first year is in a probationary status, but few agents drop out. During this time, agents receive on-the-job training conducted at the local level, normally by a first-line supervisor. They also gain experience in the various functions of field offices by working in different mission areas. Additionally, these agents may receive temporary assignments to duty protecting the president, vice president, and foreign dignitaries. During presidential campaign years, staffing for protective details of presidential candidates comes primarily from field offices.

The second assignment for most agents is typically to a protection detail and requires a relocation. By then most agents are GS-13s. Although agent preference is considered, final decision on reassignment and relocation is made by the headquarters in Washington, D.C., based on organizational needs and projected vacancies. All agents sign mobility agreements on entry into the Secret Service.

While there is no required certification process for Secret Service agents, there are minimum standards for retention: monthly weapons qualification, quarterly physical fitness test, and annual physical examination. When agents fail these tests or have other problems (overweight or substance abuse), the Secret Service has an aggressive support program to assist, rehabilitate, and retain these individuals; discharge is a last resort.

Promotion. Since agents are general schedule government employees, they receive regular promotions at specified time intervals (on a “fully qualified” basis) through the grade of GS-13. An employee entering as a GS-7 would reach GS-13 after four years if selected for the next grade at the earliest opportunity (five years if starting as a GS-5). Subsequent promotion is based on position and described below.

Assignment. After serving one year as a GS-13, agents become eligible to compete for management positions that will normally include promotion if they are selected. This is not to imply an up-or-out policy, because agents are free to remain agents at the GS-13 level until retirement. Agents that opt not to pursue the management track are likely to remain resident agents at the GS-13 level.
throughout their career. Training and development for these agents is normally functional in nature and conducted both at the local level and at the Secret Service Training Facility in Maryland.

Because the agents were unhappy with the process used for promotion and selection of managers, the process was modified in 1989, using total quality management techniques. Under the new process, all agents in each grade are rated annually and given a composite score based on equal input from three groups/individuals: supervisor, a peer review committee, and a functional assistant director at headquarters (e.g., Assistant Director for Protection). For the higher grades (GM-14 and GM-15), a larger portion of the points is allocated to the assistant director. Each year a new order of merit list is developed by headquarters based on the composite scores, and agents are informed of their position (e.g., 131 out of 876 GS-13s). There is some concern that under the revised system, agents new to a region (and not previously known by the SAIC) may not compete favorably with other agents and suffer in the scoring process.

When management positions become available (and they are normally widely publicized), agents apply (or “bid”) by advising headquarters. Often agents are encouraged to apply for a specific position by a mentor, associate, or the SAIC in the region of the vacancy. The selection process is centralized; the selection for all management positions is made by a promotion board consisting of all assistant directors and chaired by the deputy director. The board is provided a list with the top 15 applicants from the merit list; selection is restricted to those 15. However, the board is not required to make a selection and can postpone selection, call for another list, or not make a selection. Occasionally, selections are made without an announcement.

After selection to be a manager, agents are provided additional training either at the Secret Service training facility or by contract trainers. This training focuses on supervisory/management responsibilities. As noted earlier, agents in the field receive regular technical training on such subjects as investigation techniques and computer fraud; most training is of short duration (3 weeks or less) and is budgeted and managed by the Washington headquarters. There is no formal program for agents to receive additional civilian education (beyond baccalaureate), nor are they encouraged to work on such degrees during off-duty time.

Reassignment not related to promotion is also managed by the headquarters, and although there is not a notional tour, most agents are reassigned at regular intervals. While each is consulted regarding preference on type of duty and
location, the needs of the organization take priority. The SAIC has little influence in assignments to his or her regional office.

The Secret Service recently initiated a Career Tracking Office to advise and counsel agents; in addition the SAIC is expected to serve as a mentor and advise agents in his or her field office on career development and advancement opportunities. Currently, the emphasis in career development is on the “generalist,” but there are career tracks (e.g., protection and investigation) available as options.

Agents in the management track are also assigned to manage administrative functions such as personnel and procurement. All government employees performing administrative functions in support of the Secret Service are supervised by an agent.

**Compensation.** While Secret Service agents (through GM-15) are paid at normal GS rates, they all receive a 25 percent bonus for unscheduled overtime. Many also receive additional compensation for scheduled overtime or night pay; indirect compensation includes use of cars as well as relocation service and benefits. Some overseas agents in high-risk areas receive additional hazardous-duty compensation, and all personnel in certain geographical areas (Los Angeles, San Francisco, New York City, and possibly Washington, D.C.) receive location pay.

Because the 25 percent bonus and some of the other benefits are included in determining retirement compensation (high three), agents often gravitate toward certain assignments and locations when approaching retirement.

**Separation.** Until recently, the Secret Service had a retirement option that allowed agents to retire after only 20 years of service if they had 10 years with a protection detail. In 1984, the Secret Service became subject to the standard retirement program for federal law enforcement agencies (early retirement at age 50 with 25 years of service and mandatory retirement at age 57). There was concern about a massive retirement or transfer; that did not materialize. Those agents that joined before 1984 continue to have an option between the two retirement systems.

The flow system is up-and-stay with few agents departing before retirement eligibility because of either poor performance or personal preference. Requests for early retirement are processed through the Washington headquarters, and it is not uncommon for them to be delayed or disapproved based on operational requirements. Each year, about 40 agents retire; most are in their 50s, and the typical grade is GM-14.
Professional Considerations. While the Secret Service does not meet all of the criteria for a profession (see Appendix B) such as special education and certification, the agents are certainly an elite group with a career commitment and strong organizational loyalty. Secret Service agents have a formal code of ethics, and there is a professional association to represent their interests (but not to lobby) and look after the families of agents who are killed in the line of duty.

Summary. The Secret Service has an up-and-stay flow structure with essentially no lateral entry and few voluntary (or involuntary) departures before retirement. A large number of agents spend extended periods of their service at the same grade (GS-13). The typical agent retires after 24 years of service at age 48.

The development program in the Secret Service focuses on short, functional training courses and on-the-job training; there is little emphasis on postgraduate education. The Secret Service operates its own training facility but makes extensive use of contractors for management courses.

In addition to annual performance evaluations, there are also regular evaluations regarding fitness, health, and weapons qualification. Promotion beyond GS-13 is limited to those choosing to be managers; they also receive additional training.

All major personnel decisions regarding assignment, promotion, and training are made at the headquarters level. Agents are general schedule government employees and receive regular compensation based on grade; all receive a 25 percent bonus for unscheduled overtime. As law enforcement officers (series 1811), they are eligible to retire at age 50 and must retire by age 57.

Federal Bureau of Prisons

The Bureau of Prisons (hereafter referred to as the bureau or the BOP) is responsible for operating 76 prisons that are operated to protect society by confining offenders in the controlled environment of prison and community-based facilities that are safe, humane, and appropriately secure, and that provide work and other self-improvement opportunities to assist offenders in becoming law-abiding citizens.

The BOP currently employs about 12,000 correctional officers (none of whom are law enforcement officers in series 1811) in an organization of over 26,000 federal employees. Other members of the bureau interact with the prisoners by providing support or services in such areas as medical delivery, food service, religious activities (chaplains), prison industry, psychological services, and education.
**Organization.** The BOP is part of the Department of Justice with headquarters in Washington, D.C., and six regional offices that operate 76 prisons across the United States. The Director of the BOP is a career/political appointee selected by the attorney general, normally with agreement of the president. All recent directors have been career employees selected from within the bureau. The director is assisted by an executive staff that includes nine assistant directors and six regional directors, all at the SES level. Overall, the BOP has 45 SES in management and staff positions.

Each of the six regions is managed (led) by a regional director at the SES level. The prisons are led by a warden (GM-15 or SES for larger prisons.) Typically, the warden has two or three assistants managing functional support staffs, including correctional officers as well as functional experts: medical, food service, chaplains, prison industry, psychologists, education, facilities, financial management, personnel, and others. The senior correctional officer at each prison is called captain (GS-12 or GS-13) and is typically assisted by 15–20 lieutenants (GS-9/11) and 100–120 correctional officers (GS-6/7/8).

The next section discusses the personnel management practices and procedures within the BOP.

**Accession.** Since 1987, the BOP has more than doubled from about 12,000 employees to over 26,000 employees (and from 47 prisons to the current 76; another 33 are planned in the next five years). Thus, continuing to recruit and access quality correctional officers as well as other employees while providing experienced managers for newly created positions has been a major challenge.

While the BOP needs a wide variety of technical specialties, as a general practice many new employees are hired as correctional officers. Recruitment for the past several years has benefited from an annual application pool of about 25,000 candidates from which about 4,000 employees are hired each year. Candidates do not need a college degree to become a correctional officer, but they must have some supervisory experience (three and one-half years for those without a college degree and one-half year for those with a degree).

There is no entrance examination; rather, each candidate’s application is evaluated by the personnel staff based on the candidate’s education, experience, and training. Overall, the BOP is looking for new employees who are intelligent, have good common sense, and are effective working with people. About 45 percent of new employees join BOP at the entry level of GS-6. The others have some experience and are lateral entries (teachers, lawyers, and psychologists, for example). The flow process is primarily up-and-stay.
The BOP has an extensive recruiting program that is currently focusing on minorities in an effort to diversify its workforce. The nationwide college recruiting program for correctional officers targets schools with a criminal justice program and military veterans. The large increase in BOP size when coupled with efforts to diversify and the hiring of veterans has slightly reduced the percentage of college graduates among entry-level personnel. This is not considered a problem since a college education is not perceived as an essential qualification to be a correctional officer or for subsequent advancement.

**Education and Development.** Most BOP correctional officers enter the government as GS-6s and begin their training at the entry level with a three week program at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC) in Georgia. The training is conducted by some of the more than 70 BOP personnel stationed at the FLETC, so in addition to general subjects, the training also addresses BOP policies and procedures. The entry-level training includes two weeks of on-the-job training at the institution of initial assignment (the employee is normally recruited for assignment to a specific institution).

During the first year, while on probationary status, the correctional officers receive additional on-the-job training conducted at the local level, normally by a first-line supervisor. By design, most employees spend the early years as a correctional officer; this allows them to be directly involved in the bureau’s primary responsibilities as well as providing the opportunity for exposure to other functional services.

Correctional officers reach an important juncture in their career when, after two years’ service, they compete for promotion to GS-8. At that time, each individual chooses whether to remain as a correctional officer and compete for advancement in that career field as a manager or to shift to one of the other functional areas. In addition, many choose to remain as correctional officers at the GS-8 level (journeyman level) until eligible for retirement and not to compete for advancement.

Those choosing to compete for advancement in the correctional officer field to lieutenant (GS-9/10/11) and captain (GS-12 or GS-13) apply for specific positions. While selection makes them eligible for supervisory training, they also must agree to be reassigned to a different prison location. The selection/promotion process is discussed in the promotion section. Those choosing to compete for advancement within a functional area also become eligible for promotion and additional training. In that capacity, they can work in the functional area in the prison, manage a functional area, or work on functional staff at the regional or Washington headquarters.
Both groups—correctional officers and functional specialists—are eligible for promotion and advancement that can lead to selection as a prison warden (GM-15 or SES) or administrator of a satellite facility. Thus, while the system initially encourages the generalist approach, many individuals later specialize in one of the functional areas. However, the BOP encourages all of those interested in becoming wardens (or associate wardens) to remain current in all functional areas. It recently initiated a cross-development training series that offers self-development training packages in each functional area; after completion, results are graded and recorded in individual records available to selecting officials.

The BOP operates three training facilities focusing on entry-level training, specialized training, and management training. All BOP employees are required to receive a minimum of 40 hours of training each year. While there are mandatory core subjects for all staff, additional specific subjects are determined by individual preference and need based on a needs assessment process and supervisory recommendations. Training is scheduled by local authorities based on individual availability. Each prison has a budget for training its employees; about 90 percent of training is at BOP institutions or training activities.

The BOP has a leadership and executive development program that is managed out of the Washington headquarters. Candidates are nominated by the regional directors and assistant directors and selected by headquarters; most attend a commercial development program.

Civilian education is a consideration but is not mandatory for development or promotion. Management training is provided for those selecting/competing in the management track. For those desiring to serve their entire career as correctional officers, training is focused on competencies.

**Assignment.** For those opting to compete for advancement—either as correctional officers or functional managers—reassignment is based on position availability and individual preference. For those choosing to remain as journeyman correctional officers, there is no reassignment or rotation program, and they can remain at the same institution for their entire career. Thus, the BOP staff consists of two groups: the homesteaders and those agreeing to move in exchange for the opportunities for promotion and management positions.

Most reassignments result from selection for a new position or promotion as described below. Since those BOP employees competing for warden (management positions) sign mobility agreements, reassignment can also be at the direction of the headquarters. Homesteading, and the inability to relocate correctional officers, is perceived as a problem by some BOP managers. Potential senior managers must have assignments to the headquarters in Washington,
D.C., in order to have the broad staff experience required to make decisions at that level. For those selected to be managers, reassignment and relocation is more frequent.

Among younger wardens and those on a fast track, duration of assignment can be as short as two years. Normal length of a management tour is two to three years, but it is not uncommon for a senior manager to spend his or her last four to five years serving in that capacity. A typical warden or captain is 45 to 50 years old.

**Promotion.** Initial promotion from entry level (GS-6 and GS-7) is routine, based on meeting minimal standards (fully qualified) and following the standard career path. Thereafter, promotion is based on competition for specific positions (best qualified). As mentioned previously, those choosing the management track compete for specific management positions.

As previously mentioned, wardens are generalists and supervise the correction officers and functional specialists. There are no standard criteria for selection for a higher position and promotion; specific qualifications for each position are listed in the vacancy announcement. For GS-12 and below, the selection process is decentralized. Vacancies are widely announced and selection decisions are made by wardens or regional directors. Management personnel (GS-12 and above) indicate their interest on an annual job preference sheet. They indicate the type of positions and locations in which they are interested. All of this information is available to the selecting official—the regional, assistant, or agency director—through an on-line computer system. He or she reviews the candidate qualifications against the job requirements, consults with other managers, contacts the individual’s current manager, or consults with the headquarters staff.

In addition, the executive staff (BOP director and 6 regional directors) conduct an annual review of all employees GS-13 and above. The annual assessment evaluates development needs and potential for different types of assignments. The results might suggest certain types of training, earmark an individual for assignment to Washington in a particular functional area, or identify a candidate to be a warden or associate warden. Promotion through GS-12 is managed by the individual wardens and regional directors using this process and vacancy announcements. Promotion to GS-13 through GS-15 and SES is managed by the executive staff. The very senior positions are selected by the director. With the rapid growth of BOP, top management is considering transfer of some promotion authority to the regional offices.
Recently, the BOP initiated a program that will relate promotion to performance. When considering individuals for promotion, the selecting official will review the reports of functional area evaluations (inspections) conducted during the tenure of the individual being considered.

All BOP institution staff are required to qualify with their weapons once each year. There are no requirements to pass fitness tests or physical exams. While BOP does encourage staff to remain physically fit, the fact that most correctional officers do shift work precludes allowing any duty time for scheduled exercise.

**Compensation.** BOP employees are general schedule employees (lawyers are excepted service) and are compensated accordingly based on rank and step. Only a few are federal law enforcement personnel (series 1811), so most do not receive a supplement for unscheduled overtime nor are they eligible for any other special compensation.

**Separation.** Those BOP employees who have worked three years in an institution are subject to the same retirement/separation rules as federal law enforcement officers (series 1811)—eligible to retire at age 50 with 20 years service and must retire by age 57. This includes virtually all BOP employees. There is no “tenure point,” and the BOP operates under an up-and-stay policy.

Turnover during the first year is about 13 percent; thereafter, it averages about 4 percent per year. BOP does not have a special program to terminate employees. It uses the formal termination process based on OPM guidelines for both nonperformance and discipline. Like other federal agencies, BOP is frustrated by this cumbersome and time-consuming process. This process is particularly troublesome when dealing with marginally satisfactory employees who are unmotivated to improve. Appeal rights to adverse personnel actions follow normal OPM guidelines.

About one-half of BOP employees retire at the earliest opportunity; most of the rest remain until retirement is mandatory; the average retirement age at BOP is 54 years. Many go on to second careers.

**Professional Considerations.** BOP does have a written code of ethics. About one-third of BOP employees belong to the American Federation of Government Employees (Council of Prison Locals). Nonmanagement employees up to GS-14 are eligible; in some locations, 80–90 percent of employees belong. The relationship between the union and top management is very good; they work together to solve a wide range of problems. As mentioned previously, there is no examination or certification necessary to be in the profession nor are there written contracts of employment.
**Summary.** The BOP is different from other federal agencies addressed in this report. It is much larger, and while most other officers discussed in this section are federal law enforcement agents, those in the BOP are not.

BOP has an up-and-stay flow structure with limited lateral entry in the professional areas—medical, lawyers, and chaplains. BOP also has somewhat more attrition before retirement than other agencies studied. Like the federal law enforcement agencies, BOP has a large number of correctional officers who spend extended periods of their career service at the same grade (GS-8). The typical correctional officer retires after 21 years of service at age 54.

The development program in the BOP focuses on short, functional training courses and on-the-job training; there is little emphasis on postgraduate education. BOP operates three training facilities (including one at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center).

All BOP employees receive annual performance evaluations. Correctional officers qualify with their weapons annually; beyond that, there is no periodic professional certification nor must they pass fitness or health examinations. Promotion beyond GS-8 is limited to those choosing to be managers or functional specialists; they also receive additional training. Termination for poor performance or disciplinary reasons is in accordance with OPM guidelines.

Most major personnel decisions regarding assignment, promotion, and training are made at the local level for employees below GS-13; actions above that level are controlled by headquarters or regions. Employees are general schedule government employees and receive regular compensation based on grade; like law enforcement officers (series 1811), they are eligible to retire at age 50 and must retire by age 57.

**Fairfax County Police Department**

There are about 980 sworn police officers in the Fairfax County (Virginia) Police Department (hereafter referred to as the department or the FCPD), which is responsible for law enforcement in Fairfax County, a suburban area of 399 square miles with a population of 837,000 (1992) in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area. The department is responsible for investigating everything from traffic accidents and murders to domestic disturbances and white-collar crime. It also plays a major role in developing crime prevention programs and interacting with community leaders.

The department is led by a police chief (rank of colonel) who is supported by 2 deputies (lieutenant colonel), a staff of 10 majors and 15 captains, and 400 other
administrative personnel (clerks and communications specialists, for example). The chief is appointed by the county board of supervisors, an elected body; all other officers are selected and managed internally.

The FCPD is organized into seven stations, each commanded by a captain with responsibility for a geographical area in the county. Station commanders have about 80–120 police officers assigned to them along with an administrative and support staff. Included in the organizational structure of each station are lieutenants, second lieutenants, and sergeants, who serve as the individual police officers’ first-line supervisor. While some sergeants have specific functional responsibilities such as accident investigation, arson, or forgery, they are primarily squad leaders who supervise other police officers operating as “generalists” who perform a variety of law enforcement activities. The other officers serving in the stations have cross-functional responsibilities.

The next section discusses the personnel management practices and procedures within the FCPD.

**Accession.** Most officer candidates are local residents, including a few with some prior law enforcement experience, often in the military. Some come directly from college, but an officer is not required to have a college education. There are very limited opportunities for lateral entry at middle and upper management levels. During the last 10 years, the FCPD has grown from about 850 officers to the current level of 980 officers. Accessions have averaged 60 per year with a range of 45–120. Currently, accessions are more stable and are based on projected retirements.

The applicant pool is satisfactory except for the lack of minority candidates, who must be actively recruited. A typical entry group of 30 comes from over 800 applicants. Preliminary screening is based on a written examination. Before final selection, however, each candidate is interviewed by several officers, takes a polygraph test, as well as psychological and medical tests, and is subjected to a thorough background check. Typical officer candidates are in their mid-20s with about half having college degrees (associate or baccalaureate.) However, lately, this average is increasing as is the percentage of degree candidates.

**Education and Development.** After joining the FCPD (as a recruit), candidates attend 17 weeks of entry-level training conducted by the department at its training facility; three such classes of 25–30 candidates are conducted annually. The first five weeks are spent in skills training (e.g., firearms, emergency vehicle operations, and first aid). The last 12 weeks focus on police officer competencies as well as FCPD policies and procedures. Attrition averages about 15–20 percent.
After completion of initial training, recruits are sworn in as police officers and assigned to one of the seven stations. During their first assignment, officers receive on-the-job training conducted at the local level, normally by a field training instructor. They also gain experience in the various functions of field offices by working in different mission areas.

Upon completion of two years of service, officers can compete for promotion to police officer first class. Officers can choose one of three options: stay on patrol, compete for management/supervisory positions, or compete for a career development track that does not include supervision but provides additional compensation and status. These options are discussed in detail below. While those officers choosing the supervisory option are reassigned regularly, members of the other two groups can spend their entire careers at the same station.

All officers receive regular training; by state law each must have at least 40 hours of training every two years or lose his or her license. FCPD officers average about 40 hours every year; most in the form of one-week courses (accident investigation, criminal investigation, etc.) conducted by the same training academy that conducts entry-level training. Individuals indicate course preferences to headquarters, which schedules attendance based on availability of the individual and the course offering schedule. In addition, all officers receive informal training at the squad and station level throughout their careers.

While there is no required certification process for FCPD officers, there are minimum standards for retention: weapons qualification three times each year and periodic physical examinations; there is no fitness test at present. When officers fail these tests or have other problems (overweight or substance abuse, for example) the FCPD has an aggressive support program to assist, rehabilitate, and retain these individuals; discharge is a last resort. The department recently initiated a wellness program that allows two hours per week for group (squad) physical activities.

**Promotion.** Those officers who choose the supervisory track and seek promotion to sergeant must have at least two years of service and have a satisfactory performance record. A written examination (conducted every three years) is used to screen candidates. The top candidates are put through an assessment center (one day) that creates a series of scenarios and exercises that tests such things as technical skills, leadership, and performance under stress. A panel of outside law enforcement officers observes and evaluates each candidate’s performance and develops a ranking of candidates.

The result is a prioritized list of candidates that is used for promotion. Annual performance evaluations are not considered in the process. When vacancies
occur, the chief selects from the list. While the chief can select any of the top 10 on the list, normally promotion is sequential.

The promotion selection process is conducted periodically (every two or three years) and each candidate must go through all phases. As a result, an officer could be next up for promotion one year and not pass the screening examination the next year. In the past, most officers compete for the supervisory track the first time they become eligible.

This assessment center process is used for promotion to sergeant, second lieutenant, and lieutenant; promotion to captain and above is controlled by the chief (there are only 15 captains, 10 majors, 2 lieutenant colonels, and 1 colonel—the chief). While there are no requirements to serve a specified period in any grade, lieutenants typically have 10 to 14 years of service and majors 15 to 20 years of service.

Several years ago, the FCPD initiated a career development program (called Master Police Officer (MPO)), which allows advancement and status for officers who have exceptional technical skills but do not want to be supervisors. Selection for this program is based on written examination, a supervisor’s evaluation, and seniority. MPOs receive compensation equal to that of sergeants. MPOs are seasoned experts in their field who serve as role models for young officers.

Upon selection to be sergeant, individual officers attend a one-week basic supervisors school and then spend four weeks working directly with a mentor (supervisory training officer) who is experienced in the functional area. MPOs receive regular training in their specialty. Supervisors and MPOs often attend special training offered by other law enforcement organizations, such as the FBI Academy.

**Assignment.** As noted previously, nonsupervisory officers can spend their entire career assigned to the same station. The county is small, so relocation is not necessary when reassigned.

Supervisors (sergeant and second lieutenant) are reassigned upon promotion. Staff officers (lieutenant, captain, and major) are regularly reassigned to broaden their experience, normally every two to four years. Reassignment is between staff and the stations and among different functional areas. Assignments of sergeants and lieutenants are managed by the headquarters in consultation with the station commander. The chief handles captain and field-grade assignments.
While officers receive annual written appraisals, they are used more for determining training needs and improving individual performance than for assignment or promotion consideration.

**Compensation.** FCPD officers are compensated using a grade and step system similar to the federal government; grade is based on rank. Within each grade (or rank) step increases are received at regular intervals (initially on an annual basis, but later less frequently); each step represents a 5 percent increase in pay. When promoted to a higher rank, the annual increase is limited to 10 percent, so individuals frequently slide back to a lower step. Until recently, all officers also received an annual cost of living allowance; budget problems in the county have eliminated that as well as within-grade steps.

Officers are provided with all uniforms, including regular replacements, and other necessary equipment (briefcases, for example). Some have limited off-duty use of their squad car; many also receive additional compensation for scheduled overtime or night pay.

**Separation.** For those hired prior to 1981, the FCPD has a retirement option that allows officers to retire after only 20 years of service; they could use accrued sick leave to reduce that further. In 1981, the potential retirement cost for an increasingly larger department and introduction of a cost of living adjustment (COLA) benefit led to a 25 year retirement system for new officers.

Those retiring with 20 years service receive 50 percent of pay; that increases 2.5 percent each year up to a maximum of two-thirds pay and 26 years of service. Although there is no mandatory retirement age, there is little incentive to stay beyond 26 years. Most officers retire after 20 years service (age 40 to 45) and pursue a second career.

The FCPD flow structure is up-and-stay with over 50 percent of the officers remaining until retirement eligibility. Those departing before retirement do so for a variety of reasons: lack of promotion, career change, and work environment.

Although not a big problem, the difficulty of terminating or disciplining officers, particularly marginally satisfactory officers who are unmotivated to improve, is troublesome. Procedures to involuntarily separate/eliminate officers originate with the supervisor. Most disciplinary problems are minor and can be handled at the station level either administratively or with probation. Final separation actions are reviewed at each organizational level; the chief has authority to terminate officers for disciplinary problems.
Officers have two appeal routes. The Police Appeal Trial Board is an internal review process that again leads to final disposition by the chief. Most officers choosing appeal go to the Citizens Review Board because it has been more sympathetic to employee expectations.

**Professional Considerations.** While the FCPD does not meet all of the criteria for a profession (see Appendix B) such as special education and certification, the officers are an elite group with a career commitment and strong organizational bonding. FCPD officers have a formal code of ethics, and they are represented by two professional associations. The Fairfax County Police Association is a community support organization that acts as an advocate for the officers. Nearly all officers belong to it, and most participate in its community support and social activities.

The Fairfax Coalition of Police Officers represents about one-third of eligible officers (no supervisors, sergeant or above, are allowed.) It supports officers facing disciplinary action and lobbies political organizations. Relations between the union and the department are strained.

**Summary.** The FCPD has an up-and-stay flow structure with essentially no lateral entry; about one-half of each accession group departs before retirement. Many officers spend their entire careers as patrol officers (no supervisory responsibilities—a journeyman position.) The typical officer retires after 20 years of service at age 40 to 45.

The development program in the FCPD focuses on short, functional training courses and on-the-job training; there is little emphasis on civilian education. The FCPD operates its own training facility for entry-level (17-week) and supervisory training; some advanced training uses other law enforcement training activities. In addition to annual performance evaluations, there are regular physical evaluations and weapons qualification.

Upon completion of two years of service and promotion to police officer first class, officers choose one of three options: stay on patrol, compete for management/supervisory positions, or compete for a career development track that does not include supervision but provides additional compensation and status as well as specialization possibilities (e.g., investigations, K-9, SWAT). An assessment center is used to evaluate candidates for promotion to leadership positions with the results establishing a promotion list for officer promotion.

Major personnel decisions regarding promotion (and reassignment) and training are made at the headquarters level. Officers receive regular compensation based on grade with regular step increase based on satisfactory service and longevity, when sufficient resources are available.