

Introduction

The FY98 *Annual Evaluation* continues the evaluation philosophy underlying the FY96 and FY97 *Annual Evaluations*, which represented a shift in the approach to program evaluation by the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civilian Personnel Policy). Beginning in FY96, ODASA (CPP) has evaluated Civilian Human Resources (CHR) from an Army-wide perspective, focusing on program outcomes and results. It is part of a larger effort to improve business practices in the Army civilian personnel program.

This year's publication dropped three indicators that were in the *FY97 Annual Evaluation* because of non-availability of data (HQ ACPERS Data Quality – OPF Comparison¹, Training – Regulatory and Procedural Compliance, Satisfaction with Position – Intent to Leave). The publication continues to attempt to balance the various aspects of CHR, from the effectiveness of service delivery on a year-to-year basis to how well Army supervisors and managers exercise their responsibility to lead and care for the civilian work force. Analyses presented here provide critical feedback necessary for sound policy decisions and for strategic planning, guiding the CHR program successfully into the future.

Annual Evaluation Organization

The *Annual Evaluation* consists of the following sections:

- **Executive Summary** - A synopsis of the evaluation of all elements within the *Annual Evaluation*.
- **The Year in Review** - A narrative of events impacting on the CHR program and the civilian work force in FY98. The Year in Review is non-evaluative but provides context for the analyses presented in subsequent sections.
- **Key Performance Indicators** - Report on CHR performance against six broad indicators, designed to **inform the Army leadership about the health of the CHR program**. Four of the six are composites of individual expanded indicators (see below). Performance data for key indicators are presented graphically, with accompanying analyses.
- **Expanded Indicators** - Report on CHR performance against 44 more detailed indicators, developed to address the various aspects of CHR from an Army-wide perspective. The indicators are divided into six categories: Cost/Efficiency, Effectiveness of

¹ Two measures of HQ ACPERS data quality remain.

Civilian Personnel Administration, Effectiveness of Civilian Personnel Management, Civilian Work Force Morale, Civilian Work Force Quality, and Civilian Work Force Representation. As with the key indicators, performance data are presented graphically with accompanying analyses.

- Special Studies - A synopsis of the findings of special studies/evaluations conducted during the fiscal year.
- Appendix - Provides raw data used in the key and expanded indicators. Major Command (MACOM) and Region breakouts of the data, where available, are included in this section.

Key and Expanded Indicators

Key and expanded indicators for the *Annual Evaluation* are the result of an extensive review of the professional literature on program evaluation, discussions with functional experts at Headquarters, Department of Army (HQDA), and staffing with the MACOMs. The criteria used to select these indicators were spelled out in the *Evaluation Plan* (Appendix D to the *FY97-98 CPA/M Strategic Plan*). In brief, the indicators are intended to:

- Evaluate the CHR program overall, without breaking out Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC) and Civilian Personnel Operations Center (CPOC) responsibilities.

- Measure areas beyond the direct control of the CHR function (e.g., civilian work force morale), emphasizing that Army managers and supervisors share in the responsibility to develop and care for the civilian work force.
- Impose minimal burden on the field in terms of additional reporting requirements. Almost all of the data for the indicators were obtained through automated sources.
- Set quantitative performance objectives for as many of the indicators as possible. Throughout the evaluation, **the term “objective”** is used to mean the threshold below which an intervention or special study may be necessary. It is a “trip wire” to warn of potential problems, rather than a “goal” which, arguably, should always be 100% (accuracy, compliance, satisfaction, etc.).
- **Present facts without undue analysis or interpretation.** Special studies are needed to determine the reasons for most of the trends identified.

Notes on Methodology

Definition of Work Force

Except as noted, work force data in the *Annual Evaluation* are shown for Army U.S. citizen appropriated fund employees in military and civil functions. Army

National Guard Technicians are not included, unless otherwise specified.

Key and Expanded Indicators

- **Regulatory and Procedural Compliance Indicators** - Data for the items dealing with regulatory and procedural compliance (key indicators 4 and 5; expanded indicators 2-2, 2-3, 3-1, 3-2, and 3-3) are from U.S. Army Civilian Personnel Evaluation Agency (USACPEA) on-site survey results. FY89-92 data result from USACPEA's normal review cycle. USACPEA selected review sites based upon MACOM affiliation with the intent of surveying each MACOM on a regular basis. It made no attempt to create a sample representative of Army as a whole. This MACOM "bias" in the sample must be kept in mind when comparing data across fiscal years. FY93-94 data are not available because USACPEA conducted only special studies during those years. FY95-98 data are based mainly on USACPEA's regionalization-related reviews. The sites selected for review align with the regionalization implementation schedule. They form a reasonably representative sample of Army. However, since USACPEA did not develop its yearly review schedules with the goal of providing Army-wide data that could be compared across fiscal years, this report attempts to draw only general conclusions from USACPEA survey data.

- **Morale Indicators** – We collected data for items dealing with work force morale and customer satisfaction (key indicators 2 and 6; expanded indicators 4-1 through 4-11) from the Army-wide Survey of Civilian Personnel Management. We administered this survey biennially to random samples of civilian employees and supervisors since 1977. FY98 continued an annual administration cycle that began in FY97 to track the effects of organizational interventions such as downsizing and regionalization. Key and expanded indicators do not report results of individual survey items but rely on composites of items that measure like concepts.

We reduced the number of survey items in FY97 after a "bottom up" review of all items. This made historical comparisons difficult, since most of the composites changed substantially. However, we were able to compare FY97 with FY96 by re-calculating results based on their common items. We did not make any changes to the composites for the FY98 survey. Presenting the employee and supervisor results in four sets of bar charts (FY96 and FY97 "common" items, and all FY97 and FY98 items) provides a historical perspective for the affected composites.

As in previous years, we selected the FY98 sample from the population of Army US-citizen

civilian employees and supervisors in appropriated fund positions (excluding National Guard technicians) stratified by Region, MACOM, gender, race/national origin, and white collar/blue collar. We mailed surveys to employee's home address, continuing the procedure that we developed and tested in FY97.

The return rate was 45%. Due to technical problems with the contractor's mailing and sorting equipment, we are unable to provide MACOM and CPOC results in the Appendix this year. The problem does not affect the reporting of overall Army employee and supervisor results.

- **Work Force Representation –** We provide three general indicators of representation. Readers requiring more detailed breakouts should contact Army's EEO Agency
- **Categorization of Key and Expanded Performance Indicators.** Functional experts at HQDA placed indicators into the various categories (e.g., Effectiveness of Civilian Personnel Administration, Effectiveness of Civilian Personnel Management). In some instances, the placement has significant implications regarding the roles of CHR professionals. For instance, items 3-1 and 3-2, measuring, respectively, grade and assignment accuracy, are considered in this evaluation to be management responsibilities.

- **Data Accuracy -** For some indicators, the accuracy of automated data was suspect. This prevented our completing certain analyses. For example, we omitted data on honorary awards and denial of within grade increases from expanded indicators 5-3 (awards) and 5-4 (disciplinary and adverse actions), respectively. We also omitted expanded indicators on timeliness of performance appraisals and leadership training of new supervisors in this year's publication.

The Next Step

We will use evaluation results presented here in developing the next HQDA CHR operational plan. Where program performance falls below established objectives, we will recommend either policy interventions or special studies to determine causes of below-par performance.