



February 24, 2014

SUBJECT: New Process for Reviewing GS-15s

TO: RPES Advisory Committee

FROM: Caird E. Rexroad, Jr.
Associate Administrator

I have carefully considered the recommendations outlined in your December 2012 memorandum, to streamline the Research Position Evaluation System (RPES) review of GS-15s. Although not all recommendations will be adopted at this time, the following will be implemented in fiscal year 2015:

- Research positions at the GS-15 level will be reviewed by panels on a 7-year cycle, to ensure continued accuracy of classification.
- Scientists or their supervisors may request an early review by an RPES panel before the cyclic review is due when there has been a significant change which may affect the grade level of the position. Requests for early review that occur *after* 5 years from their last evaluation will automatically be referred through supervisory channels to the Area Director for notification to the RPE Staff of intent to be reviewed and placed on the next available panel in their peer group. Early reviews that are requested *before* the 5 years will be handled as they are currently.
- GS-15s will continue to adhere to current policy on development of their case writeup.
- GS-15s will be phased into panel forums that convene under alternative environments, such as teleconferences and/or video conferences. This will be an ongoing and flexible process to determine the most efficient way to evaluate the GS-15 cases with the same equal and fair consideration given to all other graded scientists.

I would like to reiterate that performance is not a consideration in the RPES process. Performance concerns should be addressed through the performance management process.

Although I am not currently adopting all of your recommendations, this does not mean that I am not continually evaluating the RPES policies and procedures. I will continue to work with Amy Hegarty, Head, RPE Staff, in monitoring the costs and benefits of adopting changes as we find appropriate. Your continued feedback is welcome at any time.

cc:

R. Spears, HRD
A. Hegarty, RPES

J. Spence, BA
Area Directors