



**EVALUATION OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR'S
PRESIDENTIAL MANAGEMENT INTERN
PROGRAM**

**OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY
FOR ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT**

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ACRONYMS

BLS	Bureau of Labor Statistics
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
DOL	Department of Labor
ESA	Employment Standards Administration
ETA	Employment and Training Administration
GS	General Schedule
IDP	Individual Development Plan
ILAB	Bureau of International Labor Affairs
MSPB	U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board
OASAM	Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration and Management
OCIA	Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs
OIG	Office of Inspector General
OPM	Office of Personnel Management
OSHA	Occupational Safety and Health Administration
PMI	Presidential Management Intern

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Presidential Management Intern (PMI) program is designed to attract to the federal service outstanding graduates with Master's and Doctorate degrees from a wide variety of academic disciplines. These individuals have an interest in, and commitment to, a career in the analysis and management of public policies and programs. The program consists of a two-year internship that enables graduate degree students to be appointed to federal positions as PMIs, and to have the opportunity to be converted to a permanent federal civil service position following a successful internship.

Within the Department of Labor (DOL), the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration and Management (OASAM) has the responsibility to promote, administer and oversee the PMI program. DOL agencies have responsibility for selecting, hiring, promoting, training, providing rotational assignments and developing their PMIs. The Department has supported the use of the PMI program as a hiring tool for several years. It "reinvigorated" the PMI program in 1997 following several years of limited participation by DOL agencies. DOL, through OASAM, hosted the annual PMI Job Fair in 1997, 1998 and 1999.

The Federal government is currently facing the great challenge of preparing for the exodus of many senior level employees. OASAM conducted a study that revealed that fifty-one percent of DOL's supervisors and managers are eligible to retire over the next five years. Therefore, it is important that DOL maximize the Department's ability to recruit talented people to Federal service. Utilizing the PMI program is one means to address the issue of succession management.

This evaluation examines DOL's participation in the PMI program, evaluates its outcomes, and identifies areas where improvements can be made.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

DOL has utilized the PMI Program as a hiring and development tool for several years. However, additional enhancements within the program can be implemented.

FINDING A - DOL Can Improve Coordination and Guidance Within the PMI Program

OASAM can do more to ensure that DOL-PMIs, PMI agency coordinators, and managers receive adequate guidance and education on the regulations, duties and responsibilities involved in employing PMIs. DOL agencies are developing PMIs without the advantage of a comprehensive Departmental strategy focused on improving program outcomes. DOL has not clearly articulated its long-term vision for the PMI program. In addition, the role of DOL's agency PMI coordinators has not been clearly defined, causing confusion about their responsibilities and hindering the efficient and effective administration of the program.

FINDING B - OASAM Can Ensure that All DOL Agencies Focus on Key Components Within the PMI Program

All DOL agencies do not consistently focus on and offer key components of the PMI program such as recruitment, orientation, training, and rotations. Even though PMIs are completing rotational assignments and participating in some of the other key program components, OASAM should provide additional guidance to ensure full completion of all the program requirements.

FINDING C - OASAM Can Work with Individual DOL Agencies to Improve Tracking of PMI Activities

OASAM has not systematically tracked and disseminated information on PMI-related activities such as hiring, training, rotations, transfers to other federal agencies, promotions, conversions or terminations. As a result, OASAM has no way to ensure that all aspects of the PMI program are implemented consistently throughout the Department.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend that OASAM work with all DOL agencies to improve the PMI program within the Department of Labor. In this regard we recommend that OASAM:

1. Actively market the Presidential Management Intern Program within DOL.
2. In coordination with DOL agencies, identify the roles and responsibilities of those employees associated with or responsible for the PMI program within DOL (i.e. PMIs, DOL's-PMI coordinator, agency PMI coordinators and DOL management staff).
3. Encourage DOL agencies to develop and share a profile of each PMI that includes information such as alma mater, degree, and current assignment, subject to the Privacy Act.
4. Develop and hold an annual PMI orientation for all DOL-PMIs. We recommend that the orientation focus on DOL's administration of the program and invite both headquarters and field PMIs. In addition, we suggest that the information provided to PMIs at the orientation be shared with their supervisors.
5. Develop and implement a tracking system to monitor PMI information, including:
 - (a) All PMI hiring information for each agency;

- (b) The amount and types of training received, including attendance at both OPM and DOL orientation sessions;
- (c) Promotion and conversion data;
- (d) Transfer information; and,
- (e) Termination information.

Additionally, OASAM should require that all DOL agencies annually provide reports on the following information to the OASAM Human Resources Center:

- (f) IDP development and completion; and,
- (g) The type, duration, and frequency of rotational assignments.

OASAM'S RESPONSE AND OIG CONCLUSION

Based on OASAM's response, we consider all recommendations resolved. The recommendations will be closed pending OIG's receipt of appropriate documentation specified in the report. OASAM's complete response is found in the Appendix.

BACKGROUND

The Presidential Management Intern (PMI) program is designed to attract to the federal service outstanding graduates with Master's and Doctorate degrees from a wide variety of academic disciplines. These individuals have an interest in, and commitment to, a career in the analysis and management of public policies and programs. The program was established on August 25, 1977 by Executive Order 12008, and was reconstituted May 24, 1982 by Executive Order 12364. It consists of a two-year internship program that enables graduate degree students to be appointed to federal positions as PMIs, and to have the opportunity to be converted to a permanent federal civil service position following a successful internship.

The PMI program places a strong emphasis on career development. During their internship, PMIs experience a myriad of challenging career opportunities. The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) facilitates and provides structured orientation and graduation training programs. Additionally, federal agencies arrange for seminars, briefings and conferences, as well as on-the-job training and other developmental opportunities. Federal agencies also provide PMIs with rotational assignments either within their own, or other federal agencies.

According to OPM guidelines, each agency should have a PMI coordinator, whose primary role and responsibility is to serve as a liaison and program facilitator for the agency. Other responsibilities include: recruitment of PMIs for the agency, working with agency managers to identify PMI positions, distributing copies of the PMI finalists' applications and scheduling interviews, participating in the annual PMI Job Fair, ensuring that all hiring components within their agency are aware of the commitments involved in hiring a PMI, notifying OPM of agency PMI placements as they occur and facilitating payment to OPM within 30 days of appointment (total cost not including salary \$4,800.00).

PMI program regulations specify that initial appointments must be made at the Grade 9, Step 1 level of the General Schedule (GS-9). Only individuals who have had prior, higher-level Federal civilian government service may be placed at a higher step within the GS-9 pay range according to 5 CFR 531.203(c). PMI positions are full-time positions that count against agency personnel ceilings and salaries are paid by the employing agency.

Once the PMI is hired, the coordinator assists supervisors and PMIs during the initial agency orientation, acts as a resource person for the PMIs and their supervisors on PMI Program activities and individual concerns, and responds to program-related questions, helping PMIs and their supervisors identify and clarify responsibilities and commitments.

The coordinator also guides PMIs and their supervisors in the design of Individual Development Plans (IDP) that identify learning goals and objectives, provides in-house orientation and training opportunities for the PMIs, and advises supervisors and PMIs on matters concerning PMI program rules, regulations, and program implementation.

Throughout the Federal Government there have been recent attempts to address the human capital issue that becomes more of a concern as current managers and senior executives consider retirement. The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration and Management (OASAM) conducted a study that revealed that fifty-one percent of the Department of Labor's (DOL's) supervisors and managers are eligible to retire over the next five years. Utilizing the PMI program is just one way for DOL to build a pool of employees who have a high level of critical leadership competencies in order to prepare for the high number of expected retirements. The Department has supported the use of the PMI program as a hiring tool for several years. It "reinvigorated" the PMI program in 1997 following several years of limited participation by DOL agencies. DOL, through OASAM, hosted the annual PMI Job Fair in 1997, 1998 and 1999.

PURPOSE, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

PURPOSE

The purpose of this evaluation was to examine DOL's participation in the PMI program, evaluate its outcomes, and identify areas where improvements can be made.

SCOPE

Our evaluation questions were as follows:

- Does DOL have a structured program to handle the day-to-day operations of the PMI program? How is it handled? Who has overall responsibility for the program?
- Is there a need for DOL to broaden its participation in and oversight of its administration of the PMI program?

These evaluation questions were designed to assist in examining the effectiveness of guidance, oversight and services provided to stakeholders in DOL's-PMI program. The PMI program is one of many hiring tools available to DOL managers to address the issue of succession planning and should be viewed in that context.

METHODOLOGY

Our methodology included qualitative methods and an extensive review of pertinent documents.

Qualitative Methods

Our qualitative review focused primarily on interviews with DOL-PMIs. We interviewed a randomly selected sample of PMIs, who represented a cross-section of DOL agency PMI hires from 1996-2001. To provide a more balanced assessment we conducted interviews with DOL's PMI coordinator, DOL managers and supervisors, and DOL agency PMI coordinators.

We asked all interviewees in DOL questions concerning the key components of the PMI as administered by OASAM. Specifically, we asked about: recruitment, hiring processes, orientation, formation of Individual Development Plans, training, Career Development Groups, rotations, stakeholder interaction (i.e. OASAM, DOL agency staff, managers, and PMIs), promotions, and conversion. Further, we interviewed other federal agency officials at the Department of Housing and Urban Development, Department of Interior, Department of Agriculture, and the Small Business Administration for best practices.

Document Review

We reviewed numerous documents related to the PMI program, including:

1. A list of all current and former DOL-PMIs (including PMIs from other agencies that had rotational assignments into DOL).
2. A list of current DOL agency PMI coordinators or managers responsible for the PMI program.
3. Rules, Regulations, Policies, and Executive Orders concerning the PMI program.
4. Internal and external DOL documents pertaining to policy, procedures and guidelines regarding the PMI program.
5. Data and information on the rate of PMI turnover.
6. Reports, reviews and/or studies regarding DOL's-PMI program.
7. Reports, reviews and/or studies regarding the PMI program government wide.
8. OPM and other federal agencies websites.

We conducted our evaluation in accordance with the *Quality Standards for Inspections* published by the President's Council on Integrity and Efficiency.

FINDINGS

FINDING A: OASAM Can Improve Coordination and Guidance Within the PMI Program

OASAM can do more to ensure that DOL-PMIs, PMI agency coordinators, and managers receive adequate guidance and education on the regulations, duties and responsibilities involved in employing PMIs. DOL agencies are developing PMIs without the advantage of a comprehensive Departmental strategy focused on improving program outcomes. DOL has not clearly articulated its long-term vision for the PMI program. In addition, the role of DOL's agency PMI coordinators has not been clearly defined, causing confusion about their responsibilities and hindering the efficient and effective administration of the program.

While it is the responsibility of DOL program agencies to hire, and provide rotations and training to PMIs, OASAM has a responsibility to remind the agencies of all responsibilities associated with employing PMIs. According to OPM, "...headquarters office remains accountable for its components' actions concerning the PMI program."¹

DOL's Vision for the PMI Program

Through interviews with DOL's PMI Coordinators, PMIs, and program agency staff, we learned that DOL has not publicized its long-range goals and long-term vision for the PMI program. Interviewees also stated that DOL does not view the PMI program as a training mechanism for future DOL managers, which is its intent.

DOL is not the only agency that is not clearly defining its vision for the program and properly developing its PMIs. The U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB), in their 2001 evaluation of the government-wide PMI program administered by OPM, stated:

"Although the 1982 executive order that governs the program states it is to 'provide for the recruitment and selection of outstanding employees in public sector management,' many agencies use the program merely as one of a number of modes of entry into the Government's professional and administrative ranks rather than as a tool specifically intended to hire future managers...neither OPM nor the agencies consistently stress its management development aspects."²

¹ 5 CFR Parts 315 and 362, [Supplementary Information: OPM issued interim regulations with a request for comments on January 2, 1997 (62 FR 3193)].

² U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, "*Growing Leaders: The Presidential Management Intern Program*," Washington, D.C., August 2001, p. ix.

Hiring agencies within DOL have not adopted a common view on the purpose of the PMI program. As a result, the PMI program is not administered consistently among program agencies, and may vary widely.

OASAM’s Guidance and Oversight of the PMI Program

OASAM has a PMI program office that has the responsibility to promote, administer and oversee the operation of the PMI program within DOL. However, we learned through interviews that PMIs receive the majority of their guidance on programmatic issues from their immediate supervisors, which results in PMIs receiving disparate information regarding program and administrative issues.

Interviewees also stated that OASAM does not conduct an orientation session for PMIs, or track the training and rotation of individual PMIs. They have not issued performance measures or standards for the PMI program. Further, there is no system in place to assess the performance of the PMI program on a recurrent basis. Presently, agency officials have no way to determine whether the program is effectively fulfilling the goals of the PMI program.

Agency Coordinator Responsibilities

We found through interviews that the PMI coordinator in DOL has not developed adequate working relationships with PMIs and agency management. The DOL-PMI coordinator agrees that interaction needs to be improved, but stated that more authority needs to be given to the position in order to effect change. For example, the coordinator does not have the authority to require that agencies provide PMIs with the training and rotational opportunities required by law.

The majority of PMIs that we interviewed who had interaction with the PMI office said the assistance they received was inadequate, as evidenced in Figure 1. below. We interviewed a total of 21 PMIs from a universe of 49.

PMIs Interaction with Program Coordinator

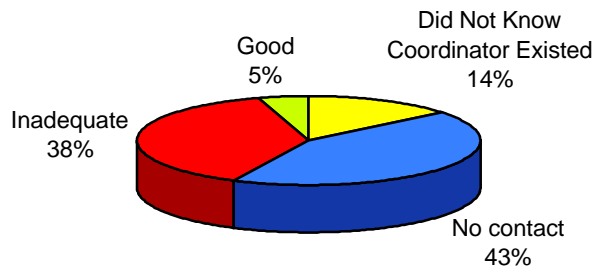


Figure 1.

OASAM has not encouraged DOL agencies to share information on PMI profiles. Profiles of PMIs could be used to enhance and facilitate networking opportunities and general camaraderie among PMIs. Subject to the Privacy Act, agencies could also use profiles to select PMIs for rotational assignments and to get a snapshot of the caliber of employees that enter DOL through the program.

The Role of Individual DOL Agency PMI Coordinators

In addition to the Departmental coordinator, there are 12 agency PMI coordinators in DOL who act as liaisons and program facilitators. Through our interviews we learned that many of these individuals are not sufficiently trained to address and resolve the varied questions and issues that frequently arise regarding the PMI program.

The role of DOL's agency PMI coordinators has not been clearly defined, causing confusion about their responsibilities and hindering the efficient and effective administration of the program. According to many agency coordinators we interviewed, they do not have a clear understanding of the primary purpose of the PMI program. Coordinators see their role as a very limited administrative function.

According to the coordinators, they need more detailed information from OASAM concerning the rules and regulations relative to the recruitment, hiring, employment, and promotion of PMIs. As a positive first step OASAM has provided a general description of the PMI program as well as other hiring authorities in a guide for managers.³ However, the guide does not adequately explain the structure and requirements of the PMI program.

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³ U.S. Department of Labor, OASAM, Human Resources Center, *“Recruiting, Hiring, and Retaining a Diverse Workforce: A Managers Guide to Staffing Tools and Pay Flexibilities,”* Washington, D.C., October 2001, p. 4.

FINDING B: OASAM Can Ensure that All DOL Agencies Focus on Key Components Within the PMI Program

All DOL agencies do not consistently focus on and offer key components of the PMI program such as recruitment, orientation, training, and rotations. Even though PMIs are completing rotational assignments and participating in some of the other key program components, OASAM is not providing adequate guidance to ensure full completion of all the program requirements.

Recruitment of PMIs

According to our interviews with agency PMI coordinators, DOL agencies are not always aware of the regulations and commitments involved with hiring a PMI before they begin recruitment. Interviewees said that OASAM could improve recruitment by educating managers and applying innovative approaches to promoting the PMI program and its benefits to hiring officials.

For example, many DOL agency representatives are not prepared to make onsite employment offers to the PMI candidates of their choice at annual PMI job fairs. All PMI finalists are invited to attend an annual PMI Job Fair. The fair is attended by any federal agency interested in hiring a PMI. Because the PMIs are already screened and assessed, agency representatives can make job offers directly to PMI candidates at the job fair. Our review of other federal agencies' PMI hiring practices revealed that some conduct interviews before, during, and after the job fair in an effort to interview as many candidates as possible that have the educational background and overall skill set the agency needs. According to some PMIs and DOL agency coordinators we interviewed, many agencies lose out on qualified candidates because they wait too long to make a job offer.

DOL Agency-Wide PMI Orientation

Although DOL has not held an agency-wide PMI orientation since 1998, OASAM agreed to begin DOL-PMI orientation sessions in 2003. According to OPM, federal agencies are responsible for conducting an orientation on agency mission and structure as early as possible for all newly hired PMIs.

Many other federal agencies plan separate agency orientation sessions that coincide with the OPM sponsored PMI orientation. For example, the Department of State starts their PMIs on the same enter-on-duty date, and as a class, all attend a one-week orientation session before reporting to their assigned bureau.

DOL agencies are not always communicating with their PMIs early in their internships. Of the 21 PMIs we interviewed, 16 stated that their agency did not do an adequate job of explaining the rules, regulations, expectations, and responsibilities of all parties that may be involved with their development.

PMIs, like all DOL hires, receive a general DOL employee orientation from their hiring agency's personnel office. According to PMIs and agency officials, information on the PMI program is normally provided. However, we found the information and guidance is informal, infrequent, and inconsistent. DOL agencies conduct general orientations at timeframes and levels of specificity that vary widely between individual PMIs.

The Amounts and Types of Training Opportunities for PMIs

Training has always been considered a fundamental part of the PMI program. DOL agencies are not consistently providing adequate training to develop PMIs into future program leaders. As a participant in the PMI program, DOL is obligated to ensure that PMIs meet the 80-hour per year training requirement mandated by OPM. Of the PMIs we interviewed, 52 percent received at least 80-hours of training. Additionally, we found that there is not an adequate system in place to track and monitor whether PMIs are being afforded the requisite amount of training.

The OPM Orientation Training Program for PMIs counts toward meeting 24 of the 80 hours of required training during the PMI's first year. OPM provides a Graduation Training Session and Ceremony, which counts toward meeting 16 hours of the 80-hour training requirement during the second year of the PMI internship.

Aside from the PMIs themselves or possibly their supervisors, there is no effective means to ensure that a PMI is completing the requisite minimum of 80-hours of training per year.

- **Management Development Opportunities for PMIs**

We found that all DOL agencies do not stress management development of PMIs. Twenty of the 21 PMIs we interviewed did not believe the PMI program was viewed as a management development program by DOL. While PMIs did receive limited management development training, it was infrequent and informal. According to the PMI coordinator and agency coordinators we interviewed, the management development component of the PMI program could be enhanced and tracked by OASAM.

Many agency coordinators we interviewed stated that they view the PMI program as a way to hire quality graduate students without the difficulty and delay associated with standard hiring mechanisms.

- **Development of IDPs for PMIs**

DOL agencies have not consistently developed IDPs for PMIs that are realistic, well researched, and clearly written. According to OPM, the IDP is a device that the PMI and supervisor should use to clarify expectations for training, rotations, other developmental activities, and responsibilities. Of the 10 PMIs we interviewed who had less than 80-hours of training, only 5 had IDPs in place, and none of the IDPs were being followed. Conversely, of the 11 PMIs we

interviewed who had 80 or more hours of training provided, 8 had IDPs in place that were followed closely.

PMI Rotations in DOL

Overall, PMIs within DOL are completing rotational assignments. Seventeen of 21 PMIs we interviewed stated they were able to complete a rotation. However, when asked about the process, 12 thought it needed to be improved. For example, several PMIs stated that the approval process was ambiguous and thus caused confusion about who in their office had final authority to grant or deny the rotation.

It is required that a PMI's "home agency" (agency that employs and provides the salary for a PMI) provide at least one rotational assignment to another functional area during an internship. The rotation can be to another bureau, division, office, program, DOL agency or branch of the Federal Government. Rotations are arranged either by the PMI or the agency. Ultimately rotations are selected at the discretion of the home agency. However, agencies must provide at least one rotation during the internship.

Although the home agency can release a PMI for rotation at their discretion, the purpose of the rotation component is for career development of the PMI. Thus, it is important that PMIs and managers have open lines of communication concerning the types, timing, and duration of rotational assignments throughout a PMI's tenure.

The Process for Promoting and Converting PMIs

All DOL agencies do not provide training and guidance to PMIs, PMI managers, and agency officials on the process for promoting and converting PMIs. DOL-PMIs experienced delays in being promoted from the GS-9 to GS-11 level. Promotion to the GS-11 level may occur after satisfactory completion of one year of continuous service at the GS-9 level.⁴ However, except for conduct or performance based issues, agencies should not delay a PMI's promotion. Of 21 PMIs we interviewed, 19 were eligible for promotion from the GS-9 to GS-11 within the timeframe of our evaluation. Of the nineteen, 11 (57%) experienced delays.

PMIs are given information on promotions and conversions at the OPM sponsored orientation. However, DOL-PMIs are not always given clear guidance from program agencies on the promotion process and the prospects for conversion at the end of the two-year internship. If an agency does not intend to convert a PMI, the agency should notify the PMI and the PMI Program Office at least 90 calendar days before completion of the internship.⁵ Fifty-seven percent of the 21 PMIs we interviewed (or 12 out of 20 that had a response) did not think that the process for promotions was explained adequately.

⁴ 5CFR 362.202(d)

⁵ 5CFR 362.204

FINDING C: OASAM Can Work with Individual DOL Agencies to Improve Tracking of PMI Activities

OASAM has not systematically tracked and disseminated information on PMI-related activities such as hiring, training, rotations, transfers to other federal agencies, promotions, conversions or terminations. As a result, OASAM has no way to ensure that all aspects of the PMI program are implemented consistently throughout the Department.

PMI Hires in DOL

OASAM informed us that, “[t]he number of PMI hires is monitored through the ‘Use of Hiring Flexibilities’ report that is provided to Agency Heads each quarter.” Through data review we learned that DOL hired an average of 18 PMIs per year between 1997 and 2000, with a peak of 22 hired in 1998. One PMI was hired in 1996, while four were hired in 2001. From 1996 to 2001, DOL accounted for approximately 2.6 percent of PMI finalists hired from a government wide pool of 3,000 (five hundred finalist per year over a six year period). The following chart depicts the total number (78) of PMIs hired by DOL from 1996 to 2001.

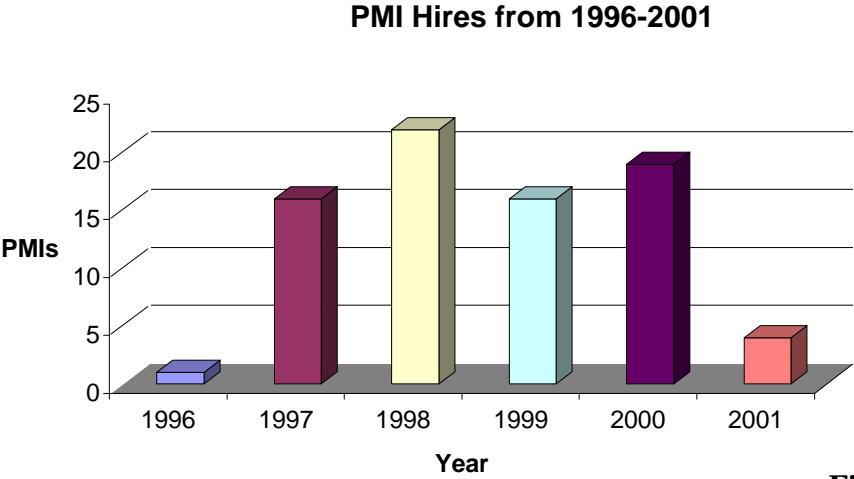


Figure 2.

Because there are countless reasons for the shifts in the number of PMIs hired from year-to-year, it is difficult to draw definitive conclusions about these shifts. Also, PMIs separate from agencies for various reasons that may have little to do with the work environment or retention efforts. Federal agencies are not required to hire or retain a certain number of PMIs during a calendar year. Even with aggressive recruitment and retention efforts, as well as ample opportunities for career development, an agency is not guaranteed PMI hires.

PMI Attrition in DOL

Similarly, we could find no evidence that OASAM conducted periodic analysis of PMI attrition. However, our analysis revealed that DOL's-PMI attrition rate is comparable to the government-wide PMI turnover numbers. Unfortunately, OASAM does not share attrition information with agency hiring officials. DOL program agency officials stated that agency managers are sometimes apprehensive about hiring PMIs because they have the perception that PMIs may leave the agency at significantly higher rates than non-PMIs. From 1996 to 2001 DOL hired 78 PMIs; during that period 29 PMIs separated from the agency. The average separation rate for DOL-PMIs was approximately 7.5 percent per year. PMIs government-wide separated at an average rate of 7 percent per year during the first five years of employment. Non-PMIs depart at a rate of 5 percent per year for the first three years, and 8 percent for the fourth and fifth year of employment.

Figure 3 below depicts the 78 PMI hires and 29 PMI separations from DOL from 1996-2001.

DOL Agency PMI Total *Seventy- Eight Total PMIs*

<i>DOL Agency</i>	<i># PMIs</i>	<i>Percentage of DOL-PMIs</i>	<i>Separations</i>
BLS	6	8%	0
ESA	13	17%	6
ETA	13	17%	5
ILAB	19	24%	5
OASAM	12	15%	6
OCIA	3	4%	2
OIG	3	4%	1
OSHA	7	9%	3
Others	2	2%	1
Total	78	100%	29

Figure 3.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend that OASAM work with all DOL agencies to improve the PMI program within the Department of Labor. In this regard we recommend that OASAM:

1. Actively market the Presidential Management Intern Program within DOL.
2. In coordination with DOL agencies, identify the roles and responsibilities of those employees associated with or responsible for the PMI program within DOL (i.e. PMIs, DOL's-PMI coordinator, agency PMI coordinators and DOL management staff).
3. Encourage DOL agencies to develop and share a profile of each PMI that includes information such as alma mater, degree, and current assignment, subject to the Privacy Act.
4. Develop and hold an annual PMI orientation for all DOL-PMIs. We recommend that the orientation focus on DOL's administration of the program and invite both headquarters and field PMIs. In addition, we suggest that the information provided to PMIs at the orientation be shared with their supervisors.
5. Develop and implement a tracking system to monitor PMI information, including:
 - (a) All PMI hiring information for each agency;
 - (b) The amount and types of training received, including attendance at both OPM and DOL orientation sessions;
 - (c) Promotion and conversion data;
 - (d) Transfer information; and,
 - (e) Termination information.

Additionally, OASAM should require that all DOL agencies annually provide reports on the following information to the OASAM Human Resources Center:

- (f) IDP development and completion; and,
- (g) The type, duration, and frequency of rotational assignments.

OASAM'S RESPONSE AND OIG CONCLUSION

OASAM's Response

“The draft report has two underlying flaws that should be addressed to better serve its purpose and accurately inform the reader:”

- *“The report needs to put the PMI Program in perspective --it is just one hiring tool available to managers for succession planning. Managers have many ways to fill positions, as outlined in the attached ‘Recruiting, Hiring, and Retaining a Diverse Workforce: A Manager’s Guide to Staffing Tools and Pay Flexibilities.’ With this in mind, the report should make clear that the resources devoted to the administration of the PMI Program must be viewed within the overall context of the available recruitment program.”*

OIG Conclusion

Throughout the report we have stated that the PMI program is but one tool to fill agencies’ hiring needs. We agree with OASAM that the PMI program should be viewed in that context. However, OASAM must ensure that agencies that hire and employ PMIs comply with the rules and regulations governing the program.

OASAM's Response

- *“The report is based ‘primarily on interviews with PMIs’, with no indication that supervisors or Agency officials validated the information gathered from these interviews. As discussed with the evaluation staff, issues raised by PMIs need to be validated by discussions with appropriate managers and supervisors to present a more balanced assessment. While the report notes that ‘DOL managers and supervisors’ were interviewed, it does not identify the number of managers interviewed or indicate that a structured approach to interviews was utilized.”*

OIG Conclusion

PMIs we interviewed spoke about their own experiences and opinions concerning DOL’s administration of the program. We do not agree that managers should have validated the responses PMIs provided nor did we ask them to. It is our opinion that we ascertained a balanced assessment by interviewing DOL’s-PMI coordinator and all available agency coordinators (who disseminate information about the program to managers and serve as liaisons between PMIs, managers, and OASAM on programmatic issues). In our opinion, those individuals represented the management perspective.

We focused our findings and recommendations on issues and areas where OASAM can work with DOL agencies to improve its administration of the PMI program.

OASAM's Response

"In response to the draft recommendations, OASAM is prepared to:

- *Clarify roles and responsibilities and enhance marketing the PMI Program by preparing a summary of program highlights, publicizing the program in the Management Forum Newsletter, developing a PMI guide outlining roles and responsibilities, and providing training to agency coordinators.*
- *Enhance networking opportunities by conducting an annual PMI orientation session and developing a PMI directory.*
- *Enhance the tracking of PMIs by developing a reporting template using the BRIO analytical reporting tool. This template will track training, promotion, and separation information. OASAM will also collect information on rotations and development of training plans from Agency PMI coordinators."*

OASAM also suggested four points of clarification, which are incorporated in the report, as appropriate.

OIG's Conclusion

We consider the recommendations resolved and will be closed upon receipt of the following information. Please provide the information no later than **February 7, 2003**.

- A copy of the action plan detailing how DOL will market the PMI program within DOL, in addition to publicizing the program in the Management Forum Newsletter.
- A copy of the PMI guide outlining the roles and responsibilities of program stakeholders, and providing training to agency coordinators.
- A copy of the action plan for developing a PMI directory.
- A copy of the action plan for developing and holding annual PMI orientations for all DOL-PMIs.
- A copy of the action plan detailing how DOL will implement a tracking system to monitor PMI related information detailed in recommendation five.

APPENDIX
Agency's Response



SEP 23 2002

MEMORANDUM FOR SYLVIA T. HOROWITZ
Acting Deputy Inspector General
Office of Communications, Inspections and Evaluations

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Edward C. Hugler".

FROM: EDWARD C. HUGLER
Deputy Assistant Secretary for
Administration and Management

SUBJECT: Evaluation of the Department of Labor's
Presidential Management Intern Program
Report No 2E-07-735-0002

This is in response to the September 4, 2002 draft report of the Office of the Inspector General's (OIG) evaluation of the Department of Labor's (DOL) Presidential Management Intern (PMI) Program. We appreciate the opportunity to discuss the preliminary draft report and the evaluation staff, and the inclusion of a number of our comments in the official draft report. As outlined below, we have remaining concerns about the report. We are also prepared to take steps to enhance the PMI program in line with several of the report's recommendations.

The draft report has two underlying flaws that should be addressed to better serve its purpose and accurately inform the reader:

- The report needs to put the PMI Program in perspective -- it is just one hiring tool available to managers for succession planning. Managers have many ways to fill positions, as outlined in the attached "Recruiting, Hiring, and Retaining a Diverse Workforce: A Manager's Guide to Staffing Tools and Pay Flexibilities." With this in mind, the report should make it clear that the resources devoted to the administration of the PMI Program must be viewed within the overall context of the available recruitment programs.
- The report is based "primarily on interviews with PMIs", with no indication that supervisors or Agency officials validated the information gathered from these interviews. As discussed with the evaluation staff, issues raised by PMIs need to be validated by discussions with appropriate managers and supervisors to present a more balanced assessment. While the report notes that "DOL managers and supervisors" were interviewed, it does not identify the number of managers interviewed or indicate that a structured approach to interviews was utilized.

The report would also be more complete if it reflected that:

- DOL has distributed the attached “Recruiting, Hiring, and Retaining a Diverse Workforce: A Manager’s Guide to Staffing Tools and Pay Flexibilities” to all managers and supervisors. This guide provides a plain English description of the PMI program as well as other hiring authorities.
- DOL Agencies plan for PMI hires as part of developing the Annual Hiring Plan. The number of PMI hires is monitored through the “Use of Hiring Flexibilities” report that is provided to Agency Heads each quarter.
- DOL HR Officers were recently briefed at the HR Officer’s Conference on the issues raised in the draft report.
- DOL reinvigorated the PMI Program in 1997 following several years of limited use in the Department. This included hosting the government-wide PMI Job Fair in 1997, 1998, and 1999.

In response to the draft recommendations, OASAM is prepared to:

- Clarify roles and responsibilities and enhance marketing the PMI Program by preparing a summary of program highlights, publicizing the program in the Management Forum Newsletter, developing a PMI guide outlining roles and responsibilities, and providing training to agency coordinators.
- Enhance networking opportunities by conducting an annual PMI orientation session and developing a PMI directory.
- Enhance the tracking of PMIs by developing a reporting template using the BRIO analytical reporting tool. This template will track training, promotion, and separation information. OASAM will also collect information on rotations and development of training plans from Agency PMI coordinators.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Kim Green at (202) 693-7642 or Karen Terrell at (202) 693-7654.

Attachment

cc: Patrick Pizzella