## Report on Senior Executive Pay and Performance Appraisal Systems

Fiscal Year 2015



**OPM**.GOV SEPTEMBER **2016** 

#### **Executive Summary**

The Senior Executive Service (SES) is comprised of the men and women charged with leading the continuing transformation of our Federal Government. This dedicated corps of executives shares a commitment to public service and a set of democratic values grounded in the fundamental ideals of the Constitution. As the leaders of our Federal civilian workforce, Senior Executives strive to create a more citizen-centered, result-oriented Federal Government. To recognize the achievements and contributions to mission made by their executives, agencies are authorized to recognize and reward SES members using their performance-oriented pay systems.

This report reflects performance ratings, pay, and awards data resulting from the application of each agency's SES appraisal system during Fiscal Year (FY) 2015. The tables in this report do not include agency and Governmentwide data on pay, performance or awards received by non-SES Federal employees, including General Schedule and Senior Level/Scientific or Professional (SL/ST) employees. Information on performance awards for non-SES Federal employees is presented in a different report, also issued annually by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM), entitled *Federal Awards Statistics*.

The report at issue indicates that even in a tight budgetary environment during FY 2015, where Federal agencies did not have great flexibility to differentiate pay, agencies still made distinctions in SES performance and pay (including in both types of performance-based SES pay – annual pay adjustments and performance awards). The report presents a number of important findings relating to FY 2015 executive performance ratings and pay, included in the following summary of the key data components of the report:

- Agencies submitted rating and pay data for 7,661 SES members (including for SES members in Offices of Inspector General (OIG)). Agencies rated 92.2 percent of SES members, with 49.7 percent of those rated at the highest level (some executives were not rated because they either retired or were hired at the end of the appraisal period and had not worked long enough to be rated).
- Data for OIG SES members are included in "ALL OTHERS" and "GOVERNMENTWIDE" categories in Tables 1-5 and 7 of this report. The Inspector General Reform Act of 2008 established OIGs as separate agencies for all SES issues.
- Career members comprised 90.0 percent of the total SES population. Agencies rated 94.3 percent of their career SES members, with 48.9 percent of those receiving the highest rating level.
- Table 1 is a summary of the number and percentage of career SES members who
  received a performance rating at the highest available performance level for their FY
  2015 performance. This table reflects a small net increase of 1.0 percentage point in
  FY 2015 for the percent of career SES members rated at the highest level compared
  to the previous year.

- Table 2 displays performance rating data for all SES members. The data reflect a net increase of 1.1 percentage points in FY 2015 for the number of SES members rated at the highest level compared to the previous year.
- Table 3 summarizes FY 2015 career SES member compensation distribution by performance rating level. The data indicate that, on average, higher-performing SES members receive higher payments based on performance. Such pay includes all payments based on a summary performance rating, which includes pay adjustments and performance awards.
- Table 4 shows the average salary and average salary adjustment for all SES members. The data indicate that, Governmentwide, the average salary adjustment for all SES members in FY 2015 decreased by a net of 0.1 percentage points from the previous year.
- Table 5 summarizes the percentage of career executives who received performance awards, as well as the average award amount granted. Governmentwide, the average performance award in FY 2015 increased by \$198 from the previous year, and the number of SES members receiving a performance award in FY 2015 increased by 2.8 percentage points from the previous year.
- Table 6 lists the separate Pearson correlation coefficients by agency for pay adjustments and performance awards. OPM uses these metrics as indicators of the strength of the relationship between executive performance ratings and subsequent ratings-based pay increases and between ratings and performance awards. The Table 6 notation provides a more in-depth description of the Pearson correlation coefficient and its meaning, and it explains that the Pearson correlation coefficient is just one tool OPM uses to analyze agency ratings, pay and awards data as OPM recognizes there might be environmental factors that may limit agencies' flexibility in distributing pay and awards.
- Table 7 summarizes the number and percentage of career executives who received performance awards, as well as the average award amount granted, and the average performance award amount as a percent of aggregate compensation (i.e., rating-based pay adjustments, performance awards and individual contribution awards, and Presidential Rank awards) of career executives. The table shows that agencies are rewarding SES members who meet or exceed their performance expectations, at or below the awards limitation (4.8 percent of aggregate career SES salaries). Governmentwide, the amount of performance awards as a percent of aggregate compensation increased by two tenths of a percentage point (0.2%).

#### Report on Senior Executive Pay and Performance Appraisal Systems for Fiscal Year (FY) 2015

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TABLE 1

### Performance Ratings for Career SES Members FY 2014 - FY 2015

FY 2014			FY 2	Net Change in		
	Total	Percent at	Total	Percent at	Percentage Points	
AGENCY	Career SES Rated	Highest Level	Career SES Rated	Highest Level	FY 2014 - FY 2015	
AGRICULTURE	280	46.1%	299	48.2%	2.1%	
AID	22	54.5%	23	69.6%	15.1%	
COMMERCE	249	47.4%	258	47.7%	0.3%	
DEFENSE	1,076	37.6%	1,111	35.5%	-2.1%	
EDUCATION	57	56.1%	60	66.7%	10.6%	
ENERGY	363	46.0%	379	44.6%	-1.4%	
EPA	239	40.2%	241	39.8%	-0.4%	
GSA	61	21.3%	73	21.9%	0.6%	
HHS	326	44.8%	339	44.5%	-0.3%	
DHS	503	57.7%	495	63.6%	5.9%	
HUD	74	35.1%	82	35.4%	0.3%	
INTERIOR	194	56.7%	195	58.5%	1.8%	
JUSTICE*	356	81.2%	345	80.6%	-0.6%	
LABOR	137	48.9%	143	55.9%	7.0%	
NASA	370	41.4%	362	45.3%	3.9%	
NRC	130	28.5%	138	35.5%	7.0%	
NSF	63	63.5%	67	76.1%	12.6%	
ОМВ	60	33.3%	61	36.1%	2.8%	
ОРМ	44	81.8%	45	13.3%	-68.5%	
SBA	32	53.1%	31	58.1%	5.0%	
SSA	129	38.0%	125	45.6%	7.6%	
STATE	144	92.4%	142	95.8%	3.4%	
TRANSPORTATION	172	46.5%	183	55.7%	9.2%	
TREASURY	390	46.2%	388	52.6%	6.4%	
VA	321	16.2%	312	10.9%	-5.3%	
ALL OTHERS	586	61.1%	603	60.9%	-0.2%	
GOVERNMENT	6,378	47.9%	6,500	48.9%	1.0%	

<sup>\*</sup>Data for Justice does not include FBI-DEA SES members, which are excluded from the SES under 5 U.S.C. 3132(a)(1)

TABLE 2

# Performance Ratings for Career, Noncareer and Limited Term SES Members FY 2014 - FY 2015

FY 2014			FY 2	Net Change in	
	Total	Percent at	Total	Percent at	Percentage Points
AGENCY	SES Rated	Highest Level	SES Rated	Highest Level	FY 2014 - FY 2015
AGRICULTURE	316	48.4%	334	50.9%	2.5%
AID	26	57.7%	27	66.7%	9.0%
COMMERCE	281	45.2%	298	36.3%	-8.9%
DEFENSE	1,148	36.9%	1,178	34.6%	-2.3%
EDUCATION	72	58.3%	75	66.7%	8.4%
ENERGY	400	46.8%	408	45.6%	-1.2%
EPA	265	36.2%	267	36.0%	-0.2%
GSA	65	20.0%	77	20.8%	0.8%
HHS	369	43.9%	352	45.5%	1.6%
DHS	544	59.0%	541	64.5%	5.5%
HUD	88	34.1%	95	38.9%	4.8%
INTERIOR	222	59.9%	229	62.9%	3.0%
JUSTICE*	397	83.1%	403	83.1%	0.0%
LABOR	161	54.0%	161	59.6%	5.6%
NASA	384	41.7%	370	45.1%	3.4%
NRC	130	28.5%	138	35.5%	7.0%
NSF	70	61.4%	75	77.3%	15.9%
OMB	75	30.7%	75	29.3%	-1.4%
ОРМ	55	80.0%	50	18.0%	-62.0%
SBA	43	55.8%	39	46.2%	-9.6%
SSA	136	39.7%	136	47.1%	7.4%
STATE	173	79.2%	172	84.9%	5.7%
TRANSPORTATION	186	48.4%	192	57.3%	8.9%
TREASURY	420	49.5%	421	55.6%	6.1%
VA	329	16.1%	318	11.6%	-4.5%
ALL OTHERS	619	62.7%	634	62.0%	-0.7%
GOVERNMENT	6,974	48.6%	7,065	49.7%	1.1%

<sup>\*</sup>Data for Justice does not include FBI-DEA SES members, which are excluded from the SES under 5 U.S.C. 3132(a)(1)

TABLE 3

Career SES Compensation Distribution by Rating Level								
		FY 2014 -	FY 2015					
AGENCY RATING LEVEL	Total Career SES Rated Percent Rated by Level Average Salary Before Average Performance Award as a Percent of Salary Before Average Salary Adjustment Average Salary Before Average Salary Adjustment Average Salary Adjustment Before						Adjustment Before	
FY 2014*								
Rating Levels	6,378							
OUTSTANDING or Equivalent (5)	3,055	47.9%	\$171,538	\$11,718	6.8%	\$3,739	2.2%	
EXCEEDS FULLY SUCCESSFUL or Equivalent (4)	2,650	41.5%	\$167,354	\$8,854	5.3%	\$2,966	1.8%	
FULLY SUCCESSFUL or Equivalent (3)	642	10.1%	\$165,882	\$8,471	5.1%	\$1,624	1.0%	
MINIMALLY SATISFACTORY or Equivalent (2)	24	0.4%	\$169,687	\$0	0.0%	\$0	0.0%	
UNSATISFACTORY or Equivalent (1)	7	0.1%	\$166,157	\$0	0.0%	\$0	0.0%	
FY 2015*								
Rating Levels	6,500							
OUTSTANDING or Equivalent (5)	3,175	48.8%	\$174,032	\$11,944	6.9%	\$3,605	2.1%	
EXCEEDS FULLY SUCCESSFUL or Equivalent (4)	2,693	41.4%	\$169,774	\$9,074	5.3%	\$2,799	1.6%	
FULLY SUCCESSFUL or Equivalent (3)	608	9.4%	\$167,817	\$8,348	5.0%	\$1,727	1.0%	
MINIMALLY SATISFACTORY or Equivalent (2)	16	0.2%	\$167,116	\$0	0.0%	\$0	0.0%	
UNSATISFACTORY or Equivalent (1)	8	0.1%	\$162,872	\$0	0.0%	\$0	0.0%	

<sup>\*</sup>Data for Justice does not include FBI-DEA SES members, which are excluded from the SES under 5 U.S.C. 3132(a)(1)

**TABLE 4** 

### Salaries for Career, Noncareer and Limited Term SES Members FY 2014 - FY 2015

FY 2014 FY 2015 Average Salary Average Salary Percentage **Average Rate Average Rate** Average Adjustment as **Average** Adjustment as Point Change of Basic Pay of Basic Pay Salary Percent of Basic Salary Percent of Basic FY14-FY15 **Before Salary Before Salary Pay Before Pay Before Adjustment** Adjustment Adjustment Adjustment **Adjustment** Adjustment **AGENCY** \$168,224 \$3,283 2.0% \$171,340 \$3,574 2.1% **AGRICULTURE** 0.1% AID \$167,313 \$1,765 1.1% \$167,985 \$3,353 2.0% 0.9% \$168,512 \$3,391 \$170,524 \$2.995 **COMMERCE** 2.0% 1.8% -0.2% **DEFENSE** \$167,548 \$1.578 0.9% \$168.075 \$1.786 1.1% 0.2% \$170,036 \$2,171 1.3% \$171,689 \$2.283 1.3% **EDUCATION** 0.0% \$170,746 \$3,226 1.9% \$173,338 \$3,017 1.7% **ENERGY** -0.2% **EPA** \$168,772 \$2,194 1.3% \$170,341 \$2,816 1.7% 0.4% \$164,273 \$1,263 0.8% \$165,736 \$1,713 1.0% **GSA** 0.2% HHS \$171,010 \$2,921 1.7% \$173,975 \$3,493 2.0% 0.3% \$3,555 2.1% \$170,111 \$3,032 1.8% DHS \$166,515 -0.3% HUD \$173,872 \$2,520 1.4% \$174,502 \$661 0.4% -1.0% \$4,453 2.7% \$4,112 2.5% **INTERIOR** \$163,158 \$166,668 -0.2% \$171,961 \$3,400 2.0% \$175,017 \$2,940 1.7% JUSTICE\* -0.3% \$4,100 2.4% \$170,857 2.3% **LABOR** \$168,609 \$3,846 -0.1% **NASA** \$169,057 \$2,669 1.6% \$171,603 \$2,172 1.3% -0.3% \$168,510 \$2,005 1.2% \$169,931 \$2,112 1.2% NRC 0.0% NSF \$174,550 \$1,983 1.1% \$176,771 \$2,078 1.2% 0.1% 1.0% 1.2% **OMB** \$167,025 \$1,666 \$168,648 \$2,050 0.2% **OPM** \$167,543 \$3,424 2.0% \$171,502 \$2,154 1.3% -0.7% \$2,199 1.3% \$1,124 0.7% SBA \$167,333 \$168,581 -0.6% 1.9% \$172,482 1.7% SSA \$169,211 \$3,216 \$2,963 -0.2% 0.9% \$3,002 1.8% **STATE** \$167,807 \$1,587 \$167,935 0.9% \$162,589 2.2% \$166,087 2.2% **TRANSPORTATION** \$3,592 \$3,624 0.0% **TREASURY** \$167,425 \$4,949 3.0% \$171,274 \$3,833 2.2% -0.8% VA 0.9% \$165,430 \$1,533 \$167,550 \$1,765 1.1% 0.2% 1.6% \$170,193 \$2,466 1.4% \$172,109 \$2,682 0.2% **ALL OTHERS** \$2,785 1.7% \$170,582 \$2,716 1.6% **GOVERNMENT** \$168,357 -0.1%

<sup>\*</sup>Data for Justice does not include FBI-DEA SES members, which are excluded from the SES under 5 U.S.C. 3132(a)(1)

**TABLE 5** 

## Career SES Performance Awards FY 2014 - FY 2015

	F)	2014	F)	/ <b>201</b> 5		Percentage
AGENCY	Average Award	Percent of SES Receiving Award	Average Award	Percent of SES Receiving Award	Change in Average Award FY14-FY15	Point Change of Career SES Receiving Award FY14-FY15
AGRICULTURE	\$10,109	71.6%	\$10,137	82.1%	\$28	10.5%
AID	\$10,355	65.4%	\$12,266	68.0%	\$1,911	2.6%
COMMERCE	\$12,177	67.2%	\$11,901	69.7%	-\$276	2.5%
DEFENSE	\$10,511	76.2%	\$10,658	73.9%	\$147	-2.3%
EDUCATION	\$12,800	64.4%	\$12,120	64.6%	-\$680	0.2%
ENERGY	\$9,908	77.9%	\$10,581	77.8%	\$673	-0.1%
EPA	\$11,403	66.5%	\$11,472	66.8%	\$69	0.3%
GSA	\$8,509	58.8%	\$8,823	60.7%	\$314	1.9%
HHS	\$10,521	76.3%	\$10,568	75.4%	\$47	-0.9%
DHS	\$9,524	82.0%	\$9,951	82.0%	\$427	0.0%
HUD	\$10,599	69.1%	\$10,669	75.9%	\$70	6.8%
INTERIOR	\$9,631	68.0%	\$10,137	69.1%	\$506	1.1%
JUSTICE*	\$14,600	57.9%	\$14,748	55.7%	\$148	-2.2%
LABOR	\$10,853	70.6%	\$11,513	69.9%	\$660	-0.7%
NASA	\$9,949	59.8%	\$10,551	57.2%	\$602	-2.6%
NRC	\$9,013	80.6%	\$9,316	80.3%	\$303	-0.3%
NSF	\$15,333	44.9%	\$11,546	61.0%	-\$3,787	16.1%
ОМВ	\$10,625	50.0%	\$10,810	46.8%	\$185	-3.2%
ОРМ	\$11,203	71.1%	\$10,147	78.7%	-\$1,056	7.6%
SBA	\$13,902	44.7%	\$11,143	74.2%	-\$2,759	29.5%
SSA	\$10,875	69.3%	\$10,616	69.2%	-\$259	-0.1%
STATE	\$8,434	47.4%	\$9,970	50.0%	\$1,536	2.6%
TRANSPORTATION	\$9,063	87.0%	\$9,030	88.3%	-\$33	1.3%
TREASURY	\$12,109	61.5%	\$13,123	63.2%	\$1,014	1.7%
VA	\$9,450	36.0%	\$10,024	74.3%	\$574	38.3%
ALL OTHERS	\$9,969	73.0%	\$10,058	73.6%	\$89	0.6%
GOVERNMENT	\$10,544	68.4%	\$10,742	71.2%	\$198	2.8%

<sup>\*</sup>Data for Justice does not include FBI-DEA SES members, which are excluded from the SES under 5 U.S.C. 3132(a)(1)

**TABLE 6** 

#### Correlation of Career SES Ratings and Compensation Based on Ratings FY 2015

4.054.07	Pearson <i>r</i>	Pearson r	
AGENCY	(Pay)	(Awards)	
AGRICULTURE	0.311	0.675	
AID	0.372	0.876	
COMMERCE	0.240	0.735	
DEFENSE	0.218	0.629	
EDUCATION	0.380	0.358	
ENERGY	0.246	0.787	
EPA	0.171	0.760	
GSA	0.211	0.772	
HHS	0.110	0.715	
DHS	0.163	0.502	
HUD	0.709	0.938	
INTERIOR	0.344	0.423	
JUSTICE*	0.206	0.434	
LABOR	-0.110	0.640	
NASA	0.007	0.698	
NSF	0.078	0.650	
NRC	-0.085	0.448	
OMB	0.315	0.598	
OPM	0.448	0.850	
SBA	0.142	0.373	
SSA	0.243	0.582	
STATE	0.161	0.198	
TRANSPORTATION	0.440	0.483	
TREASURY	0.105	0.679	
VA	0.505	0.727	

<sup>\*</sup>Data for Justice does not include FBI-DEA SES members, which are excluded from the SES under 5 U.S.C. 3132(a)(1)

The **Pearson correlation coefficient** (*r*) is a measure of strength of the relationship between two variables. OPM uses the Pearson *r* metric as a tool to analyze separately the strength of the relationship between executives' performance ratings and subsequent ratings-based pay adjustments and between ratings and performance awards.

The higher the positive relationship between ratings and pay adjustments and ratings and performance awards the stronger the relationship between the factors. A perfect correlation is represented as (+1). This positive relationship generally indicates an agency is differentiating pay and award amounts based directly on executives' performance ratings, thus ensuring those ratings are the primary basis for determining pay adjustments and performance awards. A high correlation reflects differentiation resulting from executives with higher ratings receiving higher pay adjustments and larger performance awards.

If the relationship is random, the Pearson *r* will approach zero, indicating there is no relationship between performance ratings and pay adjustments or ratings and performance awards.

A negative coefficient indicates an inverse relationship (i.e., the metric will approach negative one (-1) if high ratings lead to low pay adjustments or smaller performance awards than those received by executives with lower ratings).

In calculating the correlation, OPM uses data submitted by agencies during the annual data call. OPM includes only the data for career executives and does not include awards that are not based on a final summary rating (such as Rank awards or Special Act awards). A correlation coefficient of (.5) represents a desirable threshold for the correlation coefficient because - statistically - it represents a strong relationship between pay adjustments or performance awards and the executive ratings upon which they are based.

The Pearson correlation coefficient is just one tool OPM uses to analyze agency ratings, pay and awards data as OPM recognizes there are environmental factors that may limit agencies' flexibility in distributing pay and awards, making it unrealistic to expect agencies to achieve a perfect positive correlation (+1). At the same time, in some cases a correlation coefficient of more than (.5) may indicate a strong statistical correlation between ratings and performance awards or ratings and pay adjustments while the agency's data still contains areas of concern regarding pay and award differentiation.

TABLE 7

## Performance Awards for Career SES Members as a Percent of Aggregate Compensation FY 2014 - FY 2015

FY 2014					FY 2015				Percentage
AGENCY	Total Career Members	Percent Receiving Performance Award	Performance Award Average	Performance Award as a Percent of Aggregate	Total Career Members	Percent Receiving Performance Award	Performance Award Average	Performance Award as a Percent of Aggregate	Point Change in Performance Award as a Percent of Aggregate FY14- FY15
AGRICULTURE	328	71.6%	\$10,109	4.0%	308	82.1%	\$10,137	4.5%	0.5%
AID	26	65.4%	\$10,355	4.1%	25	68.0%	\$12,266	4.5%	0.4%
COMMERCE	256	67.2%	\$12,177	4.5%	274	69.7%	\$11,901	4.5%	0.0%
DEFENSE	1,101	76.2%	\$10,511	4.5%	1,154	73.9%	\$10,658	4.4%	-0.1%
EDUCATION	59	64.4%	\$12,800	4.5%	65	64.6%	\$12,120	4.2%	-0.3%
ENERGY	375	77.9%	\$9,908	4.2%	387	77.8%	\$10,581	4.4%	0.2%
EPA	239	66.5%	\$11,403	4.2%	241	66.8%	\$11,472	4.2%	0.0%
GSA	80	58.8%	\$8,509	2.9%	89	60.7%	\$8,823	3.1%	0.2%
HHS	333	76.3%	\$10,521	4.4%	346	75.4%	\$10,568	4.3%	-0.1%
DHS	511	82.0%	\$9,524	4.3%	529	82.0%	\$9,951	4.5%	0.2%
HUD	81	69.1%	\$10,599	3.9%	87	75.9%	\$10,669	4.3%	0.4%
INTERIOR	200	68.0%	\$9,631	3.7%	204	69.1%	\$10,137	3.9%	0.2%
JUSTICE*	378	57.9%	\$14,600	4.6%	361	55.7%	\$14,748	4.4%	-0.2%
LABOR	143	70.6%	\$10,853	4.2%	146	69.9%	\$11,513	4.3%	0.1%
NASA	420	59.8%	\$9,949	3.2%	421	57.2%	\$10,551	3.3%	0.1%
NRC	144	80.6%	\$9,013	4.1%	147	80.3%	\$9,316	4.2%	0.1%
NSF	78	44.9%	\$15,333	3.7%	82	61.0%	\$11,546	3.8%	0.1%
ОМВ	64	50.0%	\$10,625	3.0%	62	46.8%	\$10,810	2.8%	-0.2%
ОРМ	45	71.1%	\$11,203	4.4%	47	78.7%	\$10,147	4.3%	-0.1%
SBA	47	44.7%	\$13,902	3.5%	31	74.2%	\$11,143	4.5%	1.0%
SSA	140	69.3%	\$10,875	4.2%	143	69.2%	\$10,616	4.0%	-0.2%
STATE	156	47.4%	\$8,434	2.3%	150	50.0%	\$9,970	2.8%	0.5%
TRANSPORTATION	184	87.0%	\$9,063	4.5%	188	88.3%	\$9,030	4.4%	-0.1%
TREASURY	400	61.5%	\$12,109	4.1%	402	63.2%	\$13,123	4.5%	0.4%
VA	350	36.0%	\$9,450	2.0%	335	74.3%	\$10,024	4.2%	2.2%
ALL OTHERS	667	73.0%	\$9,969	4.0%	671	73.6%	\$10,058	4.0%	0.0%
GOVERNMENT	6,805	68.4%	\$10,544	4.0%	6,895	71.2%	\$10,742	4.2%	0.2%

<sup>\*</sup>Data for Justice does not include FBI-DEA SES members, which are excluded from the SES under 5 U.S.C. 3132(a)(1)

### Appendix

### Guide to Agency Acronyms and Titles Used in this Report

AGENCY	Name of Agency						
Agriculture	Department of Agriculture						
AID	U.S. Agency for International Development						
Commerce	Department of Commerce						
DEA	Drug Enforcement Administration						
Defense	Department of Defense						
Education	Department of Education						
Energy	Department of Energy						
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency						
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation						
GSA	General Services Administration						
HHS	Department of Health and Human Services						
DHS	Department of Homeland Security						
HUD	Department of Housing and Urban Development						
Interior	Department of the Interior						
Justice	Department of Justice						
Labor	Department of Labor						
NASA	National Aeronautics and Space Administration						
NRC	Nuclear Regulatory Commission						
NSF	National Science Foundation						
OMB	Office of Management and Budget						
OPM	Office of Personnel Management						
SBA	Small Business Administration						
SSA	Social Security Administration						
State	Department of State						
Transportation	Department of Transportation						
Treasury	Department of the Treasury						
VA	Department of Veterans Affairs						



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