

CHAPTER 6. MODIFIED REDUCTION-IN-FORCE

A fourth objective of the demonstration program was to adjust workforce levels to meet strategic program and organizational needs. In order to facilitate mandated reductions, reduction-in-force (RIF) regulations have been modified to better match the career paths and banding schemes.

Generally, there are three major differences between modified and standard Title 5 procedures.

1. Competitive areas are defined in terms of career paths within a unit or geographic area.
2. The definition of grade has been replaced by band. For example, three grades lower would be replaced by one or more broadband levels lower since bands typically include two or more grades.
3. Different formulas are used for crediting additional years based on performance.

Table 6-1 shows the modified RIF procedures for those laboratories that have implemented their demonstration projects.

Usually demonstration projects conduct RIFs for three major reasons: mandated downsizing, loss of funding, or changes in technology. Since most of the downsizing has been accomplished using buyout authority, most RIFs are limited to individuals or small groups. Under the DoD Base Realignments and Closures (BRACs), downsizing has affected large numbers of employees and groups, but few employees were separated as a result of RIFs. Downsizing efforts have been underway since 1992 and have resulted in a 29% reduction of the laboratory workforce by 2001 (see Status Report, p. 5). Survey, workforce, and site historian data were used to track the effects of the RIFs that have taken place.

Table M-1, Appendix M, shows the data based on separation due to RIF (Nature of Action Code #356) for calendar years 1996-2000 across laboratories. Except for 1996, the annual numbers are in the single digits.

Tables M-2 through M-4 show nature of actions that could be due to pending or actual RIFs. These include voluntary retirements, retirements in lieu of involuntary action, and resignations in lieu of involuntary action. AFRL and NAVSEA laboratories show the highest numbers of voluntary retirement separations over the five years represented. NAVSEA laboratories remain high for retirements and resignations in lieu of involuntary actions.

Table 6-1 Modified Reduction-in-Force				
Laboratory	Competitive Area/ Competitive Levels	Retention Criteria	Performance Credit	Bumping/ Retreat Rights
Air Force Research Laboratory	By geographic location/ same series and pay band; similar duties, qualifications, and working conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenure • Veterans Preference • Length of Service • Performance 	Depends on CCS	Up to 3 broadband levels
Army Aviation and Missile RDEC	By all geographic locations/Pay band; series; similar duties, qualifications, pay schedule, working conditions, and service (excepted, competitive)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenure • Veterans Preference • Length of Service • Performance 	A=10 years B=7 years C=3 years U=0 years (credit added, not averaged, over last 3 years)	Equivalent of 3 GS levels; 30% compensable veterans, equivalent of 5 GS levels
Army Research Laboratory	Occupational family by geographic location/Same series and pay band; similar duties, qualifications, and working conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenure • Veterans Preference • Length of Service • Performance 	A=10 years B=7 years C=3 years U=0 years (credit added, not averaged, over last 3 years)	One band; 30% compensable veterans, equivalent of 5 GS levels
Army MRMC	By HQ and subactivity by geographic location/ Occupational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenure • Veterans Preference • Performance Credit 	A=10 years B=7 years C=3 years F=0 years (credit added,	One band for everyone; 30% compensable veterans retreat two bands

Table 6-1 Modified Reduction-in-Force				
Laboratory	Competitive Area/ Competitive Levels	Retention Criteria	Performance Credit	Bumping/ Retreat Rights
	Family; pay band; similar duties, qualifications, and working conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Length of Service 	Not averaged, over last 3 years-service comp. dates used as tie breakers)	Equivalent of 5 GS levels
NUWC/NSWC, NRL	By geographic location/ Competitive levels not required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenure • Veterans Preference • Length of Service • Performance 	No additional performance credit (NUWC/NSWC); Up to 20 years per CCS (NRL)	One band; 30% compensable veterans, 2 bands (NUWC/NSWC); Up to 3 GS levels below the highest current grade, plus 2 more GS levels for compensable veterans (NRL)
Army ERDC	Occupational Family/Pay band; Series; Specialty Code; Pay Schedules and Service (excepted Competitive)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenure • Veterans Preference • Performance • Length of Service (Tie breaker only) 	Performance credit based on average of most recent three performance scores received during past four years	Two bands; 30% compensable veterans, equivalent of 5 GS level

Table 6-1 Modified Reduction-in-Force				
Laboratory	Competitive Area/ Competitive Levels	Retention Criteria	Performance Credit	Bumping/ Retreat Rights
Army TACOM (proposed)	By geographic location/occupational family; pay band; similar duties, qualifications, and working conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenure • Veterans Preference • Length of Service 	Performance credit based on current rating of record (tenure, veterans' preference, and length of service considered)	Same or one band below; 30% compensable service-related disability (equivalent of 5 GS grade levels)
Army CECOM (proposed)	By geographic location/occupational family; pay band and series; similar duties and qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenure • Veteran Preference • Length of Service 	48-50 = 10 years 45-47 = 9 years 42-44 = 8 years 39-41 = 7 years 36-38 = 6 years 33-35 = 5 years 30-32 = 4 years 27-29 = 3 years 24-26 = 2 years 20-23 = 1 year 19 or below = no credit for RIF retention (credit added, not averaged, over last 3 total performance scores during preceding 4 years)	One band below; 30% service-related disability (equivalent of 5 GS levels)

Perceptions of RIF Process

Survey respondents were asked if there had been a RIF at their organization within the last year. It was found that nine percent of Wave 1, five percent of Wave 2, and nine percent of respondents in non-implemented laboratories indicated that there had been a RIF at their organization within the last year. When asked to indicate how fair the RIF process was, 41% of Wave 1 respondents indicated that the RIF process was fair, compared to 49% in Wave 2 and non-implemented laboratories. There was no discernible effect of the demonstration RIF procedures (see Table M-5).

When asked if they had received adequate information about the RIF process, 47% of Wave 1 and 31% of Wave 2 respondents indicated that they had received adequate information, compared to 56% of non-implemented respondents. These results indicate more information about the RIF in the laboratories that had not yet implemented their demonstration projects (see Tables M-6 and M-7).

Findings. Despite the mandated downsizing under BRAC, few employees have been separated through RIFs. In general, RIF is an unpleasant and unpopular process and voluntary retirements and separation incentives, as well as retirements and resignations in lieu of involuntary actions, have been more common and have reduced the organizational turmoil resulting from large-scale RIFs. There has been no noticeable impact of the modified RIF procedures.