TECHNICIAN PERSONNEL PLAN
NUMBER 251
1 February 2003

STATE OF ILLINOIS
DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AFFAIRS
SPRINGFIELD, IL

INTRA-MANAGEMENT COMMUNICATION AND CONSULTATION

Summary of Changes:

a. Updated terms and requirements IAW 5 CFR Chapter I part 251

b. Role of management associations

Applicability. This plan applies to supervisors and management officials of the Illinois Army and Air National Guard as defined in paragraph 5c.

Suggested Improvements. The proponent of this regulation is the Illinois National Guard, Human Resources Office. Users are invited to send comments and suggested improvements to The Adjutant General, Attn: DMAIL-HRO-LRS, Camp Lincoln, 1301 N. MacArthur Blvd., Springfield, IL 62702-2399.

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*This regulation supersedes Technician Personnel Plan Number 251 dated 30 September 1986

1. Purpose. The purposes of consultation and communication are to improve agency operations, personnel management, employee effectiveness, the exchange of information (e.g., ideas, opinions, and proposals), and the establishment of policies that best serve the public interest in accomplishing the mission of the Illinois National Guard.

2. Background.

a. The Illinois National Guard's consultation and communication with organizations representing Federal employees and with other organizations under this plan may not take on the character of negotiations or consultations regarding conditions of employment of bargaining unit employees, which is reserved exclusively to labor organizations as provided for in Chapter 71 of Title 5 of the U.S. Code or comparable provisions of other laws. The regulations in this part do not authorize any actions inconsistent with Chapter 71 of the U.S. Code or comparable provisions of other laws.

b. The Adjutant General may determine that it is in the interest of the agency to consult with organizations other than labor organizations and associations of management officials and/or supervisors to the extent permitted by law. Under section 7(d)(2) and (3) of Executive Order 11491, as amended, recognition of a labor organization does not preclude an agency from consulting or dealing with a veterans' organization, or with a religious, social, fraternal, professional, or other lawful association, not qualified as a labor organization, with respect to matters or policies which involve individual members of the organization or association on a matter of particular applicability to its members.

3. Basic Principle. To effectively communicate management objectives and viewpoints to employees, supervisors as members of the management team must be afforded the opportunity to participate in the development and implementation of policies and procedures affecting their assigned responsibilities. This includes active participation in the selection of employees who are to work under their immediate supervision.

4. Policy.

a. Illinois National Guard Technician Supervisors are a part of management. As such, they represent management to the employees in the administration of policy and programs and in the administration of labor-management agreements. They are also responsible for the communication of management objectives and viewpoints to employees.

b. If supervisors are to carry out the above responsibilities effectively, there must be a system of communication and consultation between managers and supervisors at all levels that will provide for the meaningful participation of supervisors in:

(1) Formulation of policies;

(2) Development of management objectives in connection with consultation and negotiation with labor organizations; and

(3) Resolution of problems affecting supervisors and the technicians they supervise.

5. General Provisions.

a. To assure that the above policy is carried out in the most effective manner, each management official will continually examine and evaluate their communications and contacts with supervisors in the organization to assure that:

(1) Supervisors at all levels have easy access to higher level management officials to present their views and ideas;

(2) Supervisors receive information of interest and importance to them in a timely manner; and

(3) Supervisors know that their views and ideas are wanted and desired.

b. Management officials must consult with supervisors in their organizations as necessary on matters of mutual interest, including;

(1) Improvement of activity operations;

(2) Improvement of working conditions;

(3) Exchange of information;

(4) Improvement of managerial effectiveness, including the management of people; and

(5) Establishment of policies that best serve the public interest in accomplishing the mission of the Illinois National Guard.

c. Definitions: For the purpose of this plan, the following definitions will apply:

(1) Supervisor: A full-time employee of the Illinois National Guard having authority to hire, direct, assign, promote, reward, transfer, furlough, layoff, recall, suspend, discipline, or remove technicians, to adjust their grievances, or to effectively recommend such action, if the exercise of authority is not merely routine or clerical in nature but requires the consistent exercise of independent judgement.

(2) Management Official: This applies to a technician or AGR official, whose duties or responsibilities require or authorize the individual to formulate, determine or influence the policies of an organization employing technicians.

6. Procedures and Guidelines for Intra-management Communication and Consultation.

a. General: Operational and managerial effectiveness can be improved materially by insuring that supervisors participate in developing policies and procedures which affect their areas of responsibility. Supervisors must be given an opportunity to present their ideas and views on matters of concern in an atmosphere of mutual cooperation and support. Managerial effectiveness and the status of supervisors are reduced when relevant information is unduly delayed or is transmitted outside of the normal communication channels, such as through rumor or through the union membership.

b. Methods: Intra-management communication and consultation extends through all supervisory levels and includes, but is not restricted to, the following procedures and techniques, most of which are now in use but may require further development.

(1) Oral Communication: There is no better way to communicate than a person-to-person discussion to resolve supervisory problems. An "open door policy" is an important and effective way to facilitate this type of communication, and all management officials and supervisors will practice such a policy. When possible and appropriate, management officials and supervisors are expected to utilize their day-to-day contacts and operations as a time for communication with subordinates.

(2) Staff Meetings: Management officials and supervisors are required to hold periodic staff meetings to discuss new and proposed organization changes, staffing patterns, budgetary requirements, and proposed new program matters. Participants in these meetings shall be free to communicate their suggestions and comments on matters affecting their assigned responsibilities. The frequency of such meetings depends upon the complexity and interrelationship of the individual organization and upon the urgency, importance, and variety of items to be discussed. Weekly staff meetings may not be too frequent for some organization elements, while monthly meetings may be sufficient for others. Managers will analyze their situations and schedule staff meetings as frequently as appropriate. Circulating minutes or documentation of matters discussed at these meetings to supervisors not in attendance is encouraged.

(3) Written Communication: Written requests provide a record of problems confronted by supervisors for which prompt answers or solutions are sought. Supervisors seeking answers or solutions are entitled to prompt responses from their supervisors or staff officials. Where unusual delays are encountered in responding, interim reports as to reasons for the delay may be appropriate.

(4) Electronic Mail (Email): Email is now an essential means of communications. This medium is a convenient and cost effective way for managers and supervisors to communicate. Even though this means is available it should be used with caution. You cannot be effective if you manage by email, and complex or sensitive issues should not be the communicated through this medium. It is to be used as a tool, and when used correctly, it will increase the agency's effectiveness.

(5) Publications and Directives: Management officials are encouraged, in appropriate circumstances, to provide supervisors who will be affected by proposed directives an opportunity to comment on them before publication. Publications are effective for dissemination of information and procedural instructions from top management to supervisors and employees when written in clear and understandable language.

(6) Incentive Awards: The Illinois National Guard Technician Incentive Awards Program offers another technique for supervisors to participate in the development and implementation of policy and procedures by personally submitting written ideas or suggestions for management improvement. Strict adherence to the time limitations for responding to suggestions will aide in wider use of this program.

(7) Supervisor Training and Development: The effective accomplishment of the Illinois National Guard's mission depends upon the kind and degree of training received by supervisors. The National Guard Bureau requires that all supervisors receive supervisory training for their career development as early as practicable. Their participation in the various supervisory courses offered by the National Guard, other federal agencies, and non-government institutions will enhance the status of supervisors. Accordingly, supervisory training will be given a high priority throughout the Illinois National Guard Technician Program.

(8) Use of HRO Specialists: Management and supervisors are encouraged to contact the HRO for questions on personnel matters. The specialists in this directorate can assist supervisors and employees on the many facets of human resources management.

c. Special Committees: The Adjutant General may establish special committees composed of supervisors and management officials. The membership on these committees will include a cross section of supervisory personnel appointed on an ad hoc basis. The purpose of special committees will be to provide the Adjutant General with ideas, comments, and/or suggestions concerning a wide variety of human resources management issues.

d. Associations of management officials and/or supervisors.

(1) As part of agency management, supervisors and managers should be included in the decision-making process and notified of executive-level decisions on a timely basis. The Illinois National Guard may establish consultative relationships with associations whose membership is primarily composed of Federal supervisory and/or managerial personnel, provided that such associations are not affiliated with any labor organization and that they have sufficient agency membership to assure a worthwhile dialogue with executive management. Consultative relationships with other non-labor organizations representing Federal employees are discretionary.

(2) Consultations should have as their objective the improvement of managerial effectiveness and the working conditions of supervisors and managers, as well as the identification and resolution of problems affecting agency operations and employees, including supervisors and managers.

(3) The system of communication and consultation should be designed so that individual supervisors and managers are able to participate even if they are not affiliated with an association of management officials and/or supervisors. At the same time, the voluntary joining together of supervisory and management personnel in groups or associations shall not be precluded or discouraged.

7. Evaluation. The HRO and appropriate management officials will evaluate at least once a year the effectiveness of this plan and methods of improving communications among and between supervisors and management officials. This may be accomplished through questionnaires, personnel interviews with a representative number of supervisors, or through the appointment of a committee. Where the evaluation indicates required improvement, necessary action will be taken to strengthen the system.

FOR THE ADJUTANT GENERAL:

//Signature on file//