



# United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
Washington, D.C. 20240

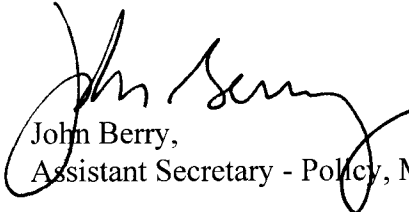
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PERSONNEL BULLETIN NO. 99-4 (351)

SUBJECT: Consultation in Reduction in Force

During the last few years program changes, downsizing and streamlining have led to reductions in force (RIF) in many bureaus. In the course of defending the Department in employee appeals to the Merit Systems Protection Board, the Office of the Solicitor has observed that defense of the appeals has been easier when they had the opportunity to review the "bona fides" of the RIFs before actions were taken. RIFs are typically vulnerable to questions by complainants about the acceptable reasons for conducting RIF (5 CFR 351.201(a)(2)), the applicability of transfer of function procedures (5 CFR 351.301), and the definition of competitive areas (5 CFR 351.402). The Office of the Solicitor's assistance in overcoming such questions has been very valuable.

Bureaus and offices must consult with the Office of the Solicitor as early as possible in the RIF planning process, but at least 30 days prior to the issuance of specific RIF notices. The Office of the Solicitor will work with bureau and office RIF planners to ensure that proposed RIF actions are legally defensible. The requirement of this bulletin will remain in effect until further notice.



John Berry,  
Assistant Secretary - Policy, Management and Budget

INQUIRIES: Carl Wallace, Office of Personnel Policy, 202-208-5284.