



## Department of Energy

Bonneville Power Administration  
P.O. Box 3621  
Portland, Oregon 97208-3621

SECURITY AND CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS

December 12, 2013

In reply refer to: NN-1

Patrick Barton

Ex6

### FOIA #BPA-2013-00195-C

Dear Mr. Barton:

This is a partial response to your request for records that you made under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), 5 U.S.C. 552.

#### **You have requested the following:**

“Communications and email from Connie Langston about the review at Bonneville related to the recent DOE-OIG Management Alert (DOE/IG-0891).”

#### **Response:**

BPA is providing the enclosed responsive documents with certain information withheld under Exemption 6. The redacted information consists of the personal information (name, email, phone, and cell phone numbers) of individuals.

Although BPA has released the majority of the responsive records in their entirety, BPA asserts Exemption 6 for information which could reasonably be expected to constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy if disclosed. Although the subject is of public interest, it has been determined that the individual names of those on the emails will not shed any light on how BPA has performed its statutory duties. Therefore, the individual privacy interest outweighs the public interest in the disclosure of this information.

We have completed the review of one mailbox and are releasing it as a partial response. We are continuing to review other mailboxes in our search to supply you responsive records. We will release those as our review progresses.

The statute requires that requests be acted on “promptly,” and “every effort” be made to respond within 20 working days. However, BPA has determined that your request for information is a “complex” request. A complex request is defined in the FOIA as “unusual circumstances” exist. Unusual circumstances are defined as searching inactive records; where a “voluminous” amount of data is involved; where information about other individuals has to be redacted; or where BPA has to consult with another agency which has a substantial interest in the response.

As such, we will be unable to meet the 20 work-day time frame set in the statute. We are processing complex requests in a “first in, first out” basis and will keep you apprised of our progress. Our goal date for completing your request is March 31, 2014.

Thank you for your patience with our process. Please contact Kim Winn, FOIA Specialist, at 503-230-5273, with any questions about this letter.

Sincerely,

*/s/Christina J. Munro*

Christina J. Munro

Freedom of Information/Privacy Act Officer

Enclosure: Responsive documents

---

**From:** Langston, Connie L. Ex 6  
**Sent:** Monday, May 13, 2013 7:54 AM  
**To:** Ex 6  
**Subject:** FW: Response to OPM audit  
**Attachments:** 20130510BPATrainingHistoryforOPM.xlsx; 20130510OPMCorrectiveActions.xlsx

Ex 6

I got it! Please ignore my earlier email.

Thanks,

Connie Langston  
HR Specialist  
Ex 6  
Merit System Accountability and Compliance  
U.S. Office of Personnel Management  
Ex 6

**From:** Langston, Connie L.  
**Sent:** Saturday, May 11, 2013 7:43 AM  
**To:** Langston, Connie L.  
**Subject:** FW: Response to OPM audit

Connie Langston  
Human Resources Specialist  
Ex 6  
Merit System Audit and Compliance  
U.S. Office of Personnel Management  
Ex 6

**From:** Ex 6  
**Sent:** Friday, May 10, 2013 7:23 PM  
**To:** Langston, Connie L.  
**Cc:** Ex 6 Ex 6 Ex 6  
**Subject:** Response to OPM audit

Connie

Per your requests, I am sending two documents: 1) training provided to our DEU certified staff and 2) BPA's proposed corrective action plan in response to your audit findings and our review of case files within the audit scope.

In the first document I've highlighted training for staff in our DE unit (NHQ) as well as staff from other groups that support the unit (NHO and NHI).

The second document highlights our proposed corrective actions following a review of all the DE case files within your defined audit period. The review specifically addressed any cases where the best qualified cutoff score was adjusted after the job announcement closed and/or where we incorrectly disqualified a candidate. Our review has determined we have nine erroneous appointments from these actions. The details of these findings are provided. We appreciate that you have additional case files in Dallas which are included within the scope of this review. We were unable to review them, but we believe two cases, #9256-11 and #9560-12, have erroneous appointments. These two cases are included in this action plan.

We expect to forward our comprehensive yellow sheet report early next week.

I look forward to your review of this material and your direction as to next steps.

Ex 6

Bonneville Power Administration

Ex 6

BPA HCM Training 2008 - Present (as of May 2013)

DeptID*	Name	DEU	DEU Expires	Pay Setting for GS Positions	EOLC Veteran Employment - FHRP	Basic Staffing & Placement	Adjudicating/ Applying Vets Preference	Position Classification	Job Analysis	Processing Personnel Actions	AVUE #1: Classification / Position Mgmt in ADS Basics	AVUE #2: Collaborating w/ Mgmt	AVUE #3: Using ADS Assessment Tools	AVUE #4: Understanding Qualifications Criteria	AVUE #5: Legal/ Regulatory Compliance Issues	AVUE #6: Recruiting	AVUE #7: Selections Using ADS	AVUE #8: Developing/ Using Freestyle Questions	
NHQ	Ex 6	3/22/2011	3/21/2014		12/31/2012						9/25/2012	9/25/2012	9/27/2012	10/16/2012	10/17/2012	10/17/2012	10/18/2012	10/18/2012	
NHQ		11/5/2010	11/4/2013		12/31/2012						9/25/2012	9/25/2012	9/27/2012	10/16/2012	10/17/2012	10/17/2012	10/18/2012	10/18/2012	
NHQ		11/14/2012	11/15/2015	2/28/2010	12/31/2012	5/9/2008	9/8/2008	9/16/2011			9/25/2012	9/25/2012	9/27/2012	10/16/2012	10/17/2012	10/17/2012	10/18/2012	10/18/2012	
NHQ		9/17/2010	9/16/2013	5/5/2010	12/31/2012	12/11/2009		9/16/2011			9/25/2012	9/25/2012	9/27/2012	10/16/2012	10/17/2012	10/17/2012	10/18/2012	10/18/2012	
NHQ		10/30/2012	10/30/2015	2/28/2010	12/31/2012	5/9/2008		9/16/2011			9/25/2012	9/25/2012	9/27/2012	10/16/2012	10/17/2012	10/17/2012	10/18/2012	10/18/2012	
NHQ		12/3/2012	12/3/2015		12/31/2012			9/8/2008	7/11/2008	1/26/2011		9/25/2012	9/25/2012	9/27/2012	10/16/2012	10/17/2012	10/17/2012	10/18/2012	10/18/2012
NHQ		9/17/2010	9/16/2013	5/5/2010	12/31/2012	7/31/2010		9/16/2011	1/26/2011			9/25/2012	9/25/2012	9/27/2012	10/16/2012	10/17/2012	10/17/2012	10/18/2012	10/18/2012
NHQ		9/17/2010	9/16/2013		12/31/2012			9/8/2008	7/11/2008						10/16/2012	10/17/2012	10/17/2012	10/18/2012	10/18/2012
NHQ		6/18/2012	6/19/2015	2/28/2010	12/31/2012	7/31/2010		9/8/2008	9/16/2011	1/26/2011		9/25/2012	9/25/2012	9/27/2012	10/16/2012	10/17/2012	10/17/2012	10/18/2012	10/18/2012
NHQ		2/10/2012	2/9/2015	2/28/2010	12/31/2012			9/8/2008							10/16/2012	10/17/2012	10/17/2012	10/18/2012	10/18/2012
NHQ		1/6/2012	1/5/2015		12/31/2012			9/8/2008							10/16/2012	10/17/2012	10/17/2012	10/18/2012	10/18/2012
NHQ		11/7/2012	11/7/2015		12/31/2012										10/16/2012	10/17/2012	10/17/2012	10/18/2012	10/18/2012
NHQ		11/29/2012	11/30/2015		12/31/2012			9/8/2008	7/11/2008			9/25/2012	9/25/2012	9/27/2012	10/16/2012	10/17/2012	10/17/2012	10/18/2012	10/18/2012
NHQ		11/7/2012	11/8/2015		12/31/2012										10/16/2012	10/17/2012	10/17/2012	10/18/2012	10/18/2012
NHQ		10/26/2011	10/25/2014	8/1/2012	12/31/2012	12/18/2011			9/16/2011			9/25/2012	9/25/2012	9/27/2012	10/16/2012	10/17/2012	10/17/2012	10/18/2012	10/18/2012
NHQ		9/3/2010	9/2/2013												10/16/2012	10/17/2012	10/17/2012	10/18/2012	10/18/2012
NHQ		9/3/2010	9/2/2013		12/31/2012										10/16/2012	10/17/2012	10/17/2012	10/18/2012	10/18/2012
NHQ		11/29/2012	11/30/2015		9/12/2012	5/9/2008	9/8/2008	7/11/2008	1/26/2011			9/25/2012	9/25/2012	9/27/2012	10/16/2012	10/17/2012	10/17/2012	10/18/2012	10/18/2012
NHO		10/26/2011	10/25/2014	8/1/2012		8/26/2011				12/9/2011									
NHO		11/7/2011	11/8/2014	8/21/2010		9/8/2008													
NHO		10/26/2011	10/25/2014	3/31/2011		6/20/2011													
NHO		11/7/2012	11/7/2015																
NHO		12/5/2012	12/6/2015	8/21/2010		2/1/2011				12/10/2010									
NHO		10/26/2011	10/25/2014	8/21/2010		2/1/2011	9/8/2008												
NHO		10/26/2011	10/25/2014	8/1/2012		8/26/2011				9/16/2011									
NHO		10/26/2011	10/25/2014																
NHO		11/6/2012	11/7/2015					9/8/2008											
NHI		3/21/3013	3/20/3016																
NHI		11/7/2012	11/7/2015																
NHI		11/7/2012	11/8/2015																
NHI	11/7/2012	11/8/2015																	
NHI	11/7/2012	11/7/2015						9/16/2011											

HCM Staff have also take additional training in January 2011 but do not have the roster, including:

- Adjudicating and Applying Vet's Preference
- OPM workshop Job Analysis
- OPM workshop Recruitment Strategies
- OPM workshop Category Rating
- OPM workshop VA Development
- OPM workshop KSA development
- FLSA

\*NHQ = Delegated Examining Unit  
 \*NHO = Processes personnel actions  
 \*NHI = Policy and compliance support

ADS = Avue Digital Services

OPM CASE FILE REVIEW - CATEGORY RATING W/MOVED CUTOFF SCORES\*

CASE FILE NUMBER	JOB OPEN #	TITLE	HIRED If Erroneous Appointment***	VET CODE	MAY 2, 2013 CASE REVIEW FINDINGS - # erroneous appt. # lost empl. cons. # lost certif.	Corrective Action		
						PRIORITY CONSIDERATION (Lost certification)	PRIORITY CONSIDERATION (Lost Employment Consideration)	REGULARIZE ERRONEOUS APPOINTMENT
8430-11-DE	8430	Project Management Coordinator	↓ Ex 6 ↑	NV	1 erroneous appt. 1 lost empl. cons 11 lost certif.	NONE REQUIRED: 11 lost certification	REQUIRED: Ex 6 (TP vet)	REQUIRED: Request variation for Ex 6
8675-11-DE	8675	Program Analyst		NV NV	0 erroneous appt. 0 lost empl. cons 6 lost certif. (3 people twice)	NONE REQUIRED: 6 lost certification (3 people twice)	NONE REQUIRED	NONE REQUIRED
8707-11-DE	8707	Interior Designer		NV	1 erroneous appt. 1 lost empl. cons 30 lost certif.	NONE REQUIRED: 30 lost certification	REQUIRED: Ex 6 (TP vet)	REQUIRED: Request variation for Ex 6
8857-11-DE	8857	Human Resources Specialist GS-12		NV	1 erroneous appt. 1 lost empl. cons 0 lost certif.	NONE REQUIRED	REQUIRED: Ex 6 (TP vet)	REQUIRED: Request variation for
8857-11-DE	8861	Human Resources Specialist GS-9		CPS	0 erroneous appt. 0 lost empl. cons 4 lost certif.	NONE REQUIRED: 4 lost certification	NONE REQUIRED	NONE REQUIRED
9124-11-DE	9124	Fish And Wildlife Project Manager (Research)		NV	Potential TP vet pref errors	NONE REQUIRED	NONE REQUIRED: based on 5/2/13 review	NONE REQUIRED
9256-11-DE OPM has file	9257	Operations Research Analyst		NV	1 erroneous appt. 1 lost empl. cons 0 lost certif.	NONE REQUIRED	REQUIRED: Ex 6 (TP vet)	REQUIRED: Request variation for Ex 6
9313-11-DE	9313	Management Analyst		NV	1 erroneous appt. 1 lost empl. Cons 0 lost certif.	NONE REQUIRED	REQUIRED: Ex 6 (CP vet)	REQUIRED: Request variation for Ex 6
9396-12-DE	9396	Auditor		NV	1 erroneous appt. 1 lost empl. cons 4 lost certif.	NONE REQUIRED: 4 lost certification	REQUIRED: Ex 6 (TP vet)	REQUIRED: Request variation for Ex 6
9560-12-DE OPM has file	9563	Accountant		NV	1 erroneous appt.	NONE REQUIRED: Can determine # when file returned from OPM	REQUIRED: Will identify name when file returned from OPM	REQUIRED: Request variation for Ex 6

**OPM CASE FILE REVIEW - CATEGORY RATING W/MOVED CUTOFF SCORES\***

CASE FILE NUMBER	JOB OPEN #	TITLE	HIRED If Erroneous Appointment***	VET CODE	MAY 2, 2013 CASE REVIEW FINDINGS - # erroneous appt. # lost empl. cons. # lost certif.	PRIORITY CONSIDERATION (Lost certification)	PRIORITY CONSIDERATION (Lost Employment Consideration)	REGULARIZE ERRONEOUS APPOINTMENT
9748-12-DE	9748 and 10378	Fish Biologist, GS 12	Ex 6	NV NV	2 erroneous appts. 2 lost empl. cons (1 person)  0 lost certif.	NONE REQUIRED	REQUIRED: Ex 6 (TP vet) - twice (1 for each position filled)	REQUIRED: Request variation for both: Ex 6

\*BPA used predefined Best Qualified (BQ) score range of 91 - 100

---

**From:** Langston, Connie L. Ex 6  
**Sent:** Friday, May 03, 2013 12:16 PM  
**To:** Ex 6  
**Subject:** RE: BPA

Hi Ex,6

No there were no glitches in the email system yesterday. I hesitated sending the email yesterday because shortly after our conversation, I was informed that my OPM management team and Energy's management team has a "pending" meeting scheduled early next week to discuss the path forward for BPA. It seems everyone is not exactly clear, so I hope to have additional "definitive" information next week.

Keep in mind, everyone is certified until we receive training records of the DE staff.

It appears this is going to go around many circles before we land on our feet. I hope you understand the statement.

I hope you have a nice weekend. We will talk next week.

Connie Langston  
HR Specialist  
Ex 6  
Merit System Accountability and Compliance  
U.S. Office of Personnel Management  
Ex 6

**From:** Ex 6  
**Sent:** Friday, May 03, 2013 1:59 PM  
**To:** Langston, Connie L.  
**Cc:** Ex 6 Ex 6  
**Subject:** RE: BPA

Good talking with you yesterday. I think we may have had some email glitches earlier, so just wanted you to know that if you sent the confirmation email, I have not received it yet.

In the meantime, I'm proceeding per our conversation. Two BPA staff will not be decertified. Ex 6 will be providing leadership (and will have his certification issued by OPM), Ex 6 management oversight of any third party DEU certified providers. You will inform us later next week as to individual decertifications. In the meantime, we are providing you with corrective action plans for cases reviewed in OPM audit and are completing the 100% review of DEU cases for OPM audit period. We will assemble training records for all DE unit staff and same for other DEU certified HCM staff.

I really appreciated your update. As always, call if there are any questions. Not withstanding cell phone quality, my 971 number is probably the surest number to call. Have a good weekend. In the 80s here. Hope this isn't the extent of our summer!

Ex 6

**From:** Langston, Connie L. Ex 6  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 02, 2013 11:24 AM

**To:** Ex 6  
**Subject:** BPA

Good Afternoon Ex 6

If you are in today, how late will you be in the office? I need to touch base with you regarding some of the decisions regarding the audit.

Thanks,

Connie Langston  
HR Specialist  
Ex 6  
Merit System Accountability and Compliance  
U.S. Office of Personnel Management  
Ex 6

**Subject:** FW: Decertification of Bonneville Power Administration HR Staff

**From:** Langston, Connie L. Ex 6

**Sent:** Thursday, May 23, 2013 07:28 PM

**To:** Ex 6 Ex 6  
 Ex 6 Ex 6

**Cc:** Ex 6 Ex 6 Ex 6 Ex 6  
 Ex 6 Ex 6 Ex 6  
 Ex 6 Langston, Connie L.

**Subject:** Decertification of Bonneville Power Administration HR Staff

Good Evening All:

The volume of varied and widespread errors leads us to conclude Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) HR Specialists lack competencies in most fundamentals of Federal staffing. Based on the issues identified, we believe BPA is vulnerable to legal challenges, violations of merit system principles, and prohibited personnel practices. Without extensive training, and a plan for increased accountability and oversight of all HR staff, continued operations will certainly lead to additional illegal appointments and violations of civil service laws and regulations. At a minimum, all HR staff should receive immediate training in the following areas: basic staffing; conducting valid job analysis and assessment tool development; qualifications analysis; basic processing of personnel actions; initial delegated examining training; and training on the use of various hiring authorities, including the many veteran hiring authorities.

As a result of the significant issues, errors, and legal violations present in the sampling of cases reviewed, we strongly urge Department of Energy and BPA to develop a remediation plan to ensure all staffing actions taken from the beginning of the review period to the present adhere to merit system principles and are void of legal violations and errors. This would include a 100 percent reconstruction of selections made under DE, MP, and excepted service appointments, and should be rigorous enough to include a review of the position announced, confirmation of qualification decisions, verification of proper referral procedures, and validation of final selection. BPA must not permit the decertified individuals (listed below) to perform DE-related work without 100 percent review by a DE-certified individual and until the extensive training is completed. The list below does not include the DE-certified contractor workforce. Also, Agency Compliance and Evaluation will want to see evidence of completion of the required training by any individual seeking to become certified to conduct DE before they will be allowed to participate in the Initial DE Certification Training again.

↓  
 Ex 6  
 ↑



If you have any questions, please feel free to give me a call at phone number provided below.

Thanks,

Connie Langston  
HR Specialist  
Ex 6  
Merit System Accountability and Compliance  
U.S. Office of Personnel Management  
Ex 6

---

**From:** Langston, Connie L. Ex 6  
**Sent:** Friday, May 24, 2013 12:14 PM  
**To:** Ex 6  
**Cc:** Ex 6  
**Subject:** Decertification

Good Afternoon,

I hope both of you received the email outlining the decertification process. Do you have any questions?

Ex 6 -In regards to our conversation last evening about BPA's path forward, I did talk to my supervisor about your legitimate concerns regarding the DE Initial Certification training. Even though HR Solutions is OPM, we feel that the MSAC evaluators, i.e., Ex 6 / Ex 6 from the Dallas Office or DE instructors from the San Francisco office would better suit your needs since these folks are intimately involved with the issues at BPA. Therefore, the instructors can specifically tailor the training for you and also address any specific issues. Having said that, once you pinpoint when you think all of the required training will be completed, the MSAC DE instructors will provide the training "without" a gap between the required training and the DE certification training. I'm sure this gives you a sigh of relief! You can provide us some type of action plan to detail the steps you plan to take to initiate the training. I know you sent the chart with the dates for the training and that is sufficient now if there's no changes.

To be clear, in reviewing the training spreadsheet, the training by AVUE was specific to using your system, not the basics of good examining. As previously discussed, the big missing piece here is a lack of job analysis, KSAs, and qualification determination training across the board. We recommend all staff take a processing personnel actions course as well. At a minimum, we want to see those touching DE to have specific coursework and we will need confirmation of training prior to allowing your staff to pursue DE certification again.

I hope this clears up any misunderstandings regarding the timing issue between the HR training and the DE Initial Certification training.

If you have any questions, please let me know. We will talk more next week.

Have a nice Memorial Day Weekend!

Thanks,

*Connie Langston*

HR Specialist  
Ex 6

Merit System Accountability and Compliance  
U.S. Office of Personnel Management  
Ex 6

---

**From:** Langston, Connie L. Ex 6  
**Sent:** Friday, May 03, 2013 12:07 PM  
**To:** Ex 6  
**Subject:** BPA Evaluation Follow up

Hi Ex 6

- To recap our earlier conversation regarding the training of BPA's HR staff, please provide the following information on ALL DE certified staff members, those working DE and those who are DE certified but not working DE.
  - Complete list of HR training
  - How long was the training
  - Date of training
  - What type of training, i.e., OJT or formal training
  - Any additional background information regarding HR training, certifications, etc.
- Ex 6 will be DE certified and issued a DE certificate
- High probability that Ex 6 and Ex 6 will act as the core federal staff leading case file reconstruction to implement the corrective actions
- No decertification of BPA staff members until OPM receives the training data. Due to OPM nlt Friday, May 10, 2013 (this gives you another week to work on cases while the final decision is determined)

I believe the above actions are moving in a positive direction and will be in the best interest of BPA implementing the necessary changes.

Thanks,

Connie Langston  
HR Specialist  
Ex 6  
Merit System Accountability and Compliance  
U.S. Office of Personnel Management  
Ex 6

---

**From:** Langston, Connie L. Ex 6  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 23, 2013 11:55 AM  
**To:** Ex 6  
**Subject:** RE: Understanding of decertification

Hi Ex 6

I hope your day is going great! Please call me when you're free so we can discuss the decertification process.

Thanks,

*Connie Langston*

HR Specialist

Ex 6

Merit System Accountability and Compliance

U.S. Office of Personnel Management

Ex 6

**From:** Ex 6  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 22, 2013 5:23 PM  
**To:** Langston, Connie L.  
**Cc:** Ex 6 Ex 6  
**Subject:** Understanding of decertification

Connie, got your message. I sure hope your supervisor didn't/doesn't have the crud that's been going around here. Folks have been relapsing if they come back before they are fully recovered.

I'd like to be prepared for any decertification decision that OPM makes regarding BPA's DEU staff. As you know, we will rely to a greater extent on the DE certified staff of Avue to accomplish our work. I want roles and responsibilities to be understood with great clarity. To that end, I understand that the following actions cannot be performed by a BPA DEU staff person until they are recertified following the training plan submitted to you last week:

- Initiate public notice for DE recruitments
- Accept and process applications
- Develop assessment instruments or apply candidate assessment
- Rate or rank applications
- Administer or score written tests
- Apply Veterans' Preference
- Consider requests for reconsideration
- Issue or audit certificates of eligible

I want to confirm that the following actions my still be performed by BPA staff even when decertified:

- Make job offers and negotiate compensation for selections from DE
- Shadow Avue DE certified staff engagement with BPA hiring managers

One new Recruiting and Staffing Advisor joined us this week and another is arriving in a couple of weeks. Ex 6  
joined us from the Department of the Air Force – Space and Missile Systems Center, Los Angeles Air Force Base

where he worked as a civilian. He was DE certified in February 2012 and used the training and certification with his previous agency. We've already set expectations that he will take the training according to the plan (great way to onboard with his new team). Do you expect to decertify him given that he was not at BPA prior to joining us Monday?

We've not been in this territory before so I think it is better to confer and confirm with one another rather than make assumptions. I want as smooth a transition as is possible and one that meets everyone's expectations and requirements. Let me know how to best follow up on this to ensure I have the proper understanding.

Stay healthy!!

Ex 6