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COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548

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RELEASED

APRIL 6, 1979



LM109643

The Honorable Jack Brooks, Chairman
Select Committee on Congressional
Operations
House of Representatives

ASE05510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

In response to your request of October 31, 1978, we reviewed the operations of 10 executive branch legislative liaison offices (LLOs). In addition to determining the roles and functions of LLOs, we identified several practices and procedures which we believe all LLOs should consider adopting to further assure that responses to congressional inquiries are timely and substantive.

The LLOs' function is to help in the awareness, understanding, communication, and cooperation between the Congress and the executive branch on matters of mutual interest. Although a large portion of LLOs' workload consists of managing and assuring responses to congressional inquiries, no comprehensive Government-wide guidelines exist to guide this important aspect of their operations.

We have prepared and included as enclosure I a document entitled "Guidelines for the Effective Management and Operation of Executive Branch Legislative Liaison Offices." As requested by your staff, we obtained written comments on the Guidelines from the agencies included in our study. The comments received are included as enclosure II.

Generally, the agencies expressed agreement with the Guidelines. For example, the Assistant Attorney General for Legislative Affairs said:

"We found the guidelines a useful and comprehensive description of the various functions of an Executive Branch Legislative Liaison Office. In general, we are in agreement with the contents of these guidelines and believe that their observance could help improve the effectiveness of legislative liaison offices."



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Letter report?

The Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission noted that:

"* * * the initial sections on 'Background,' 'What LLO's do,' and 'Nature of congressional inquiries' together constitute one of the best written summaries of this important professional specialty which we have seen."

The Chief of Legislative Affairs, U.S. Navy, said:

"The Guidelines provide an excellent basis for LLOs to evaluate the effectiveness of their organization."

The Secretary of Labor remarked:

"I agree with many of your observations and want to emphasize that it is particularly important that there not be a rigid pattern for Agencies dealing with these activities in that much depends on the size of the Agency as well as the size and quality of the staff involved in legislative liaison activities."

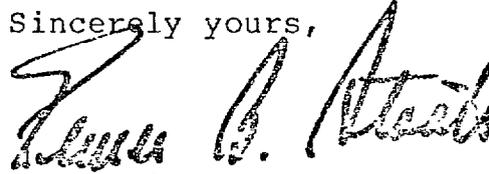
Some of the other agencies expressed the view that certain suggested practices and procedures would not be applicable or useful for their LLOs. We have stressed in the Guidelines that they are not necessarily all inclusive or applicable to every executive branch LLO. LLO systems and procedures for managing responses to congressional inquiries should be tailored to the differing types and volumes of inquiries received, the size, nature and diversity of departmental program organizations and operations, and the varying roles and functions assigned to LLOs at different organizational levels. The practices discussed in the enclosed Guidelines should be viewed therefore in light of these and possibly other considerations.

We also asked each LLO to complete a questionnaire to determine the extent to which they follow the practices and procedures contained in the Guidelines. A copy of the questionnaire which includes a composite of the agencies' responses and a summary of the questionnaire results, by agency, are included as enclosure III. In addition, a summary of various characteristics of the LLOs is included as enclosure IV.

B-194300

We plan no further distribution of this report at this time. However, we will be in contact with your office later to arrange for release of the enclosed Guidelines.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "James G. Atchafalua".

Comptroller General
of the United States

Enclosures - 4

GUIDELINES FOR THE EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT AND OPERATION OF EXECUTIVE BRANCH LEGISLATIVE LIAISON OFFICES

Prepared By The Staff Of The
U.S. General Accounting Office
March 1979



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BACKGROUND

Executive branch departments and some large agencies, bureaus, etc., within them have established legislative liaison offices (LLOs) to help in the awareness, understanding, communication, and cooperation between the Congress and executive branch on matters of mutual interest. LLOs are responsible for providing information and assistance to the Congress and to executive department and agency officials. They must maintain close working relationships between members of the Congress and their staff and executive branch representatives.

LLOs serve as executive department representatives on the Hill and seek to create a favorable climate in the Congress for the policy and legislative initiatives of their organizations. On the other hand, LLOs often serve as congressional representatives in executive departments seeking departmental receptivity to congressional initiatives to promote constructive compromise in areas where congressional and departmental views differ.

LLOs' duties

Duties usually assigned to LLOs include:

- Providing members and committees of the Congress with information concerning executive branch actions, plans, and programs which might appreciably affect their respective State, district, and committee responsibilities (e.g., grant and contract awards, installation establishments, closures, reductions or expansions, etc.).
- Recording and responding to or coordinating responses to telephonic and written inquiries received from members of the Congress and their staffs on policy, legislative, and constituent matters.
- Presenting and clarifying for members of the Congress departmental views and priorities on policy and legislative matters and likewise keeping departmental officials informed of congressional views and priorities.
- Supervising, coordinating, and arranging the presentation of formal statements, testimony, briefings, and reports to members and committees of the Congress by executive personnel.

- Developing, coordinating, and processing departmental actions related to proposed legislation, executive orders, or Presidential proclamations.
- Monitoring and evaluating the content and status of proposed legislation and advising departmental officials thereof.
- Resolving intradepartmental differences on legislative matters.
- Identifying areas of compromise between congressional and departmental positions on issues.

A large portion of LLOs' workload is the management and response to written and telephonic congressional inquiries. Estimates of the number of written congressional inquiries received annually by 10 LLOs ranged from approximately 2,000 to 145,000. Telephonic inquiries ranged from an estimated 3,500 to 104,000 annually.

Nature of congressional inquiries

Written and telephonic inquiries received by executive branch LLOs from congressmen or their staffs are commonly categorized as either (1) constituent or casework inquiries or (2) policy and legislative inquiries.

Most constituent or casework inquiries, though received directly from congressmen or their staffs, originate with private citizens. Constituent inquiries usually concern executive branch actions affecting an individual or group of individuals, such as veterans, servicemen, social security claimants, Government employees, and welfare recipients. Subjects of inquiries might include

- loss or nonreceipt of Veterans Administration or social security benefit checks,
- status of license or grant application,
- eligibility requirements for Federal assistance programs,
- disputes of regulatory actions, and
- location of individual servicemen.

Policy and legislative inquiries originate with and come directly from congressmen and their staffs. General areas of inquiry include

- program implementation and results,
- budget justification,
- proposed program and legislative initiatives,
- existing or proposed regulations, and
- draft legislation.

Generally, department level LLOs receive and respond directly to inquiries involving policy and legislative matters and major agency or bureau LLOs respond to constituent inquiries received directly or delegated to them from the department level LLO. In many executive departments, agency or bureau LLOs also provide back up and other support to department level LLOs responding to legislative inquiries.

The staff in most department level LLOs are political appointees with several years of Hill experience. The staff in lower level agency or bureau LLOs are generally career civil servants with experience as agency or bureau program officers.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE MANAGEMENT AND OPERATION OF LLOs

To further assure timely and substantive responses to congressional inquiries, all LLOs should consider adopting the practices and procedures that were observed at selected LLOs. The following observations are not necessarily all-inclusive nor applicable to every LLO. LLO systems and procedures should be tailored to the differing types and volumes of inquiries received; the size, nature, and diversity of departmental program organizations and operations; and the varying roles and functions assigned to LLOs at different organizational levels. The practices discussed below should be studied in light of these and possibly other relevant considerations.

Detailed practices and procedures related to the following aspects of responding to congressional inquiries are discussed in the remainder of these guidelines.

- Delegating and referring inquiries.

- Guiding congressional contacts.
- Assuring timely responses.
- LLO staff experience and training.
- Attitudes toward congressional relations.

Delegating and referring inquiries

LLOs need not prepare all responses to congressional inquiries. Many inquiries received by LLOs can be adequately responded to by program offices without LLO involvement. Whether an LLO responds to an inquiry or assigns the task to another agency office for direct response or preparation of a response should depend on (1) the nature of the inquiry and (2) the LLO's confidence that the agency response to the inquiry will be adequate and timely.

Some inquiries, for example, require detailed knowledge of agency or department program operations. Direct assignment of these inquiries to program staff can lead to more timely and complete responses. Staff familiar with program details may more fully understand congressional questions, be able to explain data and clear up misconceptions, and provide detailed answers more quickly. LLO staff, on the other hand, may omit data due to lack of both understanding and ability to clearly present program details.

Program offices should be given inquiries involving mostly factual data or noncontroversial policy issues--well understood throughout the department or not easily misconstrued--and these offices should respond directly with "information copies" for LLO files. Program offices should also be given casework-type inquiries and those involving the mere recitation of often-stated departmental and agency policies; these should require only minimal review by the LLO staff.

All responses to the Congress involving controversial policy should be reviewed by LLOs to assure that they are complete, responsive, and agree with department or agency policy. Responses requiring extensive policy interpretation of program data and presentation of policy and legislative issues probably should be prepared by LLOs with input from the program offices. Other less policy-oriented responses could be prepared in draft by program offices and reviewed by LLOs before issuance.

Misconstructions and misconveyances of departmental position and policy may result from inappropriate assignment to program staff of inquiries involving broad policy issues. Some inquiries/responses involve a mixture of policy and program data and require presentation and/or interpretation in a departmentwide setting. Assignment of such inquiries to program offices for direct response would be inappropriate if the responses were to be prepared by staff too involved in program details to have a sufficiently broad perspective on policy issues.

The ability of program offices to respond to policy-related inquiries can be enhanced if LLOs periodically meet and discuss policy issues with key program officials to further assure a clear understanding of agency/department positions. Such briefings can also assist LLOs in maintaining awareness and control over congressional communications. Informed program office staff, for example, are more likely to know when they should involve LLOs in responding to sensitive congressional inquiries received directly.

Avoiding inappropriate assignments
or referrals

Non-LLO personnel responsible for assigning response preparation and referral of phone callers should be trained in congressional relations and be familiar with departmental and agency program staff so they can decide whether program staff should be asked to respond directly to inquiries. In all cases, before making assignments or referrals, non-LLO personnel should be certain that they will be made to appropriate personnel. If non-LLO personnel are unsure of the assignments or referrals they are making, they should be encouraged to check with senior LLO officials first. Moreover, persons to whom referrals or assignments are made should be questioned regarding their familiarity with the substance of inquiries and their ability to respond.

Non-LLO personnel assigning inquiries must be able to recognize those which cross program lines and require involvement of more than one respondent. Assignment of such inquiries to only one respondent may lead to incomplete replies.

Records of inquiry/response assignments should be maintained so senior LLO staff may review those which involve the subject matters and/or congressmen with whom they specialize. Assignments of inquiries requiring written

response should be reviewed right away to avoid wasted effort on the part of inappropriate respondents and delay in the LLO's preparation and response.

Guiding congressional contacts

Congressmen and their staffs often make inquiries directly to agency or bureau offices. If direct contacts are not made with knowledgeable sources, unresponsive and/or untimely replies may result. Incorrect contacts need not occur. Those that do may stem largely from failure of LLOs to provide congressional offices with information on appropriate points of contact.

Some LLOs want to receive and respond to all congressional inquiries and thus discourage direct congressional contacts with program staff. For example, some LLOs in letters of introduction to new members of the Congress list only one name and phone number--for the head of the LLO--as a reference for directing inquiries. Some other LLOs list all their staff members and the program areas they handle. Few, however, explain the nature of inquiries (policy, legislative, budgetary, or constituent) appropriate for direction to LLO staff and few provide non-LLO contacts. Failure of LLOs to guide congressional inquiries can lead to contacts selected from phone books and perhaps numerous subsequent referrals which may or may not lead to appropriate sources.

LLOs could assist congressional members by providing them with an "inquiry guide" which lists all LLO staff departmentwide and explains not only the subject matter but the type of inquiry appropriately directed to each. An inquiry guide might also list appropriate program office contacts for inquiries of a strictly factual nature. Availability of inquiry guides can reduce the number of misdirected inquiries and incorrect responses and the time spent by LLOs in making assignments and referrals.

Congressional phone calls are often referred to the first person or office number coming to the mind of the agency employee receiving the call. In addition to using inquiry guides, all staff departmentwide should be instructed that when receiving direct congressional inquiries, particularly phone calls, it is the agency's or receiving person's responsibility to determine the appropriate point of contact. All department staff should be made aware of the LLOs' capacity to identify contact points and be instructed to avail themselves of such assistance, if necessary, before referring inquiries.

Assuring timely responses

To assist in achieving the objectives of timely and substantive responses and of the LLO awareness of congressional interest, LLOs should establish mechanisms for recording and monitoring all written and substantive telephone inquiries received departmentwide or agencywide. Inquiries should be identifiable by date of receipt, response due date, inquiring congressional member and/or committee, constituent involved (if applicable), program or issue area, nature of inquiry (policy or case), point of receipt, and location of respondent or organization to which response assignment was made. Due dates should be established for both phone and written inquiries, and the LLO staff should be able to monitor responses by due date and locate responses in process at all times.

When two or more organizations are involved in response preparation, the LLO should make a clear assignment of responsibility for coordinating response preparation and establish deadlines for receiving response input by the coordinating office. Reviews of responses by offices not involved in response preparation should be limited in number and by time. Reports of past due and upcoming due responses should be prepared and used to remind responsible offices to complete response preparation.

Receipt of written congressional inquiries regarding constituent matters should be acknowledged immediately in writing with some indication of when responses can be expected. Such acknowledgements are considered vital by congressional offices because they provide congressmen with responses that can be immediately forwarded to constituents informing them that their problems are being handled promptly. Substantive interim replies should be prepared--preferably before the due dates--for all inquiries which cannot be responded to by established or negotiated due dates. Such replies should also be prepared for all inquiries which require a long time to completely respond to (perhaps 15 days) even though inquirers may know this.

The adequacy of telephone systems in LLO offices is very important. Phone calls are often urgent matters (i.e., matters that cannot wait for preparation of written inquiries and responses).

LLO phone systems should be set up to minimize the probability of busy lines. When messages must be taken, receptionists should ask the nature of the call so that the LLO

staff can be prepared to respond when returning the call. All LLO staff should be urged to return calls promptly, and alternative provisions should be made to return calls made to the LLO staff who are out of the office for the day or longer.

All written and substantive telephone inquiries and responses, whether case or policy oriented, should be centrally recorded for easy reference by the LLO staff. Files should be maintained so the LLO staff can review inquiries by congressmen, programs, and issue areas.

The LLO staff should be familiar with the content of all substantive telephone inquiries, all written inquiries, and responses (including interim responses) involving policy, legislative, and appropriation matters, but not all casework type inquiries. Analysis of inquiries by issue area may identify areas of increasing congressional interest, areas needing more explanation to the Congress, and programs needing better administration.

In many departments and agencies, automated equipment is used to log and track congressional inquiries and responses. At one agency, for example, automated equipment is used for recording, filing, and referencing communications and virtually all program data retrieval.

Using automation for communications logging and tracking may be justified based on large workloads. Workloads and the number and diversity of both agency programs and associated issues provide a basis for deciding whether automated equipment should be used for recording, filing, and referencing communications.

Centralized computer retrieval of program data permits almost immediate response to many casework type telephone inquiries. Retrieval of all program data may not be feasible in some departments, however, because of the diversity of program operations.

Departments and agencies having difficulty responding to inquiries in a timely fashion should consider automation and other system characteristics discussed in these guidelines. Systematic procedures should be established for periodic independent evaluations of the timeliness and quality of LLO and program office responses to congressional inquiries. LLOs should request feedback regarding their responsiveness from congressional offices. The program office

staffs and the LLO staff should assess systems for processing congressional inquiries and should take actions when necessary to improve their services.

LLO staff experience and training

LLOs should be staffed with individuals having either Hill or program experience, or both, to respond better to policy/legislative and constituent/casework inquiries.

LLO staff members that have previously served on the Hill usually bring a sense of urgency to responding to congressional inquiries. LLO staff members with Hill experience understand the nature of congressional office operations and are usually familiar with the often unstated priorities which these offices place on inquiries. Being familiar with the legislative process, they may more easily recognize the significance of actions taken on pending legislation and can better assess the status and potential outcome of their departments' legislative initiatives. Such staff may be better able, therefore, to provide departmental officials with realistic assessments of congressional climate which can be used to guide departmental/congressional negotiations.

An LLO staff possessing intimate knowledge of department, agency, or bureau programs enables the LLO to respond quickly to constituent inquiries or those requiring strictly factual data. LLOs often receive inquiries requiring only the conveyance of such things as a general understanding of program origin, objectives, scope or magnitude, impact, methods of implementation, progress, and proposed changes. In answering this type of inquiry, as well as a constituent inquiry, staff with extensive program experience usually know immediately the appropriate source of information for a substantive response.

LLO staff members working on constituent inquiries must be able to recognize responses which require policy input and those of which policy specialists should be made aware. Some responses to constituent inquiries, for example, require an explanation of agency action in terms of governing policy. Other responses may require an explanation of actions which deviate or appear to deviate from agency policy. Still other responses may concern agency actions in areas where policy is not firmly established. Responses to such inquiries may need to be worded so agency action is not construed as representative of established or existing policy.

LLO staff members should be trained to maximize their capability to handle various requests for information in an informative, expeditious, tactful, and professional manner. As a minimum, orientation/training should provide instructions on the agency's general policy regarding congressional relations; agency programs, objectives, and general administration; specific agency policy and position on legislative and programmatic issues currently of interest to the Congress and the agency; and general office protocol.

Orientation for LLO staff members should include instructions on the

- roles and responsibilities of LLOs throughout the department and the interrelationship that exists among them;
- agency policy on the release of information to members of the Congress or congressional staff;
- agency policy regarding congressional staff access to program personnel at headquarters and field office locations;
- procedures for responding to policy/legislation and constituent/casework inquiries and differentiating between these types of inquiries;
- procedures for receiving, recording, and responding to telephone inquiries;
- procedures for referring written and telephone inquiries to program personnel at headquarters or field office locations;
- importance of responding within the established time frame;
- LLO protocol regarding contacts made with members of the Congress or congressional staff; and
- letterwriting format and style.

The above list of training areas is not all-inclusive. Accordingly, each LLO should review its operations and determine those functions which would benefit from staff orientation and training.

Attitudes toward congressional relations

The success of implementing procedures to further assure adequate response to congressional inquiries is largely dependent on the attitudes of both LLO and the program office staff toward congressional relations. Some LLO staff, for example, may view their role as primarily an advocate for executive department positions. They may limit information disclosure to the minimum required by congressional inquiries and only to such data as they believe will shed favorable light on their departments' performance. Some program personnel may be reluctant to deal with congressional inquiries because they fear either criticism of their performance or budget cuts or simply because they lack an appreciation of the need for give and take in information exchange. Ultimately, top level management may not possess or convey a strong commitment to full cooperation between the Congress and the executive branch.

Top level management may help coordinate departmental congressional liaison activities and further assure adherence to related policy and procedures by assigning responsibility for its department's overall congressional relations to a high level departmental official. In addition, it can include that official and other key LLO staff in meetings of top level departmental officials. Authority and responsibility for implementing departmental policy and procedures for congressional liaison should be assigned to a position high enough in the organization to command the influence and power necessary for exercising such authority. Assignment of responsibility for congressional relations to a high level official, such as an assistant secretary, demonstrates top management's concern for congressional relations. Cooperation between agency and department level LLOs is generally enhanced when meetings of their staffs are chaired by an official possessing the stature of an assistant secretary. Coordination of departmental policy and legislative communications with the Congress can be helped when the chief departmental LLO official is a member of or at least a participant in meetings of departmental policy counsels and if he/she meets periodically with LLO, policy, and legislative staffs throughout the department.

To increase the probability that congressional inquiries are handled appropriately, departmental policy and procedures on congressional relations should stress the need for balance in LLO roles and the need for timely and substantive responses to congressional inquiries. Policy and procedural guidance should be documented and distributed

to all staff. Overall policy should stress the importance of maintaining open communication and cooperation between the Congress and the executive branch. Procedural guidance should require strict adherence to such things as deadlines, acknowledgements, interim replies, response review and coordination channels, inquiry and response documentation, and criteria for referring and assigning congressional inquiries.

ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL
LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

Department of Justice
Washington, D.C. 20530

FEB 17 1979

Mr. Allen R. Voss
Director, Federal Personnel
and Compensation Division
Room 4000
441 G Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20548

Dear Mr. Voss:

In accordance with your letter of January 29, 1979 we have completed the questionnaire and have reviewed the draft "Guidelines for the Effective Management and Operation of Executive Branch Legislative Liaison Offices."

We found the guidelines a useful and comprehensive description of the various functions of an Executive Branch Legislative Liaison Office. In general, we are in agreement with the contents of these guidelines and believe that their observance could help improve the effectiveness of legislative liaison offices. There are a few areas which give us some problems.

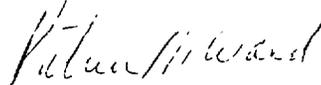
On page 9 it is indicated that LLOs should establish mechanisms for recording and monitoring all substantive telephone inquiries received department or agency-wide. We believe that selectivity should be exercised in determining which telephone calls need to generate a permanent record of their contents and disposition. The person taking an incoming call, of course, keeps records concerning the call until it is properly acted upon, but reducing the transaction to permanent record form thereafter, except on a selective basis, should not be necessary.

On page 10 it is stated that written inquiries should be acknowledged immediately in writing with some indication of when responses can be expected. Here again we believe that some selectivity is in order. Several years ago, the Department instituted a system of immediate "automatic" acknowledgement of all incoming congressional correspondence and it was soon determined to be counterproductive. The wide variety in the subject matter, degree of sensitivity and manner of ultimate disposition made routine acknowledgements inappropriate in many instances. A system of selective acknowledgements is now being used and appears to be working well.

On page 11 it is indicated that files of inquiries and responses should be centrally recorded by congressmen, program and issue area (emphasis supplied). We maintain such files by congressmen only and have found these files to be entirely adequate to serve our retrieval needs. Even this degree of record-keeping creates a mountain of paper and to triple this would greatly increase the workload with only a minimal return. The nature of our operation, we believe, permits recognition of problem areas without resort to a formal analysis system by issue area. Some agencies may need cross-filing, but we believe that the guidelines should be flexible enough to accommodate those that do not.

In summary, we are, except as noted, in general agreement with the draft guidelines and believe they can serve a very helpful function. Thank you for enabling us to review and comment on the draft.

Sincerely,



Patricia M. Wald
Assistant Attorney General



DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON, D C 20250

February 14, 1979

MEMORANDUM TO: Cathy Pardee
Federal Personnel and Compensation Division
General Accounting Office

FROM: Larry Meyers 
Deputy Director
Congressional Affairs

SUBJECT: General Comments on the Draft Guidelines for
the Effective Management of Liaison Offices

In general, I feel the document is very well prepared and contains good detail on the operation of a congressional liaison office. Overall it is very familiar to our operation, which is professionally satisfying to me.

On page 9 of the draft, the report discusses and encourages an inquiry guide in a manner which seems to indicate that the guide should be extremely comprehensive so as to include any individuals in the Department who can comment on a particular subject matter. I feel strongly that such an inquiry guide must be limited to the principal legislative liaison office. Only in such a manner can the proper policies be put forward and only in that manner can you begin to control such information that may flow from the Department that is counter to Administration policy.

On page 10, the document discusses how telephone inquiries should be identified for later filing and follow-up work. The discussion in the document strikes me as too detailed, and I feel strongly that the general crush of events in a liaison office would prevent such detailed recording of inquiries. As a compromise, I enclose a copy of the form I have used to file telephone casework which may be more useful because of time constraints.

Page 11 discusses the adequacy of telephone systems, and I very much agree that prompt response to telephone inquiries

must be of highest priority within a liaison office. It is for that reason that we in this office have cross-trained so that each person has a backup in his subject areas. This facilitates the return of phone calls late in the day and could be useful to other offices.

Page 12 discusses the use of automated equipment to log and track congressional inquiries. We currently do not have the facilities or funds to instigate such a system except for our correspondence section. However, I think the suggestion is a good one, and we will be investigating how we can best utilize it in the future.

Please do not hesitate to call if we here at USDA can be of further service to you in your study.



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON D C 20350

IN REPLY REFER TO

1 FEB 1979

Mr. H. L. Krieger
Director, Federal Personnel and Compensation Division
U.S. General Accounting Office
Washington, D.C. 20548

Dear Mr. Krieger:

This is in reply to your letter of January 26, 1979, to the Secretary of the Navy regarding "Guidelines for the Effective Management and Operation of Executive Branch Legislative Liaison Offices" (OSD case #5088).

The Guidelines contained a brief explanation of the functions of Legislative Liaison Offices (LLOs), the nature of congressional inquiries they receive and observations on the management and operation of LLOs. As requested, the completed questionnaire on executive branch legislative liaison office practices is enclosed.

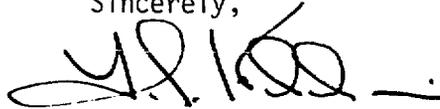
The Guidelines provide an excellent basis for LLOs to evaluate the effectiveness of their organization. The suggested procedures which other LLOs utilize are well worth investigation by every LLO to determine if the procedure would improve their department's legislative liaison effectiveness.

It is noted that in the LLO functions section of the Guidelines no mention is made of congressional briefings and hearings. A significant amount of time and personnel resources are expended by the Department of the Navy in this function. For instance, in 1978 the Navy had 2158 appearances by personnel involved as either primary or backup briefers and witnesses. The briefings and hearings totaled 1015 hours and accounted for 5413 man hours for primary and secondary briefers and witnesses. These figures are "chair" hours and do not include preparation or transit time. The Office of Legislative Affairs must arrange for the briefers and witnesses, process and distribute witnesses' statements, make and set up witnesses' name plates at hearings, coordinate submission of transcript corrections and have a representative at each briefing and hearing. Since briefings and hearings do consume a significant amount of resources and provide the basis for congressional committees' actions on the Federal Budget consideration should be given to mentioning this LLO function.

The Guidelines specify that written inquiries should be acknowledged immediately in writing with some indication of when responses can be expected. This guideline is not concurred with. For approximately two years the Office of Legislative Affairs did this with all congressional inquiries addressed to the Secretary of the Navy. It was found that an unnecessary amount of paper work that did not answer the question was

generated and increased the administrative workload of congressional offices as well as that of the Office of Legislative Affairs. In fact, several congressional offices asked that these immediate acknowledgements not be sent. The Department of the Navy requires that all congressional inquiries be answered within five working days of receipt. If a final reply cannot be provided, then an interim reply with an estimated date of when a final reply can be expected is required. It is believed that this procedure works better than requiring an immediate acknowledgement letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. J. Kilcline', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

T. J. KILCLINE
Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy
Chief of Legislative Affairs

Enclosure



DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20410

FEB 16 1979

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY
FOR LEGISLATION
AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

IN REPLY REFER TO:

Mr. Henry Eschwege
Director, Federal Personnel
and Compensation Division
U. S. General Accounting Office
Room 4000
441 G Street, N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20548

Dear Mr. Eschwege:

Your letter of January 26, 1978 to Secretary Harris regarding the guidelines for the Effective Management of Executive Bank Legislation Liaison Offices has been referred to this office for response.

While I have no specific comments on the guidelines, my overall view is that they generally conform to the existing practices that have been established at the Department of Housing and Urban Development for liaison with Congressional offices.

I appreciate the opportunity to comment on the guidelines and to complete the questionnaire. Please let me know if I may be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

William B. Welsh
Assistant Secretary for
Legislation and Intergovernmental
Relations

Enclosure

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

WASHINGTON

FEB 2 1973

Mr. Gregory J. Ahart
Director
Human Resources Division
U.S. General Accounting Office
Washington, D.C. 20548

Dear Mr. Ahart:

Thank you very much for providing us with the opportunity to comment on your draft report concerning the management and operation of legislative liaison offices. I agree with many of your observations and want to emphasize that it is particularly important that there not be a rigid pattern for Agencies dealing with these activities in that much depends on the size of the Agency as well as the size and quality of the staff involved in legislative liaison activities.

I feel strongly that legislative liaison can be effective only when close cooperation exists between the legislative office, the Secretary and Assistant Secretaries. We have established such a working relationship here and are quite pleased with its effectiveness. My legislative liaison staff is small, but it is a highly competent professional unit. Because of the caliber of the people involved, I have not found it necessary to establish formal procedures for many aspects of their jobs. The liaison officers have established many contacts in the bureaus within their respective areas of responsibility and they work continuously at maintaining open communication with these contacts.

Although a substantial portion of my legislative liaison staff's time is spent in responding to Congressional inquiries, it certainly does not represent the majority of activity of the office. They are heavily involved in the development of and advocacy for the Administration's labor-related legislation. I think it is also extremely important to note that the legislative office initiates a significant number of contacts with Members of the Congress, on both sides of the aisle. It is imperative that we keep Members constantly appraised of the status of the Department's programs, and equally important that we learn of their intentions with respect to possible legislation and understand their views.

It seems to me that the only shortcoming in the report is the failure to discuss at any length the many activities performed by legislative liaison offices aside from those duties involved in responding to mail or telephonic inquiries.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ray Marshall". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Secretary of Labor

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20554

FEB 2 1979

IN REPLY REFER TO:

3200

Mr. Henry Eschwege
Director, Community and Economic
Development Division
U. S. General Accounting Office
Washington, D.C. 20548

Dear Mr. Eschwege:

I am responding to your letter dated January 26, 1979, concerning your Office's current study for the House Select Committee on Congressional Operations of certain agency Legislative Liaison Offices for the purpose of improving their efficiency. Your letter requests our comments on draft "Guidelines for the Effective Management and Operation of Executive Branch Legislative Liaison Offices" and further requests our response to a questionnaire on Legislative Liaison Office practices.

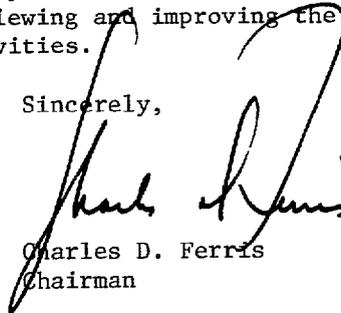
Our response to the questionnaire is attached. However, before submitting our specific comments and suggestions concerning the Guidelines, some general observations should be made. First, the fact that the FCC is an independent agency directly affects how certain legislative liaison matters are handled, often differently than in the Executive Branch. These differences were noted in a letter of December 12, 1978 (copy attached) from our General Counsel to Ms. Fauntleroy of your staff in connection with an earlier phase of this project. For example, because of this Commission's many judicial and quasi-judicial functions we often are prohibited by law from responding to Congressional inquiries concerning adjudicatory proceedings. Moreover, as an independent regulatory agency operating under a fixed annual budget, and with relatively well-established and on-going functions, this Commission has a different relationship with the Congress than other "programatic" agencies which are constantly seeking out programs and funding from the Congress. Secondly, the Guidelines appear to have been drafted for a large organization with a large LLO staff and many of its suggestions may not be practical for smaller organizations. Finally, we would note that the initial sections on "Background," "What LLO's do," and "Nature of congressional inquiries" together constitute one of the best written summaries of this important professional specialty which we have seen.

At the top of Page 6 under the heading of "Delegating and referring inquiries," the Guidelines recommend that program offices should be delegated authority to respond directly to Congress, with only "information copies" for LLO files. We believe, however, that insofar as written communications are concerned, review by either the Legislative Liaison Office or the Chairman's Office of all correspondence to members of the Congress is essential, if for no other purpose than to assure that the communication is directly responsive to the inquiry.

At Page 9, "Guiding congressional contacts," the Guidelines recommend that LLOs furnish all congressional members with an "inquiry guide" which, among other things would list appropriate program office contacts by subject matter for direct congressional contact. We do believe, however, that this Commission's areas of regulation are so complex that the assistance of the LLO usually is essential to be referred to the proper bureau or office. For example, if a Congressional inquiry is received dealing with the subject of "pay television," the matter could relate to any one of three totally separate Commission bureaus. A general "inquiry guide" to the Commission's staff would certainly be useful for both Congressional staff and the public; but we believe that the Commission can be more efficient and responsive to inquiries by coordinating them through its liaison office.

We appreciate the opportunity to present our views in the matter; and we are committed to continually reviewing and improving the effectiveness of the Commission's liaison activities.

Sincerely,



Charles D. Ferris
Chairman

Enclosures



VETERANS ADMINISTRATION
OFFICE OF THE ADMINISTRATOR OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20420

MARCH 5 - 1979

Mr. Hyman L. Krieger
Director, Federal Personnel
and Compensation Division
General Accounting Office
Room 4000
441 G Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20548

Dear Mr. Krieger:

As requested in a January 29, 1979 letter, we have reviewed the draft report titled "Guidelines for the Effective Management and Operation of Executive Branch Legislative Liaison Offices."

The report notes that Legislative Liaison Offices (LLO's) provide information and assistance to the Congress and to executive department and agency officials through a number of liaison activities. These activities include providing members of Congress with information concerning executive branch actions and programs which might appreciably affect their State, district or committee assignment. Also included are activities such as providing assistance in resolving intra-departmental differences on legislative matters and identifying areas of compromise between congressional and departmental positions on issues.

Our liaison activities are comparable to what you have described. This has been achieved by organizing the liaison office under the direct supervision of the General Counsel, whose office coordinates all legislative activities for our Agency.

The report also states that congressional inquiries are commonly categorized as either constituent inquiries or policy and legislative inquiries. This coincides with our practice; our liaison office is staffed with career civil servants who respond to constituent inquiries and with Schedule C appointees who respond to legislative and policy questions. We believe this division of responsibility has worked well.

With respect to the management and operation of LLO's, the report states that several practices and procedures were observed by the GAO staff at selected LLO's which all such

offices should consider adopting. These practices and procedures are discussed as guidelines to congressional inquiries and include: (1) delegating and referring inquiries; (2) guiding congressional contacts; (3) assuring timely responses; (4) training of LLO staff; and (5) developing a balanced attitude toward congressional relations.

We are in agreement with your proposed recommendations and we appreciate the emphasis you place on tailoring them to the organizational make-up of an executive department or agency. Currently, our liaison office is, in general, functioning as you have recommended. The scope of operation, however, is confined primarily to written or telephonic inquiries received by the liaison office and the Administrator's Office (although the liaison office receives reports of contact from department and staff offices). Your recommendations would broaden the scope of LLO activity to all written and telephonic congressional inquiries received by the agency. In view of your comments, we are reassessing our liaison activities to determine what changes should be made.

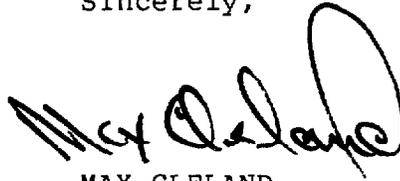
Your suggestions concerning the issuance of an "inquiry guide" and the use of automated equipment to track congressional inquiries were also of interest to us. We agree that an inquiry guide could reduce the number of congressional referrals within our liaison office and thus we plan to give further consideration to the development of such a guide.

Currently, limited use of ADP equipment is made to notify congressional offices of grant and contract awards, personnel assignments, and other vital program information. The General Counsel's Office is now in the process of evaluating the various types of automated equipment to log and track pending legislation. If a positive decision is made, we believe that a system could be operational in 1980. Furthermore, we are in the preliminary stages of investigating the possibility of automating the VA's Central Office mail procedures. Additionally, the VA is currently automating all veterans' claims folders in a nationwide system called TARGET. Access to this programmed information by the liaison office will clearly reduce the amount of time involved in retrieving constituent information.

We appreciate the opportunity to review and comment on this report. The VA is committed to working with the Congress and we find our liaison office to be a vital link between these two branches of government.

With warm regards.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Max Cleland". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

MAX CLELAND
Administrator

Enclosure



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
The Assistant Secretary for Congressional Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20230
(202) 377-3663

March 5, 1979

Mr. H. L. Krieger
Director, Federal Personnel and
Compensation Division
United States General Accounting
Office
441 G Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20548

Dear Mr. Krieger:

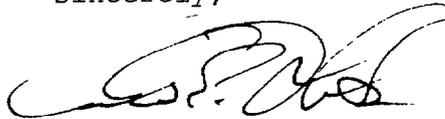
This is in reply to your request that we complete a questionnaire concerning practices and procedures of Executive Branch legislative liaison offices and comment on your draft guidelines for such offices.

In the Department of Commerce the legislative liaison activity is allocated among three primary offices. The Assistant Secretary for Congressional Affairs (OCA) manages the movement of legislation through the Congress and directs liaison with Senators, Representatives and Committee staff; is the initial Department contact for incoming requests from Congress and generally assigns constituent or casework inquiries. The Assistant Secretary for Administration, and the Budget Office under her, is involved in committee liaison concerning the Department's appropriation bills and hearings. The General Counsel (OGC), through the Assistant General Counsel for Legislation, is responsible for development of legislative policy and responses to legislative inquiries and liaison with the Office of Management and Budget and other Executive Branch agencies on legislative policy and clearance. While this rough description of the division of responsibility is not definitive, it gives you a summary picture of the Department's legislative liaison activities. Enclosed please find questionnaires completed by the Office of Congressional Affairs and the Office of the General Counsel.

We found comment on the guidelines in general to be very difficult and would hope another draft might be prepared. As presently drafted, it is inaccurate in basic respects as it would apply to the Department of Commerce. Neither does it include the legislative clearance function of the Office of Management and Budget. [See GAO note.]

Without an extensive review, line by line, we would find any comment difficult, but would be pleased to meet with you to discuss any proposed guidelines.

Sincerely,



Andrew E. Manatos
ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR
CONGRESSIONAL AFFAIRS

GAO note:

A Department of Commerce official subsequently elaborated on what was meant by this statement. Commerce believes the Guidelines are inaccurate because at Commerce all legislative liaison activity is not performed solely by the LLO. Some activity such as preparing testimony and certain congressional correspondence is performed by the Office of the General Counsel and the Executive Secretary's staff.



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE
 SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION
 BALTIMORE MARYLAND 21235

REFER TO:
 SXQ

MAR 13 1979

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

Mr. Hy L. Krieger
 Director, Federal Personnel
 and Compensation Division
 General Accounting Office
 Room 4000
 441 G Street, NW.
 Washington, D.C. 20548

Dear Mr. Krieger:

As requested by Mr. Gregory J. Ahart when he transmitted GAO's draft report titled Guidelines for the Effective Management and Operations of Executive Branch Legislative Liaison Offices, enclosed is our completed questionnaire.

I believe the purpose of the study to be very worthwhile, and I was pleased that we were asked to participate. Members of my staff who met with Ms. Pardee and the work group report that a useful exchange of information resulted. I trust that the guidelines developed from the study will prove useful to Federal agencies in improving their legislative liaison functions. We at SSA take our legislative liaison responsibilities seriously. We have made a significant investment in personnel, training and equipment to provide an effective service.

In addition to our comments in the questionnaire itself, I would like to comment on the item on page 7 of the draft report titled "Avoiding inappropriate delegations or referrals". As we understand this item, the problem arises in those agencies that have several different offices receiving Congressional inquiries. SSA, as well as other agencies, have solved this problem by centralizing the receipt and control of Congressional correspondence in one office. This is equally true for telephone calls received from Congressional offices. Thus, we believe that a recommendation to have a central receipt point in an agency is worth considering in your report.

Please let us know if we can be of any further help in this study.

Sincerely,

Stanford G. Ross
 Stanford G. Ross
 Commissioner of Social Security

Enclosure



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
The Assistant Secretary for Administration
Washington, D C 20230

MAR 26 1979

Mr. H. L. Krieger
Director, Federal Personnel and
Compensation Division
U. S. General Accounting Office
Washington, D. C. 20548

Dear Mr. Krieger:

Enclosed is a copy of the Economic Development Administration's comments on the GAO draft report "Guidelines For The Effective Management and Operation of Executive Branch Legislative Liaison Offices" and the completed "Questionnaire on Executive Branch Legislative Liaison Office Practices."

The enclosed response represents the reply of EDA as to legislative liaison activities of that agency. It should be recognized, however, that EDA is a constituent agency of the Department of Commerce and the EDA's Office of Congressional Relations operates within the general guidelines and subject to control, supervision, and direction at the Department level as described in Assistant Secretary Manatos' reply to your questionnaire. The EDA response should be read in that light and is subject to the points spelled out in Assistant Secretary Manatos' reply.

Sincerely,


Elsa A. Porter
Assistant Secretary
for Administration

Enclosure



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
The Assistant Secretary for Economic Development
Washington, D.C. 20230

MAR 14 1979

Mr. Henry Eschwege
Director, Community and Economic
Development Division
U. S. General Accounting Office
Washington, D. C. 20548

Dear Mr. Eschwege:

The Economic Development Administration (EDA) has examined the General Accounting Office's draft report, "Guidelines for the Effective Management and Operation of Executive Branch Legislative Liaison Offices." We believe this report contains much worthwhile information designed to improve the operations of Legislative Liaison Offices (LLOs), particularly in the sensitive area of responses to congressional inquiries.

We have the following general and specific comments to make on your report.

General

The EDA Office of Congressional Relations (OCR), which was one of the organizational units surveyed by GAO as a source for the report, agrees with the general findings contained in your sections on "Background," "What LLOs Do" and "Nature of Congressional Inquiries." The functions of this office correspond with those of your report, with one exception. OCR processes congressional telephonic inquiries only. EDA's Executive Secretariat processes all written congressional correspondence signed by the Assistant Secretary or the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Economic Development. The Executive Secretariat also records receipt of all congressional correspondence to EDA Washington offices.

At the present time, OCR has a staff of four professionals, one paraprofessional and two secretaries. In the near future, two additional paraprofessionals will be recruited for this Office.

Delegating and Referring Inquiries

a. Under established policy, OCR delegates almost no telephone inquiries to other units of the Agency. Only when the inquiry is of a highly technical or programmatic nature (which occurs very infrequently) does OCR make a delegation to other offices. The Agency sees little merit to a change in this policy.

b. A change may be warranted in our policy for written inquiries/responses. At the present time OCR clears all written congressional inquiries requiring the signature of the Assistant Secretary or the Deputy Assistant Secretary. EDA does not require that written inquiries for the signature of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Operations or the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy and Planning be cleared with OCR. While most of these responses involve detailed knowledge of Agency or Department program operations, some will contain sensitive policy. As your report suggests, OCR clearance on this congressional correspondence may be needed. Accordingly, we are considering establishing a sampling policy for written responses by the DAS/Operations and the DAS/Policy and Planning.

c. According to your report, the ability of program offices to respond to policy related inquiries can be enhanced if LLOs periodically meet with key program officials to assure a clear understanding of Agency/Department positions.

We do not see the need to expand OCR's activities in this regard. The Director of OCR is a member of the Agency's Policy Council, attends senior staff meetings, and has frequent contact with members of top management. As a result, OCR already has numerous opportunities to brief management on the need to maintain awareness and control of congressional communications.

Avoiding Inappropriate Delegation or Referrals

a. According to the report, there are numerous chances for mistakes in performing this function. Some are: should the program staff respond directly to the congressional inquiry; has the right person received the action to respond; and should more than one person be assigned the action to respond?

In reviewing its operations, we do not believe that the Agency has problems here. Delegations for written inquiries are handled effectively and efficiently. All telephonic inquiries are centralized in OCR. The Agency is relatively small and as a result inappropriate delegations or referrals are avoided.

b. On the other hand, the proposal to maintain records of telephonic inquiries/responses has merit for the Agency. In the near future, OCR will obtain word processing equipment. This office plans to explore the possibility of using this automated equipment to establish a system for recording and tracking all telephonic congressional inquiries and responses.

Guiding Congressional Contacts

The report recommends publishing a directory to be given to congressional offices so that questions may be directed to the appropriate staff member of the LLO or program office. The Agency does not publish such a directory and does not see the need to do so. Since all congressional calls are directed to OCR, it would be counterproductive to provide a listing to congressional offices suggesting who else in the Agency could be contacted. Referral of calls to the appropriate staff person is currently handled by the OCR staff member answering the telephone.

Assuring Timely Response

a. The report recommends establishing mechanisms for recording and monitoring all written and substantive telephone inquiries. We believe our present system for monitoring written responses is adequate.

b. To assist LLO staff in monitoring responses at all times, you recommend that phone systems minimize the probability of busy lines, receptionists determine the subject of calls so LLO staff can respond immediately when returning the calls. You also recommend that the LLO establish alternative provisions to return calls made to LLO staff who are out of the office for the day or longer, and analyze inquiries to identify areas of increasing congressional interest. All of these practices are presently being used by OCR.

LLO Staff Experience and Training

a. Most LLO staff have had Hill experience. All are trained in Agency policy and operations.

b. In cooperation with the appropriate program offices, OCR plans to explore the possibility of developing systems for responding to congressional inquiries using standardized terminology to the extent practicable. Such responses would explain Agency actions in terms of governing policy, deviation or apparent deviation from Agency policy, and areas where policy is not firmly established.

Attitudes Toward Congressional Relations

We agree with the attitude of full cooperation between the Congress and the Executive Branch recommended by your report. OCR will continue to encourage this attitude at all times.

Points not Raised in the Draft Report

One procedure which OCR has used and has found to be productive for handling all incoming telephone inquiries from congressional offices and for clearing congressional correspondence is by assigning specific geographic areas to various members of its staff. To the extent possible, the assignments coincide with the boundaries of EDA's regional offices. This system assists OCR staff to:

- o become acquainted with staff of congressional offices,
- o become familiar with economic development problems and projects in the states they handle and respond to congressional inquiries more readily,
- o become acquainted with staff of the particular EDA regional offices making it easier to get information needed to respond to congressional inquiries, and
- o be more sensitive to problems the Agency may be encountering in a particular region of the country earlier when the problems can be solved more easily.

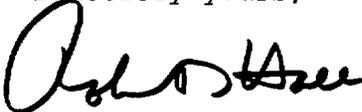
This arrangement means that all OCR staff must be familiar with the full range of Agency policies and programs. In a relatively small Agency like EDA, this has not been a problem.

Questionnaire

The questionnaire which was included as a part of your draft report has been completed by OCR and is enclosed.

We welcome the constructive recommendations contained in your draft report. Please contact us for any assistance we may give you in preparing your report in final.

Sincerely yours,



Robert T. Hall
Assistant Secretary
for Economic Development

Attachment

QUESTIONNAIRE ON EXECUTIVE BRANCH
LEGISLATIVE LIAISON OFFICE PRACTICES

U.S. General Accounting Office
Washington D.C.

January 1979

Please answer all questions for current practices of the legislative liaison office (LLO) at the highest level in your organization.

Indicate below the department or agency, title, and organizational level of the LLO to which your responses in this questionnaire apply:

_____ (department or agency)

_____ (title of LLO)

_____ (organizational level of LLO)

Please provide the name and phone number of an individual we can call, if necessary, regarding question responses:

_____ (name)

_____ (phone number)

Any questions regarding this questionnaire should be directed to Cathy Pardee or Tom Snyder at 633-0159.

Please return the completed questionnaire in the attached envelope which is addressed to:

Director
Federal Personnel and Compensation Division
Room 4000
441 G Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20548

Please answer questions 1-13 using the following scale. The numbers in parenthesis indicate what percents of time each scale point represents. Mark your answer by placing the appropriate letter (A-G) on the line to the left of each question.

- | | | |
|--|---------------------------|-------------|
| | A - Never | (0%) |
| | B - Usually not | (1% - 19%) |
| | C - Sometimes | (20% - 39%) |
| | D - About as often as not | (40% - 59%) |
| | E - Frequently | (60% - 79%) |
| | F - Very often | (80% - 99%) |
| | G - Always | (100%) |
-
- | Average
response | | |
|---------------------------------|-----|---|
| <u>frequently</u> | 1. | How often are inquiries requiring detailed program knowledge delegated to program offices? |
| <u>frequently</u> | 2. | How often are inquiries involving mostly facts and/or noncontroversial policy delegated to program offices? |
| <u>very often</u> | 3. | How often does LLO review responses prepared by program offices which contain policy matters. |
| about as often as <u>not</u> | 4. | For those inquiries involving policy interpretation of program data or policy and legislative issues, how often does LLO prepare the response using program office input or assistance? |
| <u>frequently</u> | 5. | How often are the receipt of written inquiries acknowledged? |
| <u>frequently</u> | 6. | How often are substantive interim replies prepared for inquiries requiring a lengthy time for response preparation? |
| <u>frequently</u> | 7. | How often does LLO staff review the content of <u>inquiries</u> handled by non-LLO staff which involve policy, legislative or appropriation matters? |
| <u>very often</u> | 8. | How often does LLO staff review the content of <u>responses</u> prepared by non-LLO staff which involve policy, legislative or appropriation matters? |
| <u>usually not</u> | 9. | How often is LLO unable to adequately review responses due to such internally imposed constraints as short deadlines and staff size? |
| <u>sometimes</u> | 10. | How often do inquirers provide insufficient lead time for the preparation of adequate responses? |
| <u>sometimes</u> | 11. | How often are inquiries unclear or in need of clarification? |
| <u>very often</u> | 12. | How often are unclear inquiries clarified? |
| <u>usually not</u> | 13. | How often is inquiry delegation performed by non-LLO staff? |

Please respond to questions 14 through 38 by placing a checkmark (✓) under the appropriate column.

Questions 14-17 refer to the use of inquiry guides. An inquiry guide is a directory or listing of agency officials' names, addresses, and phone numbers, possibly related to subject areas, which Congressmen or their staffs and other agency personnel can use in directing inquiries to appropriate agency contact points.

If your LLO does not have an inquiry guide skip to question 18.

| <u>Yes</u> | <u>No</u> | |
|------------|-----------|---|
| <u>1</u> | <u>3</u> | 14. Does your inquiry guide list all professional LLO staff departmentwide? |
| <u>4</u> | <u>0</u> | 15. Does your inquiry guide list areas of specialty for those staff members included? |
| <u>2</u> | <u>2</u> | 16. Does your inquiry guide explain the nature of inquiries appropriate for direction to LLO? |
| <u>2</u> | <u>2</u> | 17. Does your inquiry guide list non-LLO contacts? |
| <u>10</u> | <u>0</u> | 18. Are due dates established for all written inquiries? |
| <u>6</u> | <u>4</u> | 19. Are due dates established for all phone inquiries? |
| <u>8</u> | <u>2</u> | 20. Are non-LLO staff required to coordinate or notify LLO of all congressional inquiries? |
| <u>7</u> | <u>3</u> | 21. Is all department staff made aware via written instruction of LLO capacity to direct inquiries? |
| | | 22. Does LLO have a system for recording and monitoring inquiries by: |
| <u>8</u> | <u>2</u> | a. response due date |
| <u>9</u> | <u>1</u> | b. inquiring congressional member |
| <u>5</u> | <u>5</u> | c. constituent involved |
| <u>5</u> | <u>5</u> | d. program or issue area |
| <u>5</u> | <u>5</u> | e. nature of inquiry (policy versus case) |
| <u>7</u> | <u>3</u> | f. point of receipt (office designation) |
| <u>8</u> | <u>2</u> | g. respondent (office designation) |
| <u>10</u> | <u>0</u> | 23. For those inquiries requiring coordination of response preparation, are due dates established for receipt of response by the coordinating office? |

| <u>Yes</u> | <u>No</u> | |
|------------|-----------|---|
| <u>5</u> | <u>5</u> | 24. Is ADP equipment used to log and track inquiries and response preparation? |
| | | 25. Is ADP equipment used to record, file and reference the text of |
| <u>4</u> | <u>6</u> | a. Inquiries |
| <u>4</u> | <u>6</u> | b. Responses |
| <u>9</u> | <u>1</u> | 26. Are reports of past due and upcoming responses used to remind and press for responses? |
| <u>7</u> | <u>2</u> | 27. Is formal training or orientation covering LLO activities and operating procedures given to new LLO staff? |
| <u>7</u> | <u>3</u> | 28. Does LLO have written procedures for inquiry response? |
| <u>9</u> | <u>1</u> | 29. Do messages to LLO staff regarding initial phone inquiries include the subject of the inquiry as well as the name and number of the caller? |
| <u>4</u> | <u>6</u> | 30.. Is a record kept of all substantive phone inquiries? |
| <u>4</u> | <u>6</u> | 31. Is a record kept of all substantive phone responses? |
| <u>8</u> | <u>1</u> | 32. Does LLO assign responsibility for coordination of response preparation when two or more organizations are involved? |
| <u>5</u> | <u>3</u> | 33. Are non-LLO personnel who delegate inquiries instructed to check with senior LLO staff before making uncertain delegations? |
| <u>9</u> | <u>1</u> | 34. Does LLO discourage direct congressional contacts with program staff? |
| <u>6</u> | <u>4</u> | 35. Does LLO request feedback on responsiveness from congressional offices? |
| <u>4</u> | <u>6</u> | 36. Do program and LLO staff participate in assessments of inquiry response procedures? |
| <u>9</u> | <u>1</u> | 37. Does LLO staff brief program officials on policy issues? |
| <u>6</u> | <u>3</u> | 38. Do senior LLO staff review inquiry delegations involving congressmen or subject areas with which they specialize? |

39. How soon after inquiry delegation do senior LLO staff review the delegations involving the congressmen or subject areas with which they specialize?

1 to 15 days

40. Approximately what percentage of all written congressional inquiries received by your department/agency are responded to directly by your LLO?

1 to 50 percent

41. How many professional members of your LLO staff have Hill experience?

3 all
3 most
0 many
2 few
2 none

42. How many professional members of your LLO staff have program experience?

2 all
3 most
1 many
3 few
1 none

43. How is your inquiry guide distributed to the Congress?

0 not distributed to the Congress
0 upon request
3 automatically to all members
1 automatically to key members only
0 automatically to new members only

44. How often is your inquiry guide provided to the Congress?

1 each Congress (bi-annually)
2 each session (annually)
1 other (please specify)
bi-annually

45. What is LLO policy regarding return of phone calls?

2 no set policy

Calls are supposed to be returned:

1 within the hour
2 during same morning/afternoon
5 during same day
0 within 2 days
0 within week

AGENCY RESPONSES TO
QUESTIONNAIRE ON EXECUTIVE BRANCH LEGISLATIVE LIAISON OFFICE PRACTICES

| Question | Responses | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|-----------------|-------------------------|-----------------|--|-------------|-------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------|--------|
| | Social Security | Veterans Administration | Agriculture | Economic Development Administration (note a) | Law | Justice | HUD | FCC | Commerce (note b) | Labor | |
| 1 Delegates inquiries re: program details | Usually not | As often as not | As often as not | Usually not | Always | Very often | Very often | Very often | Very often | Very often | Always |
| 2 Delegates inquiries re: facts/noncontroversial policy | Usually not | Sometimes | Very often | Usually not | Very often | Very often | Frequently | Very often | Very often | Very often | Always |
| 3 Reviews non-LLO policy responses | Frequently | Very often | Very often | Always (written) | Always | Very often | Always | Always | Always | Always | Always |
| 4 Prepares policy & legislative responses w/non-LLO input | Frequently | Sometimes | Usually not | Always | Usually not | Usually not | Very often | Very often | Usually not | Sometimes | |
| 5 Acknowledges written inquiries | Very often | Very often | Always | Sometimes | Usually not | Sometimes | Always | Always | Always | Always | |
| 6 Prepares interim replies | Very often | Very often | Usually not | Usually not | Always | Sometimes | Frequently | Frequently | Always | Sometimes | |
| 7 Reviews policy, legislative, appropriation inquiries delegated to non-LLO | Very often | Very often | Never | Very often (written) | Very often | Usually not | Always | Very often | Sometimes | Very often | |
| 8 Reviews policy, legislative, appropriation responses delegated to non-LLO | Very often | Very often | Very often | Very often (written) | Very often | Very often | Always | Always | Always | Always | |
| 9 Internal constraints inhibit response review | Usually not | Usually not | Never | Never | Usually not | Very often | Usually not | As often as not | Never | Usually not | |
| 10 Insufficient response lead time | Usually not | Sometimes | Sometimes | Usually not | Usually not | Usually not | As often as not | As often as not | Usually not | Sometimes | |
| 11 Inquiries unclear | Usually not | Usually not | Sometimes | Frequently | Usually not | Usually not | Sometimes | As often as not | Usually not | Sometimes | |
| 12 Inquiries clarified | Always | Always | Frequently | Always | Very often | Very often | Very often | Very often | Very often | Always | |
| 13 Non-LLO staff delegate inquiries | Never | Usually not | Usually not | Never | Very often | Usually not | Usually not | Never | Usually not | Sometimes | |
| 14 Inquiry guide lists all LLO staff departmentwide | No | No guide | Yes | No guide | No guide | No guide | No guide | No | No guide | No | |
| 15 Inquiry guide lists specialty areas | Yes | - | Yes | - | - | - | - | Yes | - | Yes | |
| 16 Inquiry guide explains inquiries appropriate for LLO | Yes | - | No | - | - | - | - | No | - | Yes | |
| 17 Inquiry guide lists non-LLO staff | Yes | - | No | - | - | - | - | Yes | - | No | |
| 18 Due dates established for written inquiries | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | |
| 19 Due dates established for phone inquiries | Yes | Yes | No | No | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | No | |
| 20 Non-LLO staff must notify LLO of congressional inquiries | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | |
| 21 Written instructions to agency personnel on LLO capacity to direct inquiries | Yes | No | No | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | |
| 22 System to record and monitor inquiries and responses by | | | | | | | | | | | |
| a due date | Yes | Yes | No | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | |
| b congressperson | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | |
| c constituent | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | No | No | No | No | Yes | Yes | |
| d program or issue | Yes | No | No | No | No | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | |
| e nature of inquiry | Yes | No | No | No | No | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | |
| f point of receipt | Yes | Yes | No | No | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | |
| g respondent office | Yes | Yes | No | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | |

| Question | Responses | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|-----------------|-------------------------|--------------------|--|-----------|------------------|---------------|---------------|-------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| | Social Security | Veterans Administration | Agriculture | Economic Development Administration (note a) | Navy | Justice | HUD | FCC | Commerce (note b) | Labor | | | |
| 23 Due dates established for coordinating office receiving response input | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes (written) | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| 24 ADP system used to log and track inquiries and responses | Yes | No | Yes | No | No | No | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| 25 ADP system used to record, file, reference text of inquiries | Yes | No | Yes | No | No | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | No |
| a inquiries | Yes | No | Yes | No | No | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | No |
| b responses | Yes | No | Yes | No | No | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | No |
| 26 Past due reports used to urge response preparation | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| 27 Formal LLO training provided | Yes | Yes | No | - | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | No |
| 28 Written LLO procedures exist | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | No |
| 29 Phone messages include subjects of inquiries | Yes | Yes | Yes | Sometimes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| 30 Record maintained of substantive phone inquiries | Yes | No | No | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | No | No | No | No | No | No |
| 31 Record maintained of substantive phone responses | Yes | No | No | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | No | No | No | No | No | No |
| 32 LLO assigns responsibility for response coordination | Yes | Yes | Yes | - | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| 33 Non-LLO staff instructed to check with LLO before delegating inquiries | Yes | No | No | - | No | Yes | Yes | N/A | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| 34 Discourage congressional contact with non-LLO staff | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| 35 Request feedback on responsiveness from congressional offices | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | No | No | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| 36 LLO and non-LLO staff periodically assess response procedures | Yes | No | No | No | No | No | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| 37 LLO staff brief program staff on policy issues | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| 38 LLO staff review delegations by specialty areas | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | No | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| 39 Length of time (in days) before reviewing inquiry delegations | Within 2 | 1 or 2 | Case-by-case basis | - | N/A | - | 7 to 14 | 10 to 15 | 1 to 3 | 14 | 14 | 14 | 14 |
| 40 Percentage of written inquiries responded to by LLO | 50% | 15% | 5% | 1% | 2% | 1% | 50% | 25% | Less than 1% | 10% | 10% | 10% | 10% |
| 41 Professional LLO staff with Hill experience | None | All | All | Most | None | Few | Most | Few | All | Most | Most | Most | Most |
| 42 Professional LLO staff with program experience | All | Most | Few | None | All | Many | Few | Most | Most | Few | Few | Few | Few |
| 43 Inquiry guide distributed to the congress | All members | No guide | All members | No guide | No guide | No guide | No guide | Key members | No guide | All members | All members | All members | All members |
| 44 Frequency of providing inquiry guide provided | Each congress | No guide | Each session | No guide | No guide | No guide | No guide | Bi-annually | No guide | Each session + updates |
| 45 Policy on returning phone calls | Same day | Same day | Same day | Same day | No policy | ASAP within hour | Same morn/aft | Same morn/aft | Same day | No policy | No policy | No policy | No policy |

a/LLO primarily handles phone inquiries. Responses apply only to phone inquiries/responses unless question specifies written.
 b/Commerce's LLO and Office of General Counsel completed questionnaires. Responses indicated apply only to LLO.

CHARACTERISTICS OF SELECTED EXECUTIVE BRANCH LEGISLATIVE LIAISON OFFICERS (LIO) (note a)

| | <u>Social Security</u> | <u>VA</u> | <u>Agriculture</u> | <u>EDA</u> | <u>Navy</u> | <u>Justice</u> | <u>HUD</u> | <u>FCC</u> | <u>Commerce</u> | <u>Labor</u> |
|--|------------------------|--|--------------------|------------|--------------|----------------|------------|------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Number of committees and subcommittees having jurisdiction | 23 | 5 | 18 | 8 | 25 | 32 | 8 | 9 | 52 | 26 |
| Estimated annual LIO congressional workload: | | | | | | | | | | |
| Written inquiries | 145,136 | 15,424 | 3,840 | 2,000 | 115,865 | 12,376 | 9,800 | b/5,240 | 5,265 | 11,000 |
| Phone inquiries | 20,626 | 35,000 | 15,600 | 14,400 | 18,344 | 13,200 | 104,000 | 17,280 | 51,300 | 3,500 |
| Number of LIO professional staff | c/109 | 12 | 7 | 5 | 31 | 14 | 20 | 3 | 3 | 8 |
| Number of LIO secretarial/administrative staff | c/79 | 6 | 4 | 2 | 28 | 12 | 11 | 2 | 4 | 9 |
| Funding - fiscal year: | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1974 | d/\$3,662,000 | \$509,000 | \$206,000 | \$ 72,000 | not provided | \$446,000 | \$ 597,000 | \$134,000 | \$180,000 | not provided |
| 1975 | d/ 3,886,000 | 521,000 | 226,000 | 86,000 | \$1,423,000 | 539,000 | 538,000 | 136,000 | 188,000 | \$489,000 |
| 1976 | d/ 4,977,000 | 462,000 | 243,000 | 82,000 | 1,678,000 | 545,000 | 632,000 | 156,000 | 188,000 | 495,000 |
| 1977 | d/ 4,065,000 | 434,000 | 281,000 | 140,000 | 1,524,000 | 560,000 | 880,000 | 158,000 | 201,000 | 501,000 |
| 1978 | d/ 4,079,000 | 442,000 | 350,000 | 152,000 | 1,588,000 | 727,000 | 1,463,000 | 154,000 | 218,000 | 507,000 |
| LIO estimated average response time (days) to inquiries | 2 to 14 | 10 | 7 | 2 | 5 | 18 | 21 | 10 | 4 to 10 | not estimated |
| Number of other lower level LIOs within agency | 0 | All regional offices and medical centers | 18 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 7 |

a/All information applies to LIOs at the top level of the organization.

b/Commission wide.

c/The Office of Public Inquiries (OPI) is responsible for the initial processing and monitoring of public inquiries including congressional requests. In fiscal year 1978 a total of 109 professional and 79 administrative/secretarial staff members were assigned to OPI. Allocation of staff directly responsible for responding to congressional inquiries was not available.

d/OPI funding includes the cost of processing responses to both congressional and general public inquiries. Funds for responding only to congressional inquiries was not available.