



United States
General Accounting Office
Washington, D.C. 20548

General Government Division

B-249772

April 29, 1993

The Honorable William L. Clay
Chairman, Committee on Post Office
and Civil Service
House of Representatives


Dear Mr. Clay:

We recently completed a review of the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board's (Safety Board) use of its exempt authority for classification, hiring, and pay for its technical staff. We found that the Safety Board has used this authority in a judicious manner and have no basis to conclude that these exemptions should be discontinued. Specifically, we noted that the pay bands for the technical staff generally conform to existing General Schedule and Senior Level pay rates of other federal employees, the staff are not all placed in the highest pay band or paid the highest amounts within each band, and most of the recent hiring has occurred at the entry level pay band.

In reviewing the Safety Board's implementation of its authority, we were initially concerned about the lack of documentation of its hiring process. Recent improvements to the process, such as issuing job announcements, rating applicants, and preparing certificates of eligibles have satisfied our concern.

Enclosed is a copy of the slides used during our April 6, 1993, meeting with your staff and our April 22, 1993, meeting with the Chairman of the Safety Board and his staff. If you have any questions or require additional information, please call me at (202) 512-5074.

Sincerely yours,


Nancy Kingsbury
Director
Federal Human Resource Management
Issues

Enclosure

GAO Defense Nuclear Facilities
Safety Board

**CLASSIFICATION, HIRING, AND
PAY EXEMPTIONS**

April 1993

GAO SAFETY BOARD
Presentation Topics

- Background
- Safety Board's use of exemptions
- Safety Board's use of Title V
- GAO observations

GAO SAFETY BOARD
Background

- Created by Congress
Sept. 1988
- Board confirmed by Senate
Oct. 1989
- Schedule A granted by OPM
Dec. 1989
- 161(d) authority and GAO report
provisions adopted by conferees
Oct. 1990

GAO SAFETY BOARD
Background

**Technical Staff Hired Under
Schedule A (12/89-8/91)**

GS-13: 1

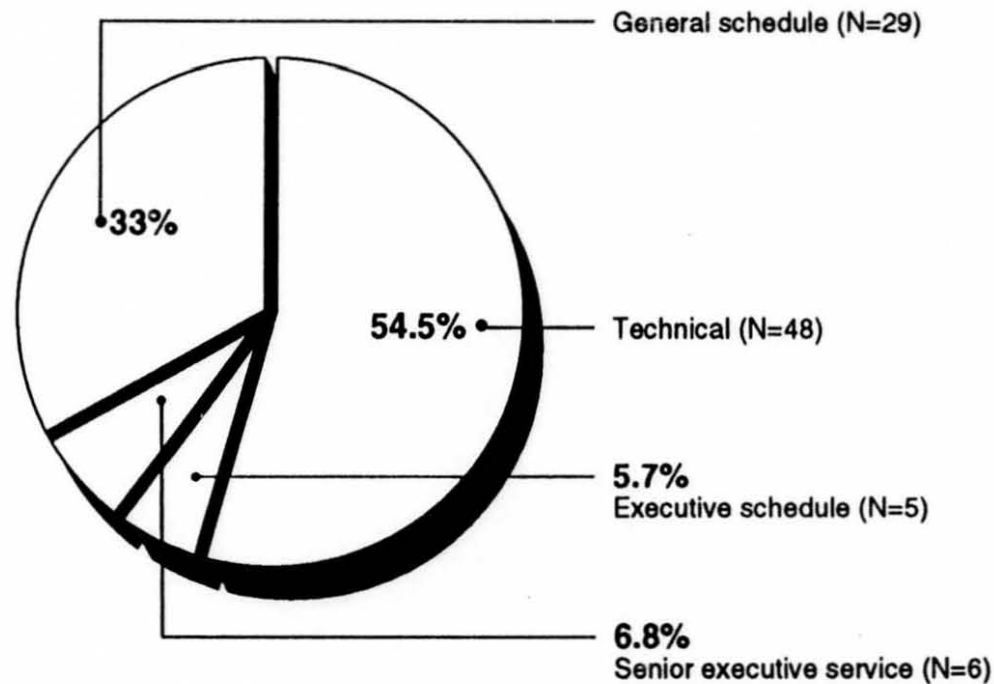
GS-14: 3

GS-15: 9

GM-15: 2

GAO SAFETY BOARD
Background

Employees by Pay System As of February 1993



GAO SAFETY BOARD
Use of Exemptions

Classification of Positions

- Classification standards
 - OPM standards as guidance
- 801 General Engineer series
 - Multi-disciplinary positions
- 1310 Physics series

SAFETY BOARD

Use of Exemptions

Classification

Title	Band				
	I	II	III	IV	V
General engineer	•	•	•	•	•
Systems engineer		•	•	•	•
Technical specialist			•	•	•
Program manager				•	•

GAO SAFETY BOARD
Use of Exemptions

Hiring Process

- Recruitment sources
 - Newspaper ads
 - Technical journals
 - College visits
 - Networking
 - Job fairs
 - Vacancy announcements

GAO SAFETY BOARD
Use of Exemptions

Hiring Process

- Evaluation of applicants
 - Qualification standards
 - OPM X-118 as guidance
- Peer review
- Resume books

GAO SAFETY BOARD
Use of Exemptions

Hiring Process

- Selection of best qualified
 - Interviews
 - Veterans' preference applied

GAO SAFETY BOARD
Use of Exemptions

Hiring Process

- Salary determination
 - Years of experience
 - Current salary
 - Education
 - Technical staff salaries

GAO SAFETY BOARD
Use of Exemptions

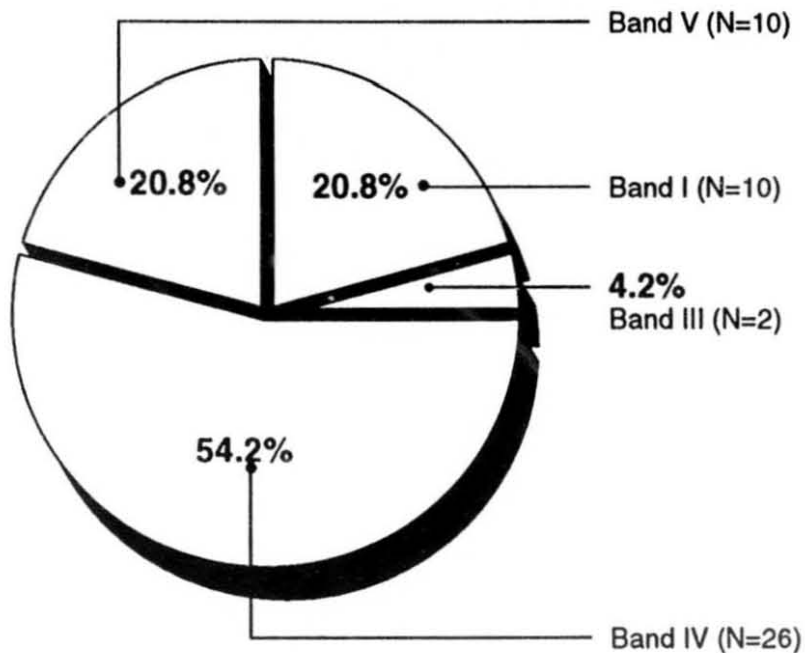
Number and Level of Technical Staff

Pay band	8/25/91	8/23/92	2/28/93
Band I	—	7	10
Band II	—	—	—
Band III	1	4	2
Band IV	14	23	26
Band V	—	5	10
Total	15	39	48

SAFETY BOARD

Use of Exemptions

Technical Staff by Band As of February 1993



GAO SAFETY BOARD
Use of Exemptions

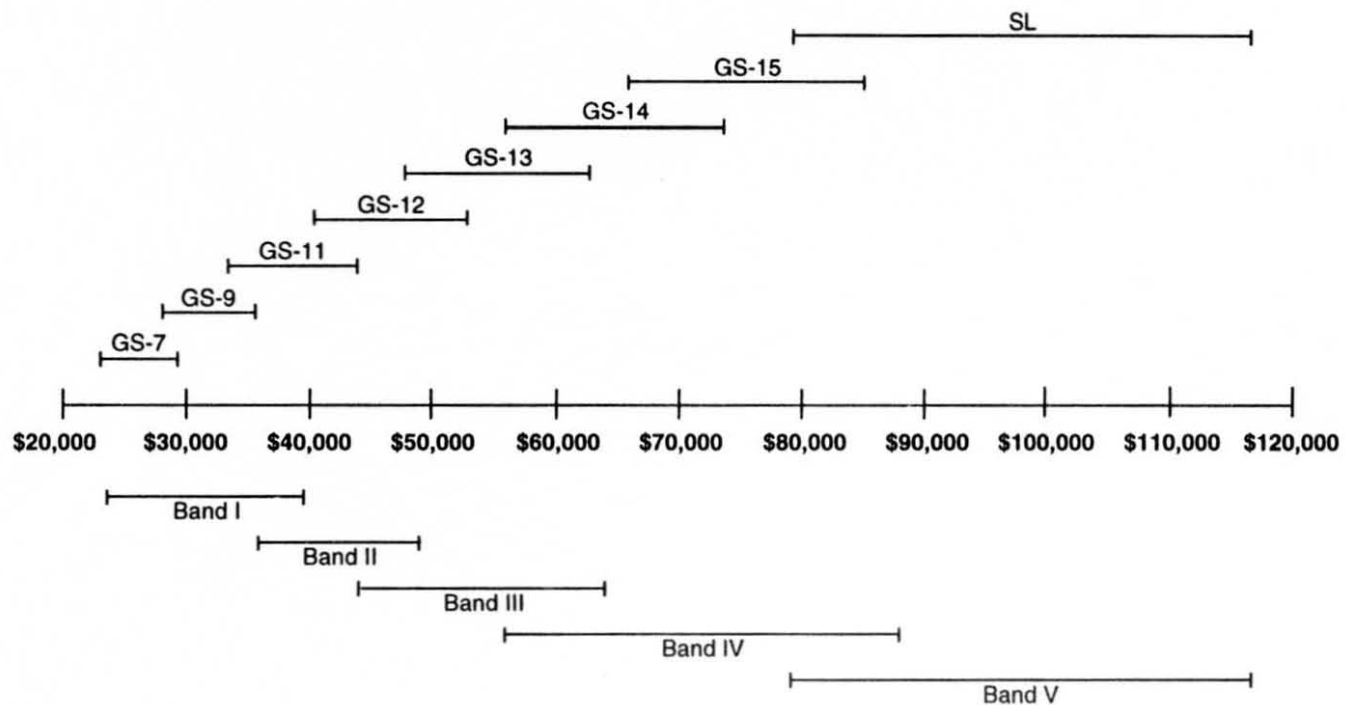
**Safety Board Pay Ranges,
February 1993**

Pay band	Possible pay range	Actual pay range
Band I	\$23,846 – \$39,828	\$34,222 – \$35,259
Band II	\$36,125 – \$49,699	none
Band III	\$44,327 – \$64,176	\$57,036 – \$62,221
Band IV	\$56,627 – \$87,952	\$62,221 – \$87,952
Band V	\$79,931 – \$115,700	\$93,229 – \$103,701

SAFETY BOARD

Use of Exemptions

GS/Pay Band Comparison (1993)



GAO SAFETY BOARD
Use of Exemptions

Advantages of 161(d) Cited by Safety Board

- Flexible administrative process
- Alternative applicant sources
- Intern program
- Salary determination
- Band V pay

GAO SAFETY BOARD
Use of Title V

**Recruitment, Relocation, and
Retention Payments (1991-present)**

- 5 recruitment bonuses
\$7,500-\$13,392
- 1 relocation bonus
\$7,860
- 0 retention payments

GAO SAFETY BOARD
Use of Title V

Critical Pay Positions

- 4 authorized
- 0 filled
 - Applicants not qualified
 - Pay not acceptable
 - Divestiture not acceptable

GAO SAFETY BOARD
Use of Title V

Dual Compensation Waivers

- 2 (Band IV)

GAO SAFETY BOARD
GAO Observations

**Documentation of Hiring Process
Has Improved**

- Job announcements
- Rating of candidates
- Certificates of eligibles

GAO SAFETY BOARD
GAO Observations

**No Basis to Recommend Elimination
of Authority**

- Safety Board has not abused authority
- Pay generally conforms with GS and SL/ST pay ranges