

positions at their proper level are hesitant to accept higher positions in the belief that at rating time they will be judged by a higher and more severe standard.

Taking the above into consideration, it would seem to be desirable that secretaries be assigned to positions at their own level. We believe that all secretaries would like this matter to be given greater attention in the assignment process.

Having said this, however, we would not wish this recommendation to become an inflexible rule. A too strict adherence to the position level principle can lead to disruptions in the assignment process contrary to the interests of both the secretary and the Department. One can well imagine, for example, that a SCY-2 at a hardship post who is due for cross-posting may find herself in a situation where the only SCY-2 positions available are at other posts where she/he would not wish to be assigned. This can be particularly frustrating if she/he has just completed a difficult posting and if, at her/his time of cross-posting, other desirable positions are available at either one higher or one lower position to which she is not eligible to be assigned because of steadfast adherence to the position level principle. In theory, each under-fill will create another over-fill situation so that each time a secretary is not assigned to the proper level the problem is doubled.

In short, we recognize that in the interests of both the secretaries and the Department, under-fills and over-fills can never, and should never, be entirely eliminated in a rotational service. Nonetheless, greater attention can and should be given to this matter to minimize as much as possible the number of under-fills and over-fills.

WE THEREFORE RECOMMEND THAT

*Positions be staffed at the proper level and, in cases where extenuating circumstances do not exist, preference be given to secretaries whose classification level corresponds to that of the position available in the assignment selection.*