

The Agency staff operates on the principle of an international civil service, that is, as an organization whose staff is primarily loyal to it and not to their nations of origin. This is not the only possible model: personnel could be treated as representatives of their governments. This approach could possibly work in a regional context, or if those states subject to safeguards were divided into different alliances. The adoption of this approach would rule out a perception of an agency as neutral, but such a view would not necessarily be undesirable. An agency's credibility, for example, could benefit if the members of one alliance knew that their people were inspecting their rivals. As the numbers and diversity of states and groupings increased, however, this model of organization would probably become less acceptable.

The concept of an international civil service requires that states resist the temptation to give instructions to nationals on the staff, and that nationals refuse to seek instructions from home states. The actual functioning of these principles will depend not only on the willingness of states to resist temptation but also on the ability of upper-level management to resist state interference in the Agency's personnel policies. The Agency may suffer from the normal personnel problems facing international organizations generally, but it seems to have escaped their worst effects, with benefits to its credibility. Since similar problems could be expected in a chemical weapons verification agency, the relevant personnel policies and practices of the Agency should thus be closely examined.

The "colonization" of upper-level positions by nationals of certain states is a problem in the United Nations Secretariat, and in some other specialized agencies. It reflects a natural tendency by major states and groups of states to seek representation in the upper ranks of the staff. Their ability to achieve this may increase the acceptability of the organization from their perspective, but it could create difficulties for the senior administrator of such a body, in terms of credibility and performance. An obvious problem would be that subordinate personnel would have power bases outside the agency, and states would have informal channels of influence by which they could bypass, negate or constrain the activities of the senior administrator. It is not clear to what extent colonization has been or is a problem in the IAEA.

A related phenomenon is that of "sponsorship." In theory, the IAEA hires individuals; in practice, these individuals must receive formal or informal sponsorship from their national governments. States thus have some potential control over which of their nationals shall be employed, again a possible factor in their acceptance of the Agency. This situation complicates Agency staffing by introducing additional personnel selection criteria. States may prefer to sponsor people for upper- rather than lower-level jobs, for example. It also creates a danger of state influence over individuals hired by the Agency, which can be exacerbated if personnel are recruited on a short-term basis and therefore have less opportunity to build a career with the Agency.