

Language Compliance

There are currently 1,424 Language Designated Positions (LDP) worldwide. This is a record high number of LDPs and an increase of 130 over the 1982 figure. The overall compliance rate remains virtually unchanged at 73.2 percent compared to last year's rate of 73.6 percent. This marginal drop in compliance contrasts with previous occasions when a substantial increase in authorized LDPs has typically produced a significant decline in the rate. The Department thus has successfully expanded the LDP program while maintaining the compliance rate, which has oscillated between 55 and 74 percent since the program's inception in 1963, near its historic high levels.

This year's increased number of LDPs are quite evenly distributed, with bureau changes as follows:

	<u>1982</u>	<u>1983</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>(%)</u>
AF	131	146	15	(11)
ARA	427	455	28	(6)
EA	127	154	27	(21)
EUR	505	533	28	(6)
NEA	104	136	32	(31)

The compliance rate figures suffer somewhat from the high standards we apply in their calculation. For example, officers are generally tested before arriving at post. In most cases, the resulting test score remains on the record throughout a tour of duty although an officer's language competence can be expected to improve through usage at post. If compliance figures counted as in compliance employees tested one-half point short of the required proficiency level (e.g., tested at 2+ but assigned to a 3-level LDP), the 1983 rate would rise from 73 percent to 82 percent.

LDP compliance figures also do not reflect important elements of the complete picture of language capability among the Department's Foreign Service officers. For example, employees with fluency in the host-country language, but not assigned to LDPs are not included in these statistics. For this reason, language skills at posts are usually considerably greater than indicated by an LDP compliance profile. A fuller indication of officers' foreign language

capabilities can be drawn from other figures. Ninety percent of the 2,853 tenured Foreign Service officers speak at least one foreign language with professionally competent proficiency, i.e., S-3/R-3. In a sampling of languages crucial to important areas of United States foreign policy, the record is equally strong:

<u>Language</u>	<u>Number of officers (tenured and untenured) with 3/3 or better proficiency</u>
French	1,385
Spanish	1,130
Russian	180
Arabic	159
Chinese	134
Japanese	75

The Department has undertaken initiatives to improve further this solid record of language competence by Foreign Service officers. A successful program of monetary incentives for demonstrated proficiency in selected hard languages (also often in hard to fill posts) was implemented in 1981 and expanded in 1982. We hope to include Russian and other hard Eastern European languages in the program soon. The study of these languages entails an individual's commitment to language training which may last as long as two years, and envisages repeat tours of duty utilizing the language skills in difficult, often dangerous, areas of the world.

Language instruction programs at the Foreign Service Institute now offer language training to more Foreign Service personnel through Familiarization and Short-Term (FAST) courses of six to ten weeks. These successful courses are given in fourteen languages, with expansion to other languages planned. In long-term courses, the curriculum has been strengthened through "bridges," exercises which tailor courses to specific language requirements of onward assignments. "Bridges" are now part of the curriculum in every language taught at FSI.

This strengthened course content should facilitate the achievement of a 3/3 proficiency level for a higher percentage of officers with average language learning aptitude. Additionally, in those cases

where students are not expected to reach target proficiency during their FSI training, the period of language training is routinely extended if the extension does not cause unacceptable gaps at posts. As application of these measures takes effect, the general language competence of Foreign Service officers should surpass the current performance.

Language Designated Position Compliance Profile

I.	<u>Total Compliance</u>	<u>6/83</u>	<u>4/82</u>
a.	Number of LDPs	1424	1294
b.	Number of positions filled	1356	1222
c.	Number of vacant positions	68	72
d.	Number filled at required level	993	899
e.	Percent of filled positions at required level	73.2%*	73.6%

* If incumbents' 1/2 point of compliance (e.g., S-2+/R-2+ where LDP is classified at S-3/R-3) are included, rate rises to 82%.

II. Compliance by Bureau

		<u>AF</u>	<u>ARA</u>	<u>EA</u>	<u>EUR</u>	<u>NEA</u>
a.	Number of positions	146	455	154	513	136
b.	Number of positions filled	134	425	144	522	131
c.	Number of positions filled at required level	87	327	96	385	98
d.	Percent of filled positions at required level	65%	76%	66%	73%	74%

III. Bureau Compliance Rates by Cone

	<u>Positions Filled</u>	<u>Filled at Required Level</u>	<u>Percent Filled at Required Level</u>
<u>Program Direction & Misc.</u>			
AF	25	22	88%
ARA	54	50	93%
EA	20	15	75%
EUR	68	58	85%
NEA	18	14	77%
Totals	185	159	86%
 <u>Political</u>			
AF	19	14	74%
ARA	63	53	84%
EA	45	36	80%
EUR	144	112	77%
NEA	42	31	73%
Totals	313	246	79%
 <u>Economic</u>			
AF	16	12	75%
ARA	53	39	74%
EA	24	18	75%
EUR	78	62	79%
NEA	18	12	67%
Totals	189	143	76%

	<u>Positions Filled</u>	<u>Filled at Required Level</u>	<u>Percent Filled at Required Level</u>
<u>Consular</u>			
AF	10	7	70%
ARA	161	131	81%
EA	39	22	56%
EUR	139	97	69%
NEA	34	25	73%
Totals	383	282	74%

<u>Administrative</u>			
AF	64	32	50%
ARA	94	54	57%
EA	16	5	31%
EUR	93	56	61%
NEA	19	16	84%
Totals	286	163	57%