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SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

To assess timeliness of processing White House access passes and security clearances, we examined the time intervals associated with each processing step; reviewed the process and associated laws, regulations, policies, and procedures; and interviewed officials from the White House, Secret Service, FBI, the Office of Government Ethics, and the Defense Finance and Accounting Service.

To calculate the processing time for passes and clearances, we collected the following key event dates associated with processing steps for staff¹ assigned to the White House Office, Special Assistance to the President (Vice President's Office), Office of Policy Development, Office of Administration, and Office of National Drug Control Policy, on or after January 20, 1993, who were paid with White House appropriated funds and needed a permanent pass.

1. Date the person entered on duty.
2. Date the SF-50 was signed.²
3. Date the person took a drug test.
4. Date the person signed their SF-86.
5. Date the person was issued a temporary pass.
6. Date the FBI initiated a background investigation.
7. Date the FBI finished the investigation.
8. Date the permanent pass was approved.³
9. Date the permanent pass was issued.⁴
10. Date the security clearance was granted.
11. Date the person separated, if applicable.

For reasons of confidentiality, the White House provided a number and office designation for persons covered within the period of our analysis.

The White House compiled a data base containing an identifier and the key dates, when available,⁵ for each of 638 persons. Dates

¹Staff included long-term contractors, reimbursable detailees (terms of 6 months and more), and consultants, as well as career and political appointment staff needing a permanent pass.

²The SF-50 indicates that a personnel action has been completed; in this case, it relates to the date entered on duty.

³For this interval, we used the date the White House recommended to the Secret Service that a permanent pass be approved.

⁴For this interval, we used the date the Secret Service approved a permanent pass for issuance.

⁵Dates were not always available for reasons including: staff separated before a date was met, contractor staff did not receive a SF-50, drug testing dates were not provided for contractor staff

were provided for (1) persons entering on duty as of January 20, 1993, through September 16, 1994, and (2) process steps completed by December 13, 1994. Dates associated with processing steps involving the Secret Service and FBI were supplied to the White House by those agencies. We received the data base containing the key event dates from the White House in January 1995 and worked with the White House to correct mistakes found in the data base. We also verified randomly sampled event dates in the data base to original personnel documents and other records.

We analyzed intervals between key event dates to determine average, minimum, and maximum time frames; as well as trends over time. We discussed our analyses with White House, Secret Service, and FBI officials to determine reasons for time frames individually and for overall trends. In our analyses of the intervals, we obtained White House explanations of individual cases and overall trends, but we did not further examine supporting documentation. The effects of the limited examinations are noted in the report where appropriate.

After the data base was finalized, White House officials proposed that dates for 54 persons not be included in our analyses because ~~most of these persons transferred from one position to another position within the Executive Office of the President.~~⁶ The White House stated that these cases were not typical of the normal pass approval process. We agree that these persons followed a different pattern than the majority of persons in the data base. However, they do represent the actual pass approval process experienced by these persons, consequently we present both sets of data in our detailed analyses.

~~The impact of excluding the 54 persons was typically to increase the average amount of time for an interval, since many of these persons had completed steps in the process prior to entering on duty. For example, a person who was employed in January 1993 by the Office of Management and Budget, an office not included in our analysis, could have received a permanent pass while with that office, and then transferred in 1994 to the White House Office. As~~

~~because such tests are controlled by contractor management and not the White House, and not all staff received a security clearance or were granted access to classified material.~~

⁶Of the 54, 45 transferred from a position within the Executive Office of the President or another government agency to the position shown in the data base, 2 transferred from their position as shown in the data base to another office within the Executive Office of the President, 5 were originally 90-day hires that became permanent employees, and 2 had background investigations completed prior to entering on duty. We were not able to determine whether these 54 represented all persons in these situations.

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a result the record would show a 1994 entered on duty date and earlier times for all other key event dates. The effect of this in our analysis is that when the entered on duty date is analyzed against the other key event dates, the result is a negative number. In our analysis, we added all the interval differences, negative and positive, to calculate an average.

We conducted our review from May 1994 to June 1995 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards.

THE ACCESS PASS PROCESS

The process for obtaining a White House access pass and/or security clearance typically worked as follows for White House complex employees, according to agency procedures dated March 1994 and the statements of agency officials. This process involved activities related to three generally uniform steps: (1) initiating pre-employment tasks, (2) obtaining a temporary pass, and (3) obtaining a permanent pass. Procedures for employees requiring access to classified information vary by organization. (See app. IV)

STEP 1: INITIATING
PRE-EMPLOYMENT TASKS

The following tasks must be completed concerning each applicant's appointment.

- Transition*
- Applicants must undergo a security interview conducted by the White House Personnel Security office.
 - Applicants must submit to a drug test. It normally takes about 10 days to get the results, and if they are positive, the person would be disqualified from appointment.⁷
 - Applicants must undergo an initial namecheck in which their name, date of birth, place of birth, and Social Security number are checked through the Secret Service's Workers, Appointment, Visitors Entrance System. This consists of checks through four computer data bases: the FBI's National Crime Information Center data base, a criminal history data base, a Secret Service data base, and a Washington-area law enforcement data base. According to White House officials, the results are usually back within a day.
 - Applicants must undergo a more extensive FBI namecheck. The White House forwards the person's name and date of birth to the FBI, which checks the name through the FBI Central Records System, computer data bases, and the Criminal Justice Information Services data base to identify any derogatory information and prior arrest records. The FBI has 60 million names in its files. Almost 13,000 name checks were done for the Executive Office of the President and associated offices in fiscal year 1993, and over 7,200 checks were done in fiscal year 1994. The processing time for this more extensive

⁷According to the Executive Office of the President Drug-Free Workplace Plan, as amended in December 1992, once employed by the Executive Office of the President, a person who tests positive for illegal drugs during random drug testing can be disciplined in one of several ways, ranging from a written reprimand to employment termination.

*ADD FN
021 TRANSITION*

namecheck typically takes several days, according to White House and FBI officials.

STEP 2: OBTAINING A TEMPORARY PASS

Each new employee, who is expected to work 90 days or more has 30 days from the date of appointment to complete the SF-86, an FBI investigation consent form, a tax check waiver, and a personal data statement questionnaire (for employees of certain offices) and provide other personal data as needed. This 30-day standard was established by the White House on March 21, 1994. Employees not meeting this standard are to have their access to the White House revoked and are to be placed on leave without pay until the paperwork is completed. Prior to March 21, 1994, there were no standards for completing the SF-86.

If the person has completed the SF-86 and related paperwork, the results of the initial namecheck are satisfactory, and the FBI namecheck has been submitted, the person is placed on the White House access list. This means the person must present positive identification each time he or she enters the White House complex. Prior to this time, the person is allowed into the complex only on an appointment basis.

Once a satisfactory FBI namecheck is returned, the White House Office of Personnel Security recommends to the Secret Service that a temporary pass be issued to the employee for a period not to exceed 90 days, although extensions are allowed. In the case of an extension, the Secret Service contacts the person's office, prior to the expiration of the temporary pass, to determine if there is a need for an extension. The person is fingerprinted by the Secret Service, and the fingerprints are sent through the national data base. Each new employee is required to attend a security briefing and the person's presence is noted and included in his or her security file.

The SF-86 forms from ^{the} White House Office, Office of the Vice President, and Office of Policy Development staff go to the White House Counsel's office. A security officer in the Office of Administration reviews the SF-86 forms of individuals from the Office of Administration and the Office of National Drug Control Policy. According to White House officials, each SF-86 is reviewed to verify its correctness and completeness and to determine if any immediate issues need to be addressed.

STEP 3: OBTAINING A PERMANENT PASS

Before a permanent pass or a security clearance can be issued, the ~~FBI must~~ conduct a full-field background investigation. The White House Counsel's request to the FBI for such an investigation includes the SF-86 and related documents.

FBI officials told us that their goal for first-time full-field background investigations was changed in late 1994 from 45 to 60 calendar days. An updated investigation, which is done every 5 years, has a goal of 90 days. According to FBI officials, these goals were changed before 1993 due to FBI staff shortages and an increased demand for investigations. The goals had been 35 calendar days for a first-time investigation and 75 days for a reinvestigation. FBI officials explained that the difference in goals is due to the urgency of completing first-time investigations. The FBI estimates that it conducts about 1,000 to 1,500 background investigations a year for the White House--about 25 percent of the FBI total.

EOP

According to FBI officials, if the investigation reveals information that warrants White House attention, such as past criminal activity, the FBI notifies the White House Counsel's Office, or the White House Office of Personnel Security, and might provide an interim report. At the completion of its investigation, the FBI sends an investigation summary to the White House Counsel, who in turn forwards a copy to the Secret Service. Depending on the case, the FBI may also send copies of individual interview summaries, but does not typically send the complete investigative file.

more in filling out the form

According to White House officials, once the Counsel's office receives the FBI background investigation summary, its review process may involve a wide range of matters of varying severity, such as prior arrests, credit problems, inability to verify previous employment, or mistakes. The White House determines any needed follow-up, such as contacting the subject for additional information or having the FBI investigate further. According to FBI officials, the White House rarely requests a follow-up investigation.

Such matters might include

White House officials stated they have several sources of information available to them during the review process, such as the FBI's background investigation report; the SF-86; the personal data statement provided by the employee (if applicable); the tax check results; financial disclosure information; and the National Crime Information Center check results. As information is returned from the agencies and departments, White House procedures, since March 1994, require that it be reviewed within 5 days by the White House Counsel's office and the White House Personnel Security office. The decision to grant a permanent pass involves not just security concerns, but also suitability for continued employment, since the White House may decide, based on its review, not to permanently hire certain individuals.

EOP

After Counsel has resolved any questions, the White House sends a written request to the Secret Service for a permanent access pass for the employee. The Secret Service, if there is no disagreement

The White House has never
directed or asked the

based on its own determination as to danger to the President or
other Service protectees, issues the permanent pass.

According to White House officials, the process for obtaining a
permanent pass is the same for a volunteer as for an employee or
contractor. These officials said that most White House volunteers
are ~~senior~~ citizens who perform duties related to correspondence
and do not have permanent passes, but are allowed entry based on an
access list and identification. However, they also said that there
are volunteers, estimated to number between 30 and 50, who perform
~~substantive work and hold permanent passes~~. For example, the
current and most recent White House Counsel have served as unpaid
volunteers.

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ANALYSIS OF KEY EVENT TIME INTERVALS

We analyzed time intervals using both the complete, unadjusted data base and an adjusted data base that excluded the 54 persons referred to in appendix I. Most of these persons transferred from one position to another position within the Executive Office of the President, and thus according to White House officials are not typical of the normal pass approval process.

Not all records were applicable to include in averaging the interval comparisons. Table 1 shows the number of applicable and non-applicable records by category. Records considered to be non-applicable include those in which a person separated prior to one or more key event dates, action was not completed and therefore pending as of the closure date of the data base, or action was taken in some other way, such as a person having a background investigation conducted by an agency other than the FBI. (Dates were not provided in these cases.)

Table 1: The table shows how many records were applicable and non-applicable for the interval comparisons listed below:

Interval Comparison	Unadjusted Data Base		Adjusted Data Base	
	Applicable Records	Non-applicable Records	Applicable Records	Non-applicable Records
Date entered on duty to date the permanent pass was approved	504	134 - 112 separated - 22 pending - 0 other	458	126 - 107 separated - 19 pending - 0 other
Date entered on duty to date the SF-86 was signed	613	25 - 23 separated - 0 pending - 2 other	559	25 - 23 separated - 0 pending - 2 other
Date the SF-86 was signed to date the FBI initiated a background investigation	600	38 - 35 separated - 0 pending - 3 other	546	38 - 35 separated - 0 pending - 3 other
Date the FBI finished a background investigation to date the permanent pass was recommended	522	116 - 95 separated - 18 pending - 3 other	473	111 - 93 separated - 16 pending - 2 other
Date the FBI initiated a background investigation to the date the FBI finished the investigation	574	64 - 50 separated - 11 pending - 3 other	523	61 - 50 separated - 9 pending - 2 other
Date a permanent pass was recommended to the date the pass was approved	504	134 - 112 separated - 22 pending - 0 other	458	126 - 107 separated - 19 pending - 0 other

TIME NEEDED TO BE APPROVED
FOR A PERMANENT PASS

The processing time needed for an individual to be approved for a White House permanent access pass after entering on duty decreased from 1993 to 1994, as did most of the individual interval time frames leading up to the Secret Service approval of a pass. As shown by Table 2, the average number of days it took to approve a permanent pass decreased from 1993 to 1994.

Table 2: Average days from the date entered on duty to the date a permanent pass was approved by the Secret Service.

Year	Average Number of Days Unadjusted Data	Average Number of Days Adjusted Data
1993	346	356
1994	98	129
Overall Average	295	315

Only 2 permanent passes were approved by the Secret Service prior to September 20, 1993, and of the 400 staff entering on duty during 1993, 250 took over 300 days to be approved for permanent passes. Only 1 of 104 staff entering on duty in 1994 took over 300 days. White House officials attributed the longer processing times in 1993 to (1) operational and administrative inefficiencies and (2) the large volume of staff entering on duty in 1993. They said the time decreased in 1994 because (1) fewer people began work, (2) the White House corrected some inefficiencies in the process, (3) the White House Chief of Staff placed emphasis on the pass process and established standards for the process, (4) the White House began using computers to track the process, (5) staff and officials became more experienced with the process, and (6) external attention was focused on the process.

With the passage of P.L. 103-329, an employee of the Executive Office of the President must be placed on leave without pay if the person has not, within six months of commencing employment or by October 31, 1994, whichever is later, had a background investigation, if completed, forwarded to the Secret Service for issuance of an access pass. Our review indicates that there are two individuals who had not had a permanent pass request made within the required 6-month time period as of December 13, 1994--the last date covered by our analysis. Seven contractors also did

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not meet the legal deadline, but contractors are not subject to the law, according to White House officials.⁸

The following sections describe our analysis related to each time interval between the date a person entered on duty and the date the person was approved for a permanent pass. We also discuss key time intervals related to the drug test date. Although the White House does not consider the drug test to be part of the access pass process, we include information about the drug test date because the requestors of this review asked that we analyze that date.

COMPLETION OF THE SF-86

The first step in obtaining a permanent pass is for the individual to complete the SF-86 and related paperwork. Table 3 shows that the average number of days needed to complete the SF-86 after entering on duty decreased from 1993 to 1994.

Table 3: Average days from the date entered on duty to the date the SF-86 was signed.

Year	Average Number of Days Unadjusted Data	Average Number of Days Adjusted Data
1993	100	107
1994	-52 ^a	3
Overall Average	66	86

^aThe individuals who entered on duty in 1994, on average, signed their SF-86 52 days prior to entering on duty.

For the entire period of our review, there were 190 individuals who took more than 100 days to complete the SF-86, including 36 who took over 300 days. All but 3 of the 190 entered on duty during 1993. *all 36*

The White House attributed the time reductions between 1993 and 1994 to staff compliance with a directive issued by the Chief of Staff on March 14, 1994. The directive required that: (1) all staff who entered on duty prior to March 1, 1994, complete their SF-86 by March 18, 1994; (2) all staff who entered on duty between March 1, 1994 and March 14, 1994, complete their SF-86 by March 31, 1994.

⁸According to White House officials, contractors are ~~now considered to be White House employees, but were not considered so previously.~~ This change was made after to October 31, 1994. *for purpose of administrative efficiency now treated as if they were subject to...*

However, in all cases, the situation was resolved promptly and the individuals submitted their paperwork in a timely manner.

1994; and, (3) all staff who entered on duty after March 14, 1994, complete their SF-86 within 30 days of entering on duty. The White House further issued guidelines on March 21, 1994, that gave each new employee 30 days from the date the individual entered on duty to complete the SF-86. Prior to these instructions there were no standards for completing these documents. Employees who do not meet this standard are to have their access to the White House revoked and are to be placed on leave without pay until they complete the paperwork. *was still*

Non-contractor staff members
Eleven individuals (not counting 22 contractors) did not, *technically* meet the 30-day deadline required by the Chief of Staff's directive or White House guidelines. White House officials said that in all of these cases, once the problem was discovered, it was resolved quickly and no one was placed on leave without pay.

For example

Three of 471 non-contractor employees who entered on duty prior to March 1, 1994, did not complete the SF-86 by March 18, 1994, as required. *All three, however, had submitted the requisite paperwork by March 23, 1994.*

- 2 who*
- One entered on duty on January 20, 1993, and signed the SF-86 on March 30, 1994, an interval of 434 days.
 - One entered on duty on January 20, 1993, and signed the SF-86 on March 28, 1994, an interval of 432 days.
 - One entered on duty on February 22, 1994, and signed the SF-86 on March 29, 1994, an interval of 35 days.

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Employees who entered on duty between March 1, 1994, and March 14, 1994, were required to complete the SF-86 by March 31, 1994. *Two* of six employees did not meet this requirement. *Both, however, had submitted the requisite paperwork within 4 weeks of the deadline.*

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-- One entered on duty on March 7, 1994, and signed the SF-86 on April 25, 1994, an interval of 49 days.

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-- The other entered on duty on March 13, 1994, and signed the SF-86 on April 18, 1994, an interval of 36 days.

Employees who entered on duty after March 14, 1994, were required to complete the SF-86 within 30 days of the date entered on duty. Six of 73 employees did not meet this requirement.

EOP
-- Five of the six were from the Office of National Drug Control Policy, and according to White House officials, the five cases involved administrative error. These five people signed their SF-86 an average of 60 days after entering on duty.

-- Another entered on duty on May 16, 1994, and signed the SF-86 on June 28, 1994, an interval of 43 days. According to White House officials, it was known at the time of entry that this

person was leaving White House employment. The person separated on October 2, 1994.

With the passage of P.L. 103-329 in September 1994, Congress required that White House employees complete the SF-86 within 30 days of entering on duty or by October 31, 1994, whichever occurred later. None of the cases in our data base are covered by this provision of the law.

WHITE HOUSE OFFICE INDICATORS

Two key event intervals we analyzed that are the White House's responsibility for completing are (1) the time between when an SF-86 is signed and when the White House forwards it to the FBI for a background investigation and (2) the time between when the FBI completes a background investigation and when the White House recommends that a staff member receive a permanent pass.

Table 4 shows that the average amount of time needed for the White House to review submitted SF-86s for correctness and completeness before forwarding the SF-86 to the FBI decreased between 1993 and 1994.

Table 4: Average days from the date an individual signed an SF-86 to the date the White House forwarded the SF-86 to the FBI.

Year	Average Number of Days Unadjusted Data	Average Number of Days Adjusted Data
1993	38	37
1994	18	18
Overall Average	33	32

In 1993, the White House's review of SF-86s took over 100 days in 34 of 434 cases, and in 1994, it took over 100 days in 2 of 155 cases. White House officials stated that the unfamiliarity of staff and reviewing officials with the information requirements of the SF-86 caused reviewing officials to request additional data, thus delaying the requested FBI investigations.

Table 5 shows that the average amount of time for the White House to recommend approval of a permanent pass after receiving the FBI's investigative report decreased between 1993 and 1994.

Table 5: Average days from the date the FBI concluded the background investigation to the date the White House recommended approval of a permanent pass.

Year	Average Number of Days Unadjusted Data	Average Number of Days Adjusted Data
1993	174	175
1994	46	48
Overall Average	127	125

During 1993, the White House took over 100 days to recommend the approval of a permanent pass in 202 of 294 cases, whereas in 1994, it took over 100 days in 26 of 217 cases. White House officials stated that an additional factor in 1993 approvals involved background investigation issues that required further clarification and inquiry.

FBI INDICATORS

Table 6 shows that the average amount of time needed by the FBI to conduct a background investigation increased somewhat between 1993 and 1994.

Table 6: Average days from the date the FBI initiated a background investigation to the date the FBI concluded the investigation.

Year	Average Number of Days Unadjusted Data	Average Number of Days Adjusted Data
1993	56	56
1994	70	71
Overall Average	59	59

In 1993, the FBI took over 100 days to complete 17 (4 percent) of 402 investigations. In 1994, the FBI took over 100 days to complete 18 (11 percent) of 159 investigations. The FBI goal of completing investigations within 45 days of initiation was not met 66 percent of the time in 1993 and 87 percent of the time in 1994. According to an FBI official, the goal was changed in late 1994 to 60 days. We did not assess the impact of the goal change because

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there were no records of investigations started and completed during the last quarter of 1994.

An FBI official said background investigations took longer than their goal to conduct for the following reasons.

- The FBI has a limited investigative and administrative staff in the background investigative area and their overall caseload in that area increased.
- FBI field personnel who conduct background investigations, also, at the same time, have numerous other investigative and administrative responsibilities.
- Forms submitted early in the time frame of this review were sometimes incomplete.
- Individuals and documents were not always readily available.
- Obtaining information from overseas sources slowed the collection of information.
- ~~Unfavorable information sometimes required more attention.~~
- Expediting some investigations slowed the progress of others.

SECRET SERVICE INDICATORS

Table 7 shows that the average number of days needed for the Secret Service to approve a permanent pass after the White House recommends that a pass be issued decreased between 1993 and 1994.

Table 7: Average days from the date of White House recommendation to Secret Service approval of a permanent pass.

Year	Average Number of Days Unadjusted Data	Average Number of Days Adjusted Data
1993	29	31
1994	7	7
Overall Average	12	12

During 1993, the Secret Service took over 30 days to approve 34 of 115 passes, whereas in 1994, this happened in 15 of 388 cases.

The Secret Service attributed the higher 1993 average to the White House not promptly sending pass requests to the Secret Service.

Secret Service officials told us that in 1994, it took the Secret Service an average of three days to approve a permanent pass after receiving the pass recommendation from the White House. This means that it took an average of four days between the time the White House recommended that a pass be approved and the time the Secret Service received recommendation. Similar data were not available for 1993.

DRUG TEST INDICATORS

All 572 non-contract employees included in the unadjusted data base reported for drug tests. It is the responsibility of each contractor's employer to conduct drug tests, and the dates for these tests were not provided to us. Table 8 shows that the average number of days between when the person entered on duty to when the drug test was taken decreased between 1993 and 1994.

Table 8: Average days from the date the person entered on duty to when the drug test was taken.

Year	Average Number of Days Unadjusted Data	Average Number of Days Adjusted Data
1993	24	29
1994	49	-12
Overall Average	10	23

ADD
TRANSITION
CLAUSE

Table 9 shows that individuals typically were issued a temporary pass prior to taking a drug test.

Table 9: Average days from the date the drug test was taken to when a temporary pass was issued.

Year	Average Number of Days Unadjusted Data	Average Number of Days Adjusted Data
1993	-5	-3
1994	-17	3
Overall Average	-6	-1

~~NOT A VALID COMPARISON~~

OBSERVATIONS ON CONTROLS

Congress and the White House have established controls to minimize delays, but the factors cited as causes may not have been fully addressed. Areas of potential concern relate to controls over: (1) the issuance of temporary passes, including renewals of temporary passes; (2) staff separations, including the revocation of temporary and permanent passes on departure unless specifically required; and (3) the granting of security clearances, including the provision of interim security clearances.

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to do this*

TEMPORARY PASS ISSUANCE DATA

Table 10 shows that the average amount of time needed for an individual to be issued a temporary pass after entering on duty decreased from 1993 to 1994.

Table 10: Average days from the date entered on duty to when a temporary pass was issued.

Year	Average Number of Days Unadjusted Data	Average Number of Days Adjusted Data
1993	19	26
1994	-26 ^a	20
Overall Average	10	25

^aThe individuals who entered on duty in 1994, on average, received a temporary pass 26 days prior to entering on duty.

Temporary passes allow persons access to the White House complex while awaiting the issuance of a permanent pass. Although since March 14, 1994, individuals are to have completed the SF-86 (and other tasks) prior to obtaining a temporary pass, some did not. Temporary passes are initially issued for a period of 90 days and can be extended. A number of extensions were granted. Persons held these passes for an average of 293 days before being approved for a permanent pass.

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SF-86 Often Not Completed
Prior to Temporary
Pass Issuance

Although since March 14, 1994, employees are expected to have their SF-86 completed before a temporary pass is issued, employees generally did not do so prior to that date. Of the 439 persons who signed their SF-86 in 1993, 310 (71 percent) received a temporary

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pass prior to signing the SF-86. In 1994, 103 of 158 (65 percent) signed their SF-86 prior to being issued a temporary pass. White House officials told us that early in the administration it did not require persons to have a completed SF-86 prior to being issued a temporary pass.

Twelve individuals (including 10 contractors) were issued temporary passes after March 14, 1994, even though they had not yet submitted an SF-86. White House officials said that the two non-contractor staff had both previously been interns and that one had been issued a temporary pass as an intern and the other had a prior SF-86 on file, which had not been shown in the database provided by the White House. Regarding the contractors, White House officials said that Office of Administration policy at that time was to not process the SF-86 for contractors until after they concluded a probationary period. The officials stated that this is no longer the policy.

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So put it
this way*

*We discovered
that is
was not
a problem*

Temporary Passes Are Often Extended

Temporary passes are usually issued for 90 days but can be extended beyond that period. Table 11 shows the average time between issuance of the temporary pass and approval for the permanent pass.

Table 11: Average days from the date a temporary pass was issued to when a permanent pass was approved by the Secret Service.

Year	Average Number of Days Unadjusted Data	Average Number of Days Adjusted Data
1993	341	343
1994	110	114
Overall Average	293	294

In 1993, 361 of 398 persons took 200 days or more to be approved for a permanent pass, whereas in 1994, 5 of 104 persons receiving temporary passes took 200 days or more to be approved for a permanent pass. White House officials attributed the decrease from 1993 to 1994 to improvements in processing procedures described above.

In addition to the above, as of the December 13, 1994, cutoff date for the data base, 22 individuals (including 10 contractors), were employed but had not been approved for a permanent pass. Two had not received a temporary pass and the other 20 held a temporary pass an average of 132 days as of the cutoff date. Of 15 who held temporary passes more than 90 days,

- 3 had permanent passes recommended by the White House but not yet approved by the Secret Service and had waited 37 days on average since the White House recommendation, as of the cutoff date;
- 3 had background investigations completed for an average of 58 days since the completion; and
- 9 were still undergoing their background investigations for an average of 57 days as of the cutoff date.

DATA RELATED TO STAFF SEPARATIONS

Out of the data base total of 638 records, 188 (29 percent) indicate that the individuals have separated from the office or contractor position shown in the data base. The individuals left at various stages in the process of obtaining a permanent pass or security clearance. Once an individual leaves White House employment, according to White House officials, there are procedures to ensure that the individual turns in the pass. We examined documents related to these procedures, but did not obtain copies.

Individuals Have Left At Various Stages of the Access Pass and Security Clearance Process

Of the 188 records that indicate separation, 7 persons left 1 office within the Executive Office of the President to take a position with another office. Four additional records concern two persons who left one office within the Executive Office of the President, went to another office, and then left the second office. Thus both individuals show two departure dates in the data base. The other 177 records are of people who have left the Executive Office of the President.

All seven persons who are now with a second office within the Executive Office of the President were approved for a permanent pass either with the first office or with the second office. All received a temporary pass.

Of the two persons who have worked for and separated from two offices within the Executive Office of the President, one was approved for a permanent pass while with the second office. The other individual had a background investigation conducted while at the second office and left this position ~~13 days after the completion of the background investigation~~. A permanent pass has not been recommended or approved. Both persons received a temporary pass.

Of the other 177 people who separated from the Executive Office of the President,

Why Have this section of all

- 67 were approved by the Secret Service for a permanent pass;
- 17 were recommended by the White House for a permanent pass, but a pass was never approved by the Secret Service;
- 43 had a completed background investigation, but were never recommended for a permanent pass;
- 21 had a background investigation initiated, but never completed; and
- 29 separated without the FBI initiating a background investigation.

Suggests a connector w/ Depart

Of the 67 people who were approved for a permanent pass:

- Seven were approved an average of 186 days after they had departed. In 5 of these cases, according to White House officials, the person went to another government agency, but continued to need access to the White House. Another case involves a person who came back to the White House as a detailee from another agency. We do not have information on the seventh person.
- Sixty left an average of 125 days after a permanent pass was approved by the Secret Service. We do not have information on how many returned the pass after departure.

WA officials underscored that the fact that a departure occurred is so overwhelming

majority of instances the employees departure was unrelated to the pass issuance process. For example, the

Of the 17 people for whom a permanent pass was recommended, but never approved:

- Six had a permanent pass recommended after they left. One person, according to White House officials, left the Office of Policy Development but is expected to return in some capacity. We do not have information of the other 5 persons. These 6 individuals separated an average of 44 days before the permanent pass was recommended.
- Eleven left an average of 93 days after a permanent pass was recommended.

an individual left after the FBI was contacted but before the pass was recommended

for a year or more. I suggest that something in the FBI process

Of the 43 people for whom the FBI completed the background investigation, but for whom a permanent pass was never recommended:

- Five had an FBI background investigation initiated and completed after they departed. White House officials told us that the background investigation was done in three cases because the individuals needed a pass in some other capacity--one as a White House detailee, one as a White House volunteer, and one as an employee of another government agency. We do not have information on the other 2 persons. These 5 individuals left an average of 164 days before the completion of the background investigation.
- Thirty-three departed an average of 106 days after a background investigation was completed.

in other departures similarly

-- Five had a background investigation initiated before they departed and completed after they departed. These individuals left an average of 23 days before the completion of the background investigation.

Out of the 177 who separated, 171 had temporary passes at the time of separation and had held the temporary pass for an average of 266 days prior to departure. Four persons received temporary passes an average of 36 days after their separation and two never received a temporary pass.

Permanent Pass
Revocation Procedure

According to a Secret Service official, the agency depends on each White House office to notify the Service if an individual is no longer employed and thus no longer needs a permanent pass. Without this notification, the Secret Service has no way of knowing who continues to need access and who does not.

White House officials stated that they maintain a check-out procedure for employees who leave Executive Office of the President employment, and unless the White House allows continued access, the employee must surrender his or her access pass upon separation. The White House showed us documents related to these procedures, but we did not obtain copies. According to a White House official, this process is checked by regular reviews of attrition and accession lists of White House pass holders. The official also said that its pass holder lists are frequently updated.

WHITE HOUSE STAFF ACCESS TO
CLASSIFIED SECURITY INFORMATION

The White House allows employees with permanent White House passes and a need-to-know to have access to classified information up to Top Secret. Generally, executive branch agencies are required by executive order to follow uniform government wide procedures and apply specific criteria when granting security clearances to individuals. Executive branch agencies grant security clearances under Executive Order 10450, as amended, and at the time of our review handled classified data under Executive Order 12356 (which was revoked and replaced by Executive Order 12958 on April 17, 1995). According to White House officials, the White House is not subject to the requirements of Executive Order 10450 but nevertheless uses similar procedures and the same criteria to issue permanent passes to White House employees that the Office of Personnel Management uses to issue security clearances to agency employees.

Out of the 638 records in the data base, 22 records indicate White House staff assigned to the Office of Administration and the Office of National Drug Control Policy have security clearances granted

*approximately two dozen**For reasons of
Confidentiality*

under government wide procedures. An additional 359 staff, assigned to the White House Office, the Office of the Vice President, and the Office of Policy Development, have access to classified information by holding a permanent White House pass. The first of the 22 security clearances was not granted until June 22, 1993⁹ and the first of the permanent White House passes was not approved until September 30, 1993. We requested data on how the offices conducted business during these 5- and 8-month periods. White House officials stated that much of the classified work done in the White House is done by the staff of the National Security Council, which is not one of the offices represented in the data we analyzed. They also stated that interim clearances were provided to several senior staff during this time, but data on the specific cases had not been provided to us at the time of this report.

was not provided

The above-mentioned orders establish uniform requirements for personnel security programs in the federal government. A security clearance is a certification that a U.S. citizen, who requires access to information classified at a certain level, has been found security eligible and may be permitted access to classified information.

White House officials stated that past and current practice permits access to classified information by staff with a permanent White House pass and a need-to-know in the White House Office, Office of the Vice President, and Office of Policy Development. The officials stated that the White House is not an "agency" under the provisions of Executive Order 10450. To obtain a permanent pass, White House employees must have a favorable background investigation completed and attend a security briefing. They stated that these actions provide the same or greater protection as policies established by other federal agencies under the executive orders, and that the White House uses the same criteria to issue a permanent pass that the Office of Personnel Management uses to issue a security clearance.

*repetitive
outgoing phase*

⁹In addition, one individual had a clearance at the time entered on duty.

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