

Help Us Help You

We need your help. Due to the dramatic increase in Competitive Sourcing and Privatization (CS&P) activity (you know A-76 studies) the Air Force (AF) is currently undertaking, the Reduction-in-Force (RIF) Unit is experiencing an extremely heavy workload. Right now, they have 65 on-going RIFs they are working. Many installations are having back-to-back contract studies, resulting in RIFs every quarter. As a result, each of the specialists assigned to the unit is currently working several RIFs simultaneously. Although we are confident we will be able to accomplish the actions required, we do need help from the Civilian Personnel Flights (CPF) to turn around two unfavorable trends to ensure we meet preferred RIF effective dates.

First, many RIF requests have been received without the complete documentation necessary to complete a valid RIF. For example, it has become a common practice to receive RIF packages without complete vacancy lists. We realize a vacancy list is often the most difficult piece of the RIF package to put together; but, it is also one of the most important documents for RIF. It is Air Force policy to use all valid vacancies in RIF; so, we cannot process one without it. In addition, since it is an "upfront" load in the AutoRIF process, we cannot begin the formal RIF until we receive it. A valid vacancy (per Air Force definition) is any authorized, funded position that does not have a hiring restriction (i.e., projected manpower reduction or funding limitation) imposed upon it by an appropriate official.

Second, we have been receiving packages with insufficient time to process all the actions necessary for a valid RIF. This has been a growing problem as CPFs are facing more and more RIFs at their bases. Getting the packages on time is especially important when MAJCOMs are conducting command-wide CS&P studies that they want effective all on the same day. These result in several bases having RIFs at once, which increase the RIF Unit's workload for that specific effective date.

An additional way you can help us get you the results of the RIF quicker, is to use the same conditions (abolishment, vacancy list, competitive area) in the mock RIF that you will need in the real RIF. Limiting the competition in the mock RIF (by not using all your vacancies or limiting consideration to just some organizations) will require us to start the process all over again when/if we run the real RIF, which delays your final product. In addition, if the competition is different in the mock RIF, it does not show you the true picture of what will happen in the real RIF and lessens the effectiveness of the mock RIF as a tool to avoid RIF actions.

As a minimum, the RIF Unit needs 60-calendar days to run a RIF. For those of you that have done RIFs, you know that is not an excessive amount of time. During the 60 days, we run quality control products to review the RIF retention factors in the Defense Civilian Personnel Data System (DCPDS), make the required corrective actions to errors (this often involves contacting the employee and obtaining additional information), load the required "upfront" information in AutoRIF, run round one and two competition, provide the base a proposed action report of the placements that will occur, resolve disputed placements and then process the RIF

notices. Although we may be able to accomplish all these actions for an individual RIF in less than 60 days, we cannot complete several RIFs simultaneously in less time.

Because we need the 60-day processing time, the complete official request (with all attachments) must be received by the Air Force Personnel Center (AFPC) 180 days prior to the RIF effective date when the RIF requires a 120 day notice, or 120 days prior to the effective date when 60 day notices are needed. So please help us by getting your RIF request packages with all required documents in on time. If you do, we will meet your RIF effective dates. A sample request letter with a list of the required documents can be found in the AFPC Procedures Guide at <http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/DPC/ProGuide/proguide.htm>. A copy is attached to this article. If you have any questions concerning your packages or need help in planning for an upcoming RIF, contact the POC at DSN 665-3045.

Sample Letter Requesting AFPC to Process RIF

[Information in red is provided as guidance to help you prepare your request]

MEMORANDUM FOR HQ AFPC/DPCTI
ATTN: RIF Unit

FROM: _____ *[Name of Base]*

SUBJECT: Request to Process Reduction-in-Force

Request you conduct a Reduction-in-Force (RIF) *[Specify if the request is for a Mock RIF]* for _____ *[Base]*.

POC for this RIF will be _____ *[Name, DSN number, and email address of a CPF Specialist that can provide additional information]*.

The proposed effective date of the RIF is _____ *[The actual effective date will be established by the RIF Unit. Your proposed date will be used if it is at least 120 days after the date of receipt of your RIF request in AFPC (180 days if RIF requires 120 day notices)]*.

The cut-off date announced for update of records is _____ *[Date publicized locally as the last day employees may update records (e.g., vet pref, SCD, education, experience history, performance appraisals) to be used in the RIF. See Pre-RIF Timeline # 45]*

Appraisal cut off date is _____ *[This date will be used to determine the four year look back period for appraisals used in the RIF. Identify if different from cut off for records update]*.

We have conducted all Pre-RIF planning *[These are the items listed on the Pre-RIF timeline of the Procedures Guide which were tasked to the CPF, Management or MAJCOM. If they have not all been completed, identify those that are still pending with the projected date of completion]* and have included the following attachments needed to perform mechanics of a RIF (see list below):

a. Reason for RIF *[This will be used when creating RIF notices and processing the RIF related personnel actions. If you are running two or more RIFs simultaneously provide the reason for each. Be sure to specify if the RIF is related to CS&P (A-76) as those actions have a different authority code and are closely tracked by HQ USAF/DPF]*.

b. Validated vacancy list *[It is Air Force policy to use all valid vacancies in RIF. A valid vacancy (per Air Force definition) is any authorized, funded position that does not have a hiring restriction (i.e., projected manpower reduction or funding limitation) imposed upon it by an appropriate official. List all valid vacancies within the competitive area of the RIF including any fill actions at AFPC, OPM, or DPK. For each position, provide the CPCN, Position Title, PP-SRS-GR, Office Symbol or Org Code and NTE date (if Temporary or Term). You can get a*

prepared list in this format by running the vacancy report in Regional Applications. Also, include those positions that are currently encumbered that will become vacant prior to the effective date of the RIF (resignations, retirements, LWOP candidates, projected internal actions) with the anticipated date the position will be vacant and the reason (promotion, CLG, resignation, retirement, etc). If the employee is moving to another position within the Competitive Area, provide the CPCN of the position they are scheduled to move to, to ensure they compete correctly in the RIF].

c. List of encumbered positions that are being abolished. *[The list should include CPCN, Position Title, PP-SRS-GR, Office Symbol or Org Code, NTE date (for TERM appointment), and the name of the incumbent. Do not include positions that are vacant or are filled with temporary employees].* Submit separate lists to identify positions in the competitive or excepted service.

d. Standard lines of promotion/progression. *[There is a three grade limit (five grade for 30% disabled veterans when determining retreat rights) on assignment right in RIF. The grade limits of each employee's rights are determined by the grade progression of the position from which the employee is released (regardless of how the employee actually progressed to that grade). Therefore, we need the " lines of promotion" for each position that is encumbered by an employee affected by RIF. These differ from one installation to another depending on the grade structure of the installation, especially in positions not covered by the general schedule. As a minimum, provide the five grade range for each abolished position, and since we do not know where and what position the RIF will also include in round two, the lines of promotion for series in the competitive area that have the same or lower grade level of the abolish positions. For example, if the highest grade affected in the RIF is a WG-10 provide the lines of promotion for positions at that grade and below (using representative rate)].*

e. List of employees with mandatory return, reemployment and restoration rights.

f. Information on competitive area(s). *[Tell us if your CPF has more than one competitive area. If it does identify specifically which positions are either included within the competitive area of the RIF, or (if it is easier) those that are outside the competitive area (normally this is because they are outside the commuting area). You can do this by either identifying the two digit "Competitive Area" field in DCPDS (if coded), or by PAS Code and organizational structure code.*

g. List of employees with physical qualification restrictions, unsatisfactory performance, conduct problems, and other non-documented conditions which may affect RIF placement when RIF action is required. *[Provide us a list of employees who have a final decision of removal or change to lower grade because of poor performance or conduct. A list of employees that have similar performance or conduct actions pending or under adjudication. A list of employees under disbarment and security restrictions (i.e., clearances revoked, denied, or under adjudication). Also, a list of employees identified for RIF or you expect may be players because they are in the same competitive level or grade range of the RIF that have physical restrictions that may limit their placement].*

h. List of employees requiring exceptions to the regular order of release in RIF when RIF action is required *[There are two types of exceptions to the regular order of release mandatory and discretionary. Employees who were re-employed because of restoration rights after returning from service in the Armed Forces have mandatory exception for 6 months or 1 year (depending on the type of service). In rare instances employees may be granted discretionary exceptions if they are serving in unique positions that higher -standing employees can not take over within a 90 day period. List all employees who are entitled to either a mandatory or discretionary exception and provide the reason]*

i. Tenure tie breaker. (Indicate whether you want to use the AutoRIF built in tie breaker or indicate if you have a unique tie-breaker that you use at your installation). *[AutoRIF uses a random tie breaker similar to the process used in delegated examining. It is defensible in third party appeals and we recommend its use unless your installation has negotiated a different process in local bargaining]*

We understand you will provide _____ (base) with the final version of the retention register from which notices will be given for use in counseling employees affected during RIF, etc.

Signature
Civilian Personnel Officer