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According to standard procedure the interviewer verified
and edited the transcript and sent it to the interviewee
for review. The interviewee David Snyder was invited to
make any changes as he saw fit. David Snyder did not edit
or approve the transcript.

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Q: All right, this is Christopher Koontz for the US Army Center of Military History. Today is the first of August, 2008, and I'm interviewing Mr. David Snyder, who is the former assistant G-1 for civilian personnel policy of the Army. I'm interviewing him for an Office of the Secretary of Defense Study on the national security personnel system. This interview will be used by OSD and Army historians for use in their research and work. First of all, sir, are you sitting for this interview voluntarily?

A: Yes.

Q: All right. And do you give your permission for OSD and Army historians and other researchers to use this material as long as they cite you correctly?

A: Yes.

Q: All right, thank you, sir. Give me a little bit of your background. How was it that you came to be the assistant

G-1 for civilian personnel?

A: I was part of the Army Civilian Personnel Career Program, and just held a variety of assignments at various places all over the, basically all over the world. And eventually, you know, got selected for the job that was basically the head of civilian personnel for the Army.

Q: Okay. And when was that?

A: I think it was around the year 2000, I think. I'm not quite sure, but close enough.

Q: All right. When you became the assistant G-1 for civilian personnel policy, around 2000, what were the kinds of issues that the Army was looking at at that time for its civilian personnel?

A: At that time, I think we were mostly concerned with trying to carry out the edict of regionalization of civilian personnel services across the Army.

Q: And what was involved in that?

A: We had, the Army had over a hundred separate operating civilian personnel offices, and the mandate was to basically take those down and establish eight or so, or six or eight regional processing centers plus a bunch of little satellite offices on each of the Army posts. So it was fairly a major change for people in my business, and also for the customer base, for that matter.

Q: All right. At that point in time, was the Army looking at anything resembling the kinds of things that NSPS would later come in and deal with?

A: Yeah. We weren't looking at it alone. I think this drive to get some improvement in the basic personnel system had existed across the department at various points in time, for a long period of time. So we were basically, again, working under the, pretty much working under the...I won't say command and control, but certainly under the executive leadership of the people at DOD. And there were various and sundry items and issues that were tried on a legislative basis to try to improve the personnel system, and most of which came to naught, I might add.

Q: At that time before NSPS, what were the kinds of issues that were blocking reform or change in civilian personnel policies?

A: Do you mean what or who?

Q: Yes, either one.

A: I would say it's mostly a "who." I would say the people at OPM at the time, they were not necessarily convinced that the system was as broken as we considered it to be. And, you know, since they have in essence the functional responsibility for all legislative changes, and they're the ones that work with what used to be the House Post Office

Civil Service Committee, couldn't get much useful legislative change unless they were alongside and in bed with you. And so, for most of the things that were tried were either, they either failed because OPM opposed them, or they were just little things that didn't get enough support across the services. And it was usually necessary also for those of us in the services to agree. So if the Air Force would propose something, and the Navy were to disagree with it, it had little chance of getting out of the department as part of the department's proposal, anyway.

Q: Was there much of a driving force before the Rumsfeld administration at OSD to get civilian policy changes?

A: Yes. I mean, at our level, and when I say "our level," I'm talking about me now, and my counterparts in Army, Navy, Air Force, there was a pretty much of an understanding and even my predecessor and my predecessor's predecessor all thought we needed some fairly fundamental change in the personnel rules. So there was a fairly significant amount of desire on our part, okay, that there be some change.

Q: At that point in time, what were the things that you were dealing with, or the things you were looking at, that you needed changed?

A: Well, what we wanted to be able to do was, we wanted to be

able to primarily, and this is my position, and others will have somewhat different positions, although I think we all agreed that the hiring process itself needed to be streamlined. Because we still had quite a substantial amount of bureaucratic stuff to go through in order to get someone hired, especially from the outside. And it was especially true if we were trying to compete for talent...you know, all the services have lots of engineers and scientists, and some fairly highly educated competitive talent. And sometimes, you know, we didn't compete very well for the really best and the brightest, the kids of the Ivy League schools and stuff like that. We got a lot of good engineers and scientists, but we were somewhat handicapped. Especially when we tried to compete against private industry, because we couldn't offer the same kind of benefit packages or financial rewards that they could, at least to start with. What we were trying to get to was something that would, when I say "fix the hiring system," you really have to work with the compensation system and the hiring system together, so it's...and also, by the way, as long as you're doing that, you may as well have a system that allows you to separate people much more expeditiously than we can do right now. And so it all kind of ties together.

Q: What sort of initiatives before NSPS had been kicked around? You mentioned that there were, you know, sort of little things that died, or things that crashed on the rocks of OMB, er, OPM. What were those?

A: I don't even remember specifically what they were, but I just remember frustration. You know we tried, I think that--when I say "we" now, I'm really meaning the high-level stuff that went out of the department from that period of time pretty much all went from OSD. The services were not allowed or were not enabled to actually deal with Congress itself. Now that's in the civilian personnel business, there were other parts--I know the Army obviously was able to deal with certain congressional committees--but in the civilian personnel business, we pretty much had to go hand-in-hand. The one thing that was, that we got which I would consider to be quite successful was, and it happened in, I want to say, 2002, 2003, was a real break in how we recruited, I think it was physicians and nurses. Because we got, we got an exception that was actually slid in by I think it was one of the appropriations committees, that just kind of slid on through, and it had a fairly, it made our Surgeon General and some of the other folks extremely happy. So that was actually quite successful. But other than that, I don't recall that we had anything

that was ever terribly successful. Until NSPS.

Q: When do you remember the first time hearing about NSPS? What did you know about it before you became involved in it?

A: Well, you call it NSPS, I call it change in the personnel system, and we had been talking about that and wanting that for years and years. I mean, it was...I can remember my predecessor's predecessor, and that goes back, let's see, five, ten, fifteen or twenty years, trying to make some efforts to get some change inside the personnel system. So there's been, at the user level, and I consider myself to be "user level," not necessarily at the policy level, the government policy level, the user level, there's been a desire for this for quite a long period of time. Now, NSPS was a term that was coined during the process some time between the best practices and when the legislation was finally passed, and the work groups were actually put together to try and bring it off.

Q: Alright. Tell me about the best practices initiative. How did you begin to get involved in that?

A: Well, there again, it was an OSD lead, and I think that my counterpart up at OSD was Ginger Graver. They basically had kind of game-planned out how should we go about trying to get from point A, where we are now, to point X, which is

a change in the personnel system. So they thought, "Okay, let's go through...", I mean, we...I believe they were going to try, and even, by the way, prior to Ginger Graver's efforts, her predecessor also tried some things. But we had to try in the right way, you had to try to work some things through OPM and if that failed, and only if that failed, and you couldn't work through OPM, then would we eventually try to go this direction, which was basically DOD goes by itself. And I guess I didn't--one of your questions I didn't answer, was...there was never any real interest during the Clinton administration...have I got it right here? Clinton was before George Bush, right?

A: Correct.

Q: Okay. There was never really any interest in trying to do something like this, because Democratic administrations traditionally support, and get the support of, the national unions. And so, when an administration came in that was, possibly could be less supportive of the unions, and more, quote, "supportive of issues that would make management more effective," that's really kind of, then said, "Okay, well maybe during this period of time that this administration is in power, then we can make an effort to try to do something like that." Now I answered that question and forgot the one that I was working on,

so...what was your previous question?

Q: You were telling me about the best practices and you were talking about how Ginger Graver (inaudible).

A: Okay, yeah. The OSD staff, I think, basically laid out this framework that says "The way we're going to do this is we're, ultimately up here, we're going to try to get legislative change. But down here, the way we need to work at it, we need to lay the groundwork, by identifying, knowing that there are some quite good things still in our personnel system even now." So we were going to, the idea under the best practices was to get together and work through the process of trying to identify A) what best practices there are, what things we had that should be changed, what things we had that should be thrown out, and what things we didn't have that we needed. And that was pretty much an issue where people like me would sit in a room, and we'd go through a lot, all of the input and the comments, because part and parcel of that process is that our staffs, okay, had been working also on work groups for the best practices. Things that they came up with then were vetted. We kind of acted like a board of directors or whatever. And then we would say "yes" on this or "no" on that or we would ask questions and get further refinement. And that process actually went on for quite a long period

of time, I would say.

Q: Who was involved in these meetings?

A: Me and all my counterparts. And me and all my counterparts would be...there was Army, Navy, Air Force. There was Defense Logistics Agency. Early on, the intelligence people were there. And then, Washington Headquarters Services, or, you know, the people that worked for Doc Cook and that bunch, and I don't know if those were Washington Headquarters Services or that's what the Army calls them, but the Army's counterpart. And then there were the, I call them the Seven Dwarfs, and that is the seven defense agencies, DLA and...I don't even remember all their names now. But that was basically, and there was probably altogether, with the DOD staff, principals maybe between ten and fifteen.

Q: All right. How did this process work? Did DOD or OSD bring in a slate of issues, or was it the services and the other agencies bring in their things?

A: Well, early in the process...early in the process, what OSD...I think we all agreed to go through this, but what OSD did, they basically had...they picked, and I think they used partly their people and partly from the services, to chair, in essence, working groups. And there were working groups by various subjects. There was, you know, staffing

or hiring, there was compensation, there was classification, there was management/employee relations, appeals. And what those work groups would do, and those work groups were made up of people from my staff, the Navy staff, everybody contributed so that we all had representation on these workgroups. And then they went through each and every issue or subject matter area under the one that they were handling, and they came up with ideas, they came up with comments, and eventually, the product that they came up with then was briefed to us as the board of directors. And then OSD, the OSD staff, meaning Ginger, would try to get a consensus as to which direction we ought to go. And I think generally we ended up, in most areas, with a consensus opinion of "Yes, let us try to get that."

Q: What was the process like to get, or to build, consensus? What were the kind of issues that were more harmonious or more divisive.

A: (laughter) Well, you had some, you had, the problem with our group in getting consensus, is you had a range of people who, from one side who wanted to basically throw the baby out with the bathwater, to those who said "No, I don't want to change much of anything. Everything's okay like it is." And so, bringing those two sides together was

sometimes fairly difficult, and in fact, even though we quote "had a consensus," there were probably some who probably still disagreed with what we ended up with, as far as the chosen or the selected course would be. And, I mean, we basically, we all knew one another pretty well, and so we'd just basically get in the rooms and just kind of hassle it out. Now this same process, by the way, took place at the work group level, and there was the same mix of people in there, you know, from the people that said "Throw everything away" to "Throw nothing away." And so...but eventually we kind of came to an idea that, you know, this is probably the best we can get out of it at this point. At the conclusion, let's say that, and I'm kind of guessing on this point, but at the conclusion of each one of these best practice work groups, then the recommendation then was, or the chosen course of action, was taken into the DOD staff, where the DOD staff members then actually would put together the proposed legislation.

Q: All right. At your level, at sort of the "board of directors" level as you've described it, you described two poles of basically people who wanted to burn the house down and then people who wanted to just keep going. If the people who wanted to completely scrap the system are, you know, on a scale of one to ten, one, and then the more

conservative people are tens, where would you fit in that numeric scale?

A: Me?

Q: Yes, sir.

A: What's that again?

Q: Which pole did you lean more towards?

A: Yeah, but which one is one and which one's ten?

Q: Say, the, you know, "chuck the system" is one...

A: Yeah, I'm about a .3. I was one of the more radical ones about, you know, doing something fairly significant.

Q: Okay. And then, could you give me an example of one of the issues that was one of the major points of contention between the radicalists and the conservatives?

A: Well, I think one of the things was labor relations. There were some of us that wanted to try to do something with federal labor relations that would give management more, more authority. Now, whether that was trying to change the labor relations statute itself, or whether that was, which might have been a non-starter because that affected the whole government, not just DOD, or whether that was to try to say "Okay, we understand that we're not going to be able to basically change this, but let us write in an exception for the department, so that we can say 'because of the kind of work that we do, we want to take some of the authority

and some of the power from the unions.'" And that was--and there were people that said "No, this works just fine. We don't need to do that." So that was one of the areas where I think we had some fairly significant disagreement. But I think ultimately, ultimately we kind of came to a middle ground, I think we came to a middle ground solution, I don't exactly remember, one way or the other. But there were some really good, on our group, even at the "board of directors" level, there were some real experts on labor relations, who were very, very good at kind of working their way around. I'm not, by the way--I was not a labor relations expert, so anyway.

Q: Were there any particular issues or any particular kind of "pet projects" that OSD was trying to steer the services and the other agencies toward?

A: You know, not that I'm aware of. I'm sure OSD had an idea in mind as to what they wanted this all to look like. But in terms of "pet projects," unless you could call the whole thing their pet project, you know, they had the authority to basically mandate those things to us anyway, you know. So... But getting to...there were three of us who were major services. I wasn't necessarily on behalf of the Army, I wasn't necessarily adverse to having a strong OSD staff basically writing policy from the department level,

although I think there was more resistance to that from the Navy and the Air Force than there was from me.

Q: Was there any kind of union or labor relation presence at your level of discussion?

A: No. No, this was all internal deliberations of personnel professionals.

Q: All right, sir, and you mentioned that...

A: Although I will say that I can't speak for the work groups. There might have been some people who were actually members of the work groups, or maybe the administrative staffs, who may have typed up some of this stuff, who might have been actually union members. Generally personnel people themselves are not union members, but sometimes the administrative staffs are.

Q: All right. You mentioned that labor relations wasn't necessarily your forte.

A: Right.

Q: Were there any people at your level that were sort of more versed in it or more interested in it than you were at the time?

A: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah, no question.

Q: And who were they, do you remember?

A: The guy who's at DLA now, I think he's still there...God, I don't know, I'll have to think. I know that person was,

and also, Jan, she worked for Doc Cook at the time, she was fairly conversant with--because she was an operator as well--she was fairly conversant. But the one who was, the one who was probably the best was this guy Jeff from the Defense Logistics Agency, or DLA. He was really good at it. And OSD normally had in the room, when we were talking about those kinds of things, we normally had experts from the DOD staff. And I think we were allowed to bring one person with us for each one, when we were in the work groups. And when the subject was labor relations, I would bring my person, who's also just a wonderful expert, his name is David Helmer.

Q: Obviously, the union piece is one of the major roadblocks to getting NSPS drafted, legislated and implemented. What were the kinds of issues that you remember getting push-back from the unions on?

A: Well, we didn't deal with the unions until...we did not deal with the unions at all in the work group process, I don't believe. Because I don't think, I don't think we actually dealt with the unions until...OSD might have dealt with the unions. But the unions were not...I know some of the issues that they did not care for, and that is, they did not care for the way in which the compensation system was being changed. They didn't care--I don't think they

liked the appraisal system that was being developed. They certainly didn't like the ability of the department to have its own, basically have its own appeals system.

Q: At the time that the working groups and the board of directors were debating or shaping these kinds of things that you talked about, like the appraisal system, the compensation and the appeals process, was there an awareness that this is going to cause problems down the road?

A: Oh, absolutely. Yeah, I mean, the one guarantee out of all of this was the unions were going to oppose it and oppose it vociferously.

Q: How long did these working groups and the board of directors meet? How long did it take to get the recommendations hashed out?

A: Well, are you talking about, what was the length of a meeting for a given subject?

Q: I'm talking about the entire process.

A: I want to say the entire process lasted a year or two. Here again, I don't remember. I've been gone three years, I've tried to forget all of this. You should have caught me the day after I retired.

Q: All right, and then, at the same time, you also have your, well, I know it's not a 9-to-5 job, but your regular job as

the assistant G-1. How much of your time was taken up by the best practices and the sort of proto-NSPS work?

A: Oh, during the time that was best practices, I'd say 10 to 15%.

Q: Okay, so this is a major project, but not something that's--

A: Yeah, if you figure four hours, if you figure a meeting a week, at four hours or, you know, roughly, well, that's four out of forty, that's about 10%. So I would say it was fairly time-intensive during the period it was going on.

Q: All right.

A: Because, you know, and one of the other things I don't know that I've said or not is that, while the working groups were working, then my representative on the working groups, then, would come and give me a rundown of where they stood, and that's caught up in that. I mean, I figured that into that period of time there as well.

Q: All right. What was your opinion of the final recommendations of the best practices process?

A: Oh, I thought they were just fine. Loved to have them implemented.

Q: All right. After the best practices phase stops, from your perspective or your experience, where did the NSPS project go from there?

A: Then it was, I believe it was then writing the legislation, and then the people on the OSD staff, primarily Ginger Graver, trying to work with whoever she needed to work with to try to get this implemented. And she did, I think she did a wonderful job, to actually get something through, because she would run into people like Susan Collins, who is, who does have quite an interest in...you know, she's the Senator from Maine, and she's got quite an interest in things having to do with the federal civil service. And although she's a Republican, she is not necessarily... against--or I shouldn't say "against," but she's not in opposition to some of the things the unions wish to do, and so I know Ginger, she was going back and forth with various people over there in the Congress, whether it be staffers or whether it be some of the principals themselves, as far as, you know, what they could do here, what they could do there, blah blah blah. And the end result of that, I think, was whatever had been written, as far as specific legislation, got turned into a piece of enabling legislation that says "Yes, you can go do this."

Q: Right, and I think you told me this before, I just want to be clear on this. The legislation was actually drafted within OSD, correct?

A: Yes, I believe so. Although I don't recall ever having

actually read it, although I probably did. I'm sure they would have shown it to us.

Q: So at the Army level, there may have been some kind of review process for it?

A: When you say "at the Army level," what do you mean? I know that I, when we got to the final, giving the final Army approval, I took that package to Mr. Reggie Brown, who is the assistant secretary for manpower and reserve affairs, and went through that process with him, and ultimately got his approval okay, as far as the Army-level approval, to basically support the package that OSD had sent us.

Q: And do you remember when that was?

A: Chris Kluh might. Chris Kluh was--she was in on all of this. She might not have been on the best practices, but she was in on it basically from the time that Gordie England took it over.

Q: All right, and in the middle of this, there was a point where Secretary Rumsfeld called for, what they're calling a strategic pause in the system, and you were there for that, correct?

A: I was what?

Q: You were there during that process?

A: Yes, I was.

Q: All right. What was the reason that OSD backed off and

started the pause?

A: Who else have you talked to?

Q: Personally, I haven't talked to anybody. I'm not sure who the other historians have.

A: Well, the reason he called the strategic pause--and this is my opinion--was there was some infighting and some backbiting going on among and between the services and the OSD staff. And either the Navy, or the Air Force, or both--and I know it was not the Army--basically went to...might have been the Secretary of the Navy and complained to him that this wasn't going the way they wanted, and that he needed to step in. He, Rumsfeld, then needed to step in--then the Secretary of the Navy went to Rumsfeld, and said he needed to step in and do something about this process, which was not working very well.

Q: Were you or anybody else on the Army side consulted about the decision to pause?

A: Oh, no, no-no, we were told. But I mean, that wasn't a big thing, I mean that was...I mean, in making the decision to quote "pause," was, okay, fine. It's easy to not do anything.

Q: How long was that pause?

A: Oh, gosh, I don't remember. Seems like a month or two or maybe...it seems to me, though, like the legislation, the

enabling legislation had already passed. And what was then happening was, we were trying to get...actually build the framework for the DOD regulation itself. And so, the authority already existed, so then it was just a determination from that point on as to A) when are we going to implement this? and B) what are we going to implement?

Q: Were you involved in any of those discussions for the when and what?

A: Not directly, no, I don't think so. You know, what are we going to implement, was, you know, OSD I believe was feeding us things that says "This is what we think." And I think it was some of those, it might have been some of those...I'm trying to remember now. It seems to me like once the legislation was passed, we were under some kind of time constraints to actually implement the legislation. And so the OSD staff basically was taking what we had quote "agreed to" in the best practices and was trying to put that into some form where it could be implemented. And it was at that point, I think, that...I don't know exactly what caused whoever to go to the Secretary of the Navy and say "something's wrong here," but there were certainly some personality issues that were involved in that as well.

Q: Do you remember any kind of particular scrutiny coming from outside of the Pentagon, from the media or Congress, or

anything towards either supporting or not supporting NSPS?

A: You know, at what point are you talking about? What period of time are you talking about?

Q: Either at the pause point or throughout the process.

A: Well, once we got to the point where we were supposed to go out and inform our components as to what some of the principles were going to be under this new system, we were requested--and this is after the pause and this is after Secretary England had kind of taken the leadership reins--we were basically...I went to numerous Army installations and had like town hall meeting after--you know, you'd get into their auditoriums and they'd fill up with people. And you'd go through, you know, what some of the principles were, and there would be a great deal of opposition or trepidation, especially from people who were normally the representative, the local union representatives. And so...but in terms of the media itself, no, I don't recall any great opposition.

Q: Were there any things that were kind of difficult for you, or contentious for you to grapple with in these kinds of town meetings, and trying to convince people that NSPS was a positive thing and the way to go?

A: Oh, yeah. Yeah, sure. Because the, you know, standing up there in front of three, four, five hundred people, who

basically are used to the old civil service system, which is, you know, takes care of you and basically protects you from these rogue managers and stuff and you're telling them that, you know, some of that is going to change. And people aren't very trusting of Big Brother. They basically say "Well, what's wrong with the way we do it now?" And the answer to that is it just produces too much mediocrity. And yet, there were some then that were also, and I don't know that this came out specifically, but you could take it to the absurd levels that Enron took it, and that is, the lowest 10% of those rated every year were fired. And so, that's no way to run a business either. And there was some concern that what was going to happen is we were going to get into some very Draconian kind of work system. Of course, that wasn't true, but you couldn't convince people not to be suspicious. Hell, I'm suspicious. When the government has something that's good for me, I'm always expecting to get my pocket picked.

Q: Yeah, I'm just thinking back to my own personal experience, the first time that this was briefed to us. I mean, we're a bunch of white-collar GS, all of our eyes just opened up, like we're doomed.

A: Yeah.

Q: So we weren't the only ones.

A: We're doomed. Are you under the NSPS now?

Q: Our managers are, and some of our new hires are. But we're still GS, or at least I am, for at least another three months, I guess, possibly. But anyway. Okay, after the pause ended, tell me what happens after that.

A: Well, you know, the strategic pause was not really a pause, okay? It was a basic re-look, from the ground up, as to how and what we ought to be doing and how to carry this out. And there were a bunch of work groups set up, because what Secretary England thought was we ought to take a look at this, since this is a major change across the department, it ought to be looked at through the eyes of the procurement process, where you actually...you define your requirement and then you go through a set process and you come out at the other end with a fairly detailed plan of what you're going to do. And so there were a bunch of groups that were set up, and one of them was Requirements, I know that. I don't remember--and I know another one was Labor. Another one was Appeals. And I chaired the Labor group, and our mission in the Labor group was to basically go through the process and try to figure out what was the best approach to the labor thing, and then to lay out a timetable as to what is accomplishable, if everything worked correctly, as it should. Well, we knew it wasn't

going to work as it should, because we knew unions were going to stop and start and stop and start and stop and start, and just drag it out as long as they could, but anyway, that was the optimum timeline, the best you could do is if everything went, so. We went through that, and one of the things we also did was--and I think all of our work groups, we had representation from OPM, we had representation from Department of Homeland Security, and we had representation from a cross-section of managers who had, who had actually worked with, had dealings with unions at the post, camp and station level. And at the end of that, I mean, we basically came out, and we, there were some really bright people in that group. The guy who, I think he was at OPM at the time, his name was Jeff Slumberg (sp?), who used to, who prior to working at OPM had been the, he was the general counsel for the largest of the public employee unions. So he knew all about union stuff. But then he went to work at OPM, and he was very, very helpful, very, very good. And I think we came out with a fairly...now, when I say a "product," okay, I'm not necessarily talking about the labor relations product itself, I'm talking about the timelines, what is accomplishable, blah blah blah, and maybe a very, very broad recommendation to kind of take a look at and follow

the labor relations lead of Health and Human...not Health and Human Services, the Department of Homeland Security who was going through about the same process at the same time. And then, all of the other groups finished, they finished their stuff, and we finished ours as far as Labor went. And during this process, Secretary England had a meeting every week, if not every day, I don't remember which, but, and he had the assistant secretaries of all of the services there with him, and of course, each of the assistant secretaries took their horse-holder, like me. And there was a representative from OPM in these meetings. And let's see...so the upshot was, at the conclusion of the strategic pause, which wasn't a pause, I mean, there was a lot of work that was going on during the strategic pause, it was decided that this process would be handled just like a major procurement in the department. And so then it was decided, and as an offshoot of that, it was decided that they would put, they would actually have a card-carrying certified, bonafide PM, or what do you call it? It's not PM, it's the next level up?

Q: PEO?

A: PEO. A PM or a PEO, one of the two, for this project, who would be the boss of it, across all the services, and that's where Mary came in, Mary...what's her name? Mary...

Q: I'm blanking.

A: Yeah, well, that's Mary, the lady who was the PM through the first, well, actually, first three years, I guess. I think the PM is now Brad Bunn or whatever.

Q: Okay. What was the relationship of these working groups that you were on with the PM or the PEO?

A: The PEO did not exist at that point.

Q: Like I said, this is just the decision to have one? At this time?

A: That's one of the things that came out of these work groups, was a decision to have, put this under the charting of a PEO or a PM. And I'm not sure which.

Q: Okay, just to...

A: Mary Lacey, Mary Lacey.

Q: Okay. Right. Just to get back to your labor relations working group that you were working on, what are your recollections of the timeline that you proposed? What did it look like in terms of benchmarks or periods of time that would be elapsed.

A: Why don't you just get a copy of it? I'm sure there's a copy of it still around. David Helmer, in the Army, probably has a copy of it. But it was...in one sense, it was not realistic, okay? It was accurate, but it was not realistic. And I think Secretary England understood that.

But what he was asking for was not...you know, "Don't try to blue sky all the delays necessarily, although you might want to build in a delay or two, just like you do sometimes in schedules," he said. "But let's see what is the, you know, all of the steps that you have to go through to get from point A to point B, and then put down the, in essence, put down the required timelines that bind each side." And that's what we did. But that was just one of the things that came out of the Labor Relations. There was some recommendations on how to go about it, as well. But that'll be in it, you can get that, you can get the paperwork, I think that'll probably clarify that for you.

Q: Alright. Take me to the next step. After the decision is made to put NSPS under a PEO structure, what was your involvement after that?

A: Not much. There were a couple of meetings, high level meetings, that I think Secretary England and maybe even Charlie Abell may have attended. Or I know Charlie, excuse me, Charlie Abell or maybe Doctor Chu attended, that were the initial meetings with the unions.

Q: Okay, but you weren't involved in those?

A: No, only on the periphery, just knowing they were going to happen and stuff. And that was just, you know, that was part of the process, I think, that we had put down was, you

know, you've got to start some time, and you've got to do X, Y, and Z. Because I think it was about at that time, if I'm not mistaken, that I spent a lot of time on the road going to the various Army posts, trying to explain to people what this was going to look like. Once the PEO was established, then I think we, again, the PEO had no internal or external resources on her own. She had, and she did use, I believe, some of the OSD staff, and I think her next command--her next person in command was Brad Bunn. But then the services...but what made up her staff was then supplied by the services, or the OSD, and/or the OSD staff.

Q: Did the service staff loaned by the Army, did they come out of G-1 or M&RA?

A: Yeah.

Q: Okay.

A: We might have had some field people as well, but at the time I think I owned it all.

Q: From the Army's side, about how many people did you have to hire on?

A: I don't remember, I don't remember. Normally, if you're going to have "work on this topic, or work on this topic, or work on this topic," you'll get one or two people on each one. Mary would be the best one to try to describe...because I don't remember.

Q: Okay, is this about the point that you retired?

A: Yep.

Q: Okay. All right, looking at it, if you could put your mind back to 2005, when you retired, what was your opinion of how NSPS had progressed from, you know, sort of the inkling stage to where it was when you left?

A: I was actually...I thought it was a reasonably decent accomplishment. It wasn't all and it wasn't everything, I still think specific legislation would have been better than an enabling legislation. But the fact that we got what we got, which was that enabling legislation, which by the way, because it was like it is, there were certain-- quite a bit that had to be blessed or coordinated or whatever with the unions, but it's still a far cry, it's a significant accomplishment over what...over nothing, okay, I'll put it that way. You know, there's always going to be value judgments as to what the product that was implemented, is it as good as what it replaced, and I don't want to get into that, but in terms of getting the authority and actually making something happen within the department, it's fairly significant.

Q: Is there anything that you would point to as a lost opportunity or something that you wish would have happened to it as the process went along?

A: Well, you know, you could always wish for the pure and the...you know, the pure initial legislation to be passed unchanged, but that's unrealistic to wish for that. So, as many times as we've tried to get stuff, and when I say "we" tried to get any kind of reasonable change inside the civil service system and have not accomplished anything, I would say this is a pretty good thing to have done.

Q: All right, sir. I'm out of questions.

A: So am I.

Q: (laughter) Is there anything you'd like to add to this? Are there any critical signposts or decisions or events that we missed?

A: No, I don't think so. I don't think so. I wish I was a little more clear on the dates and the times, but I did the best I could to forget all this stuff when I retired.

Q: Okay. We might get in touch with you, maybe to clarify some points at some point in time. Would that be all right?

A: Sure. But I'd say the two people probably that can give you some better information is Chris Klueh. Chris Klueh was quite significantly involved in the pause, and also in the...also she was basically the M&RA's representative. So any time we had needed policy changes and stuff, we went through her to get to the M&RA. So she had visibility over

quite a bit of this stuff as we were going through the process. And did you spell her name correctly?

Q: K-L-U-H.

A: Correct.

Q: I want to ask you one last question. When we talk to Mr. McLauren, what are the topics that he was working on? What should we ask him about?

A: Well, he was Chris's boss, okay? He, again, is going to be sitting in that kind of position where most of that stuff would have flowed through him. And so, he will have, he might also have some insights at a little higher level. He might have some insights as to just what was going on at the higher levels of the OSD staff, with regard to Charlie Abell and David Chu levels. Tell him hello, by the way.

Q: Okay, I certainly shall do that. Okay, sir, thanks for taking the time to do this.

A: Okay, you're welcome.

Q: I appreciate it.

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