

Summary of Discussions with Focus Groups from the Special Investigators and Real Estate Specialist

Overview of Findings

In the Special Investigators (SI) and Real Estate Specialist (RES) class series there are various skill-sets needed of employees in different positions within their class or class series or with-in an agency for that matter. Employees in this class must be able to function independently/autonomously as they are by themselves majority of the time. Agencies dictate what type of work employees in this class will perform. Employees must be able to set priorities and decide which investigations to do first. Assignments can come from a supervisor, an attorney, or complaints from the public. Participants indicated that they can work up questions, make reports, testify, and make recommendations. Also, depending on the agency, the SI's may only do investigations or they may do investigations, audit and compliance.

Enforcement powers are limited to the specific program or regulatory area and involve informal resolution and/or recommendations for administrative sanctions or penalties which are imposed by a higher authority (such as a commission or board). Criminal violations are referred to the Attorney General or local District Attorney for investigation and/or prosecution.

As mention above, some positions include compliance enforcement. This requires in some positions to coordinate possible resolution of compliant with contending parties addressing statues or regulation violations, evidence gathered and steps to regain compliance and/or resolution of complaint. Final agreements can be negotiated and stipulated in writing. Cases are then monitored to ensure adherence to agreements. In other positions, this requires gathering evidence, such as records, reports, accounting records, bank statements, bills, check stubs, sales receipts, transaction verification, personnel files and historical data pertaining to the initial violation and to develop trends or patterns to support compliant or violation. May conduct surveillance activities and serve subpoenas to obtain evidence and expedite cases. There are other positions that enforce compliance for licensing with state. This range of work may result in needing to look closely at rather there needs to be positions allocated to other classes or create new classes that covers the complexity of work and skills needed.

Distinguishing Work

The SI-2 differs from the SI-1 in that SI-2's can determine the need to start an investigation, make recommendations/determinations regarding settlements, compensation, consumer protection rules and regulations, and/or continued case action

Full Performance

Amount of Time to Reach Full Performance

Participants indicated that it takes anywhere from half a year to one year to reach full performance in their respective jobs.

Minimum Requirements

The majority of the participants agreed that the current minimum requirements were sufficient. Some of the reoccurring comments from the participants are as follows:

- Additional requirements are necessary for some positions and depending on agency needs.
- Working experience and knowledge in the specific field is necessary as well as familiarity with the agency.
- Flexibility and a very independent streak
- Good understanding of State and Federal laws for compliance purposes
- Good investigative background
- At least three weeks of on-the-job training with veteran SI's

Type of Supervision Received

Participants agreed that very limited supervision is all they get from their immediate supervisors. The work dictates employees to use independent judgment and/or act at their own discretion in determining investigation outcomes. Most receive assignments for the week from their supervisor, and that will be the only contact they have with him/her. Most of the employees update their supervisor of their case load once a week and/or have team meetings to bring everyone up to speed.

Type of Supervision Given

NONE

What Criteria Should Compensation be Based?

There was agreement among the participants that longevity, skill-set, productivity and performance should be the criteria used for compensatory benefits, with skill-set and performance taking priority over production and longevity. Participants also addressed the issue of a new inspector making more than someone who's been with the same agency employed the last 10 years.

Occupational Survey Summary on the Special Investigators and Real Estate Specialist

SUMMARY

	Special Investigator	Real Estate Specialist
<u>Participation Rate:</u>	84.5% of the 58 Total positions. 48 participated.	Population is too small to analyze.

<u>Time Worked in Occupation:</u>	Of the 84.5% of employees who participated in the survey 24.1% have 1-3 years of work experience; 19% has 3-5 years and 31% have five or more years	
<u>Education</u>	31.6% of participants indicated that at entry you need an associate degree and 22.8% said a bachelor's degree is required.	
<u>Experience</u>	61.4% of participants indicated that at entry you need at least 2 years of related work experience.	
<u>Skills:</u> (Extremely or Very Important)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Problem Solving 2. Decision Making 3. Instructing 4. Judgment and Decision Making 	1.
<u>Work Context:</u> (Every Day)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Contact with others 2. Decisions affect other people 3. Face to face discussions 4. Working with a team 5. Interaction with external customer/public 	
<u>Level of Complexity:</u>	38.8% - Level 4 – You evaluate the relevance and importance of theories, concepts, and principles. Guidelines exist only to serve as a guide. The criteria for developing new information. Guidelines may not exist for all situations. Considerable independent judgment, personal direction, and resourcefulness are needed to interpret circumstances, and to make decisions in major areas where there may be	

	uncertainty in approach, methodology and interpretation.	
<u>Supervision Received:</u>	57.1%- Level 4 or higher - Receive limited supervision and the work requires employees to use independent judgment or act on their own discretion. Requires the use of initiative and creativity to resolve problems or interpret policy to develop solutions. A manager may be available to provide general direction or advice, but employees usually act independently based on their own judgment.	
<u>Supervision Given:</u>	79.6% of positions have no supervisory responsibilities.	
<u>Knowledge within the Field or Specialty:</u>	63.3% - Most of positions require at a minimum an in-depth knowledge of concepts, practices and procedures with ability to use in varied situations.	
<u>Problem Solving:</u>	1. 63.3% - Problems are varied, requiring analysis or interpretation of the situation. Problems are solved using knowledge and skills, general precedents and practices.	
<u>Licenses/Certifications:</u>	Some certification is required for 10.2% of participants	