physically removed from any other federal facility, and the unit leader must be familiar with federal procedures for conducting business.

**Recruiting and Hiring Unit Leaders**

Recruiting and hiring leaders and assistant leaders for cooperative research units is unique because of the cooperative nature of the unit program. The advertising for leaders is restricted to the issuance of internal vacancy announcements that recruit employees from the federal government. Unit experience, whether as a leader in another unit or as an assistant leader, is strongly preferred for leader candidates. If a candidate with unit experience cannot be found, candidates with experience in working for research centers in the Service research organization are sought. Center-research experience gives the candidate the necessary preparation for Service and broader federal research but provides no guidance for operating in the university and state administrative systems. If a candidate with suitable scientific credentials cannot be found in the Service, attempts are made to recruit experienced candidates from other federal agencies.

The recruitment of assistant leaders is different from the recruitment of leaders. Recruitment of assistant leaders is an attempt to bring new expertise into the Service by searching for newly trained scientists with expertise applicable to future research needs. Position vacancies for assistant leaders are advertised in standard internal vacancy announcements and through the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), which is a source of candidates without previous federal employment. Assistant leader positions are considered entry level and are advertised at the entry level for research scientists with recently earned Ph.D. degrees (GS-11 or 12).

**Cooperator Involvement**

The cooperative nature of the unit program makes the governmental hiring processes for both leader and assistant leader positions unusually awkward. The cooperators must be involved in the federal selection processes. The complications arise because no compensatory mechanism exists in the Office of Personnel Management recruitment system to account for the needs and desires of the cooperators who conduct the on-site interview portion of the recruitment process.

**The Recruitment Process**

The following is the process for recruitment:

1. Cooperative unit headquarters personnel in Washington D.C. (collectively referred to as the unit office by field personnel) work with the appropriate federal personnel office to identify candidates for each vacancy through the federal advertisement procedure (vacancy announcement and OPM register issuance).