



Civilian Human Resources Office – East Newsletter March 2004

Update on the status of the National Security Personnel System (NSPS)

The President signed the DoD Authorization Act for FY04 into law on November 24, 2003. The Act granted the Secretary of Defense the authority to establish a National Security Personnel System (NSPS). Additional information is available at <http://www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps/index.html>.

On February 23, 2004, the National Association of Government Employees submitted a concept paper in response to the Department of Defense's National Security Personnel System draft proposal. This concept paper is the official collective response of more than 30 unions that have a vested interest in protecting the workplace rights of over 658,000 employees within DOD.

In the concept paper, unions argued that DOD's draft proposal does not:

- Provide for independent third party review of decisions
- Ensure that employees may bargain collectively and participate through unions of their own choosing in decisions which affect them.

Unions argue that DoD's personnel concepts go beyond the intentions of Congress, which passed the fiscal year 2004 DoD Appropriations Act giving DoD the authority to impose a new personnel system in the interest of national security. The unions representing DoD support the agency's national security mission, but firmly believe that collective bargaining rights are the keystone of any just labor-management relations systems.



Civilian Hiring and Recruitment Tool (CHART)

CHART became operational in October 2003. It provides easy access to all job information, all of the time. All the tools needed to search for jobs, build a resume, apply online, and see the status of your resume is at your fingertips. Information is easily accessible and available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Online application process can be accessed by going to the Department of Navy Human Resources web site www.donhr.navy.mil and clicking on Jobs, Jobs, Jobs. When you get to the second page, click on Jobs, Jobs, Jobs, again and you will be at the CHART site.

Latest CHART modifications are:

- Vacancy announcements now include an explanation of what an open continuous announcement (OCA) is and how an OCA works
- Address and phone number entry blocks for overseas applicants are now available for update
- Applicants can now easily jump from one job search results page to another using a simple navigation button
- Pop-up error messages are now available to remind applicants to enter mandatory information in the proper format
- Quick tips and answers to Frequently Asked Questions have been updated to address applicants' issues
- Applicants can now reset their forgotten passwords without having to go to a system administrator
- Receive notification of job announcement openings
- View your resume expiration date and extend it
- Review the job that you applied for and identify your continued interest
- Track the status of your resume activity

Comments regarding improvements you would like to see can be sent via <http://chart.donhr.navy.mil/> and clicking on the "Contact the Webmaster" link at the bottom of page.



Re-employment Priority List (RPL)

DoD was required to establish an RPL in which all DoD components in the commuting area would provide priority consideration to RPL registrants. Effective September 2003 the RPL was automated through the Automated Stopper And Referral System (ASARS) Web. The RPL Guide can be accessed by clicking on www.cpms.osd.mil/CARE/docs/RPL-Guide.doc.



HR Flexibilities for Direct-Hire Authority and Alternative Category Rating and Selection Procedures (Homeland Security Act of 2002 (PL 107-296))

These procedures provide agencies with the authority to appoint candidates directly to jobs for which the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) determines that there is a severe shortage of candidates or a critical hiring need. It also authorizes agencies with delegated examining authority under 5 USC 1104(a)(2) to develop a category-based rating method as an alternative process to assess applicants for jobs filled through competitive examining.

The Office of Personnel Management Director Kay Coles James gave approval/granted the use of direct-hire authorities government-wide for Medical Occupations (Diagnostic Radiologic Technologist, GS-0647; Medical Officer, GS-0602; Nurse, GS-0610 and 0620; and Pharmacist, GS-0660, as well as for Information Technology Management (Information Security), GS-2210).

In addition, direct-hire authority in support of the Administration's critical reconstruction efforts in Iraq has been granted. Agencies may immediately appoint non-United States (U.S.) citizens with fluency in Arabic or other related Middle Eastern languages to positions in support of those reconstruction efforts. Appointments are Schedule A excepted service, time-limited, and authority may only be used when there is a severe shortage of candidates with U.S. Citizenship. (Authority expires June 30, 2004.)

Note: The Human Resources Service Center-East (HRSC-E) has posted Direct Hire Public Notices on the Department of Navy Human Resources (DONHR) and OPM Web Pages. They are identified as EA0647-DR (Diagnostic Radiologic Technologist); EA0602-DR (Medical Officer); EA0610-DR (Nurse); EA0620-DR (Practical Nurse); EA0660-DR (Pharmacist); EA2210-DR (IT Spec (Info Security)).



Veterans' Recruitment Appointment (VRA) Information

(Formerly Veterans' Readjustment Appointment) – the following veterans are eligible for a non-competitive VRA appointment:

- Disabled veterans;
- Veterans who served on active duty in the Armed Forces during a war or in a campaign or expedition for which a campaign badge has been authorized;
- Veterans who, while serving on active duty in the Armed Forces, participated in a United States military operation for which an Armed Forces Service medal (AFSM) was awarded; and
- Recently separated veterans. Recently separated veterans are defined as those who have separated from active service within the last three years.

Other aspects of the VRA remain unchanged. As in the past, the following provisions apply:

- The maximum grade level at which appointments may be made is GS-11
- Veterans must be "qualified," i.e., able to perform the essential functions of the position with or without reasonable accommodation for a disability
- Veterans with less than 15 years of education must still receive training or education
- After two years of successful employment, appointments must be converted to career conditional.



Voluntary Early Retirement Authority (VERA) – Homeland Security Act of 2002

Agencies have the option to offer voluntary early retirement when restructuring as well as when downsizing. Previously, voluntary early retirement was only available in downsizing situations. The authority covers employees under the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS), and under the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS).



Office of Personnel Management will be conducting an audit of Navy’s HR programs during the second quarter of FY 04

An audit of Department of the Navy HR programs, operations, and use of personnel authorities will be conducted to assess how well they support mission accomplishment and comply with the merit system principles, laws, and regulations. MCAS Cherry Point is scheduled for 16-18 March 2004.



Return of Activated Military Members to Federal Civilian Employment

In recognition of the sacrifices civilian employees recalled to active duty have made, President George W. Bush directed on November 14, 2003, that Federal employees who are returning from active duty be granted 5 days of excused absence from their civilian duties. The President’s memorandum is available from OPM’s Web site at <http://www.opm.gov/oca/compmemo/2003/2003-14b.asp>. OPM’s memorandum and guidance on granting the 5 days of excused absence are available at <http://www.opm.gov/oca/compmemo/2003/2003-14a.asp>.



Need a DD 214

Veteran employees/applicants may request copies of their DD 214s online from NPRC (National Personnel Records Center), St. Louis. Previously, only written requests via U.S. mail which contained the requestor signature were honored, and it took up to 6-8 months to receive a reply. The online capability can be accessed via http://www.archives.gov/facilities/mo/st_louis/military_personnel_records/standard_form_180.html.



DoD Guidance for civilians participating in political activities

Civilian employees are subject to certain rules that limit their participation in political activities. On January 21, 2004, the Deputy Secretary of Defense issued a memo entitled "Civilian Employees' Participation in Political Activities." As we begin an election year, the information in this memo may be helpful in answering your questions regarding what political activities you may or may not participate in. For further information go to http://www.defenselink.mil/DoDgc/defense_ethics/DoD_oge/DepSECDEF_Memo_21Jan04.pdf



About DFAS

The Defense Finance and Accounting Service is the world's largest finance and accounting operation. It provides responsive, professional finance and accounting services to the men and women who defend America. In Fiscal Year 2003, DFAS paid about 5.9 million people, processed more than 12.3 million invoices from defense contractors, disbursed more than \$416 billion and managed more than \$197.4 billion in military trust funds. For more about DFAS visit <http://www.dfas.mil>.

New Pay Table D064 for Pharmacist (North Carolina)

DoD Special Salary Rate Authorization, Table Number D064, was issued on September 12, 2003. DoD Installation(s) covered include Halyburton Naval Hospital, Cherry Point, NC and Naval Hospital, Camp Lejeune, NC. The new salary rates were effective the first day of the pay period beginning on September 21, 2003.



January 04 Pay Raise arrived in increments

Federal civilian employees received a 2% raise at the start of the year. The President authorized the additional 2.1 percent pay raise on January 23, 2004, retroactive to January 11th. On March 3, 2004, the President signed an Executive Order addressing how the increase will be split between base and locality pay.

The Executive Order authorized an across the board base pay increase of 2.7 percent. The remaining 1.4 percent will be applied to locality pay. The Office of Personnel Management has published new salary tables based on that guidance. These tables are now being integrated into the personnel system and retroactive pay adjustments are being processed. Once the adjustments are processed by the personnel system, calculation of employee pay increases by payroll systems can begin.

As in 2003, not all employees will receive the retroactive part of the pay increase at the same time. Due to transaction volume, payroll processing of this change must take place over the course of multiple paydays. Employees can expect to receive the retroactive portion of the pay increase as early as 26 March 2004.

Leave and Earnings Statement



In order to protect against identity theft, DFAS is adjusting employees' Leave and Earning Statements by masking part of the social security number (SSN) on the hard-copy Leave and Earnings Statements (LES) that are mailed to the civilian employees' home address on record. Effective the pay period ending January 24, 2004, only the final 4 digits of the SSN will be displayed on the hard-copy LES. This change will not impact the electronic LES available on myPay, which will continue to display the entire 9-position SSN.

CHRO-E Tidbits:

Term & Temp – What's the difference?

- Term Employment. An individual may be hired to perform work that is expected to last for more than one year, but no longer than 4 years.
- Usually for work of a project nature.
- Release of an employee before the term appointment ends requires a RIF action.
- Temporary Actions. May be used to hire individuals (temporary appointment) or to temporarily place current permanent federal employees into a different position.
- Temporary appointments are: Limited to 2 years. The initial appointment must be no longer than 1 year, but it may be extended to 2 years.

Other types of temporary actions involve current permanent federal employees and can be used to quickly fill a vacancy while awaiting a permanent action. Common actions include:

- Temporary Promotion (to a higher grade)
 - Limited to 5 years.
 - May not require competition among applicants if less than 120 days.
 - May be an exception to Priority Placement Program.
- Temporary Reassignment (to the same grade)
 - Does not require competition among applicants.
- Detail (to the same or lower grade)
 - Does not require competition among applicants.



What are some good web sites for human resources matters?

- Department of the Navy
Civilian Human Resources
<http://www.donhr.navy.mil>
- Human Resources Service
Centers
[http://www.donhr.navy.mil/H
RSC/default.asp](http://www.donhr.navy.mil/H
RSC/default.asp)
- Defense Civilian Personnel
Management Service
<http://www.cpms.osd.mil>
- Office of Personnel
Management (OPM)
<http://www.opm.gov>
- OPM Job Listing
<http://www.usajobs.opm.gov>
- Pay Tables
Federal Wage System:
[http://www.cpms.osd.mil/wage/s
cheds/pay_info.htm](http://www.cpms.osd.mil/wage/s
cheds/pay_info.htm)
General Schedule:
[http://www.opm.gov/oca/payrate
s/index.htm](http://www.opm.gov/oca/payrate
s/index.htm)
- Office of Special Council
<http://www.osc.gov>
- Classification Appeals
<http://www.opm.gov/classapp/>
- NSPS
[http://www.cpms.osd.mil/nsp
s/index.html](http://www.cpms.osd.mil/nsp
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