



THE NUGGET

NEWSLETTER FOR THE ARMY PACIFIC REGION
PACIFIC REGION CIVILIAN PERSONNEL OPERATIONS
CENTER, FORT RICHARDSON, ALASKA

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DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Patricia Pearson, Director

Change and Improvement to Better Serve

This issue of the Nugget contains a number of articles that provide information about changes and improvements to existing Human Resource processes and services. Our theme over the past few years has been about moving forward, improving services and learning to live and thrive with change.

The Benefits arena has many new changes, especially in the Thrift Savings program. Employees can now increase their contributions during the Open Season. This is a positive step and helps employees help themselves in preparing for retirement. The ABC-C Center faced a series of technical problems in getting the new programs to work properly in time for Open Season. These are behind us now and ABC-C is fully functioning and processing open season actions via phone and Internet.

Our popular Standard OnLine Applicant Response System (SOARS) has been updated to allow applicants to edit and submit their resumes directly from SOARS. Read more about that in this issue.

I hope you find this Newsletter informative and useful. Suggestions for articles and coverage are always welcome.
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TSP OPEN SEASON

The Thrift Savings Plan Open Season is 15 May – 31 Jul 2001 and contains significant changes. Two new investment funds, the Small Capitalization Stock Index Investment Fund (S), and the International Stock Index Investment Fund (I) are now available.

In addition, CSRS and FERS employees can elect to contribute an additional 1% more in salary. This increases the CSRS limit from 5% to 6%, and the FERS from 10% to 11%.

Program changes and ABC implementation require employees to initiate changes as follows:

To change the amount of either salary or rate withheld from pay, employees will either call the ABC Center (IVRS) or initiate the change via the Internet (EBIS).

To change fund allocation, employees will either call the TSP office at (504) 255-8777, or initiate the change via the Internet at www.tsp.gov. You will need your Personnel Identification Number (PIN) to access your account via the Internet. If you do not have a PIN or have forgotten the number, you can request a new PIN either over the Internet or telephonically at above number. It will take approximately 10 days to receive a new PIN.

The earliest that changes become effective are 1 July 2001. The Pacific Region has electronic capability through the ABC-Center, please submit your elections via ABC-C. ([top](#))

RETIREMENT CORRECTIONS

Employees are reminded to consider their service history to determine whether they are under the correct retirement system. If you were separated under CSRS and rehired into Federal service, you may have been placed under the incorrect retirement system upon rehire. If you think an error has occurred, please contact Mr. Billy Atseriak, CPOC, at Billy.Atseriak@cpocpac.army.mil. The CPOC

will be conducting a 100% audit of Official Personnel Folders to determine retirement coverage errors. Errors will be reported to an OPM team that has been specifically implemented to address the erroneous retirement coverage issue. ([top](#))



REVISED ACKNOWLEDGEMENT RECEIPTS FOR RESUMES AND SELF- NOMINATIONS

Applicants will discover that our acknowledgement receipt for resumes and self-nomination(s) from our Resumix office has been changed. The acknowledgement was revised due to the numerous questions/concerns our Resumix operators and CPAC generalists were receiving. The major question asked by applicants is “Was my resume or self-nomination received?” This acknowledgement is sent automatically to applicants when our Resumix email server has received a resume/self-nomination. It is not an indication that the resume and/or self-nomination has been accepted and processed. The resumes and self-nomination(s) must first go through a verification process after which time applicants will be notified if either resume and/or self-nomination cannot be processed. This is the reason we ask applicants to allow at least 5 workdays to process. We strongly recommend applicants to read these acknowledgements carefully and all the way through. Not only does the acknowledgement inform an applicant that we received a resume and/or self-nomination, it provides Do’s and Don’ts for submitting such documents.

We suggest that applicants maintain these

acknowledgements for their records. This document is your "proof" of submission and receipt.

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The Standard On-line Applicant Response System (SOARS) has been around for over a year now. In this time we have had over 6500+ SOARS users established in the Pacific region. The program has been met with such a warm response that it has also been implemented in Korea, and has been sent for review in other regions.

SOARS recently has gone through some major revisions which should broaden the range of customers it reaches, as well as increase the intuitiveness of the interface.

FAQ – A Frequently Asked Questions area has now been added to the SOARS interface, to better help the customer understand the terms and information presented in the SOARS interface.

DEU Implementation – SOARS now interfaces with the Delegated Examining Unit (DEU) database, which allows SOARS to meet the needs of a greater range of applicants. For more information on DEU, please check the FAQ section in SOARS, or contact your local CPAC.

Online Resume Editing – SOARS now has the ability to allow customers to edit their resume online. Once the resume has been modified it is sent directly to the local RESUMIX applicant office.

BE AWARE!!! IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOTE:
It will take between 2-5 days for the new resume to be verified and saved to the Resumix database before the new resume is viewable in SOARS. We believe some of our applicants are not aware of this process because we have seen an increase in the number of duplicate

resume submissions. (Duplicate resume submissions should be avoided as it may compromise your applicant desires.)

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Science and Engineering Occupational Study Briefing

Taken from [Civilian Personnel Bulletin](#)

Representatives from the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civilian Personnel Policy) attended an information briefing regarding the U.S. Office of Personnel Management's study involving 46 science and engineering occupations in job series GS-400, GS-800, and GS-1300 to identify critical tasks and competencies for these occupations. The surveys will be distributed during June and July across Federal agencies to a random sample of 50,000 employees and 30,000 supervisors. The Office of Personnel Management is encouraging use of the Internet for completing the surveys or employees can choose to complete a paper version that will be made available through agency personnel offices. Employees will be allowed time to complete the surveys during work hours and it is expected that it will take about two hours to complete--both the Internet and the paper version. This study is the latest phase of the Government-wide occupational analysis program. The Office of Personnel Management and agencies can use the results of these studies to develop new Human Resources practices for recruitment, selection, and retention for these jobs. [\(top\)](#)

Gatekeeper Checklist

Taken from [Civilian Personnel Bulletin](#)

One of the most user-friendly programs on the modern DCPDS (Defense Civilian Personnel Data System) is the "gatekeeper checklist". The checklist was developed for our managers to fulfill their human resource needs faster and easier. The information collected for the checklist ensures the manager has submitted the necessary information to process the RPA (Request for Personnel Action).

Mike Vajda, director of the Northeast Civilian Personnel Operations Center (CPOC), headquartered at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md., said when a manager (customer) generates a Request for Personnel Action (RPA) such as filling a position or reassigning a person, the system will prompt a user-friendly checklist.

"The checklist has a series of questions relative to the personnel action the manager requested," he said. "Many of the questions have a drop-down menu with a list of potential answers the manager can select from."

"It tells the manager up-front what the staffing personnel need to complete the action," Vajda said. "In the past, when the staffing personnel did not have the required information, the action was returned to the customer for additional information."

As the RPA moves through the routing process, each user - manager, resource manager and personnel advisor - can add and update the required information on the checklist. "This assures the required information to process the action is complete and accurate when it arrives at the CPOC," Vajda said.

He explained that the gatekeeper checklist is very compatible with the Modern System and is advantageous to the customer because the staffing specialist at the CPOC can process the action faster.

Currently, the Pacific CPOC is scheduled for implementation of the Gatekeeper checklist program this Summer. [\(top\)](#)

Military Leave for Civilian Employees

Taken from [Civilian Personnel Bulletin](#)

On March 8, 2001, the Defense Finance and Accounting Service distributed a letter regarding how military leave will be charged once the modification to the Defense Civilian

Pay System is completed. This change allows for specific types of military leave to be charged in one-hour increments versus whole days, and no leave being charged for periods of non-duty. The letter outlines the steps that should be taken to correctly document military leave for periods of non-duty as well as work around to avoid erroneous conversions to another leave type or leave without pay.

Please note that corrections to time and attendance for military leave taken prior to December 31, 2000, should continue to be reflected in daily increments. Previous rules are applicable for non-duty periods prior to that time. Once the system is changed, military leave will automatically be converted to hours.

For more information, view DFAS's letter in the "Messages and Memorandums" section of the CPOC Library at http://cpol.army.mil/library/dod/memos/dod_030801.html [\(top\)](#)

NEW POSITION CLASSIFICATION STANDARDS

Three new position classification standards have been approved for use throughout the federal personnel system. They are:

- a. Job Family Position Classification Standard for Administrative Work in the Human Resources Management Group, GS-0200.
- b. Job Family Position Classification Standard for Assistance Work in the Human Resources Management Group, GS-0200.
- c. Job Family Position Classification Standard for Professional and Administrative Work in the Accounting and Budget Group, GS-0500.

Human Resources Management Group (Administrative Work) – This job family

standard cancels: Military Personnel Management, GS-0205; Personnel Staffing, GS-0212; Position Classification, GS-0221; Occupational Analysis, GS-0222; Salary and Wage Administration, GS-0223; Employee Relations, GS-0230; Labor Relations, GS-0233; Employee Development, GS-0235; Contract Industrial Relations, GS-0246; and Federal Retirement Benefits, GS-0270 series'. With a few exceptions, all positions previously in these occupational groups (and in the GS-0201 series) will be re-classified as GS-0201, Human Resources Specialist. OPM has established ten parenthetical titles for specialties, which may be used alone or in combination with one other title, as the duties of the position dictate. The Pacific CPOC has two years to fully implement the new standard. Some position descriptions and vacancy announcements have already reflected the title and series changes.

Human Resources Management Group (Assistance Work) – This job family standard cancels the Military Personnel Clerical and Technician, GS-0204 occupational series. All positions previously in the GS-0204 and GS-0203 will be re-classified as GS-0203, Human Resources Assistant. OPM has established eight parenthetical titles for specialties, which may be used alone or in combination with one other title, as the duties of the position dictate. The Pacific CPOC has two years to fully implement the new standard. Some position descriptions and vacancy announcements have already reflected the title and series changes.

Accounting and Budget Group - This job family standard covers: Financial Administration and Program, GS-0501; Accounting, GS-0510; Auditing, GS-0511; Internal Revenue Agent, GS-0512; Tax Specialist (formerly Tax Technician), GS-0526; and Budget Analysis, GS-0560. All of the listed series will now use the same criteria to determine the appropriate grade of positions. [\(top\)](#)

NEW RECRUITMENT PROCEDURES FOR CAREER PROGRAM 34

The Chief of Central Programs Division has discontinued the use of the Army Civilian Evaluation System (ACCES) for registration and referral for Computer Specialists, grades 12-15 and Telecommunications Specialists, grades 11-15 (Career Program 34 positions). These positions will now be recruited using merit promotion procedures or other appropriate competitive or non-competitive procedures. Career referrals will no longer be issued for these series and grades. This change was effective February 27, 2001. [\(top\)](#)

Use of COREDOC to Develop Supervisory Responsibilities

The current version of COREDOC that is in the Modern DCPDS suite is not the module to evaluate supervisory responsibilities. If this version of COREDOC is used, a paragraph outlining supervisory duties and the 6 evaluation factors must be manually inserted. The following are two examples of supervisory paragraphs that can be inserted into the position descriptions:

- a. Exercises supervision over the daily activities of employees assigned to assist in carrying out the functions of the unit. Assures the effective and efficient administration of activities supervised. Plans work to be accomplished by subordinates and sets and adjusts short-term priorities. Assigns work to subordinates based on the capabilities of employees; evaluates work performance of subordinates; approves leave and accounts for civilian employees time; advises, counsels, or instructs employees on both work and administrative

matters; interviews candidates for vacant positions and recommends selections; resolves complaints from employees; effects minor disciplinary measures; deals with union officials; identifies and schedules training needs of employees and assures the conduct of such in-house training; and develops performance standards. Works to achieve the objectives of the DA Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity Programs and policies. (%)

OR

b. Exercises significant responsibilities in dealing with officials of other units or organizations, or in advising management officials of higher rank. Makes or approves selection for subordinate non-supervisory positions. Hears and receives group grievances or serious employee complaints. Reviews and approves serious disciplinary actions (e.g. suspensions) involving non-supervisory subordinates. Assures efficient and effective operations in such areas as conduct of training in accordance with current policies and directives. Recommends awards or bonuses for non-supervisory personnel and changes in position classification, subject to approval by higher level officials. Finds and implements ways to eliminate or reduce significant bottlenecks and barriers to production, promote team building, or improve business practices. Exercises supervision over the daily activities of employees assigned to assist in carrying out the functions of the unit. Assures the effective and efficient administration of activities supervised. Plans work to be accomplished by subordinates and sets and adjusts short-term priorities. Assigns work to subordinates based on the capabilities of employees; evaluates work performance of subordinates; approves leave and accounts for civilian employees time; advises, counsels, or instructs employees on both work and administrative matters; interviews candidates for vacant positions and recommends selections; resolves complaints from

employees; effects minor disciplinary measures; deals with union officials; identifies and schedules training needs of employees and assures the conduct of such in-house training; and develops performance standards. Works to achieve the objectives of the DA Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity Programs and policies. (%)

Additionally, if the supervisory paragraph is 25% or more, the position must be evaluated using the 6 grading factors in the General Schedule Supervisory Guide, dated April 1998. These 6 factors are: Factor 1, Program Scope and Effect; Factor 2, Organizational Setting; Factor 3, Supervisory and Managerial Authority Exercised; Factor 4, Personal Contacts (consisting of 4A, Nature of Contract and 4B, Purpose of Contacts); Factor 5, Difficulty of Typical Work Directed; and Factor 6, Other Conditions. [\(top\)](#)



PAYMENT OF PCS COSTS IS NO LONGER MANDATORY FOR CENTRAL REFERRAL SELECTIONS

In October 1988, DAPC-CPS-R11 message 241300z Oct 88, was issued stating that any move of an individual selected from a DA career program mandatory referral level list was in the best interest of the government and all permanent change of station (PCS) costs associated with career program selections must be paid. A DASA(CPP) memorandum, dated May 3, 2001, subject: Permanent Change of Station Costs for Central Referral Selections, officially rescinds this message. The Joint Travel Regulation (JTR) will be applied for central referral selections with the exception that the central referral notice must advertise if PCS will not be paid. The PCS costs are authorized but management can determine, in regard to a

specific vacancy, whether it is in the interest of the government to pay these costs. Management may decline to authorize PCS costs in accordance with the JTR. If management intends not to pay PCS allowances, this decision must be advertised in the central referral notice. This decision will not be imposed after referral or selection. If the central referral notice is silent, there is an assumption that PCS allowances will be paid. This policy is stated in HQDA Letter 690-01-1, subject: Army Civilian Career Evaluation System (ACCES) Consolidated Career Program Referral registration and will be reflected in the upcoming AR 690-950, subject: Career Management. [\(top\)](#)

Managing the Civilian Workforce

The Managing the Civilian Workforce course will soon be offered free of charge throughout the Pacific Region. Tentative dates for the course are August (Hawaii—4 classes); - September (Japan—3 classes) and November (Alaska—3 classes). This two-day course is intended for supervisors and leaders of civilian employees and augments the information provided in the Supervisory Development Course (ST 5001 & ST 5002).

Some of the topics that will be covered include supervisory responsibilities, personnel actions, performance management, labor-management relations, and civilian systems and structures to name a few. Ms. Pat Murphy, who has extensive experience in leadership positions in the civilian personnel community, will be conducting the Managing the Civilian Workforce course. Ms. Murphy is a highly respected and sought-after instructor who has taught this course for many years to Air Force supervisors and managers of civilian personnel.

Detailed information on specific course dates, times and locations of training, and individual application procedures will be announced in the near future. [\(top\)](#)



PACIFIC REGION'S CANCER ANSWER TEAMS ARE A BIG SUCCESS

On 19-20 May, staff and family members of the Pacific Region CPOC participated in the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life. The Relay is held for 24 hours (noon to noon) and each team must have a teammate walking or running the track each of the 24 hours. This year we had enough volunteers to make two teams. The CPOC employees and family members participated by either walking, working the fund raisers and collecting pledges, or being there just to provide support. The teams held fund raisers throughout the year and collected pledges with a combined total of \$4425.00.

This is our third year for participation and each year we raise more money than the year before. We are very proud of the contribution we made to this very worthy cause - and we had such fun along the way. We're already planning for next year!

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