



CNFJ REGIONAL HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE (HRO) "SHINBUN"

Director's Corner – Sarah B. Overstreet

Special Thanks and Way Ahead

As 2009 comes to a rapid close and we look forward to our new opportunities for 2010, I would like to take a moment to set the stage for the way ahead. This has been a very busy year for the Regional Human Resources Office. There have been several changes implemented and even more planned for our future.

I would like to personally thank command leadership and our personnel for their patience, and flexibility as we worked to complete the transition from HRSC Pacific to HRSC Southwest and HRSC Northwest. Our primary concern is our command personnel and they will continue to be our focus!

In 2010 and beyond our biggest challenge will be to ensure that our people have a smooth transition from the current National Security Personnel System (NSPS) to the General Schedule (GS) personnel system. As we await guidance from DoD, providing for the direction on the conversion we urge your patience and we encourage command leadership and their personnel to still follow the NSPS guidelines until the conversion is complete. Again, our primary goal is to ensure a smooth transition for all of our personnel with minimal disruptions. We will be working hand-in-hand with the HRSCs to accomplish a smooth transition back to the GS system. DoD has already stated that during the transition of NSPS employees, there will be no loss in pay to the previously existing civilian personnel systems and that everyone should be fully transitioned no later than January 1, 2012.

During the transition period commands and employees currently covered by NSPS will continue to follow NSPS regulations, policies and procedures until

Continues on page 4

"HR Services That Enable the Fleet."

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- The Director's Corner
- Holiday Gift Giving – Not So Fast
- Reassignments In NSPS
- Mandatory EEO Training
- Aims To Step Up Hiring Of Veterans
- The Federal Benefits Open Season
- NSPS Reconsideration Process
- DoD Bill Includes New Benefits for Feds
- Retirement Corner – New FERS Sick Leave Benefit

Holiday Gift-Giving - Not So Fast

As the holiday season is approaching, please be reminded of the DoD ethics rules concerning gifts between employees, supervisors and even contractors. These rules apply to USCS, military members, and MLC/IHA employees. While exchanging gifts in the workplace among friends and coworkers is common, everyone is encouraged to carefully review and refresh themselves of the DoD Standards of Conduct guidance, DDODIR 5500.7 Standards of Conduct and 5500.7-R Joint Ethics Regulations, before doing so. Please keep this in mind as we roll into the holiday season and the spirit of gift-giving is in the air!

HR Program and Site Contact Info

- US Staffing/Classification 243-9343
- EEO 243-8163
- Okinawa Satellite Office 634-6224
- Labor/Emp Relations 243-8187
- JN Emp/Classification 243-8155
- Sasebo Satellite Office 252-3661
- HR Info Systems 243-8191
- Atsugi Satellite Office 264-3422

Reassignments In NSPS

When an employee moves to a position or set of duties in the same pay band or a “comparable” pay band on a temporary or permanent basis, the move is a **reassignment**. In a comparable pay band, the work performed in the new position entails the *same level of work* as the current assignment (e.g., entry/developmental level, journey level, or expert level).

Reassignments can occur within or across the varying pay schedules and career groups in NSPS, regardless of the earning potential of the pay band.

- Reassignments give employees the opportunity to perform different types of work assignments that may provide career development opportunities.
- NSPS gives management the opportunity to provide employees with a salary increase of up to 5% on reassignment.

Types of Reassignments

Employee-Initiated Reassignment

An employee-initiated reassignment occurs when an employee applies and is selected for a position in the same pay band or in a comparable pay band. The supervisor may grant a discretionary base salary increase of up to 5%. The use of this flexibility to grant a salary increase must be consistent with local or Component-level policies.

The employee in NSPS can have several employee-initiated reassignments:

- Reassignment compensation is a managerial flexibility in NSPS and is not a requirement. Supervisors must carefully balance the needs of the organization, budget restrictions, and other pay-setting factors before deciding whether to compensate an employee for a reassignment and prior to determining the amount of pay.
- Criteria used in some organizations to govern the use of the reassignment increase include: (1) the position must be critical to the mission; (2) the position must be hard-to-fill based on previous recruitment efforts; or (3) the employee

must possess critical skills that are not prevalent in the organization, can be applied immediately, and cannot be obtained in the absence of a reassignment pay increase.

- A reassignment is distinct from a salary increase based on promotion.

With reassignments, pay cannot be set *less than the minimum or greater than the maximum* of the pay band to which the employee is reassigned.

Management-Directed Reassignment

Management-directed reassignments are actions initiated by management to laterally move an employee to another position in the same or comparable pay band within the organization or between organizations. These actions typically occur when an employee’s skills can be better utilized in another equivalent position.

With a management-directed reassignment, the employee may receive a discretionary base salary increase of up to 5% for each reassignment that is directed by management. There is no limit to the number of times an employee can receive a management-directed reassignment. An employee’s base salary can also remain the same upon a management-directed reassignment, but it may not be decreased.

Involuntary Reassignment

When an employee is involuntarily reassigned to the same or comparable pay band through adverse action procedures, the base salary must be reduced by at least 5% and up to 10%, provided the reduction does not result in the employee’s base salary falling below the minimum rate of the assigned pay band.



Season Greetings

Mandatory EEO Training

Commands are reminded of the mandatory EEO training for U.S. civilian employees. Listed below are the three mandatory EEO courses for USCS employees and supervisors of USCS employees.

ANNUAL PREVENTION OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT (All Employees)

SECNAV Instruction 5300.26D; Subj: Department of the Navy Policy on Sexual Harassment; Para 5b: states "All DON personnel, military and civilian, will be educated and trained upon accession (within 90 days to the extent possible) and annually thereafter."

FEDERAL EMPLOYEE ANTI-DISCRIMINATION AND RETALIATION ACT OF 2002 TRAINING (All Employees)

SECNAV Civilian Human Resources Manual Subchapter (CHRM) 1613; Para 6b: "All employees, including military supervisors and managers of civilian employees must be trained within 90 calendar days of appointment thereafter, each command will ensure that all employees are trained on a training cycle of no longer than every two years." Most Navy commands completed their latest NO-FEAR training in April of 2009.

ANNUAL EEO TRAINING FOR SUPERVISORS

OPNAVINST 12720.4b DTD 11 JUL 1989 Paragraph 2(f) Head of Activities shall "Ensure that managers and supervisors receive EEO training annually". The above training can be accomplished in classroom settings, on-line, via VTC, or self-study courses. For assistance in coordinating and/or facilitating training for your command, training POCs should contact the CNFJ EEO Office at 243-8163/9579.

Aims To Step Up Hiring Of Veterans

Last month President Obama signed an executive order designed to boost the number of veterans in the federal workforce. The directive creates Veterans Employment Program offices in federal agencies, to match veterans with job openings and help them navigate the application process. The offices also will give veterans guidance on how to adjust to civilian life after they are hired.

In addition, the executive order establishes a Council on Veterans Employment, to be chaired by the secretaries of Labor and Veterans Affairs. It requires the Office of Personnel Management to develop a strategic plan in consultation with other agencies, such as the Defense, Homeland Security, Labor and Veterans Affairs departments. The order comes as the number of military members re-entering civilian life is ballooning.

OPM Director John Berry has emphasized the hiring of veterans, saying the government should take a more proactive role in recruiting former military members and preserve veterans preference during the selection process.

The percentage of veterans in the federal workforce has increased just slightly in recent years. According to the Office of Personnel Management's most recent report, it rose 0.5 points from 25 percent in fiscal 2003 to 25.5 percent in fiscal 2007.

*******HRO NEW WEBSITE*******

Effective 20 November 2009, Regional Human Resources Office website was migrated to CNIC web chain. Please visit us at the following URL: <https://www.cnic.navy.mil/Japan/HumanResources/index.htm>



Happy Holiday's

Continued Director's Corner

the transition takes place for your command. I'm sure as we transitioned to NSPS and as we transition back to GS this will be a phased event and various timelines will have to be met in order to keep the transition a smooth one. HRO is committed and stand waiting to provide you with the most up to date information in a timely manner to assist you with your role in this major reconstruction of the personnel system and any other HR need. We are here to provide a quality service to you – our customer.

Have a very safe and enjoyable holiday season!

The Federal Benefits Open Season

The Federal Benefits Open Season started on 9 November 2009 and continues through Monday, 14 December 2009. This is the time to make elections you usually cannot make any other time of the year for Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB), Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP) and Federal Flexible Spending Account Program (FSAFEDS). You can decrease your Federal and State taxes by participating in the flexible spending accounts for medical expenses and dependent care expenses.

The open season material is available at https://www.civilianbenefits.hroc.navy.mil/benefits_openseason.asp. Please take a few minutes to read the information as failure to do so could leave you without the healthcare services or supplies you need or with a premium you can not afford.

Employees with questions about FEHB should call The Benefits Line at 1-888-320-2917 and select menu option #4 to speak with a Customer Service Representative (CSR). CSRs are available between 7:30 a.m. and 7:30 p.m., Eastern Time, Monday through Friday, except on Federal holidays. During Open Season the Benefits Line call volume is typically quite high. The highest call volume is between 10:00 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. Employees should hold on the line until a CSR is able to answer the call or place their call outside the peak call hours. Overseas employees may contact CSR via e-mail for benefits inquiries at info@navybenefits.org.

NSPS Reconsideration Process

For most commands the pay pool process has now completed, and employees can anticipate receiving their rating of record soon. In the event that an employee is dissatisfied with their rating of record, he or she may seek review through the NSPS Reconsideration Process. As a reminder, an employee may only challenge their rating of record – not their performance payout, recommended ratings, number of shares or share value, payout distribution, interim review or closeout assessment. Within ten (10) calendar days of receipt of the rating of record, the employee must submit a written request for reconsideration to the Pay Pool Manager (PPM), with a copy to the Rating Official and servicing Human Resources Office. As a reminder, per DON guidance, the “clock” for reconsideration requests does not start until 4 January 2010, or the effective date of their payout.

The request must be in writing and state the requested change and basis for the change. The employee may also include a request for discussion with the PPM. Within fifteen (15) calendar days of receipt of the employee's request for reconsideration, the PPM will render a written decision, which will include a brief explanation of the basis of the decision.

If the employee is dissatisfied with the decision of the PPM, they may submit a written request for final review to the Performance Review Authority (PRA), within five (5) calendar days of receipt of the PPM decision. The PRA will render a decision within fifteen (15) calendar days. This decision is final. Allegations that a performance rating was based on prohibited discrimination may not be processed through the reconsideration process, but instead will be processed through the EEO discrimination complaint procedure. Contact your servicing Labor/Employee Relations Specialist at 243-3410/8198 for additional information regarding the reconsideration process.



DoD Bill Includes New Benefits for Feds

The Defense Department National Security Personnel System (NSPS), which now covers about 205,000 civilian employees, would be completely phased out by January 1, 2012, under the Defense authorization bill lawmakers passed on Oct 22. The bill will:

- End the National Security Personnel System by 2012 and dramatically downsize the pay-for-performance system that covers intelligence agencies' employees.
- Allow agencies to temporarily rehire retirees at their full salaries and annuities.
- Provide locality pay for federal employees in Hawaii, Alaska and U.S. territories.
- Allow previously retired Federal Employees Retirement System employees returning to the federal government to redeposit their annuities to the civil service trust fund, permitting them to combine their past and new federal service for future retirement benefit calculations.
- Recalculate annuities of Civil Service Retirement System employees who work part time at the end of their careers so they are based only on their fulltime salaries.
- Require the Defense Department to justify sole-source contracts worth more than \$20 million.
- Suspend DoD's use of public-private competitions for federal jobs under Office of Management and Budget Circular A-76.
- Lifts caps on hiring for the DoD civilian acquisition workforce and allow DoD to use expedited hiring to fill acquisition openings.
- Allow DoD to pilot alternative ways of procuring information technology.

The Pentagon has six months to start transferring employees back to their original pay system. For most employees, that will be the General Schedule (GS).



Retirement Corner – New FERS Sick Leave Benefit

Most Federal employees are in one of two retirement systems, the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS), which originally covered employees first employed prior to 1987, and the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) covering employees employed after 1987 and those who voluntarily switched from CSRS.

Until recently only CSRS employees received credit for unused sick leave in the computation of their basic annuity. Under a provision President Barack Obama recently signed into law, FERS employees will now receive credit for unused sick leave in their annuity calculations when they retire, which will take effect immediately. The change now puts FERS employees on par with CSRS employees who have always received credit for their unused sick leave.

However, employees retiring before 1 January 2014 will get credit for only half of their unused sick leave while those who retire after 1 January 2014 will get 100% of their unused sick leave credited toward their annuities. For some employees, if they have a large amount of unused sick leave, it may be worth it to work until January 2014 to get the full advantage. But employees who retire now but delay receiving their benefits until after January 2014, under a deferred or delayed retirement, will not get any credit for their unused sick leave. The new law gives the credit only to those employees who take an immediate annuity. CSRS employees who take a deferred retirement also do not receive any credit for unused sick leave.

The Congressional Budget Office estimates that the average FERS employees will gain an additional three months of service toward their pension calculation, which would increase their retirement checks by an average of \$150 a year.



To find out more about NSPS visit:

NSPS CORNER

<http://www.cpms.osd.mil/NSPS>

UPCOMING NSPS TRAINING – Yokosuka/Atsugi POC: 243-8182

12 Jan 2010	Navigating NSPS for Supervisors/Employees at Yokosuka
14 Jan 2010	Writing Objectives and Assessments at Yokosuka
28-29 Jan 2010	NSPS Compensation for Supervisors at Yokosuka
29 Jan 2010	Navigating NSPS for Supervisors/Employees at Atsugi

UPCOMING NSPS TRAINING- SASEBO POC: 252-3661

Jan 2010	None
----------	------

UPCOMING NSPS TRAINING- OKINAWA POC: 634-6224

03 Dec 2009	Navigating NSPS for Supervisors/Employees
10 Dec 2009	Writing Objectives and Assessments
13-14 Jan 2010	NSPS Compensation for Supervisors
27 Jan 2010	Writing Objectives and Assessments

If your organization is interested in obtaining the services of a pay pool advisor, please contact the Regional NSPS Program Manager, at 243-3413. This is just another HR initiative developed to increase our customer service as we provide “HR Services That Enable the Fleet.”

You may access the DON NSPS Compensation Overview course on Navy e-Learning (NeL) using the following steps:

1. Log on to NKO at the following site: <https://wwwa.nko.navy.mil/>. You will need an NKO account in order to take the Overview course. If you do not have an account, you may register as a "New User" from the home page. Note, by registering as a new user, your training completion will automatically be captured. For information about setting up a new user account, accessing, navigating and enrolling in NKO courses, please refer to the NKO Guide available at <https://www.donhr.navy.mil/employees/NKOGuidebook.asp>.
2. Look under Learning
3. Click on Navy e-Learning Online Courses
4. Scroll down to "Want to see WHAT'S NEW?"
5. Click on WHAT'S NEW
6. Scroll down to find DON NSPS COMPENSATION OVERVIEW (OCHR-NSPSCO-1.0)
7. Click on course title
8. Start enrollment.



2010 FEDERAL HOLIDAYS

Federal law (5 U.S.C. 6103) establishes the following public holidays for Federal employees. Please note that most Federal employees work on a Monday through Friday schedule. For these employees, when a holiday falls on a nonworkday -- Saturday or Sunday -- the holiday usually is observed on Monday (if the holiday falls on Sunday) or Friday (if the holiday falls on Saturday).

Friday, January 1	New Year's Day
Monday, January 18	Birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr.
Monday, February 15*	Washington's Birthday
Monday, May 31	Memorial Day
Monday, July 5**	Independence Day
Monday, September 6	Labor Day
Monday, October 11	Columbus Day
Thursday, November 11	Veterans Day
Thursday, November 25	Thanksgiving Day
Friday, December 24***	Christmas Day

Please visit us at the following URL:

<https://www.cnic.navy.mil/Japan/HumanResources/index.htm>

And the Answer is...

Now that NDAA 2010 is enacted, will I still be rated under NSPS for the performance cycle that ended on September 30, 2009?

Yes, NSPS employees currently covered by NSPS will continue to follow NSPS regulations, policies and procedures until the transition takes place for their organization. At this important time in the pay pool process, employees and managers have significant responsibilities in NSPS that must be accomplished. Evaluating and rewarding employee performance continues to be a key aspect of organizational success and individual employee pay.