Newsletter, November 2007 Issue

# CNFJ Regional Human Resources Office (HRO) "Shinbun"

## Director's Corner – Sarah B. Overstreet

Over the last year, many changes have taken place in the Human Resources Office Yokosuka. In February of 2007, I reported on board as the **Regional Human Resources Director for Commander U.S. Naval Forces Japan**. I previously served as the Director, Civilian Personnel Programs (DCPP) for the Commander, Navy Installations Command. With almost twenty-five years of service in Human Resources Management and related fields, I am prepared to work with our customers to provide responsive HR support to "Enable the Fleet".

In this first issue of many to come, I have included some contact information for key personnel on my staff. Please feel free to contact me or any of these staff members for assistance on any human resources issue.

| | |
|---|---|
| Terri Duenas, Operations (US Staffing and Classification) Division | 243-9343 |
| Junarion Hubbard, EEO Division | 243-8163 |
| Serge Magloire, Okinawa Satellite Manager | 634-6224 |
| Charles Molden, Labor and Employee Relations Division | 243-8187 |
| Junko Ooyanagi, JN Employment and Classification Division | 243-8155 |
| Dean Tom, Sasebo Satellite Manager | 252-3661 |
| Aki Yamada, HR Information Systems Division | 243-8191 |
| Linda Yeck, Atsugi Satellite Manager | 264-3422 |

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**We are on the web !**
**Visit us** hro.cnfj.navy.mil/

## 10 Rules To Protect Personal Information

1. **DO NOT** be afraid to challenge "anyone" who asks to see Privacy Act information that you are responsible for.
2. **DO NOT** maintain records longer than permitted under records disposal.
3. **DO NOT** destroy records before disposal requirements are met.
4. **DO NOT** place unauthorized documents in Privacy Act record systems.
5. **DO NOT** commingle information about different individuals in the same file.
6. **DO NOT** transmit personal data without ensuring it is properly marked.

Use "FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY –PRIVACY SENSITIVE."

7. **DO NOT** use interoffice envelopes to mail Privacy data.
8. **DO NOT** place privacy data on shared drives, multi-access calendars, the Intranet or Internet that can be accessed by individuals who do not have an official need to know
9. **DO NOT** create a new system of records without first consulting your Privacy Office or CNO (DNS-36)
10. **DO NOT** hesitate to offer recommendations on how to better effectively manage privacy data.

For more information on protecting privacy act and other personal information please visit www.privacy.navy.mil

# NSPS CORNER

*To find out more about NSPS visit: https://www.donhr.navy.mil/nsps/ or http://www.cpms.osd.mil/NSPS*

## Upcoming Deadlines for NSPS October 2007 Conversions

27 Nov 07 – Managers must verify access to MyWorkplace

28 Nov 07 – Pay Pool Manager Designation Letters from PRA Delegate

30 Nov 07 – Employees must have email addresses entered into MyBiz

30 Nov 07 – Final Performance Plan established, communicated to employee, and entered into Performance Appraisal Application (PAA) Tool.

12 Dec 07 – Pay Pool Managers must have final Pay Pool Panels members in place.

27 Jan 08 – Pay Pool Managers/Pay Pool Administrator Training must be complete.

30 Apr 08 – Mock Pay Pool completed by Pay Pool Managers and Pay Pool Panel.

The following courses are available on the DoD NSPS website at *http://www.cpms.osd.mil/NSPS*:

- NSPS 101 (The Basics)
- I-Success Training (writing job objectives and assessments)

The following courses are currently only available in a classroom setting:

- Navigating NSPS for Supervisors
- Navigating NSPS for Employees
- Pay Pool Management

These courses may be offered on DVD in the near future.

**NSPS - What Remains the Same?**

NSPS changes many aspects of the current Human Resources system, including how pay is set, pay for performance, job classification, how promotions are handled, and workforce shaping. However, much remains the same.

- Under NSPS employees will also retain these basic rights and entitlements:
- Protection from prohibited personnel practices
- Whistleblower protections
- Veterans' preference principles
- Benefits laws (retirement, health, life, etc.)
- Anti-discrimination laws
- Fundamental due process
- Allowances and travel/subsistence expenses
- Training
- Leave and work schedules
- Merit system principles

**NSPS – What Changes!**

- Classification Architecture – Simple and flexible. From 15 grade levels to 3 or 4 pay bands
- Compensation – Receive pay increases or bonuses based on performance versus longevity
- Hiring and Employment – More flexibility to place the right person in the right job
- Performance Management – Must document results that are mission-focused
- Workforce Shaping – Less disruptive when mission changes occur

**Basic Rules on Converting into NSPS…**

| *Position Type* | *PB-1* | *PB-3* | *PB-3* |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Supervisory* | *GS-6 to 11* | *GS-12 to 14* | *GS-15* |
| *Non-Supervisory Professional/Analytical* | *GS-5 to 8* | *GS 9 to 13* | *GS-14 and 15* |
| *Non-Supervisory Technician/Support* | *GS-1to 6* | *GS-7 to 10* | *GS-11 to 12* |

A few exceptions do apply to some GS-11s; GS-14s; individuals in 1001, 1101, and 1173 series; and other select groups.

## USE OR LOSE ANNUAL LEAVE

The end of the leave year is approaching and U.S. employees must schedule their "use or lose" annual leave or risk losing the excess leave at the end of the leave year on 5 January 2008. "Use or lose" annual leave is the amount of accrued annual leave that is in excess of the employee's maximum annual leave limitation for carry over into the next leave year. Most employees are authorized to take240 hours of annual leave into the new leave year. However, if you are on a transportation agreement and serving in an overseas area, you may be eligible to carry over 360 hours of annual leave into the new leave year. Employees must "use" their excess annual leave by the end of a leave year or they will "lose" (forfeit) it. An activity may consider restoring annual leave that was forfeited due to an exigency of the public business or sickness of the employee **only** if the annual leave was scheduled in writing before the start of the **third biweekly pay period prior to the end of the leave year (November 24, 2007)**.

Within certain limits, donating leave to an approved leave recipient in the Voluntary Leave Transfer Program is an option for those with "use or lose" leave. The Leave Transfer Program allows you to donate annual leave you might otherwise lose to an employee who needs the leave because of a medical emergency. For additional info contact Eiko Norinaga at 243-8184.

## FIVE YEAR ROTATION POLICY FOR DOD EMPLOYEES IN AN OVERSEAS AREA

On August 6, 2007 The Commander, U.S. Navy Forces Command (CNFJ) issued guidance reiterating compliance with the Department of Defense (DoD) Five Year Rotation Policy for Employees Serving in Overseas areas. CNFJ guidance stated in part that "All Naval Shore Commands, activities and installations shall implement this policy to the maximum extent possible" using the guidance,

The following positions/employees are exempt from the policy:

(a) Positions that require frequent and continuous (daily) contact with officials of the host nation and require a detailed knowledge of the culture, laws, and customs, or government processes of the host nation and that requirement is included in and supported by the position.

(b) Employees who are family members accompanying military and civilian employees of the DoD components stationed in the foreign area.

(c) Employees of the Senior Executive Services.

(d) Employees who were first employed in the foreign area prior to April 1, 1996, and

(e) Educators of the DoD Dependent School System.

Approval authority for extensions beyond the five year tour limitation resides with Installation Commanding Officers (CO) for all base employees, Activity COs for command employees, and Chief of Staff for CNFJ staff employees. However, there should be very few extensions beyond five years.

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## DISABLED VETERANS ASSISTANCE LINE

The Department of Navy recently established the Disabled Veterans Assistance Line. The Assistance Line will be staffed by Human Resources Specialists Monday through Friday from 9:00 AM – 8:00 PM Eastern Standard Time. If staff members are unable to take the call, they will reply within two business days.

If you want to speak to a Department of the Navy Human Resources Specialist, please call the Disabled Veterans Assistance Line at 1-800-378-4559.

## OCTOBER IS NATIONAL DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH

The following is an excerpt from the President's Proclamation of October as National Disability Employment Awareness Month: "This is an opportunity to recognize the contributions and accomplishments of Americans with disabilities and to underscore our Nation's commitment to advancing employment opportunities for all our citizens.

Americans with disabilities strengthen our country's workforce, and their achievements help keep our Nation the world's economic leader. Landmark reforms such as the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 have helped to ensure that individuals with disabilities are better able to engage in productive work and participate fully in the life of our Nation. It is important that we continue to expand on these opportunities for Americans with disabilities by eliminating the barriers and false perceptions that hinder them from joining the workforce. By enhancing the workplace environment for people with disabilities, employers can help provide access to jobs that allow these individuals to demonstrate their potential and realize their dreams."

In September of 2007, Navy issued "Procedures for Processing Requests for Reasonable Accommodation", for medical reasons. The guidance can be found at the following website https://www.donhr.navy.mil/donchrm/default.asp

Five Year Rotation Policy Con't from page 3

Major Command policies also apply.

The Regional HRO Office is tasked with monitoring tour extensions and evaluating management compliance with this policy through annual assessments and inspections. Annual command reports will be submitted to CNFJ.

Read the full policy on the HRO website.

## FEDERAL EMPLOYEES HEALTH BENEFIT

The Federal Employees Health Benefit Plan (FEHB) is the largest employer health benefits plan in the world. In an era where health insurance has become a major area of concerns for many Americans, the FEHB continues to standout as a significant benefit of Federal employment.

Mid November through mid December is normally the period that Federal employees are allowed to make changes to their health insurance elections. This years Open Season runs 12 November through 10 December. Plan and review options carefully.

Employees may visit www.opm.gov/insure/ to obtain information on 2008 plan rates. The web site also provides information on the new vision and dental plans which were added in 2006, and information on the Flexible Spending Accounts for Federal Employees (FSAFE).

Start your research now, and make sure you make an informed decision based on your health needs and those of your covered family members.

## Government Phones and Personal Calls

It is not unusual that Federal employees use their government telephones to make infrequent calls that may not be related to their official jobs. However, what is unusual and inappropriate is the excessive use of the government telephone lines for personal phone calls. A financial clerk with the Pensacola office of the Defense Finance Accounting Service (DFAS) was fired for misuse of the government telephone.

After coworkers complained about the employee's excessive telephone use and abusive language, the supervisors, counseled the employee, and when that didn't work suspended him from duty.

The employee continued the excessive use of the telephone, after the repeated attempts by his command to curtail his behavior. DFAS eventually terminated his employment. The employee appealed to the Merit Systems Protection Board, and the Board upheld the removal. Still unsatisfied, the employee filed with the appeals court.

The court found that the Board had taken Griffin's record into account. It also pointed out that the Board had considered "Mr. Griffin's lack of remorse for his conduct, and the failure of repeated efforts on the part of the Agency to solve the problem with less drastic means than removal." In short, the employee's removal for excessive use of his government telephone was upheld by the courts.

## Big Brother is Watching!

When you log into your government computer you usually receive some type of warning concerning the appropriate use of your computer. Warnings such as "This is a Department of Defense Computer System. This computer system, including all related equipment, networks, and network devices (specifically including Internet access) are provided for authorized U.S. Government use. DoD computer systems may be monitored for all lawful purposes, including to ensure that their use is authorized, for management of the system, to facilitate protection against unauthorized access, and to verify security procedures, survivability, and operational security. Unauthorized use may subject you to criminal prosecution. Evidence of unauthorized use collected during monitoring may be used for administrative, criminal, or other adverse action. Use of this system constitutes consent to monitoring for these purposes."

Failure to comply with applicable rules for using your government computer can result in disciplinary action up to and including your removal from Federal service. Additionally you may be subject to criminal prosecution.

# PRINCIPLES OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Taken from the Navy's Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR) web site.

1. **Think Before Reacting**
The tendency in a conflict situation is to react immediately. In order to resolve conflict successfully it is important to think before we react--consider the options, weigh the possibilities. The same reaction is not appropriate for every conflict.

**2. Listen Actively**
Listening is the most important part of communication. If we do not hear what the other parties are communicating we can not resolve a conflict. Active listening means not only listening to what another person is saying with words, but also to what is said by intonation and body language. The active listening process also involves letting the speaker know that he or she has been heard. For example, "What I heard you say is....."

**3. Assure a Fair Process**
The process for resolving a conflict is often as critical as the conflict itself. It is important to assure that the resolution method chosen as well as the process for affecting that method is fair to all parties to the conflict. Even the perception of unfairness can destroy the resolution.

**4. Attack the Problem**
Conflict is often emotional. When emotions are high it is much easier to begin attacking the person on the other side than it is to solve the problem. What is the problem that lies behind the emotion? What are the causes instead of the symptoms?

**5. Accept Responsibility**
Every conflict has many sides and there is enough responsibility for everyone. Attempting to place blame only creates resentment and anger that heightens any existing conflict. In order to resolve a conflict we must accept our share of the responsibility and eliminate the concept of blame.

**6. Use Direct Communication**
Say what we mean and mean what we say. Avoid talking around a problem. The best way to accomplish this is to use "I-Messages". With an "I-Message" we express our own wants, needs or concerns to the listener. "I-Messages" are clear and non-threatening way of telling others what we want and how we feel. A "you-message" blames or criticizes the listener. It suggests that she or he is at fault.

**7. Look for Interests**
If we are going to resolve conflict successfully we must uncover why we want something and what is really important about the issue in conflict. Remember to look for the true interests of the all the parties to the conflict.

**8. Focus on the Future**
To understand the conflict, it is important to understand the dynamics of the relationship including the history of the relationship. However, in resolving the conflict we must focus on the future. What do we want to do differently tomorrow?

**9. Options for Mutual Gain**
Look for ways to assure that we are all better off tomorrow than we are today. Our gain at the expense of someone else only prolongs conflict and prevents resolution. For more information on the Department of Navy's conflict resolution program visit: www.adr.navy.mil or contact Tom Labelle at 243-7092.