



CNFJ REGIONAL HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE (HRO) “SHINBUN”

Director's Corner – Sarah B. Overstreet

September and October are important times in the performance management cycle. Employees and supervisors are ending one cycle and planning for the next one. Beginning September 28, 2008, PAA will be available in two versions:

- * PAA v2.0 is used to complete FY08 annual appraisal activities (available through February 2009)
- * PAA v3.0 is used to build FY09 performance plans

You are encouraged to hold off working on your FY09 performance plan within the PAA until September 28, 2008. If you have already started your FY09 performance plan in PAA v2.0, do not worry, there is no loss in information. Your information will be available in PAA v3.0, under Plans in Progress. Why do it this way? We recognize that the end of the fiscal year can be stressful. Using v2.0 allows you to accomplish your activities using a familiar tool - the one you started with - while still taking advantage of the v3.0 enhancements as soon as possible.

PAA v3.0 enhancements include:

- * A new look and feel with tabs that display key tasks in the order they are performed.
- * The ability to copy plans from year to year.
- * Improved copy and paste functionality that converts most MS Word format characters.
- * An improved character counter that provides a more accurate count of the number of characters entered

To help you become familiar with v3.0, CPMS created Introducing PAA v3.0 - Establishing a Performance Plan a self-paced presentation of the application, including how to create and approve a performance plan. You can access the application at the following website:

<http://www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps/docs/EstablishingPerformancePlan.pps>

Stay tuned for updates on this initiative and others as we continue to strive to provide “*HR Services That Enable The Fleet*”.

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HR Program and Site Contact Info

Yokosuka HRO:
Operations (US Staffing and Classification Division) 243-9343
EEO Division 243-8163
Labor and Employee Relations Division 243-8187
JN Employment and Classification Division 243-8155
HR Information Systems Division 243-8191

Satellite HRO:
Atsugi Satellite Manager 264-3422
Okinawa Satellite Manager 634-6224
Sasebo Satellite Manager 252-3661



CORNER

To find out more about NSPS visit:

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

UPCOMING NSPS TRAINING

POC: 243-8182

25 Sep 08	NSPS Performance Appraisal Application (PAA) at Yokosuka
30 Sep 08	Writing Job Objectives at Yokosuka
8 Oct 08	Navigating NSPS for Employees/Supervisors at Yokosuka
14 Oct 08	NSPS Performance Appraisal Application (PAA) at Yokosuka
21 Oct 08	NSPS Performance Appraisal Application (PAA) at NAF Atsugi
22 Oct 08	Navigating NSPS for Employees/Supervisors at Yokosuka
29 Oct 08	NSPS Performance Appraisal Application (PAA) at Yokosuka
13 Nov 08	NSPS Performance Appraisal Application (PAA) at Yokosuka
18 Nov 08	Navigating NSPS for Employees/Supervisors at NAF Atsugi
2-3 Dec 08	NSPS Pay Pool Management at NAF Atsugi
10 Dec 08	Navigating NSPS for Employees/Supervisors at Yokosuka
27 Jan 09	NSPS Performance Appraisal Application (PAA) at NAF Atsugi
17 Feb 09	Navigating NSPS for Employees/Supervisors at NAF Atsugi
25-26 Feb 09	NSPS Pay Pool Management at NAF Atsugi

THE HATCH ACT

With Election Day just around the corner it's important to review the provisions of the Hatch Act. The Hatch Act restricts and governs the political activity of government employees at the federal, state and local levels. In 1993, Congress amended the Hatch Act as it applies to Federal and D.C. employees ([5 U.S.C. §§ 7321-7326](#)). As a result of the amendments most federal employees are now permitted to take an active part in political management and political campaigns.

The chart below outlines permitted and prohibited activities. Employees are encouraged to follow these guidelines in prevention of Hatch Act violations. Penalties range from a 30-day suspension without pay to removal from Federal service. For more information contact the Human Resources Office, Labor/Employee Relations Division at 243-3410.

**Permitted and Prohibited Activities
for
Employees Who May Engage in
Partisan Activity**

May be candidates for public office in nonpartisan elections

May register and vote as they choose

May assist in voter registration drives

May express opinions about candidates and issues

May contribute money to political organizations

May attend political fundraising functions

May attend and be active at political rallies and meetings

May join and be an active member of a political party or club

May not use their official authority or influence to interfere with an election

May not solicit, accept or receive political contributions unless both individuals are members of the same federal labor organization or employee organization and the one solicited is not a subordinate

May not knowingly solicit or discourage the political activity of any person who has business before the agency

May not engage in political activity **while on duty**

May not engage in political activity in any government office

May sign nominating petitions

May campaign for or against referendum questions, constitutional amendments, municipal ordinances

May campaign for or against candidates in partisan elections

May make campaign speeches for candidates in partisan elections

May distribute campaign literature in partisan elections

May hold office in political clubs or parties including serving as a delegate to a convention

May not engage in political activity while wearing an official uniform

May not engage in political activity while using a government vehicle

May not be candidates for public office in partisan elections

May not wear political buttons on duty

Managing Your Workplace Conflict Through Mediation

Conflict and/or differences of opinion are a constant in the workplace, and if handled in a constructive manner, often has the potential for enhancing work processes and improving working relationships. When conflict becomes disruptive to the work environment, however, it may be time to seek assistance. Help is available through your Human Resource Office and the Navy's Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR) process.

Secretary of the Navy Instruction [5800.13A, Alternative Dispute Resolution \(ADR\) Policy and Mission of the DON ADR Program Office](#) promotes Navy's policy to use ADR to the maximum extent practicable. It also provides guidance on confidentiality, the use of ADR agreements, and binding arbitration. The Navy's goal is to resolve disputes and conflicts at the earliest stage feasible, by the fastest and least expensive method possible, and at the lowest achievable organizational level prior to litigation.

Navy's ADR method of choice is mediation. In 2007, Navy's mediation resolution rate was 77%. Mediation is a voluntary and confidential ADR process involving a neutral third-party who assists employees and activity officials by facilitating discussions on workplace disputes. In the EEO process, the employee normally initiates the request for mediation. However, management or the employee may initiate a request for mediation for any type of workplace disputes.

Still not sure if it's right for you? Let's take a look at the top 5 reasons mediation is catching on in the workplace: 1) people are generally more satisfied with resolutions that they develop themselves

rather than with agreements that are decided by third parties; 2) mediation expedites the process, allowing management and employees to resolve issues quickly and reduces production losses; 3) mediation assists parties restore or maintain positive working relationships; 4) mediation is less adversarial than traditional third party resolution and encourages parties to focus on individual and common interests to reach agreements that meet both parties needs; and (5) mediation is a means of significantly reducing financial liability associated with processing complaints/disputes.

Is mediation voluntary? Absolutely! If one party does not want to participate, mediation does not occur. However agency supervisors and managers, and employees are strongly encouraged to participate in attempts to resolve both informal and formal complaints of discrimination and other workplace disputes through ADR.

A mediation session involves discussion of the dispute by the employee and the management/supervisory official, as opposed to the formal presentation of witnesses and evidence occurring in a trial or other traditional third party process. The session is normally attended by the mediator, the employee and the management/supervisory official, and their representatives. Mediation can usually be completed in less than a day.

Additionally, the mediator has no power to render a decision or to force the parties to accept a settlement. Rather, the mediator's role is to assist the parties in their negotiations by identifying obstacles to settlement and developing strategies for overcoming them.

Mediation provides an environment and opportunity where disputing parties can explore feelings, clear up misunderstandings, open lines of communication, find areas of agreement and devise mutually acceptable “win-win” solutions to the disputed issues.

For more information on the process call HRO EEO at 243-9579 or visit the Navy ADR website at <http://www.adr.navy.mil>

Changes to Approved NSPS Implementing Issuances

This information provides an overview of the significant changes to the NSPS Implementing Issuances that went into effect June 10, 2008, to conform to the National Defense Authorization Act 2008, and adjust and clarify procedures regarding a variety of routine matters.

1. Full Government-wide Pay Increase (GPI) with No Rating of Record:

Provide a January base salary increase equivalent to the percent of the Government-wide general pay increase to employees not meeting the minimum rating period.

Why: To formalize policy established by Deputy Secretary of Defense during the fall of 2007.

2. Remove Time Limit for Trainee/Intern Salary Increases:

Remove 90-day salary increase waiting period for trainees/interns appointed or converted to NSPS.

Why: To recognize developmental assignments/work performed prior to NSPS assignment as well as that achieved during the first 90 days under NSPS.

3. Modify Pay Setting Rules: Remove unintended losses or windfalls in salary due to anomalies in current pay setting rules.

Why: To prevent loss of pay or overpayment in certain circumstances when voluntarily moving to NSPS. Adjustments occurring in General Schedule pay at the time NSPS was developed resulted in some unexpected effects in pay setting upon movement from non-NSPS to NSPS positions, and targeted local market supplement to standard local market supplement.

4. Pay Reconstruction upon return from a non-NSPS Temporary Assignment:

Provide for reconstructing NSPS pay and performance payouts upon return of employee temporarily assigned outside of NSPS (e.g., deployments, temporary promotions).

Why: Adjusts pay to reflect salary increases that would have occurred if not for the temporary assignment outside of NSPS.

5. Within Grade Increase (WIGI) Buy In Equivalent: Provide mandatory WIGI Buy-In Equivalent for management directed moves into NSPS and optional WIGI Buy-In Equivalent for employee-initiated moves.

Why: Protects earning potential of employees assigned to NSPS via management-directed moves and enables management to offer more competitive compensation packages when recruiting employees for voluntary moves.

6. Compensatory Time Off for Travel: Provide authority for employees to retain and extend time limit for compensatory time off for travel.

Why: Ensures employees retain compensatory time off for travel when moving from one DoD agency/department to another. Protects earned compensatory time off for travel for up to an additional 26 pay periods when this time can not be taken due to work demands.

7. Pay Pool Share Factor: Specify formula for calculating pay pool share factor.

Why: To clarify and provide transparency of formula used by all pay pools to calculate the value of the NSPS share factor.

8. Pay Pool Payouts for Employees on Approved Paid Leave: Provide for performance salary adjustments for employees who did not meet the minimum period of performance due to an approved paid leave status.

Why: To ensure the pay of employees exercising paid leave entitlements is not adversely affected

9. Time-Limited Appointments: Provide NSPS coverage of employees and positions subject to Time-Limited Appointments NTE 90 days.

Why: To extend coverage of NSPS pay banding features to positions and employees on 90 day time limited appointments.

10. Minimum Statistical Base for a Modal Rating: Increase the minimum statistical group used in determining a modal rating from 3 to 5 pay pool members.

Why: To protect privacy of ratings and ensure a large enough group to achieve a modal rating.

11. Reduction in Pay for Unacceptable performance: Clarify that persons on retained pay may be subject to a reduction in salary due to unacceptable performance.

Why: To clarify pay retention does not prevent reduction in salary due to unacceptable performance or conduct.

iSuccess Training Course Helps Employees Write Job Objectives and Self Assessments!

The Program Executive Office, NSPS, has developed a web-based training course to assist employees in writing effective job objectives and self assessments. iSuccess is a result of important feedback from Spiral 1.1 employees. Draft job objectives and accomplishments can serve as a starting point for discussions between employees and their supervisors as they work to finalize mission-aligned objectives.

The narrated iSuccess course guides the employee through the writing process using a step-by-step approach. A “virtual coach” and “virtual employees” are added features that provide important tips and techniques for writing, as well as specific examples. iSuccess helps employees:

- Write effective job objectives using the S.M.A.R.T. (Specific, Measurable, Aligned, Realistic/Relevant, Timed) framework
- Select appropriate Contributing Factors that reflect how to accomplish job objectives

- Understand the impact of Performance Indicators on the development of job objectives
- Practice writing a Self Assessment based on accomplishments and achievements

A self-paced tool, iSuccess is useful at any time during the performance management process. The employee can place drafted work into a Word document and save it to the computer desktop for easy access at any time. The employee can also copy and paste these job objectives into the Performance Appraisal Application to share them with the supervisor.

Please use the following website to access the training:

<http://www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps/iSuccess/>

TSP Moves Forward on Spousal Benefits, IT Modernization.

The Thrift Savings Plan is on track to undergo a major technology modernization and is moving forward with efforts to allow spousal beneficiaries to keep funds in the TSP. But changes to the plan's offerings and the enrollment process were the subject of debate at the first joint meeting of the Employee Thrift Advisory Council and the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board on Monday. While the proposal to allow the spouses of deceased federal employees to continue managing their TSP funds instead of withdrawing them within 60 days would bring the system in line with many private sector plans, it would require the full implementation of other technical upgrades, said Renee Wilder, Director of the Office of Research and Strategic Planning at FRTIB. The Director of External Affairs, said more research

would have to be done on the tax implications of spousal accounts as well.

NSPS Questions and Answers

As a supervisor, what advantages does NSPS offer me? NSPS offers you:

- A greater ability to affect your pay through your performance.
- Tools to create a productive, high-performing work environment that increases your ability to achieve organizational goals.
- Training to help you communicate performance expectations; develop, monitor, rate, address, and reward employee performance; and provide employees with valuable feedback.

I have a very high performing staff. Are quotas set for the number of employees who receive the highest rating?

- No. The law prohibits forced distribution of performance ratings.

Is my supervisor held accountable for equitably and fairly rating me?

- Supervisors and managers are trained and evaluated on how well they exercise their performance management responsibilities. Their effectiveness is an important factor in determining their own evaluations and pay increases.
- NSPS is designed to use pay pool panels (groups of management

officials) to evaluate and reconcile an organization's performance ratings. The pay pool process is a means of checks and balances for employee performance ratings and rewards.

What if I don't agree with my final rating of record?

- You are entitled to a reconsideration if you do not agree with your final rating of record. Within 10 calendar days of receipt of the rating of record, you must submit a written request for reconsideration to the pay pool manager and provide a copy to your rating official and the servicing human resources office (HRO). For further details on the reconsideration process, please contact your servicing performance management consultant at the HRO.

We are on the web!

Visit us at
hro.cnfj.navy.mil