

Nashville District
Human Resources Newsletter
"News You Can Use"
Issue 03-15-03
15 March 03

The purpose of this newsletter is to keep Nashville District employees informed about personnel issues, concerns, and topics. You are encouraged to review the information and disseminate to your organization. If there are particular areas of interest that you would like to see addressed in future issues, an article of general interest, or general comments, please contact John Restey at 615-736-5538 or John.G.Restey@lrm02.usace.army.mil.

General News:

FULLY AUTOMATED SYSTEM FOR CLASSIFICATION (FASCLASS) RELEASE 2.0

The Policy and Program Development Division, Position Classification Team, announces that FASCLASS, release 2.0, was fully and successfully deployed on Saturday, February 22, 2003. Numerous new features were contained within this release such as:

- Access to Look-up Tables has been given to Public user role.
- New Delegated Classification Authority (DCA) Report.
- Civilian Personnel Office Identifier (CCPOID) field has been added to the Comp Level report.
- New role "Personnelist" has been added. Role is for all personnelists other than classifiers.
- Functional code field added to search interdisciplinary
- Link to the Position Description (PD) has been placed on all email messages.
- What's New menu button has been added. Users can see what is new in the application.
- Advance Search and Search have been merged.
- Checks occupational series before allowing the creation of interdisciplinary positions.

- Links to regional homepages on CPOC logos, found on FASCLASS homepage.
- Classifiers will have the ability to search for PDs by employee name.
- Results screens will default to display up to 100 records.
- Ability to search by sequence without entering a CCPOID.
- Leading "0" have been added to the search screen in the fields of series and grade.
- Review process for managers/CPAC.
- New Report Track PD, ability to keep track of the status of a PD.
- Ability to know that there are not PDs within an organization before you click to open the organization.
- Ability to search for 4 digit PD numbers using power search.
- Ability to link directly to Classification and Qualification standards.
- Display the users role, after their name and before their region on the light blue menu bar.
- Ability to have a list of all PDs within a Unit Identification Code (UIC)
- When searching for multi-text, system will default the duty score to descending order.
- Title of CPOC Classifier or DCA Manager is added to Classified By field on new PDs.
- Ability for host nation employees to obtain their own userids.

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FASCLASS TRAINING SURVEY

The requirement to complete a Training Survey for certain positions has been cancelled. Currently the system requires a survey for all positions at the grade 11 and above.

Once the FASCLASS team begins the removal of the Training Survey from the application it will take 4 to 6 weeks to finish the removal. In the meantime, the survey remains in the application, however, the following work around has been put in place:

When the CPOC Classifiers create the PD for management and the requirement for the Training Survey appears, Classifiers will send the survey to the following email address deborah.todd@asamra.hoffman.army.mil [<mailto:Mits.Matsunaga@cpocma.army.mil>](mailto:Mits.Matsunaga@cpocma.army.mil), for completion.

When a manager creates a PD at one of these levels, the survey will appear. Fill in all of the fields with a "1" (one), then forward to your servicing CPOC Classifier or CPAC Personnelist.

(Deborah Todd/(703) 325-1331 or DSN: 221

E-mail: [<deborah.todd@asamra.hoffman.army.mil>](mailto:deborah.todd@asamra.hoffman.army.mil))

228 Years of Service

The attached article depicts 228 years of service to our nation rendered by DoD civilians. It's worth reading.



DoD Civilians.doc

FEDERAL LAWS AID MOBILIZED SERVICE MEMBERS

Both the Soldiers' and Sailors' Civil Relief Act and the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act were enacted for the protection of service members. The SSCRA protections for Reserve and National Guard members who are called to active duty cover them against mortgage foreclosures, high interest rates and adverse court proceedings. The interest cap does not apply to federally guaranteed student loans, automobile leases or cell phone contracts. Under the USERRA, employers must rehire service members returning from a period of active duty if the employees meet certain criteria. For more information on Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve go to [<http://www.esgr.org/>](http://www.esgr.org), or for information on the SSCRA go to <http://www.jagcnet.army.mil/legal>

Employment Verification

Health And Benefits:

THRIFT SAVINGS PLAN (TSP) CATCH-UP CONTRIBUTIONS UPDATE

The Thrift Investment Board has released TSP Bulletin 03-4, Catch-up Contributions for TSP Participants Age 50 and Older. Catch-up contributions potentially provide

participants over 50 an opportunity to make up for working years when 401(k)'s and similar savings plans, like the TSP, were not available. TSP catch-up contributions are made on a pre-tax basis and therefore may only be made through payroll deductions.

To be eligible to make TSP catch-up contributions an employee must be:

1. In a pay status
2. Contributing the allowable maximum to TSP
3. Age 50 years old in the year the catch-up contributions are made
4. Not in the 6-month non-contribution period following receipt of a financial hardship in-service withdrawal

Currently there are over 20,000 Army civilian employees who meet these eligibility requirements.

Catch-up contributions are not subject to the Internal Revenue Code's elective deferral limits (\$12,000 in 2003). However, catch-up contributions are limited each year as follows:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Maximum Contribution</u>
2003	\$2,000
2004	\$3,000
2005	\$4,000
2006 and thereafter	\$5,000

(Catch-up contributions are not subject to the open season rules, and more than one election may be made in any given year, so long as the annual limit is not exceeded).

The Defense Finance and Accounting System and personnel systems must be adapted to allow for catch-up contributions to be withheld. TSP Bulletin 03-4 states the intention to implement the catch-up contributions program in July 2003 and the effective date as early as the first pay period in August. The implementation date for each Federal agency will, however, be dependent upon adaptation of payroll and personnel systems.

Employees who may want to participate in TSP catch-up contributions should begin now to plan for a short time period to have payroll deductions made during 2003 following announcement of an implementation date. For example, if the first pay period TSP catch-up contributions can be withheld is September 26, 2003, an employee would have seven pay periods for withholdings to meet the \$2,000 maximum contribution for 2003, about \$300 a pay period.

TSP bulletins may be viewed on the TSP web site at <http://www.tsp.gov/> under the section, Info for Agency Reps. The Army Benefits Center - Civilian (ABC-C) website <https://www.abc.army.mil/> will continue to be updated with the latest information about TSP catch-up contributions as it becomes available. Employees may also contact the ABC-C at 1-877-276-9287 (see the web site for outside of the continental United States toll free numbers).

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Food For Thought:

**Vegetarian - that's an old Indian word meaning
“lousy hunter”**

Andy Rooney