

Nashville District Human Resources Newsletter "News You Can Use"

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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@lrn02.usace.army.mil.

General News:



What's this I Hear about Centralization of Databases? It's true!

Department of Army is centralizing its 10 civilian human resources (HR) Defense Civilian Personnel Data System (DCPDS) databases to a consolidated database at one central site.

The transition period for consolidation began 6 Jun 2003. It is expected to be completed sometime during the week of 23 Jun 2003.

The centralization project, also known as M2M, will include Continental United States (CONUS) and Outside of the Continental United States (OCONUS) regions. During the transition period, DCPDS will not be available so personnel actions will not be able to be initiated, processed or flowed to payroll in the automated system, provide managers with selection lists during the transition period.

HISTORY: Army civilian employee records have been maintained in 10 separate regional databases.

WHAT'S CHANGING? All ten regional databases are being centralized into the new Army Civilian Data Center (ACDC) located at Rock Island Arsenal, IL. The CPOCs will no longer maintain regional personnel databases. Instead, all users will access the central database at Rock Island to initiate and process actions.

WHY THE CHANGE? Consolidation of Army's HR databases will better support Army's civilian employees. One database in one location means it can be more quickly and efficiently updated and maintained. One centralized database will allow for more efficient reporting and further standardization of Army processes. Users who need to access employee data from multiple regions will not need separate accounts in each region.

IMPACT ON EMPLOYEES: There should be very little impact on employees as a result of the transition. Although DCPDS will not be available to users during the transition period, CPOCs and CPACs are currently working with managers to ensure that personnel actions are processed in a timely manner. Some personnel actions may be delayed in getting to payroll, but this should be a rare occurrence. CPACs and CPOCs will still be working together to issue job announcements and transition period.

WHAT SHOULD EMPLOYEES DO? Contact your supervisor if a personnel action is to be effected during the transition period. Questions regarding actions that may be affected by the transition should also be referred to your supervisor.

IN CASE OF EMERGENCIES: Should an emergency occur that requires a personnel action during the transition period, plans are in place to process such actions using manual processes.

IMPACT ON THE ARMY BENEFITS CENTER-CIVILIAN (ABC-C): ABC-C operations will continue during the transition period. Retirement packages will continue to be processed. Changes to benefits or TSP will continue as usual using the Interactive Voice Response System / Employee Benefit Information System (IVRS/EBIS) system. Information in IVRS / EBIS will be as of 6 Jun 2003 but you will be able to view your actions in the "projected" areas of the system. Any transactions will be held in pending status until DCPDS is once again operational, at which time they will be processed and flowed to payroll.

Decreases in Federal Tax Rate Withholding Brackets

On May 28, 2003, President Bush signed the "Jobs and Growth Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2003," which will bring substantial tax relief to 136 million American taxpayers, including more than two million Federal civilian employees worldwide. Among its provisions, the Act provides for decreases in Federal tax rate withholding brackets retroactive to January 2003.

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) has published "Early Release Copies of New Income Tax Withholding Tables" in Notice 1036 (Rev. May 2003), which are available on the

IRS Web site at <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/n1036.pdf> . The 2003 biweekly income tax withholding tables will be available at <http://www.irs.gov> in the near future.

The 2003 biweekly income tax withholding tables included in the booklet, "Salary Tables for 2003," do not reflect the new Federal tax rate withholding brackets. The publication was being printed when the new law was enacted. Interested parties must refer to IRS' web site at www.irs.gov <http://www.irs.gov> to obtain the new 2003 Federal tax rate withholding brackets. **TAKEN FROM A STATEMENT MADE BY OPM DIRECTOR ON 30 MAY 2003.**

Navy MWR Launches Vacation Discount

Navy Morale, Welfare and Recreation has partnered with the Government Armed Forces Travel Cooperative to provide a wide range of discounted travel opportunities to active-duty and Reserve personnel, military retirees, and Department of Defense employees and their family members. The GAFTC Web site allows users to shop for hotel rooms, airline tickets, car rentals, cruises, golf packages and travel insurance. The site features access to more than 50,000 hotels, hundreds of airlines, 24 car rental companies, all major cruise lines, 400 golf vacations and leading travel insurance companies worldwide. It also offers a "family friendly" travel guide. Log on to www.govarm.com <http://www.govarm.com> or contact your closet military travel office. **TAKEN FROM MILITARY FEDWEEK.COM**

Health And Benefits:

Retroactive 1% Pay Increase

The CPOC staff recently completed the retroactive 1% pay adjustment for the region. This was a huge mission that had an impact on productivity for a 7-week period.

We recently reported some statistics to our higher headquarters on this subject. Here is a "Behind the Scenes" picture of what the figures looked like.

- Timeframe to process 1% pay adjustment - 7 weeks
- # of employees involved in processing these - 81
- # of regular hours spent on processing - 3,492
- # of overtime hours spent on processing - 1,219
- Total overtime dollars spent - \$27,606

The Key to Controlling Your Pay

Formerly known as Employee/Member Self Service (E/MSS), **myPay** offers faster enhanced services to all employees worldwide. **MyPay** puts you in control of your pay account information. It delivers your leave and earnings statement (LES) days before you receive the printed mailed copy.

Available nearly around the clock, **myPay** means no waiting in lines or holding on the phone. With clear confirmation messages, **myPay** means knowing your pay is going where it should, when it should.

With **myPay**, you can

- View, print, and save your LES
- View and print tax statements
- Change Federal tax withholdings
- Update bank account and electronic fund transfer information
- Manage allotments
- Make address changes
- Purchase U.S. Savings Bonds
- View and print travel vouchers
- Turn off your printed/mailed LES for greater security and privacy

MyPay combines strong encryption and secure socket layer (SSL) technology with your social security number and personal identification number (PIN) to safeguard your information from any unauthorized access.

Start using **myPay** now by logging on to <https://mypay.dfas.mil> or call toll free 1-877-363-3677. Civilian employees will receive their PINs by mail. If you need a new PIN, simply click on “Need New PIN”. Logon once you receive your new PIN in the mail.

Need assistance? Customer Support is available toll free 1-800-390-2348, commercial (216) 522-5122 or DSN 580-5122, Monday through Friday between 7 am and 7:30 p.m. Eastern Standard Time.

Thrift Savings Plan Catch Up Contributions

Have you read about the TSP Contributions Catch-Up opportunity? If you are a TSP participant and are 50 years of age or older, this may apply to you!

Employees that are eligible and elect to contribute additional funds to their TSP are limited by the amounts you see below. This amount does not affect the regular contribution limits for the TSP open season elections.

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

*This amount may be adjusted to reflect inflation

Basic eligibility to participate in the Catch-up Contributions this year includes:

- You are currently in a pay status
- You are contributing the maximum amount to TSP (either 8% for CSRS or 13% for FERS)
- You are at least 50 years old by December 31 of this year
- You are not currently in a non-contribution period due to a hardship in-service withdrawal

Specific information about eligibility to participate in the Catch-Up Contributions for TSP can be found at the ABC-C website by making the following selections starting at the Home Page; Information, TSP, Information, TSP “Catch Up” Contribution Update. As soon as final information is received on how and when to make these contributions, it will be shared.

Information can also be found on the TSP website, www.tsp.gov <<http://www.tsp.gov>> .

IMPRESSIVE ABC-C STATS

During the CPAC/CPOC Spring Conference held on Fort Riley in May 2003, Ms. Cindi Porter, Chief, Army Benefits Center-Civilian (ABC-C), announced some interesting statistics for the month of April 2003:

- 3965 employees contacted a counselor
- Average wait time was 27 seconds
- ABC-C processed the following actions
 - 898 voluntary retirements
 - 86 disability retirements
 - 377 retirement estimates
 - 42 death claims
 - 21 family death claims
 - 239 Post-56 requests
 - 95 deposits/redeposit

- 56 temporary continuation of FEHB coverage

Food For Thought:

Blessed are the flexible for they shall not be bent out of shape.