

CHRA-E INFORMATION EXPRESS



Issue 1

July 2004

Welcome to the inaugural edition of the CHRA-E Information Express. The intent of this publication is to disseminate information of interest to managers, supervisors, and civilian employees serviced by the CHRA – Europe Region.

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Civilian Human Resource Professionals Supporting the Army's Mission Through Excellence and Partnership

INTEGRITY – CARING – SERVICE – ADAPTABILITY – QUALITY - PARTNERSHIP

What is the CHRA – Europe Region?

The Secretary of the Army and the Chief of Staff of the Army directed the realignment of all Army operating level Civilian Human Resources (CHR) to the Civilian Human Resources Agency effective October 2003. The singular command and control allows for the standard development and delivery of CHR services and products Army-wide.

There are eight regions across Army. The Europe Region is comprised of eight Civilian Personnel Advisory Centers (CPAC) throughout Europe, a Civilian Personnel Operations Center (CPOC) located in Seckenheim, Germany, and the CHRA – Europe Regional Office, co-located with the CPOC.

The CHRA-E region provides the full range of civilian personnel advisory services and processing services for U.S. Appropriated Fund and Non-Appropriated Fund Employees, as well as, host nation employees within the European theater.

Specifically, the CHRA-Europe Region offices are:

- CHRA-E Regional Office
- CPOC-Europe
- Benelux CPAC
- Grafenwoehr CPAC
- Hanau CPAC
- Heidelberg CPAC
- Kaiserslautern CPAC
- Stuttgart CPAC
- Vicenza CPAC
- Wuerzburg CPAC

Learn more about CHRA- E in the Feature section on page 6.

DIRECTOR'S CORNER

Lisa J. Lessard

Welcome to the CHRA-E's first newsletter! Our goal is to provide useful information to you on matters relating to civilian personnel. I have been assigned to Europe since June 2003 serving as the Civilian Personnel Operations Center Director and since May 2004 as the CHRA Regional Director - Europe. It is a great privilege and a tremendous responsibility.

As your Director, my priorities are:

- Taking care of people our most valued asset.
- Fostering and nurturing partnerships with Commanders, managers, other stakeholders, customers, and most importantly within our own community to ensure seamless service delivery.
- Production – getting the mission accomplished.

The CHRA-E community consists of highly trained and dedicated employees committed to seamless service delivery to our customers. Despite the turbulent times in which we live, we enjoy a strong partnership with the Commanders and managers we serve. Together we filled a total of 10,518 positions throughout the European Theater during the past year. Awesome!

In June we marked the 10th Anniversary of Civilian Personnel Regionalization in Europe. As a result of a DoD directive, the Europe region was the first in DoD to launch centralized delivery of HR servicing. Over the past ten years our business processes and automation tools have evolved. Today, we continue the journey. As we look back and reflect on the progress made over the past ten years we look ahead to continued growth and transformation.

The 2004 Summer Hire program is well underway. As a result of Command emphasis and the great effort of the HR staff and stakeholders, we placed over 2300 applicants this year. This program is a wonderful opportunity for our youth to gain valuable work experience and earn some money!

Are we meeting our customer expectations? In March/April 2004, we visited 33 ASG/BSB commanders and top management officials to solicit feedback on their top three civilian personnel management issues and expectations. We received high marks on staff responsiveness, working relationships, and customer focus. Areas that need improvement include work force training, timeliness and quality of referral lists, and classification services. Based on their feedback we developed a *Response Plan* that will shape our focus for the upcoming year. Each CPAC Chief will brief those interviewed on their *Response Plans* this summer.

I am proud to represent the CHRA-Europe team and look forward to the challenges ahead supporting the Army's mission. This newsletter is designed to keep you informed. We welcome your suggestions and comments to the newsletter (page 7). Have a happy and safe summer!

FEGLI 2004 OPEN SEASON



To celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Federal Employees Group Life Insurance Program, the Office of Personnel Management will be holding an Open Season from September 1- September 30, 2004.

This is the first FEGLI open season since 1999. This open season will give Federal employees the opportunity to make any adjustments they need to better plan for the future.

During the open season, Federal and Postal employees in eligible positions will be able to enroll in the FEGLI program or increase or change current coverage without having a physical or answering any questions about their health. The earliest that newly elected coverage will be effective is September 1, 2005.

Visit the Army Benefits Center – Civilian web site at <https://www.abc.army.mil> for more information.

ARMY TO DEPLOY NEW HR SYSTEMS

During the last two years, the HR community has been diligently working to enhance Resumix functionalities in order to improve the Army suite of recruitment and staffing tools and to develop and deploy additional automated HR tools. The Resumix Redesign effort was to be accomplished in three phases. Phases I and II are complete. These two phases involved changes to accommodate the move to a single, centralized Resumix database and deployment of Web-based Referral Lists, enhanced vacancy announcement builder, ANSWER applicant notification system, standardized application processes, automated Reemployment Priority List (RPL) program and OPM authority to conduct Administrative Careers With America (ACWA) examinations.

The Army's implementation of phase III is scheduled to begin in August. The first tools to be deployed, on 30 August 2004, will be the automated Delegated Examining tool and the Electronic Recruitment Case File tool. Deployment of the automated Delegated Examining tool is a huge step forward in our capability to streamline, simplify and expedite the examination and referral of external candidates. This tool will benefit both the HR community and managers.

Following deployment of these two new staffing tools, Army will deploy an upgrade of their Resume Builder and an automated Interest and Availability (I&A) tool. The I&A tool will allow HR specialists to assess applicant's availability by automatically notifying and querying individuals who have previously applied to open, inventory type announcements. An on-line "screen-cam" will be developed and made available to the public on using the new Army Resume Builder. Later this summer, the Army will introduce a new employment page which will offer applicants expanded search capability. Another initiative in the works is the implementation of a subscription service for applicants allowing them to register and receive automatic notification of job openings that suit their interests.

Additional information will be provided as it becomes available.

NATIONAL PERSONNEL SECURITY SYSTEM

Here are some facts you should know about the National Personnel Security System (NSPS).

1. Congress authorized the NSPS in the fiscal year 2004 National Defense Authorization Act, signed by President Bush on November 24, 2003. The law allows the Department of Defense to establish new rules for how civilians are hired, assigned, compensated, promoted, and disciplined, within the framework of merit principles, accommodation of veterans' preference, and respect for employees' right to bargain.

2. NSPS will be a new human resources management system for the DoD civilian workforce. The law authorizing NSPS provides a framework but does not prescribe the specific elements of the new system. DoD intends to build NSPS in full support of National Security goals and objectives.

3. NSPS will bring more flexible and streamlined processes for:

- Staffing to include recruiting, hiring, advancement, and promotion
- Pay administration and performance management
- Job classification
- Labor management relations
- Discipline, adverse actions and employee appeals

4. During a strategic review of NSPS, DoD and component officials came to consensus on the NSPS design and implementation way ahead:

- Full partnership with Office of Personnel Management (OPM)
 - OPM to participate in development of regulations
 - Regulations to be jointly signed by SecDef and OPM Director
- Mission-first but also employee-centric with broad collaboration with stakeholders
- Defense Acquisition Management model for implementation approach
- DoD governance through Senior Executive and Overarching Integrative Product Teams (OIPT)
 - Aggressive, but event-driven schedules.

- Communicate, communicate, communicate.

5. The design process for NSPS is outlined in the law and includes full partnership with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), collaboration with employee representatives, and notification to Congress prior to implementation.

6. Secretary of the Navy, Gordon England, announced on April 27, 2004, that a new Program Executive Office (PEO) was created to design and implement the new NSPS for all of DoD. The PEO is staffed with personnel on detail from the components, to include two from the Department of the Army. In addition to working the NSPS through to completion, the PEO will provide standard materials to Components for use in implementation. NSPS Component Project Managers (PMs) have been designated to work in close coordination with the PEO throughout the planning, design and implementation process.

7. The Overarching Integrated Process Team is led by Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) and OPM leadership with the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs (ASA(M&RA)), Mr. Reginald Brown, as Army's representative. A Senior Advisory Group (SAG) led by the Program Executive Officer, provides HR advice to the PEO. HR Directors and representative management officials serve on the SAG.

8. On 24 May 2004, Mrs. Mary E. Lacey, Technical Director of the Naval Surface Warfare Center, was named as the Program Executive Officer for the NSPS. Mrs. Lacey will report directly to Secretary England, who reports to Secretary Rumsfeld. The Army Assistant G-1 for Civilian Personnel Policy, Mr. David Snyder, is the Interim Director of the Labor Relations and Appeals Process Team assigned to the PEO.

9. The Defense Acquisition Management model was adopted for NSPS design and implementation. The specific elements of the system are not yet finalized, but the PEO staff began the collaboration process with unions in early June. The notional implementation schedule projects the first cycle of pilots in July 2005. Identification of organizations to be considered in the first pilot has yet to be

finalized. Implementation demands will be immense.

10. The Army Assistant G-1 for Civilian Personnel Policy, has set up an Army NSPS Program Management Office to lead, coordinate, and accomplish the training, communications, marketing, Army's implementing policy work, personnel conversion transactions, and conversion of Army personnel support systems like RESUMIX and the staffing suite of tools.

11. The NSPS design process will include a number of features. Plans include a series of Focus Groups across all Components of DoD for the PEO to obtain thoughts, feelings, and ideas about human resources policies and practices from a broad cross-section of the workforce. Focus Group sessions were conducted in the Heidelberg and Wuerzburg communities in July 2004.

12. PEO Working Groups will develop the alternatives/designs for NSPS. They will take their input from several sources: the NSPS Focus Groups; previous personnel demonstration projects; the NSPS legislation and previous alternatives; input from union leadership meetings; and the principles of modern human resources management systems. NSPS Guiding Principles are:

- Put mission first – support national security goals and strategic objectives
- Respect the individual, protect rights guaranteed by law
- Value talent, performance, leadership and commitment to public service
- Be flexible, understandable, credible, responsive, executable
- Ensure accountability at all levels
- Balance Human Resources interoperability with unique mission requirements
- Be competitive and cost effective

Both DoD and union leadership will discuss these alternatives in planned meetings during the summer of 2004. Input from these meetings and discussions will contribute to drafting of the proposed NSPS regulations in late 2004.

13. A series of Town Hall Meetings led by senior Army and other DoD leaders is planned in

August 2004 in the Heidelberg, Stuttgart, and Kaiserslautern communities. These meetings will provide attendees information about the status of the NSPS, key milestones, and the opportunity to ask questions.

14. The Authorization Act also delivers other new personnel flexibilities for the Department, that are already in place, including permanent authority for voluntary early retirement and separation incentive pay for force restructuring; elimination of the pay offset for civil service retirees who are rehired in DoD; and authority to hire up to 2,500 highly qualified experts (with special pay).

View the NSPS web site at <http://www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps/index.html> for up-to-date information.

►► NEWS FLASH ◀◀

NSPS TOWN HALL MEETINGS

18 August 2004 - Stuttgart
1400-1600 Hours, Bldg. 2339
Base Theater at Patch Barracks

19 August 2004 - Heidelberg
0900-1100 Hours
PHV Pavilion Ballroom

19 August 2004 - Kaiserslautern
1400-1600 Hours, Bldg 2059
Vogelweh Community Center Ballroom

PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS

A quick reminder for managers and supervisors regarding performance appraisals:

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| 1 Aug 04 | Base System Mid-point Review Due (GS6-8, WS 6-8 and equivalent, WG 6 and above, and all WL) |
| 14 Aug 04 | Senior System Evaluations Due (GS/WS 13 & above, GM and ES) |

PROHIBITED PERSONNEL PRACTICES

A recent Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Veterans' Employment Audit Report found an instance of a prohibited personnel practice had occurred within the European theater. This finding involved a selecting official soliciting a declination of a disabled veteran on a Delegated Examining Unit (DEU) certificate of eligibles who was blocking the candidate they wanted to hire.

The specific prohibited personnel practice: "...a Federal employee authorized to take, direct others to take, recommend or approve any personnel action may not: ...; (5) influence anyone to withdraw from competition for any position so as to improve or injure the employment prospects of any other person..."

This is a serious charge and has prompted the HR community to use various forums to increase awareness of the law. U.S. Army Europe managers are strongly committed to supporting veteran's employment. The veteran community provides a major source of well qualified applicants to the region and represents a little over 40% of the U.S. workforce.

Watch our next issue for a complete list of the Prohibited Personnel Practices as defined in §2302(B) of Title 5 of the United States Code.

ABC-C GUIDE TO RETIREMENT

This guide contains great information for anyone who is considering retirement, no matter how close (or far) they may be. It is also an ideal "first stop" for those who have just decided to retire, but do not know where to begin.

Check out the Retirement Guide at:
<https://www.abc.army.mil/Information/ABCRetirement/Information/RetirementGuide.doc>
 Or, from the ABC-C web site at
<https://www.abc.army.mil>, Information, Retirement, Information, *Guide to Retirement*.

►► NEWS FLASH ◀◀

ABC-C Representatives to Visit Europe

Planning is underway for representatives from the Army Benefits Center – Civilian at Fort Riley, Kansas to visit Europe in mid-September to conduct employee briefings at various locations. While the specific itinerary is still being established, the tentative dates for the visit are 13-24 September 2004.. Further details will be provided through your CPACs as they become available.

FEATURE SECTION

This section is designed to provide information about the different components of CHRA-E.

WUERZBURG CPAC is this issue's featured office.

Located in central Germany, the Wuerzburg Civilian Personnel Advisory Center, (CPAC) and its satellite offices in Ansbach, Bamberg, Kitzingen, and Schweinfurt provide the full range of personnel advisory services for Appropriated Fund, Non-Appropriated Fund, and Local National civilian personnel. In addition to servicing the Base Support Battalions (BSB) in Ansbach, Bamberg, Kitzingen and Schweinfurt areas, they also provide advisory services to BSB outposts in Bad Kissingen, Giebelstadt, Katterbach, and Illesheim,

The CPAC services a wide spectrum of Army and DOD customers. Their footprint includes not only the 98th Area Support Group, four Base Support Battalions, and three Area Support Teams, but US Army Medical Command Health and Dental Clinics, eight Commissaries, 13 Department of Defense Schools, V Corps' 1st Infantry Division, USAREUR elements, Criminal Investigation Command, 266th Finance Command, BASOPS Maintenance Centers, Transportation Command elements, Army Materiel Command, two major airfields and more. Of all the CHRA-Europe CPACs, Wuerzburg has the 4th largest serviced population in the region.

As the home of the 1st Infantry Division, the CPAC was heavily involved in deployment and redeployment issues facing the community as the soldiers deployed to IRAQ. The Wuerzburg Civilian Personnel Advisory Center, along with their Customer Focus Team at the Civilian Personnel Operations Center, came together to support this mission, working long hours in addition to performing their regular duties.

The CPAC provides a multitude of training opportunities for the workforce and management staff. Courses include Priority Placement Program, Military Spouse Program, New Employee Briefings, Motivation, Counseling (Performance and Discipline), Classification, Supervisory Development, Resumix, Supervisory HR training, Works Council activities in Germany and others. The CPAC has a newsletter that provides timely information to their customers on a regular basis. The "Alles Klar" is short, easy to understand and includes web based references.



The Wuerzburg CPAC was recognized on 19 July 2004 at the USAREUR Commanding General Annual Awards ceremony with receipt of the Civilian Human Resources Management Customer Service Award. The outstanding support and service they provided to the 98th Area Support Group and tenant activities precipitated their receipt of this award. This team of professionals provided expert advice and guidance to managers that resulted in filling over 200 positions in support of the Global War on Terrorism. They made this untiring effort appear seamless. The professional service provided was sincerely appreciated not only by managers and supervisors but also by the new employees. Congratulations to the Wuerzburg team!

Visit their website at
<http://www.chrma.hq.usareur.army.mil/cpac/wu>
to find out more about the Wuerzburg CPAC.

COMMENTS

We welcome your feedback and suggestions.

Send comments to the CHRA-Europe
Regional Director's Office at

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