



CPMS Express

Get on the fast track



An Essential Element of NSPS

Understanding the Pay Pool Process

NSPS Program Executive Office

Under the National Security Personnel System (NSPS), an employee's pay and rewards are affected by work performance. The **pay pool process** is an important component of the performance management cycle of NSPS, developed to ensure that all managers and supervisors apply fair and equitable standards when rating employees in the organization. The process also ensures that rewards provide incentives to the workforce.

During the pay pool process, individual and team accomplishments are recognized and rewarded by senior members of the organization. The **pay pool panel**, a group of managers and supervisors from the organization or its functions, gathers to review employee evaluations and recommended ratings of record submitted by managers and supervisors. Employees receiving appraisals belong to the **pay pool**, which is a group of employees (generally 50 to 300) working in an organization who share performance payout funds. The term may also be used to refer to the shared funds.

Each pay pool panel has a designated **pay pool manager** who is responsible for overseeing the process of reconciling the rating

HR Line of Business Update

Human Resources Business, Information, and Technology Solutions (HR-BITS) [E-mail us](#)

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has released the seventh [issue](#) of its *HR Line of Business* (LOB) newsletter, which provides insight into the Human Resources (HR) LOB and its impact. This issue has interviews with the Interior Department HR LOB Shared Service Center Project Manager, L. C. Williams, and OPM's Dave Anderson, who addresses the HR LOB requirements development process.

and reward decisions. The pay pool panel ensures consistency of standards and ratings throughout the organization, and it also ensures that managers and supervisors have rated employees fairly based on their performance.

The Program Executive Office (PEO) for NSPS has initiated training courses that are specific to the pay pool process. These two and one-half day, simulation-based workshops cover all phases of the pay pool cycle, process, and procedures for effective pay pool management. The target audiences include pay pool managers, sub-pay pool managers, trainers, and facilitators. Additional pay pool manager training sessions are scheduled for December 2006 through February 2007.

The nomination process for PEO-sponsored training courses is being managed by the Department of Defense (DoD) Components. Employees interested in attending NSPS training are encouraged to contact their respective NSPS Program Offices.

Communication between employees and their managers or supervisors is critical to the pay pool process. Just as managers are responsible for explaining how the pay pool process works, employees under NSPS should make sure they have a clear understanding of the pay pool process and the decisions made by the pay pool panel.

The pay pool process preserves the integrity of the NSPS performance management system by providing a higher-level review during the appraisal period. In addition, the process makes certain that all decisions regarding work performance are made within the context of the mission and the organization. To learn more about the NSPS pay pool process, please read the "Pay Pool Management at a Glance" brochure, which is available on the home page of the NSPS Web site, www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps.

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New Online Application Supports NSPS Pay Pool Process

NSPS Program Executive Office

Pay pool managers and administrators now have an online tool that supports the pay pool process, which is an important component of the NSPS performance management cycle. The pay pool process ensures that managers apply fair and equitable standards to rate and reward employees based on work performance.

The Manage Pay Pool Identifier (MPP ID) application provides individuals responsible for establishing or maintaining pay pool structure and membership—such as pay pool managers, pay pool administrators, or HR

practitioners—with an electronic means for organizing and documenting information about employees in the pay pool. The new application allows designated system users to perform the following tasks:

- ◆ Create pay pool IDs;
- ◆ Assign roles within pay pools and sub-pay pools;
- ◆ Assign employees to pay pools; and
- ◆ Establish the pay pool hierarchies necessary to manage, control, and disburse performance-based pay increases and bonuses.

The MPP ID application is accessible through the self-service area of the Defense Civilian Personnel Data System (DCPDS) via *My Biz* or *My Workplace*. Only persons who have been granted a special permission user ID and password for the MPP ID application will be able to access the new tool.

Just as the performance appraisal application supports supervisors and employees in the NSPS performance management cycle, the MPP ID application will ease operations for pay pool managers and administrators in the final stages of NSPS performance management. The MPP ID application will help ensure an organized, efficient rating and reward experience for NSPS organizations.

Spiral 1.2 of NSPS kicked off this month, with 66,000 DoD civilians scheduled to convert to NSPS over the next four months. October 31st marks the close of the Spiral 1.1 appraisal period, and payouts for the first 11,000 NSPS employees will take place in January 2007.

For additional information about NSPS performance management and the pay pool process, please visit the NSPS Web site, www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps.

CPMS Web Site Is Redesigned

We have redesigned and launched the new CPMS Web site, www.cpms.osd.mil. Part of our mission here at CPMS is to provide relevant, up-to-date, and understandable civilian HR information to the DoD community, including HR professionals, line managers, and employees.

The Department's civilian HR management programs have undergone unprecedented transformation in recent years, and CPMS is transforming to meet these new challenges while maintaining our core focus to provide enterprise HR solu-

tions, guidance, and information to support the DoD mission.

We have updated our site to make it more user-friendly and better organized, with relevant and dynamic content. We hope you will find it easier to navigate and continue to use www.cpms.osd.mil as your primary source for DoD civilian HR information.

We would appreciate your feedback, so as you use the new site, we encourage you to use the feedback function to provide your suggestions. Thank you!

NSPS Questions? Ask FAS!

Classification & Pay [E-mail us](#)

The following is just one of the many frequently asked questions posted on the CPMS Web site.

Q: A General Schedule (GS) 5, step 5, information technology employee in the “rest of the United States” (RUS) is being converted to NSPS. His position is covered by special salary rate table 999B. His payable rate of basic pay is \$39,406, which includes a special rate supplement of \$10,851.

At the time of conversion, the employee receives a within-grade increase buy-in that raises his adjusted rate to \$39,958. How are the NSPS base salary and local market supplement (LMS) figured when this special salary rate employee is converted into NSPS?

A: During conversion, the adjusted rate (\$39,958 in this case) is reallocated into an NSPS base salary and LMS. Since the employee is in RUS, the reallocation process would divide \$39,958 by 1.1252 (one plus the LMS value for the employee's pay band), resulting in \$35,512, which is the NSPS base salary.

Then, multiplying \$35,512 by 0.1252 results in an LMS of \$4,446. The \$35,512 plus \$4,446 equals the NSPS adjusted salary of \$39,958.



DoD Common Access Card Will Enhance Systems Security

HR-BITS [E-mail us](#)

Recent concerns about systems security and cyber attacks have focused on intruders obtaining valid usernames and passwords for exploitation and access. As a result, the Department will implement a more secure method for accessing networks, one that does not rely on usernames and passwords. The DoD Common Access Card (CAC) will soon become the new way to identify and authenticate users.

In recent months, the Joint Task Force—Global Network Operations (JTF-GNO) has provided extensive guidance in DoD-wide Communications Tasking Orders (CTOs). The latest CTO, which was issued on September 21st, focused on securing NIPRNet Web servers and public key (PK)-enabling them by October 5th. (The NIPRNet is the Department’s *non-classified-but-sensitive Internet protocol router network*.)

Non-CAC users may use the alternative logon token or another approved method of two-factor authentication. Two-factor authentication is a security process in which the user provides two means of identification. One is typically a physical token, such as a card, while the other is typically something memorized, such as a security code.

Throughout the Department, the CAC will serve as more than just an identity card.

The CAC contains an integrated circuit chip with the user’s associated DoD PK infrastructure certificates and public/private keys. These certificates can serve several purposes on the unclassified network:

- ◆ Confidentiality (ensuring the privacy of data moving around the NIPRNet);
- ◆ Integrity (ensuring that data are not manipulated in transit);
- ◆ Nonrepudiation (ensuring that the authenticated users in a given transaction cannot later deny actions previously taken); and
- ◆ Authentication (ensuring that sender and recipient actually are who they say they are).

Protection of, and access to, personal data are especially important matters for HR systems like DCPDS, the Web-based enterprise civilian HR system that supports more than 800,000 DoD employees worldwide. In response to the latest CTO, during October CPMS gave the JTF-GNO a plan to PK-enable the DCPDS Corporate Management Information System and enterprise support systems by January 2007.

Similarly, Component customers that operate DCPDS systems within their enclaves are preparing to PK-enable the Component NIPRNet Web servers that support DCPDS.

Information from these assessments will be used to develop the annual HC Accountability Report. This report to OPM will focus on the following three areas:

- ◆ Demonstrating Department-wide HC results;
- ◆ Promoting continuous improvements, efficiencies, and effectiveness; and
- ◆ Recognizing best practices.

In conclusion, Ms. Brown said, “The CHCAS is an important part of our Total Force management strategy to ensure we have a strong civilian workforce that meets the Department’s mission and civilian transformation efforts.”

DoD Civilian Human Capital Accountability System

Accountability and Evaluation [E-mail us](#)

Dr. David S. C. Chu, the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, formally established the new DoD Civilian Human Capital Accountability System (CHCAS) on September 29th by signing the CHCAS [policy](#) statement. CHCAS is an enterprise-wide approach to evaluating DoD civilian Human Capital (HC) management and assessing progress toward the goals in the DoD Civilian HC Strategic [Plan](#) 2006 – 2010.

Since 2000, a new Executive Order (E.O.) and law have reformed Federal HC management. E.O. 13197 of January 18, 2001, created Civil Service Rule X, “Agency Accountability Systems.” This Rule authorized the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to require that agencies establish

accountability systems. Rule X is codified at title 5, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Section 10.2. The Chief Human Capital Officers Act of 2002 holds agencies accountable for their HC endeavors. This provision is codified at title 5, United States Code, Section 1103 note; it was enacted by Section 1304 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002, Public Law 107-296, 116 Stat. 2289 (November 25, 2002).

OPM developed the HC Assessment and Accountability Framework as a Government-wide approach to evaluating agency HC programs. The Department’s accountability system is fully aligned with OPM’s Framework.

A new CPMS Division, the Accountability and Evaluation Division (AED), is responsible for implementing CHCAS. “A variety of as-

essment tools will be used to fulfill CHCAS objectives,” said AED Chief Donna Brown, “including on-site audits, surveys, workforce data analysis, and other program reviews.”



Insurance Carriers Are Selected and Rates Set for FEDVIP

Benefits & Entitlements [E-mail us](#)

The first annual open season for the new Federal Employee Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP) will take place from November 13th through December 11th, in conjunction with the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP) open season. Earlier this year, OPM selected FEDVIP vendors, as shown in the matrix below.

As noted in our previous [article](#), the law authorizing FEDVIP (the Federal Employee Dental and Vision Benefits Enhancement Act of 2004, Public Law 108-496 (December 23, 2004)) makes this program a voluntary benefit, i.e., one for which there is no Government contribution. While current employees will pay the full premium, they will be able to do so with pre-tax dollars.

Premiums for both the dental and vision programs are available for Self Only, Self Plus One, and Self and Family enrollments. Additionally, the dental program premiums vary by geographic location. Premiums for 2007 are online at www.opm.gov/insure/DentalVision/07rates.asp.

OPM's solicitation for contracts provided for the following benefits:

◆ Dental plans should provide preventive services (e.g., oral examinations, topical fluoride treatment, and sealants) for a small co-payment. Subject to a \$100 deductible, major dental work (e.g., crowns, bridges, and dentures) should be covered at 70 percent; more extensive care (e.g., extractions and root canal surgery), at 40 percent; and orthodontia, at a minimum of 30 percent.

◆ Vision plans should fully cover annual eye examinations, to include screening for vision problems (e.g., glaucoma, diabetes, and ocular hypertension). Corrective lenses (i.e., eyeglasses and contact lenses) may also be covered under FEDVIP vision plans.

FEDVIP open-season elections will become effective on December 31st. This supplemental vision and dental insurance will be available to employees and retirees who qualify for FEHB coverage, as well as their dependents. Employees and annuitants may use the new online enrollment system customized for FEDVIP, www.BENEFEDS.com, or call 1-877-888-3337 (teletypewriter, 1-877-889-5680). These systems will become available on November 13th. For further information on FEDVIP enrollment, click [here](#). For more on this year's open season, see the notice at left.

| FEDVIP INSURANCE CARRIERS | | | |
|---|--|---|-------------------|
| Dental Benefits ¹ | | Vision Benefits ² | |
| Carrier | National/Regional | Carrier | National/Regional |
| Aetna Life Insurance Company | National | Blue Cross Blue Shield Association (BCBSA) | National |
| CompBenefits | Regional (20 states and the District of Columbia) ³ | Spectera, Inc. | National |
| Government Employees Hospital Association (GEHA) | National | Vision Service Plan | National |
| Group Health, Incorporated (Inc.) | Regional (All of New York; parts of New Jersey, Connecticut, and Pennsylvania) | ¹ GEHA and MetLife offer standard & high options; other dental carriers offer a single plan. ² All vision carriers offer standard & high options. ³ CompBenefits availability: <i>South-Central</i> —AR, KS, MO, OK. <i>Midwest</i> —IL, IN, OH. <i>Gulf Coast</i> —AL, FL, LA, MS, TX. <i>Appalachia</i> —KY, TN, WV. <i>Mid-Atlantic</i> —DC, GA, NC, SC, VA, and parts of MD. ⁴ Triple-S is a BCBSA independent licensee. | |
| Metropolitan Life Insurance Company (MetLife), Inc. | National | | |
| Triple-S, Inc. ⁴ | Regional (Puerto Rico only) | | |
| United Concordia Companies, Inc. | National | | |

NOTICE—2006 Open Season Involves Three Programs

For the first time, three separate programs will participate: FEDVIP, the Federal Flexible Savings Account Program (FSAFEDS), and FEHBP. For online information, visit—

- ◆ FEDVIP: www.opm.gov/insure/dentalvision;
- ◆ FSAFEDS: www.FSAFEDS.com; and
- ◆ FEHBP: www.opm.gov/insure/health.

Information on what each FEHB plan and option covers will be detailed in OPM's FEHB comparison guide and individual brochures, available at www.opm.gov/insure.



CPMS, Component Staffing Chiefs Discuss Current Topics

Staffing & Development [E-mail us](#)

CPMS recently met with DoD Component Staffing Chiefs. Here are highlights of topics discussed.

DOD INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY EXCHANGE PROGRAM (ITEP). The ITEP enables temporary details between Government and the private sector. The ITEP policy [memorandum](#) was signed on August 31st.

NATIONAL SECURITY EDUCATION PROGRAM (NSEP). [NSEP](#) aims at developing the national capacity to educate United States citizens to understand foreign cultures, thus strengthening our economic competitiveness and enhancing international cooperation and security. The Secretary of Defense, in consultation with the National Security Education Board, provides program direction. NSEP's statutory basis is the National Security Education Act of 1991 (Public Law 102-183), December 4, 1991, as amended.

NSEP awards scholarships and fellowships to undergraduate and graduate students nationwide who desire public service careers. Recipients incur a service requirement to work for a Federal agency or office with national security responsibilities. All NSEP award recipients can be hired using the Schedule A appointing authority under 5 CFR 213.3102(r). This authority enables agencies to hire when traditional, competitive-service hiring pro-

cedures would be impractical.

Information about various DoD scholarships, including NSEP, is available on the Recruitment Assistance Division Web [site](#). This site also has information about National Flagship Language Initiative fellowships.

LANGUAGE INITIATIVE. Military operations after September 11, 2001, reinforced the Department's need for individuals skilled in emerging languages, dialects, and regional expertise, as well as the capacity to expand these capabilities on short notice. In 2005, the DoD Language Roadmap was approved in order to:

- ◆ Create foundational language and cultural expertise in the officer and enlisted ranks for both Active and Reserve Components, plus the civilian workforce;
- ◆ Create the capacity to surge language and cultural resources beyond foundational and in-house capabilities;
- ◆ Establish a cadre of language specialists with a level 3/3/3 ability in reading, listening, and speaking; and
- ◆ Establish a process to track accession, separation, and promotion rates of language professionals and Foreign Area Officers.

The Defense Language Office is the operational arm for the Office of the Under

Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness for ensuring the language roadmap is executed. The Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Civilian Personnel Policy (CPP) provides support in executing the roadmap for the civilian workforce. A Civilian Defense Language Work Group has also been established, consisting of CPP, CPMS, and Component representatives. This Work Group provides input, frames policy, and supports roadmap deliverables.

Detailed information about the Defense language initiative will be furnished in a future article.

WORKFORCE DIVERSITY. Persons with targeted disabilities were less than one percent of the permanent Federal workforce in fiscal year 2005, according to a recent [report](#) by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Public Law 93-112), September 26, 1973, as amended, requires agencies to take proactive steps to provide equal employment [opportunities](#) for individuals with disabilities.

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES. During June, the DoD Computer/Electronic Accommodations [Program](#) was honored with one of EEOC's annual Freedom to Compete Awards. The Department is the first Federal agency to receive this award.

Prohibited Notice Period

Civilian Assistance and Re-Employment Division [E-mail us](#)

With the holidays approaching, here is a timely reminder that reduction in force and other termination notices shall not be issued or made effective between December 15th and January 3rd. If available resources absolutely preclude delay in specific situations, the appropriate official listed below may authorize exceptions: the Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness); Assistant Secretaries (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) of the Army, Navy, or Air Force; Director, Administration and Management; or Director of a Defense Agency or DoD Field Activity with independent appointing authority.

Exceptions shall be limited. Approval may be given only when the adverse effect on employees would be significantly increased if a particular exception were not granted.

The above requirements are contained in the Civilian Personnel Manual, DoD 1400.25-M, Subchapter (SC) 1701, Section [SC1701.3](#), "Prohibited Notice Period."

CPMS Employment

CPMS vacancies are posted on USAJOBS. Click [here](#) for status candidate employment opportunities; for other vacancies, click [here](#).



CPMS Personnel-ity Profile

IRD's Marie Robichau Adopts a "Work Hard, Play Hard" Philosophy

"I've been a Discrimination Complaints Investigator for more than 20 years now," says Marie Robichau (pronounced "ROBE-a-show") of the Investigations and Resolutions Division (IRD), which until recently was called the Office of Complaint Investigations. "After all these years, I still love what I do," Marie says.

"IRD managers offered us the option to be remote-site investigators. That's why, even though I'm officially assigned to the IRD office in Dayton, OH, I actually operate out of my telework office at home in Fairfield, CA. I believe telework improves my ability to focus and concentrate on my cases. Doing investigations requires close reading and analysis, so telework can help by eliminating distractions.

"Our work has a certain flow to it; we must finalize current cases even as new ones hit our "In" basket. The bottom line is that IRD investigators must manage our time and workload effectively in order to get a handle on our assignments. A good thing about IRD is that I am not micro-managed. I'm very self-motivated, I enjoy having the ability to schedule my investigations, and I take pride in the quality of my work.

"With the IRD reorganization, the Sacramento office now performs case intake

for all of IRD. Their standardized processing helps ensure that, for most cases, investigators have all necessary documents on hand before we start investigating a case. As an investigator, I certainly appreciate Sacramento's intake service!

"Other IRD offices are organized by Component. For example, I conduct investigations primarily for the DoD Agencies, and the IRD Component Director for these is located in Dayton. The Navy Component Director is also in Dayton, and the Air Force and Army Component Directors are in San Antonio.

"During my tenure as an investigator, I have also been assigned Army, Navy, and Air Force, cases, and I have mediated cases, which gives me the opportunity to interact with other IRD management.

"The IRD ombudsman and in-house training functions are assigned to the Dayton office. The ADR—alternative dispute resolution—Director is located in Atlanta. The Atlanta office is also the focal point for IRD quality reviews, so all investigators receive assessments from Atlanta on how we are doing—the quality of our investigations and of the analysis contained in our written reports. This means that IRD investigators are well positioned to produce consistent work products, regardless of our geographic locations.

"The annual conference for IRD investigators and mediators also helps us stay in sync. It's usually held during May at the DoD Executive Training Center in Southbridge, MA.



Home, sweet home . . . office!
(Above) Marie with family pet.

"On a personal note, my husband Charles enjoys helping people through his work as assistant manager of a local motor home park. My daughter works with a faith-based organization in St. Louis, and my son is employed with the Kendall-Jackson winery in Sonoma County. Being nearby, he and my daughter-in-law and grandson are able to visit us often.

"When not at work, my husband and I enjoy traveling for pleasure. I also love gardening, and Northern California has very favorable growing conditions. One amazing rose bush has liter-

ally taken over several trellises in our back yard. It's now almost roof-high.

"My motto is, 'Work hard and play hard.' Life is very good, and I just appreciate every day. When I want to stop and smell the roses—well, all I have to do is go out in the back yard!"

CAREER BRIEF

1972-7: Worked in the HR clerical field. 1977-1981: Personnel Assistant; subsequently promoted as Personnel Management Specialist, GS-9, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, National Park Service. 1981-2: Personnel Staffing and Classification Specialist, GS-11, Health and Human Services, San Francisco. 1982-3: Personnel Staffing Specialist, GS-11, Army, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Supreme Headquarters, Allied Powers Europe Support Group, Mons, Belgium. 1983-4: Chief of Staffing and Placement, GS-12, Army, Mannheim, Germany. 1984-9: Discrimination Complaints Investigator, GS-12, Navy, Walnut Creek, CA. 1989-1991: Equal Employment Manager (Complaints Processing Manager), GS-12, Mare Island Naval Shipyard, Vallejo, CA. 1991-3: Discrimination Complaints Investigator, Navy. 1993 to date: Discrimination Complaints Investigator/Certified Mediator, GS-13, IRD.