

2007 Status of Forces Survey of Department of Defense (DoD) Civilian Employees

It's that time of year again – yes, Surveys! The 2007 Status of Forces Survey (SOFS) of DoD Civilian Employees is coming your way again in May 2007. We realize there seems to be a lot of surveys in this town. Well... there are. But they provide valuable information about what you are thinking and feeling about how leaders perform in your organization, how performance is managed and recognized, how the National Security Personnel System (NSPS) is being implemented, how mission needs are addressed through recruiting and developing talent, and your satisfaction with your job, your organization, training/development, career progression opportunities, pay and benefits, human resources services, etc.

DoD civilian employees took the Federal Human Capital Survey (FHCS) during the summer of 2006. FHCS is administered by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) every two years, with the next one being administered in 2008. Results for the 2006 survey were published in January 2007 and can be found on the Civilian Personnel Management Service (CPMS) website at http://www.cpms.osd.mil/HRBITS/federal_human_capital_survey.aspx. For the intervening years (i.e., 2007, 2009, etc.), OPM is now requiring every executive agency (i.e., DoD) to administer a comparable annual survey and report their results to OPM.

We have new requirements placed on us by OPM, which grew out of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2004. With NDAA, Congress established a requirement for agencies to survey their employees annually to assess employee satisfaction as well as leadership and management practices that contribute to agency performance. This survey requirement became effective January 1, 2007, for calendar year 2007.

SOFS has been administered semi-annually since 2003 by the Defense Data Manpower Center (DMDC). However, at the direction of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, starting in 2007, DMDC will be conducting only one civilian survey per year for the entire Department; this year, being May 2007. SOFS will be the vehicle to meet this requirement. Therefore, DoD Components are not required to administer surveys to meet the OPM requirements. Components are encouraged to use the results of SOFS in their Human Capital planning. This guidance in no way interferes with Component's initiatives to assess employee perceptions by conducting surveys they develop internally.

The 2007 Web SOFS will be fielded for approximately 6 weeks and given to approximately 100,000 DoD civilians. During the first week of SOFS, DMDC will also administer the experimental QuickCompass Web poll to a sample of the civilian population. The QuickCompass Web poll will include 20 items. Results of these items

will be compared to those from identical questions on the 2007 SOFS as an evaluation of this new method of assessing attitudes and opinions. For quick facts about SOFS, [click here](#). For quick facts about the QuickCompass, [click here](#).

If you receive a survey, we sincerely appreciate your time in responding. Our goal is to get our response rate back to the 2004 and 2005 levels of 60% or more. The higher our response rate, the better data we will have to inform decision makers on the Department's Human Capital issues.

As a side note, the results from the November 2006 survey will be published later in 2007 and will be posted on CPMS website: www.cpms.osd.mil.