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will return in the next issue.

## PAA Version 2.0 Incorporates User Feedback

“NSPS participants gave us valuable feedback,” says Rhonda Diaz, Director of the CPMS Human Resources Business, Information, and Technology Solutions (HR-BITS) Division. “They said they want an intuitive, user-friendly tool that supports and creates efficiencies in the appraisal process.



“In response, we in HR-BITS and the NSPS Program Executive Office – in close coordination with Defense Components – began in January to solicit feedback through Component focus groups. We identified changes to the Performance Appraisal Application (PAA) to better meet our customers’ needs.

“PAA version 2.0 is the result,” Ms. Diaz says. Deployed on August 19, the updated application successfully completed robust user-acceptance testing over a three-week period by the Components, the Program Executive Office, and CPMS, with all levels of users represented. PAA version 2.0 contains a number of improvements, to include the following:

- Clearer, standardized labeling of all navigation buttons and links;
- Much larger text-box sizes for objectives, employee self-assessments, and supervisor assessments of employees;
- Character counters immediately below the main text boxes, allowing users to see exactly how many characters are left before reaching the maximum; and

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## About CPMS Express

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## CPMS Launches HR Competency Assessment Tool

On July 27, CPMS launched the Federal Competency Assessment Tool – HR (FCAT-HR), a Web-enabled competency assessment and development tool developed by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM).

FCAT-HR is an integral part of Department of Defense (DoD) efforts to strategically plan for, and sustain, a high-performance HR workforce.

FCAT-HR results will provide DoD leadership with insight into strengths and developmental needs of the 0201 occupational-series workforce Department-wide. This information will help focus investments in training and development to close competency gaps.

While participation is voluntary, we in CPMS strongly encourage it. FCAT-HR is available until August 31.

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## PAA Version 2.0 Simplifies Processing

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- Online help information describing the purpose of the page and the sequence of actions required to complete the activity that the page supports.

“Perhaps best of all,” Ms. Diaz notes, “are the improvements to the PAA’s performance-plan development process. Building a performance plan in version 1.0 would have involved up to 10 steps and required the employee, supervisor, and higher-level reviewer to ‘ping-pong’ the performance plan back and forth for revisions and approvals.

“Now, with version 2.0, the PAA allows you to complete the performance plan build-and-approval process in as few as two steps. The updated application simplifies the process and significantly lessens the time required to complete it. We listened to our customers and are providing a better tool to address their needs,” Ms. Diaz says.

“With version 2.0 just released, we are wasting no time; plans have already begun on the next version, 3.0, to make an even better PAA. Enhanced and more intuitive screen layouts and support for additional step-by-step instructions are just some of the future improvements on their way. So, stay tuned.”

-HR-BITS



## FCAT-HR Is Available Until August 31

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FCAT-HR consists of two parts, completed independently:

- Employee self-assessment of current proficiency; and
- Supervisor assessments of the employee’s current proficiency and the desired proficiency for the position.

Individual results are not automatically shared between employee and supervisor for data-integrity and privacy reasons. Nonetheless, we urge employees and supervisors to discuss the results with each other, identify competency strengths, and determine developmental needs.

For further information about the assessment, please visit our Web site at <http://www.cpms.osd.mil/FAS/>.

-Staffing and Development



## 5 CFR Part 211 Interim Regulations Affect Veterans’ Preference

OPM has issued interim regulations affecting veterans’ preference. The new rules took effect immediately upon publication in the *Federal Register* (FR) on July 27 (72 FR 41215).

A 60-day comment period began on that date. OPM must receive comments on or before September 25, the FR notice states.

These interim regulations change the definition of “active duty” contained in Section 211.102(f) of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). OPM is making this change in response to a Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB) decision that affects eligibility for veterans’ preference based on a service-connected disability.

The pertinent case is *Hesse v. Department of the Army*, MSPB Docket Number AT-3443-05-0936-I-1, final decision (February 6, 2007).

MSPB decided in *Hesse* that, for the purposes of entitlement to veterans’ preference, “active duty” (as the term is used in title 5, United States Code (U.S.C.), Section 2108 (2)) “...may consist entirely of service for training purposes.” Consistent with MSPB’s decision, OPM has now revised the definition of “active duty” in 5 CFR 211.102(f).

In doing so, OPM states that the following individuals meet the definition of disabled veteran:

Former National Guard and Reserve members who served on active duty, *including active duty for training*, who were discharged or released from active duty under honorable conditions, and who establish the present existence of a service-connected disability or are receiving compensation, disability retirement benefits, or pension under the laws of the Department of Veterans Affairs or a military department (emphasis added).

For the full text of the *Hesse* decision, click [here](#).

-Staffing and Development





## 2007 DoD Worldwide HR Conference

From July 16 – 19, approximately 220 DoD senior HR officials from around the globe attended the DoD Worldwide HR Conference, held at the Executive Management Training Center in Southbridge, MA.

This year's conference theme, "Building the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Mission-Ready Workforce," focused on what the new workforce must look like, what skills and competencies are needed, and how HR drives organizational performance.

To view or download conference presentations, click [here](#).

**KEYNOTE ADDRESS.** Patricia S. Bradshaw, Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Civilian Personnel Policy, presented the keynote address at the conference.

She said private- and public-sector organizations alike expect the HR community to provide expertise on how to leverage human capital so that the demands placed on a 21<sup>st</sup> century workforce can be met.

In this regard, three areas need attention to improve DoD strategic HR capability. First, Ms. Bradshaw said, HR professionals need to apply more human capital data and information to drive business decisions.

The HR/Payroll Integration project will create a fully integrated, civilian human-capital database by incorporating payroll data, as well as processing and reporting functions, into the Defense Civilian Personnel Data System.

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## Using 3Rs for Mission-Critical Occupations

At the DoD Worldwide HR Conference in July, the Department announced that 25 occupations have been designated as enterprise-wide, mission-critical occupations (MCOs). These are broken out by occupational clusters, as follows:

- **ENGINEERING/SCIENTIFIC:** 0801, General Engineering; 0810, Civil Engineering; 0854, Computer Engineering; 0855, Electronics Engineering; 1301, Physical Scientist; 1520, Mathematician; and 1550, Computer Scientist;
- **MEDICAL:** 0602, Physicians; 0610, Nurses; and 0660, Pharmacists;
- **SECURITY ADMINISTRATION/INTELLIGENCE:** 0080, Security Administration; 0083, Police Officers; and 0132, Intelligence;
- **INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS:** 0130, Foreign Affairs; 0131, International Relations; and 1040, Language Specialist;
- **FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT:** 0501, Financial Management; 0510, Accounting; 0511, Auditing; and 0560, Budget Analysis; and
- **OTHER SELECTED OCCUPATIONS:** 0201, HR Management; 0346, Logistics Management; 1102, Contracting; 1910, Quality Assurance; and 2210, Information Technology Management.

MCOs reflect current DoD needs and initiatives. They may require succession planning to ensure the Department can carry out its mission.

Thus, MCOs are the focus of DoD strategic human capital planning efforts, which notably include recruitment and retention. In this regard, the "3Rs" authorities (i.e., the recruitment, retention, and relocation incentive authorities in

5 U.S.C. 5753 and 5754) can help DoD Components to bridge any pay gaps between Federal and private-sector salaries.

3Rs provide agencies with more targeted alternatives to special rates. Revised by the Federal Workforce Flexibility Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-411), October 30, 2004, 3Rs are strategic tools to attract, retain, and relocate individuals in the Federal service.

These incentives can serve to address staffing problems in certain occupations and grade levels/pay bands at specific work locations. OPM sets conditions for using 3Rs, but in most cases DoD Components can implement or stop using them quickly, without OPM approval.

DoD use of these incentives grew rapidly in calendar year 2006 (CY06), the most recent year for which data are available. Overall, the Department paid a total of 8,767 recruitment, retention, and relocation incentives worth almost \$55.0 million during CY06.

In monetary terms, use of 3Rs within the Department during CY06 amounted to roughly double the CY05 level of \$25.6 million, while the number of incentives was approximately two-and-one-half times the CY05 level of 3,516.

The following charts highlight 3Rs usage within the Department in CY06 for the occupations that have now been designated as enterprise-wide MCOs. These data may be a useful baseline for HR Specialists when they begin to address MCOs as one of the DoD human capital initiatives targeted to key areas.

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## 2007 DoD Worldwide HR Conference

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Second, she noted, the Department needs a talent model for HR. A number of initiatives address the competencies required for the 21<sup>st</sup> century workforce, to include identifying enterprise mission-critical occupations and emphasizing key foreign-language competencies.

Additionally, the Department is developing a DoD HR career program that will help identify and define the roles HR professionals play.

Plans are also underway to certify HR Specialists in the area of strategic compensation. At the conference, the Department launched the Strategic Compensation Certification Program. NSPS flexibilities require in-depth understanding of compensation and its long-term organizational impact. This initiative marks a significant step forward to develop HR into strategic business partners, Ms. Bradshaw said.

The third area needing attention is a roadmap for HR transformation. Thus, the Civilian Human Capital Strategic Plan aligns HR actions with the goals and objectives of the 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review Report, the Human Capital Strategy, and the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness) Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2006-2011.

These documents are a sound foundation toward building the workforce of the future, Ms. Bradshaw concluded.

**PANEL DISCUSSIONS AND BREAKOUTS.** These sessions covered important topics that are critical to being strategic partners, with titles like “Navigating Performance Management Minefields,” “Establishing Relationships as a Recruitment Tool,” “Redefining the HR Role,” and “Becoming the Employer of Choice.” Participants benefited from a wealth of useful information to take back to their workplaces and share with their colleagues.

**PLENARY SESSIONS.** Headlining a roster of distinguished experts were the following:

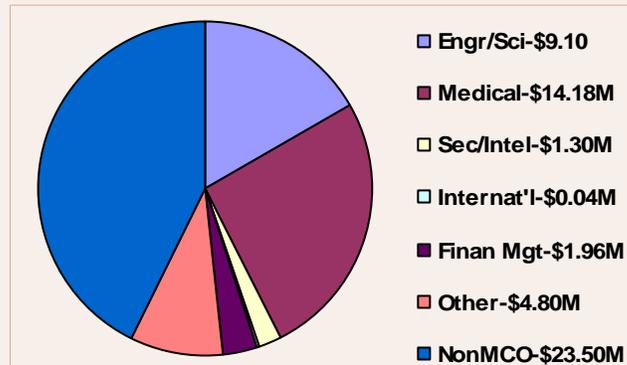
- David Caruso, Ph.D., management psychologist and co-author of *The Emotionally Intelligent Manager*, who discussed the key role of emotion in decision-making and problem-solving;

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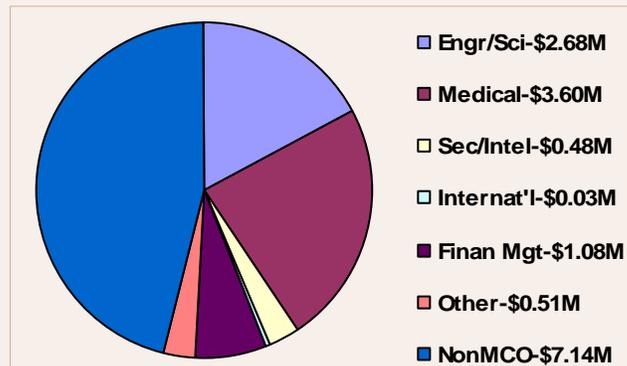
## CY06 Use of 3Rs in the Department

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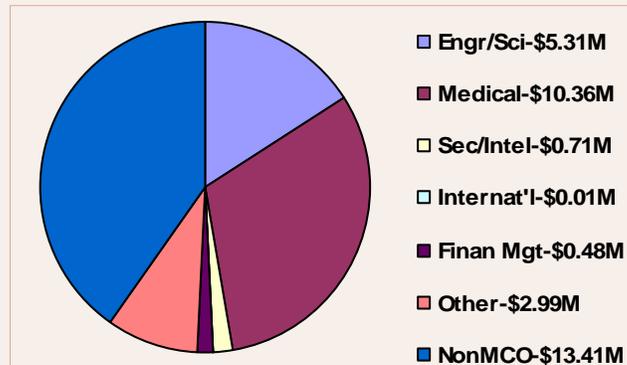
**Figure 1. 3Rs DoD-Wide in CY06**  
(Total \$ = \$54.88M; Total # = 8,767; Average \$ = \$6,260)



**Figure 2. Recruitment Incentives DoD-Wide in CY06**  
(Total \$ = \$15.52M; Total # = 1,611; Average \$ = \$9,630)



**Figure 3. Retention Incentives DoD-Wide in CY06**  
(Total \$ = \$33.27M; Total # = 6,613; Average \$ = \$5,032)



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## DoD Worldwide HR Conference

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- Dion Love, research director of the Corporate Leadership Council, who provided insight from studies that may yield viable solutions to current HR challenges;
- Joseph Mancusi, Ph.D., founder of the Center for Organizational Excellence, who explored how to motivate employees to excel; and
- John Palguta, vice president for policy of the Partnership for Public Service, who spoke about revitalizing the Federal Government.

This year's DoD Worldwide HR Conference ranks among the most successful ever, based on participant surveys. The surveys reflect that the conference involved participants in an interactive forum and expanded their understanding of numerous, critical issues that confront the Department today.

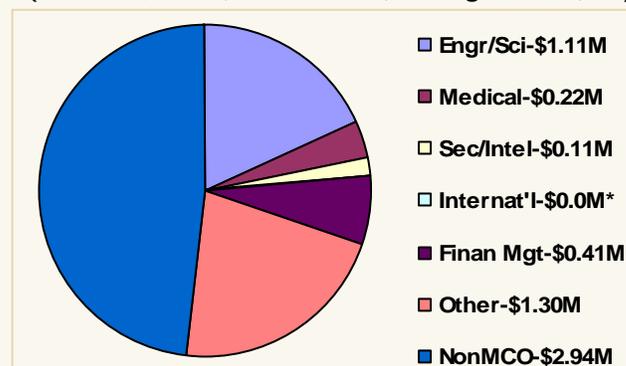
—Field Advisory Services



## CY06 Use of 3Rs in the Department

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**Figure 4. Relocation Incentives DoD-Wide in CY06**  
(Total \$ = \$6.09M; Total # = 543; Average \$ = \$11,217)



\* None were paid to International Programs MCOs.

-Classification and Pay



*Coming Soon*

## DMDC QuickCompass Poll on Defense Travel Service

The Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC), in coordination with the Defense Travel Management Office, is preparing to poll Service members and DoD civilians to find out how well the DoD travel system is working.

This upcoming QuickCompass will query DoD travelers about topics such as the ease of making reservations and filing travel claims, and the length of time it takes to get reimbursed. The poll is expected to be administered in mid-September to early October.

Please respond quickly if you are asked by e-mail to take part in a QuickCompass poll. These polls are short, limited to a few key questions, and take just a few minutes to answer on the Web. The payoff for participating can be great, since QuickCompass provides policy officials information to assist them in making decisions that affect you.

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## Constitution Day and Citizenship Day

This year, Constitution Day and Citizenship Day will be commemorated by the Department on Monday, September 17. Planning is well underway for a wide variety of DoD Component-sponsored events and activities.

The highlight of this year's commemoration will be a presentation at the Pentagon that day featuring Dr. Allen Weinstein, the Archivist of the United States. In that capacity, he is responsible for preserving the Declaration of Independence, Constitution, Bill of Rights, and other important documents of American heritage.

A noted historian, Dr. Weinstein will discuss the role of the U.S. Constitution and its impact on democracies throughout the world. He will also answer selected questions from among those submitted in advance by DoD personnel.

Questions for Dr. Weinstein may be submitted through the CPMS Web site, <http://constitutionday.cpms.osd.mil>, until August 31. His presentation will be videotaped and posted on the Web site for viewing by DoD personnel worldwide.

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## DoD Travel Services Poll

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To provide timely results to policy officials, QuickCompass polls are only on the Web for a short period. These polls supplement the more familiar Status of Forces Surveys (SOFS) that are now conducted annually with DoD civilian employees.

Participants are selected at random and notified by e-mail. Participation is voluntary and confidential. These surveys are considered official business and can be completed at duty stations using Government equipment, at home, or elsewhere.

Only group data will be reported, not individual survey responses.

After analyses, results will be posted at [www.dmdc.osd.mil/surveys](http://www.dmdc.osd.mil/surveys). This Web site also has information on other DMDC surveys and fact sheets on both QuickCompass and SOFS in the "Recent Survey Reports" column on the home page.

-DMDC



## Online Constitution Course

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While visiting the CPMS Web site, readers will also find the DoD online course on the Constitution, as well as links to a vast array of information about the Constitution and other related topics.

All DoD personnel are encouraged to visit the Web site and learn something new about our nation's history.

-Joint Leader Development



## With Open Season Approaching, Plan Ahead to Make the Best Use of Your Benefits



"Remember how simple life used to be?" asked a 1960s ad slogan. Back then, Federal employees had fairly simple decisions to make in order to meet their needs for insurance.

The Government offered its employees two basic types of insurance in those days: Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance, first enacted in 1954; and the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP), which became effective in 1960.

Fast-forward to today: FEHBP is the largest employer-sponsored group health insurance program in the world. This program now offers more than 350 health plans covering in excess of nine million individuals.

Entirely new types of insurance are offered through the Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP). This program was implemented in 2006.

In addition to the various kinds of insurance that are now offered, tax-advantaged flexible spending accounts are available for health care and, separately, for dependent care.

Not so simple anymore, is it? Now as never before, Federal employees

should review their health insurance protection before they need it. Consider the following:

- Each year during open season, they have to make choices about which FEHBP plan addresses their (and/or their family's) needs;
- Flexible savings accounts can be effective ways to manage the cost of co-payments and deductibles;
- High-deductible health plans let employees enroll in tax-free health savings accounts that they can use to pay for medical, dental, and vision expenses; and
- If major dental or vision expenses seem likely next year, FEDVIP might be something to think about.

OPM has not yet announced the dates for this year's open season, but it typically occurs during November and December.

Our point is simply this: Plan ahead to make the best use of these important benefits. It is not too soon to start!

-Benefits and Entitlements



## CPMS Employment

CPMS vacancies are posted on USAJOBS. To access employment opportunities for status candidates, click [here](#).

For other CPMS vacancies, click [here](#).