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435 MSS/DPC Civilian Personnel Flight

March 2004



For US Civilian Employees and Their Supervisors
<http://www.ramstein.af.mil/435mss/cpo>

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Message from the Civilian Personnel Officer

Dear Reader--

Welcome to the US Civilian Quarterly Newsletter. Once again, the Ramstein Personnel Office is out-doing itself with this issue of the US Civilian Newsletter. There are many articles providing information that managers and supervisors (military and civilian) as well as civilian employees will gain insight into the "mysteries" of civilian personnel. Also, this issue contains a lot of information regarding employment options, all sorts of benefits and entitlements topics, and general information that you have found yourself asking "...what do they mean by that..."

I challenge you to read through this issue—you just might learn something valuable! Or some tidbit that you might need in the future. Keep this issue handy in case you or your peers come up with a topic that is stumping everyone in or around the office.

As always, know that my door and e-mail are open to you. Your feedback will help us make improvements on future issues of the Newsletter or with our current operations and procedures.

See you next issue...

//Mhm// 2 Apr 04 Marcia Miller Civilian Personnel Officer

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US Affirmative Employment

Affirmative Employment Customer Service Hours

The Customer Service (Employment) Office hours are 0800-1600 daily. Customer service representatives can answer your employment related questions and other general questions.

The Affirmative Employment Human Resource Specialist/Assistants do not begin taking walk-in customers until 1200 daily. This allows them uninterrupted time to rate the large volume of applications received, prepare and issue timely referral certificates, and process all the necessary paperwork to ensure various personnel actions are processed in a timely manner.

Individuals who show up before 1200 should go to the Customer Service Office, Room 123. If the representative is unable to answer your question, he/she will take a message for the Staffing Specialist/Assistant to contact you. If there is an urgent matter, you will be referred to the Section Chief for immediate assistance. We appreciate your continued support.

Am I an "External" or an "Internal" Employee?

This distinction is important, especially if you are interested in applying for Air Force positions. You are considered "internal" if you occupy a PERMANENT position serviced by the Ramstein Civilian Personnel Flight. An "internal" employee may be on a competitive service (e.g., career or career conditional) or accepted service (e.g., family member) appointment. It is important for excepted service (non career) family member employees to understand that they are "internal" candidates while in USAFE; however, they are not "internal" for other Air Force positions outside of the commuting area of their civilian or military sponsor.

An "external" candidate is any individual not currently on a PERMANENT appointment with the Air Force or serviced by the Ramstein Civilian Personnel Flight (e.g., temporary employees, Army employees, NAF/AAFES employees). External candidates must apply for positions at the Customer Service Counter, Ramstein Civilian Personnel Flight, Building 2120, Room 123. New announcements are posted every Friday, closing date on Thursdays.

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NOTE: Family members on excepted service appointments wishing to be considered for positions in the United States prior to or in conjunction with the PCS move of their sponsor must apply as "external" candidates. For more information on how to apply for positions in the US, please contact your servicing Human Resource Specialist/Assistant, DSN 480-7055.

To view announcements that have been expanded to candidates beyond the commuting area (e.g., DoD or Federal-wide), go to <http://www.usajobs.opm.gov>. Since these announcements are serviced by the Regional Personnel Center at Sembach, the announcement will direct you to forward your application and related documents directly to them.

Self-Nominating: Current Air Force Employees

To be considered for other Air Force positions, permanent Air Force employees must self-nominate for a specific announcement by the closing date. RESUMES ARE NOT REQUIRED AND MAY CREATE PROBLEMS IN THE SELF-NOMINATION PROCESS IF ENTERED INTO THE SYSTEM. All internal Air Force vacancies will be posted on the HQ AFPC Civilian Employment Home Page, and the Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS) Job Line. Announcements (**other than USAFE positions**) will open any day of the workweek for a minimum of five workdays. USAFE announcements posted on the AFPC website will continue to run from Friday through the following Thursday.

IMPORTANT NOTE: In an effort to increase the timeliness of issuing certificates to managers and getting individuals into positions, many announcements will now indicate that they will be used for 90-days to fill subsequent “like” positions (i.e., same pay plan, series, grade, title, skill codes) at the base location.

“Internal” employees may self-nominate for employment consideration by:

- Calling the HQ AFPC IVRS (from Germany) at 00-800-1997-2378, or
- Accessing the HQ AFPC Civilian Home Page at:
<http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/resweb/>

CANS Registration

For those of you who have not registered in the CANS (Civilian Announcement Notification System), now is the time to do so. By registering in CANS, you will no

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longer have to continually check for Air Force job vacancies.

CANS is a very user-friendly program. Once you're logged on, the system will take you through the process step by step. All you need to do is list your specific job criteria, and CANS does the rest. Once the criteria are established, it will last for 180 days before expiring. You can list up to 20 different criteria combinations. The information can be changed at any time, initiating another 180-day cycle.

The system will automatically search for jobs based on your search criteria. If there are any matches, an email will be sent to you listing the job announcement number, description, pay plan, occupational series, grade, job location, closing date and the announcement's URL. As a safeguard; however, you may wish to continue checking the AFPC job website on a weekly basis.

2004 Summer Hire Program

We're getting ready for the 2004 Student Summer Hire Employment Program. The program provides a beneficial and economical resource to get needed work accomplished.

Students must be U.S. citizens and family members of an active military member or DOD civilian (includes non-appropriated fund and AAFES) in the overseas area on official orders. Family member students of locally hired civilians are not eligible for the program. Students must be between the ages of 14-22 and may not work beyond their 23rd birthday. Placements are made on a first-come, first-serve basis with 16-22 year olds placed PRIOR to any 14-15 year old regardless of when applications were submitted. Students must provide proof of their Social Security Number. Applications are available at the Ramstein Civilian Personnel Flight, Bldg. 2120, Rm 126 and the Ramstein and Kaiserslautern High School administration offices. Applications will be accepted until 1500 hours on 28 May.

There are two types of positions available, laborer and clerical. Students are not permitted to operate forklifts, clean latrines, and will not be allowed to perform a duty that requires use of a respirator. For more information on the program, call DSN 480-5850 or 480-7092.

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Reduction in Force

A Reduction in Force (RIF) situation exists when the agency releases a competitive employee from his/her competitive level by:

- ✱ Furlough for more than 30 days
- ✱ Separation
- ✱ Demotion
- ✱ Reassignment requiring displacement of another employee

Releasing the employee must be caused by:

- ✱ Lack of work

- ✱ Shortage of funds
- ✱ Insufficient personnel ceiling
- ✱ Reorganization
- ✱ The exercise of reemployment or restoration, or return rights
- ✱ Reclassification of an employee's position due to erosion of duties under certain circumstances

Once RIF becomes unavoidable, however, it is important to understand that everyone in the organization can do something to assure the process is carried out as fairly and smoothly as possible:

- ✱ Supervisors should keep employees informed, ensure core documents/position descriptions and annual performance ratings are accurate, current, and submitted on time.
- ✱ Supervisors must support all actions taken as a part of the RIF and ensure RIF is initiated only for reasons specified by law.

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- ✱ Employees need to inform their supervisors if core documents/position descriptions are not accurate. They also need to provide up-to-date information on their veterans' preference, experience, and education. If the RIF is going to result in separations, eligible employees must consider mobility for placement at other defense and/or federal activities.

Specific steps are followed in every reduction in force process, and the first step is determining the competitive "area". The competitive "area" is the geographic and organizational boundaries within which employees compete. Air Force policy is that the competitive area is usually all Air Force activities within the commuting area, serviced by the same Civilian Personnel Flight. Similarly, different agencies, such as DeCA, will define their own competitive areas for RIF. Employees of one agency will not normally compete with employees of another.

Merit System Principles

The merit system principles are the public's expectations of a system that is efficient, effective, fair, open to all, free from political interference, and staffed by honest, competent, and dedicated employees. As the federal government experiences continued change in the management of human resources (centralization, deregulation, delegation, etc.), it becomes increasingly important that line supervisors and managers incorporate the merit system principles into every decision process they use.

The merit system principles are:

- ✿ Recruit qualified individuals from all segments of society and select and advance employees on the basis of merit after fair and open competition.
- ✿ Treat employees and applicants fairly and equitably, without regard to political affiliation, race, color, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, age, or handicapping condition.
- ✿ Provide equal pay for equal work and reward excellent performance.
- ✿ Maintain high standards of integrity, conduct, and concern for the public interest.
- ✿ Manage employees efficiently and effectively.

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- ✿ Retain and separate employees on the basis of their performance.
- ✿ Educate and train employees when it will result in better organizational or individual performance.
- ✿ Protect employees from improper political influence.
- ✿ Protect employees against reprisal for the lawful disclosure of information in "whistle blower" situations (i.e., protecting people who report things like illegal and/or wasteful activities).

Outbound Leave Without Pay (LWOP) Employees

Employees wishing to request Leave Without Pay (LWOP) because of a sponsor's PCS to CONUS should make an appointment with their servicing Human Resources (Staffing) Specialist prior to departing the area. If eligible, employees may be granted 12 months of LWOP to allow them to seek employment at the new duty location without a break in

service (see the article on Executive Order 12721 eligibility). Our office will prepare a package for the employee to use at the gaining location. Employees should contact their servicing Specialist (480-7055/2138/5448) for an “out-bound” counseling session no later than 2-3 days prior to their departure date.

Executive Order 12721 Eligibility

EO 12721 provides certain former overseas employees noncompetitive appointment eligibility when they return to the United States. In order to be eligible for this special appointment authority, an individual must meet all of the following criteria:

- ◆ Must be a citizen of or owe permanent allegiance to the United States
- ◆ Must have accumulated 52 weeks of creditable overseas service in an appropriated fund position under an overseas local hire appointment within any 10-year period beginning after 1 January 1980.
- ◆ Must have received a passing, fully successful or better performance rating (or equivalent) for the overseas service accrued after 1 January 1984

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- ◆ Must have been a family member (spouse or unmarried child under age 23) of a federal civilian employee, a federal nonappropriated fund employee, or a uniformed service member who was officially assigned to the overseas area
- ◆ Must have resided in the overseas area while the sponsor was officially assigned to the overseas duty station
- ◆ Must be appointed within 3 years of returning to the United States from the overseas duty station
- ◆ Must meet the qualifications and time-in-grade requirements for the position being filled

This is a benefit granted to eligible employees because it allows them non-competitive consideration for the highest grade held in the overseas area without having to openly compete with the general public. Once selected, individuals are given career-conditional appointments.

Outprocessing for Civilians and Family Members

The PCS season is near and all AF civilian employees are required to clear the base. The Affirmative Employment Section has developed two checklists – one for self-sponsored civilians and one for family members, because the activities/offices which employees must visit to settle business transactions and the timelines for clearance are different. It is recommended that ALL departing civilian employees contact the Affirmative Employment Section no later than 45 days prior to the scheduled departure date to pick up the checklist and follow the recommended timeline for out-processing. Once all outside activities have been visited and “cleared,” the employee should make an appointment with a Human Resources (Employee Management Relations) Assistant, DSN 480-4212 and their servicing Human Resources (Staffing) Specialist, DSN 480-7055. In addition to ensuring all obligations have been settled by the employee, out-processing assists our office in ensuring the employee’s final pay check is processed properly and that management has submitted paperwork to back-fill the employee’s position. Checklists can be obtained from our Customer Service Office, Bldg 2120, Rm 123, 0800-1600 or at: http://www.ramstein.af.mil/435mss/cpo/US_PROGRAM/AFFIRMATIVE_EMPLOYMENT.

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Automated Employment and Income Verification

The Work Number[®] provides automated employment and income verifications on employees. (Our office will not process any manual requests for employment verification; therefore, please become familiar with this process).

The Work Number is an automated service that provides over 65 million employees a variety of human resource and payroll services, including employment and income verification. This fast, secure service is used when applying for a mortgage or loan, for reference checking, leasing an apartment or any other instance where proof of employment or income is needed. You benefit from having control of the process – authorizing others access to your information.

The Work Number can be used anytime, anywhere – available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

How to use The Work Number:

For Proof of Employment

Step 1) Give the verifier (the person needing proof of your employment) the following information:

- ✱ Your Social Security Number: - -
- ✱ Employer Code: **10365**
- ✱ The Work Number Access Options:
 - Option a) verify.theworknumber.com
 - Option b) **1-800-367-5690**

For Proof of Employment *plus* Income

Step 1) Obtain a Salary Key

- ✱ The Work Number Access Options for Employees:
 - Option a) verify.theworknumber.com
 - Option b) **1-800-367-2884**

Step 2) Select to Obtain a Salary Key and write down in the boxes provided below

Step 3) Enter the following information:

- ✱ Employer Code: **10365**
- ✱ Your Social Security Number: - -
- ✱ Your PIN (**temporary PIN is MMY of your birth**) (You can change once you get into the system)

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Step 4) Give the person needing proof of your employment plus income, the verifier, the following information:

- ✱ Your Social Security Number: - -
- ✱ Employer Code: **10365**
- ✱ Your Salary Key (from Step 3):
- ✱ The Work Number Access Options for Verifiers:
 - Option a) verify.theworknumber.com
 - Option b) **1-800-367-5690**

The Work Number Client Service Center Information:

Monday – Friday; 7:00am – 8:00pm (CST)

1-800-996-7566

1-800-424-0253 (TTY – Deaf)

Civilian Personnel Online

Air Force civilians can easily find links and descriptions of civilian customer self-service and online resources. This web page is designed to give civilian employees and job seekers a 'one-stop' shopping list of the informational pages and web applications available for their use. Visit the web site at <http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/dpc/civpersonline.htm> for more information.

Civilian Employment Planning and Advance Recruitment

Supervisors of civilian employees should always be engaged in "employment planning". This is easy to do for civilians because each has an established rotation date -- either the 3-year or 5-year date for non-family member civilians or the sponsor's DEROS date for family members. If you have been through the recruitment process recently, you know recruitment can be lengthy -- even local recruitments can take up to 90 days. To reduce the potential lapse rate and ensure coverage in civilian positions, we must take a proactive approach for filling US civilian positions. As soon as you anticipate a civilian vacancy, whether part of the normal rotation (DEROS) or otherwise, contact your servicing Human Resources (Staffing) Specialist to begin the recruitment process. For civilians that have an established DEROS, we will notify you at least 8 months prior to the DEROS and ask you to submit a Request for Personnel Action (RPA) to begin the advance recruitment process. This allows our office sufficient time to recruit and allows the selectee sufficient time to process for an overseas move. Our office conducts all "local" recruitment. Positions covered by a Career Program are handled by the

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designated Career Program at the Air Force Personnel Center and all "internal" certificates and DoD wide or Federal wide (outside of the commuting area) recruitment are handled by the Regional Personnel Center at Sembach -- expect longer recruitment timeframes.

Equal Employment Opportunity

We've all seen the statement on job opportunity bulletins, "All qualified applicants will receive consideration without regard to political affiliation, marital status, sex, age, non-disqualifying physical or mental disability, national origin, or any other non-merit factors." Air Force managers and supervisors are held responsible and accountable for upholding the principles of equal opportunity in all decisions regarding the personnel management process. It is Air Force policy that all personnel management decisions are free from discrimination and ensures equal opportunity for all applicants and employees.

Virtual Career Brief

The on-line virtual career brief is available to US civilian employees through the AFPC Secure website at <https://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/afpcsecure/default.asp>.

This application is located along with other automated civilian personnel processes such as the employee benefits information system (EBIS) and is identified as *Civ Career Brief - Virtual Career Brief for AF Appropriated Civilian Employees*.

The virtual career brief contains all the information "real time" found on the standard career brief that now must be requested through the Civilian Personnel Flight. The following categories of information are located on the on-line career brief: Current Position Data, Certification/Language Proficiencies, Appointment Information, Pay/Benefits, Overseas, Special Placement, Career Program, Experience Current, Experience History, Education, Training, Awards, Appraisals, and Acquisition (if applicable). *The information contained in the virtual career brief may be printed using the "landscape" mode.*

If you find missing or incorrect information, i.e., awards, training, education, or experience, go to:

[http://www.ramstein.af.mil/435mss/cpo/US_PROGRAM/AFFIRMATIVE EMPLOYMENT](http://www.ramstein.af.mil/435mss/cpo/US_PROGRAM/AFFIRMATIVE_EMPLOYMENT) for a supplemental qualifications form. Print, fill out, and submit this form to your servicing Human Resources Specialist/Assistant with any supporting documentation, as necessary.

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Questions regarding awards should be directed to Employee/Management Relations at 480-2008, training and education should be directed to Training at 480-2167, and work experience should be directed to Affirmative Employment at 480-7055.

Employees who are unable to access the brief may request a copy by sending an e-mail to the 435 MSS/DPCS Inbox or by calling DSN 480-7055.

Printing Copy of SF50, Notification of Personnel Action

~Go to AFPC Homepage: <http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/>

~Double click on "Electronic Personnel Folder" next to "Civilian Personnel"

~On the next screen, double click on "EOPF". If you need to set up your PC, follow the instructions after clicking on "Setup Page".

~Current employees, who have established a USERID and Password, can type those in and click on "Secure Login" (right hand side of screen). New users will have to follow instructions in "Create Password Accounts Here".

~After successful login, you will reach the secure sites. Click on "Civilian Electronic OPF". This will take you to the EOPF Documents. Double click on the SF50 you want to review/print. The SF50 will show up as a Formflow document.

***MAKE A COPY FOR YOUR SUPERVISOR TO ANNOTATE AND/OR PLACE IN YOUR FOLDER.**

Federal Information on the Web

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) website (www.opm.gov) is a great, one-stop source for finding up-to-date information about current issues and news related to Federal Employees. One feature called "Hot Links" gives you new and pertinent information on current topics. "What's New?" has current information in date order for news releases and Federal Regulation changes, as well as other useful information.

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National Security Personnel System

NSPS was established in the FY04 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) and permits the Secretary of Defense, with the assistance of the Office of Personnel Management, to establish a new civilian personnel system. Some of the key features include:

- Pay banding -- eliminates current GS-1 through GS-15 grades and steps and replaces with 5 Career Groups and 4 pay band levels. It eliminates automatic step increases and allows more flexibility for selecting officials to determine pay within a pay band for new selectees.

- Pay for performance -- changes rating cycle; 7 performance factors are rated with a possible score of 100 points; points determine "shares" toward pay increase and performance incentives.

- Expedited hiring procedures -- on-the-spot hiring for emergency positions; more flexibility in hiring of temporary/TERM employees for five years; more name request options in merit promotion process; may require 1 year probationary period for each promotion

- Preserving merit principles/veteran's preference -- merit principles include employment of diverse workforce, equal pay for equal work, and fair and open competition
- Streamlining appeal/grievance process -- creation of an "internal" system with the assistance of the Merit Systems Protection Board and the Equal Opportunity Commission
- Permanent authority to offer early retirements and "buy outs" to assist in workforce restructuring and downsizing efforts
- Eliminating offset of annuity for re-employed civil servants, similar to retired military members, which will provide more flexibility to re-employ key civilians during emergency situations

Initially, 300,000 DoD civilian employees will be converted to the new system. Air Force, currently the lead agency for scheduled conversion, is working with DoD on implementation procedures. Conversion is tentatively scheduled for Jan 05.

For more information on NSPS, you can visit:
<https://www.dp.hq.af.mil/dpp/dppn/nsps/index.cfm>.

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Employee/Management Relations

Change in Pay, Overtime, and Leave

The 2004 National Defense Authorization Act, effective 24 Nov 03, put in to motion some changes affecting civilians. The act modifies the hourly overtime pay cap for federal employees whose rates of basic pay is greater than GS-10, step 1 and who are not covered by the overtime pay provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act. This means that these employees, employed overseas, are entitled to receive overtime pay at either the current hourly rate of basic pay or the hourly rate of basic pay for a GS-10, Step 1, multiplied by 1.5, whichever is greater. In addition, military leave for mobilized federal civilian employees who perform full-time military service, as a result of a call or order to active duty supporting a contingency operation, are now entitled to 22 days of military leave each calendar year. An employee is entitled to the greater of his or her civilian or military pay, not both; however, an employee may choose to take annual leave instead of military leave to retain both civilian and military pay. The amendment applies to military service performed on or after 24 Nov 03.

Am I Eligible for Leave Without Pay (LWOP)?

Dependent spouses who are required to relocate because of a PCS move may be eligible for LWOP if they meet all the requirements below. Also eligible are former spouses of sponsors following death, divorce or legal separation if they accompanied the sponsor on a PCS to the current duty station. The supervisor may immediately fill a position if the employee is eligible for LWOP under this circumstance only:

- ✱ Must be in a permanent position (not term or temporary)
- ✱ Must be hired on a Career, Career-Conditional or Schedule A dependent hire appointment
- ✱ Must be currently working a part-time or full-time schedule (rather than intermittent)
- ✱ If hired on Schedule A dependent hire authority, must have at least 12 months of service overseas
- ✱ Must submit a copy of the PCS orders listing the employee as a dependent.
- ✱ Must submit 2-SF-52's: one for LWOP and the other for resignation to be effective at the end of your LWOP

If eligible, you can begin your LWOP on any date you and your supervisor agree upon, after you have received your official orders and before you actually depart. You must be working the day prior to going on LWOP. It is not appropriate to exhaust your annual leave prior to going on LWOP.

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Living Quarters Allowance (LQA) Points of Interest

Department of State Standardized Regulation (DSSR) and DoD Manual 1400.25-M, Subchapter 1250 is our guidance to grant Living Quarters Allowance. The DoD Manual emphasizes that LQA is not an automatic salary supplement or entitlement, but rather a recruitment incentive for US citizen civilian employees living in the US to accept Federal employment in the overseas area. Furthermore, employees will not automatically be granted LQA simply because they meet eligibility requirements. The practical effect of this guidance is that while an employee may have personal eligibility for LQA, we must now consider whether the position warrants payment of LQA. If an individual is already residing in the overseas area, payment of LQA is normally unnecessary. In addition, payment of LQA will not be approved for positions normally recruited locally.

If LQA is authorized, it is the employee's responsibility to notify 435 MSS/DPCE immediately of changes which include: significant increase or decrease in quarters expenses; loss or gain of dependents; movement from one rental dwelling to another; purchase or sale of a residence; subleasing or sharing occupancy by other persons, dependent child attaining age 21; etc.

Reconciliation of living expenses **is mandatory** IAW the DSSR when LQA is paid. This is because LQA is paid based on actual rent/utility expenses up to an authorized

maximum dollar amount based on sponsor's grade and number of dependents. Normally, utility expenses are estimated when an employee initially moves into quarters. Therefore, reconciliation should be done within 45 days after the 12-month anniversary date of initial occupancy of quarters or as soon as a yearly bill from the utility companies is received. This reconciliation **is required** for both new arrivals at an overseas post and again when an employee moves into different quarters. Extensions may be granted for circumstances beyond the employee's control on a case-by-case basis. If mandatory requirements are not met in a timely manner, the Civilian Personnel Office (CPO) is allowed to suspend or withhold LQA payment until required documentation (receipts) are submitted. Thereafter, LQA reconciliations will be conducted at the employee's request or when deemed necessary by the CPO. There is no requirement for a final reconciliation when the employee leaves the foreign post.

Some housing contracts have rental fees listed in dollars rather than the currency of the country in which the employee lives. LQA transactions with the Civilian Payroll Office, DFAS will be calculated using the country's currency rather than dollars. Ref: Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense, Washington, DC, 20301-4000, Force Management Policy, Subject: Living Quarters Allowance Changes effective 20 Mar 2000.

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Renewal Agreement Travel

The tour of duty established in overseas areas under the initial transportation agreement (TA) is 36 months unless specified otherwise. If a tour extension of 24 months is approved, renewal agreement travel (RAT) is authorized for the purpose of returning home to take leave. When taking RAT, a new TA must be signed. RAT provides the employee and authorized dependents a free airline ticket to the home of record in the CONUS. Usually home leave, if approved by management, is taken in connection with RAT. An initial tour may be curtailed by up to 6 months and then will be added on to the tour extension ($24 + 6 = 30$ months tour extension). RAT may also be delayed after the initial tour of 36 months as long as the employee has at least 12 months remaining on the extended tour upon return to the overseas area. The initial tour and extension must equal 60 months, which is the overseas tour limitation. An employee will not be entitled to RAT if they have less than 12 months remaining on their extended tour upon return from the CONUS; short-term extensions past the five years do not override the 12-month requirement and do not count towards the 12 months. (Ref: Vol 2 JTR, chapter 4, para C-4155,B 2 3). Normally concurrent travel for family members is authorized, but family members may travel earlier or later as long as the employee uses his/her entitlement. If earlier RAT dependent travel is authorized to return to CONUS, dependents are not allowed to come back overseas until the sponsor uses his/her entitlement.

Employees in many of our Geographically Separated Units have different initial tours and extensions. They may call 480-2196 for RAT information for their location.

It's 10:00! Do You Know Where Your Loved Ones Are?

Have you ever stayed up, pretending to read or watch television, while waiting for a friend or loved one who is late coming home? Have you ever had someone worry about you because you weren't home when you said you would be? There are so many wonderful places to visit and things to do while we are assigned and living in Europe or one of the geographically separated units. But sometimes we are just somewhere at the wrong time and an accident happens. Do you realize that as of Jan 04 only 33.9% of the employees serviced by the Ramstein Civilian Personnel Flight have registered in the Emergency Data System (EMDS)? The EMDS allows employees to provide the names and addresses of their next-of-kin or friend to be notified in the event of an injury or casualty. This information is even more critical when an incident occurs after duty while you are overseas.

When an injury or casualty occurs every effort is made to contact the next-of-kin as soon as possible. This could mean life and/or death to you or your loved one. When the

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Ramstein Command Post is notified of a casualty or injury of a Ramstein member they immediately contact the Military Personnel Flight Casualty Assistance Representative (CAR) on call. If it is a civilian, the Civilian Personnel Flight CAR is contacted to assist in locating the next-of-kin. We never know when an accident could occur and we are unable to provide officials with the information needed to notify your next-of-kin if you are not registered in EMDS. Won't you please take time to register in EMDS and help us to help you? Instructions can be found on the AFPC website at: <https://ww2.afpc.randolph.af.mil/emds/default.htm>. If you need help with registering, please call Ms Ollie Wilson or Ms Marina Kappler at 480-4212 and they will be more than happy to assist you.

When is Travel Considered Hours of Work? (Q&A)

As an employee NOT covered under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), due to an overseas exemption, official travel is hours of work if the travel is:

- (1) Outside the employee's official duty station, **and**
- (2) Within the hours of the employee's regularly scheduled administrative workweek, including regularly scheduled overtime hours (Note that overtime hours should not be scheduled specifically to accommodate travel), **or**

- (3) Outside the hours of the employee's regularly scheduled administrative workweek, is ordered or approved, **and** meets one of the following four conditions: The travel:
 - Involves the performance of work while traveling (such as driving a truck);
 - Is incident to travel that involves the performance of work while traveling (such as deadhead travel in order to drive an empty truck back to the point of origin);
 - Is carried out under arduous and unusual conditions (e.g., on unpaved roads; more arduous than heavy traffic, long distances, cold weather, etc.);
 - or**
 - Results from an event, which could not be scheduled or controlled, administratively by any individual or agency in the executive branch of Government (such as training scheduled solely by a private firm or a job-related court appearance required by a court subpoena).

Q & A

Q1. An exempt employee attends a conference that is considered a training activity in accordance with 5 CFR 410.404. His normal tour of duty is 8 hours a day, and he does

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not usually receive any premium pay. After his tour of duty ends, he continues to participate in conference activities. Is he entitled to overtime pay if he **(1)** participates in a group discussion after the scheduled events, **(2)** prepares homework, **(3)** attends a conference dinner/icebreaker, or **(4)** delivers a speech at the conference dinner?

A1. Normally overtime work means work in excess of 8 hours in a day or 40 hours in an administrative workweek that is officially ordered or approved and performed by an employee. However, 5 USC 4109 (a)(1) prohibits an agency from paying premium pay (overtime, holiday, or night differential pay) to an employee engaged in training except in specific situations. Therefore, in this case, an exempt employee, even though performing work outside of his regular work hours, is not entitled to overtime pay in situation (1), (2), and (3). Regarding situation (4), he is entitled to overtime pay when delivering a speech after hours, provided he performed such work in his official capacity and was directed to make the speech.

Q2. An exempt employee must attend a meeting in Fairfax, Virginia at 0800 Monday morning. His normal duty hours are Monday through Friday, 0730 to 1630. The Department of Defense (DOD) is holding the meeting for various security personnel throughout DOD. In order to make the 0800 meeting in Fairfax the employee must fly out of Frankfurt no later than 1000 Saturday. He will leave Fairfax at 1300 Wednesday

and return to Frankfurt at 0400 Thursday. Is the employee entitled to overtime for (1) travel on Saturday? (2) travel on Wednesday and Thursday?

A2. (1) Travel on Saturday: The meeting being held on Monday morning was scheduled by DOD, which certainly was controlled administratively by an agency in the executive branch of Government and therefore did not meet the requirements identified above in condition #3; however if the employee would have traveled on Friday, he would have received regular pay for the time he traveled between 0730 and 1630 because he would have met conditions #1 and #2. In addition, he would have been entitled to per diem and lodging for Saturday and Sunday.

(2) Travel on Wednesday and Thursday: Because the employee's normal duty hours are 0730 to 1630, Monday through Friday, he would receive regular pay for the time he traveled on Wednesday between the hours of 1300 and 1630. In addition, when extensive temporary duty travel outside of regularly scheduled hours of duty is required, employees are authorized to be absent from work without charge to leave or loss of pay for a reasonable time to recuperate from fatigue or loss of sleep. See AFI 36-815, para 8.13.4.3.

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Time Off Awards Forfeited

Did you get a time-off award last year in recognition of your performance that you haven't used yet? Do you know that employees forfeit any time off not used within one year from the effective date? Don't let this happen to you. You earned it. Supervisors should charge time-off awards on employee timesheets, using leave "Type Hours" code "LY".

Annual Performance Rating Time

Once again the annual performance appraisal cycle for US civilian appropriated fund employees is coming to an end – 31 Mar 04. When a rating official (supervisor of civilian employee) departs between 1 Apr 03 and 1 Jan 04, the supervisor prepares information concerning the employee(s) performance and leaves it and the performance plan for the new supervisor. This information is not discussed with the employee and may be used by the new supervisor when preparing the annual rating of record. When a rating official departs between 2 Jan and 31 Mar 04 and has supervised the employee for 90 days or more, the departing supervisor prepares the annual rating of record in final

form and leaves it for processing by the reviewing official (second level supervisor). If the rating official has supervised the employee less than 90 days, the supervisor gives input to the reviewing official who uses it to prepare the annual rating of record. Ratings are **not** to be discussed with employees until finalized by the rater, reviewing official and approved by the Quality Control Review Official (QCRO) after the end of the appraisal cycle.

With so much to do and not enough time to do it in, we recommend that when you sit with each of your employees to discuss their performance appraisal, that you accomplish two other required discussions at the same time. One requirement is to recertify the Core Personnel Document or Performance Plan whichever is applicable. In accordance with AFI 36-1001, this meeting between the rating official and civilian employee is required at the beginning of each appraisal period to discuss the employee's approved performance elements and standards. At this same time, the supervisor should stress the importance of having current information from the employee, as to who should be contacted in the event of an emergency, both overseas and stateside points of contact. Following the instructions on the AFPC website at: <https://ww2.afpc.randolph.af.mil/emds/default.htm> the supervisor can assist the employee review his/her emergency data in the Emergency Data System (EMDS), making necessary updates online. By printing it out, the supervisor can review and update Part A of the AF Form 971. (Supervisors should have this computerized form for each of their US Appropriated Fund civilians.) Part A contains emergency data to include the employee's home address and telephone number,

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as well as an overseas and stateside point of contact (POC). Be sure to have current addresses and telephone numbers at work and home for these POCs.

Recognize Your Employees Before They Depart

It is our goal to have award packages finalized so that supervisors can present the awards in an appropriate ceremony prior to the employee departing the Base. Many times however this is an insurmountable challenge when the packages are received within a week or less of the employee's departure date. Any award requiring approval above the local base level, must be presented to Ramstein's Incentive Awards' Committee and may require revisions prior to review by HQ USAFE/CV, appropriate medal engraving, etc. AFI 36-1004, *Managing the Civilian Recognition Program*, says to submit honorary award nominations for presentation at a special ceremony at least 3 months before scheduled presentations since these honorary awards require considerable review and deliberation. Such awards include the Meritorious Civilian Service Award and the Outstanding Civilian Career Service Award. So, be ahead of the game and see that smile on your employee's face when you present him or her the award!

New Award Codes

In January 2000, DoD issued instructions establishing policy, eligibility criteria, and procedures for recognizing private citizens, organizations, or career civilian government employees for significant achievements provided to the joint community. Most recently, there was an action item initiated by one of the Career Program Councils to establish codes for Joint Command awards in DCPDS. This will allow employees who received such an award the capability to have the award reflected in their personnel records. As a result of this action item, the following codes are now available for use in the system:

- J1 CJCS Award for Distinguished Public Service (DPS)
- J2 CJCS Award for Outstanding Public Service (OPS)
- J3 CJCS Joint Distinguished Civilian Service Award
- J4 CJCS Joint Meritorious Civilian Service Award
- J5 Joint Civilian Service Commendation Award (JCSCA)
- J6 Joint Civilian Service Achievement Award (JCSAA)

Employees should submit a copy of their award certificate to 435 MSS/DPCE, Bldg 2120, Room 219 to update their personnel records.

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Do You Know How Military Service Can Affect Your Civilian Retirement?

Have you served in the military? Did you know that you might be able to have that time count toward your retirement from the civilian workforce? The process of determining the amount of money you would have to pay to have this active duty time count is called Post-56 Military Deposit because it refers to military service performed after 1956.

If the characterization of your military service is honorable and you are currently covered by either the CSRS or FERS retirement systems, you may be eligible to make a deposit for the time you served in the military and have that time credited toward your retirement. This is an important decision in your career and it is important that you make this decision with the best information possible.

The process to determine if it is beneficial for you to pay for this time to be creditable begins with you. Review the information on the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) website: http://www.opm.gov/fers_election/fersh/h_scd9.htm#mservice to determine if you are eligible to pay for this time to be creditable and if you want to make the deposit. As you are reviewing this information and deciding on whether or not to pay the deposit,

keep in mind that you can only make the deposit while you are a federal employee and interest begins to accrue if you have over 2 years of civilian service.

If you are eligible, complete RI 20-97 (Estimated Earnings During Military Service) and mail it to the appropriate military finance center identified on the reverse of the form, with a copy of your DD Form(s) 214. The completed form or letter showing the estimated earnings will be returned to you. Don't forget to send a copy of your DD 214 along with the RI 20 -97.

Upon receipt of estimated earnings, contact your servicing Human Resources Specialist (HRS) (Employee-Management Relations (EMR)) at DSN 480-2008 to obtain approximate deposit amount. If you determine that you want to make a deposit, your specialist will ask you to bring in a completed SF 3108 – FERS (Application to Make Deposit or Redeposit) or SF 2803 – CSRS (Application to Make Deposit or Redeposit), an Estimated Earning Form or Letter and DD Form(s) 214.

Forms can be found at: <http://www.opm.gov/forms/>. Questions may be referred to your servicing HRS.

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Changes to the TSP Loan Program

In recent years the TSP Office has seen a significant increase in the number of loans. Some participants constantly have two outstanding loans, taking another loan immediately after one is paid in full. This practice results in administrative expenses that are currently charged to all TSP participants, whether or not they ever use the Loan Program.

As a result of the above, the TSP office has decided effective 1 July 2004, the following changes will occur to the Loan Program.

- A \$50 fee will be deducted from the amount of each new loan.
- You will no longer be able to have two general purpose loans at the same time.
- You will still be able to have one general purpose loan and one residential loan.
- When you pay off one loan, you will not be eligible to apply for another loan for 60 days.

The changes to the Loan Program will reinforce the importance of borrowing from your TSP account only as a last resort. For participants who need a TSP loan, the \$50 fee will cover the cost of processing and will ensure that these costs are paid by the 500,000

participants who use the program, and not by the 2.7 million participants who do not use the program.

Keep in mind that the TSP Loan Program is an important benefit, and the TSP Office recognize that some participants need to have access to the money in their accounts for legitimate reasons. However, you should not tap into these funds as if they were in a checking or savings account. The TSP is a long-term investment intended for retirement. Removing money from your account — even if you pay it back — may diminish the amount available for your retirement.

Additional information on the TSP Loan Program can be found at:

<http://www.tsp.gov/features/chapter11.html>

Information Federal Employees Need to Pay Attention to Regarding Their Health Plan

Recently an employee came into the Civilian Personnel Flight angry because he was paying for health coverage for himself and his family and had been for many years. The

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problem – he was paying an additional cost to have family health coverage when he was no longer married and his kids were no longer eligible for health coverage under the employee. The extra money the employee paid cannot be recovered. It is your responsibility to notify the Benefits and Entitlements Service Team (BEST) when you have a life-changing event that affects your health benefits.

If you made an open season election during the Nov – Dec 03 Open Season, make sure you verify your 30 Jan 04 (for pay period 11- 24 Jan 04) Leave and Earning Statement (LES) under the deductions block to ensure you are in the right plan and the correct health premiums are being deducted from your pay. It is your responsibility to verify that your open season changes are correct and to notify the BEST if your change is not correctly reflected on the LES.

If you made an open season election to change to a plan that has membership fees, it is critical that you pay your dues. Failure to pay your dues may result in cancellation of your health plan. Direct questions regarding your plan's membership dues or where to send those dues to your health plan carrier. The phone number is on your membership card or in your plan brochure. It is your responsibility to find out if your plan has a membership fee and to pay the fee according to the guidelines set forth by your health plan.

Lastly, it is also your responsibility to ensure you notify both your health plan carrier and union/employee organization sponsoring your plan if you have a change of address.

Plan brochures can be found at: <http://www.opm.gov/insure/health/brochures/index.asp>.
Information on how to contact BEST can be found at:
<http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/dpc/best/contactus.htm>

Do You Really Need to Designate a Beneficiary?

Recently an employee came into the Civilian Personnel Flight angry because he was paying for health coverage for himself and his family and had been for many years. The problem – he was paying an additional cost to have family health coverage when he was no longer married and his kids were no longer eligible for health coverage under the employee. The extra money the employee paid cannot be recovered. It is your responsibility to notify the Benefits and Entitlements Service Team (BEST) when you have a life-changing event that affects your health benefits.

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Information on how to contact BEST can be found at:
<http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/dpc/best/contactus.htm>

Have You Ever Heard of the Lautenberg Amendment?

The Lautenberg Amendment is the commonly used name for the Domestic Violence Misdemeanor Amendment to the Gun Control Act of 1968. This amendment makes it a felony for any person who has been convicted of a "misdemeanor crime of domestic violence" to ship, transport, possess, or receive firearms or ammunition. The Amendment also makes it a crime for any person who transfers, issues, or sells firearms to a person with a Lautenberg qualifying conviction. DoD policy has extended the prohibition to include civilian criminal felony convictions adjudged on or after 27 Nov 02.

A person has a qualifying conviction for a "crime of domestic violence" if: (1) The conviction has as its factual basis the use or attempted use of physical force, or threatened use of a deadly weapon and the convicted offender was at the time of the offense: a current or former spouse, parent, or guardian of the victim; or a person with whom the victim shared a child in common; or a person who was cohabiting with or has cohabited with the victim as a spouse, parent or guardian; or; a person who was similarly situated to a spouse, parent, or guardian of the victim; and (2) The convicted offender was represented by counsel, or knowingly and intelligently waived the right to counsel; and, if entitled to have the case tried by a jury, the case was actually tried by a jury or the person knowingly and intelligently waived the right to have the case tried by a jury; and (3) The

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conviction has not been expunged or set aside, or the convicted offender has not been pardoned for the offense or had civil rights restored, unless the pardon, expungement, or restoration of civil rights provides that the person may not ship, transport, possess or receive firearms.

Upon becoming aware of a qualifying domestic violence conviction, or reasonable cause to believe there is such a conviction, management must immediately retrieve and deny the employee's access to government-owned firearms and ammunition. Management should also contact their servicing Human Resources Specialist (Employee- Management Relations (EMR)) and Staff Judge Advocate (SJA) for further guidance regarding this policy, including determinations of whether a conviction meets the criterion set forth in the Act. Employees in covered positions who have qualifying convictions will have no more than 120 calendar days to obtain an expungement or pardon of the qualifying conviction. Your EMR specialist can be reached at DSN 480-2008 and your SJA can be reached at DSN 480-5911. They will advise and assist management with options available.

The 435 Mission Support Squadron Civilian Personnel Flight (435 MSS/DPC) has recently received both Department of Defense (DoD) and Air Force policies to implement the Lautenberg Amendment. First, all civilian positions will be reviewed to determine if they meet the definition of a covered position. Core personnel documents (position descriptions) must be amended to clearly reflect the requirement to access weapons or ammunition. Vacancy announcements for covered positions shall include a statement that the position requires access to firearms or ammunition and persons having

a qualifying conviction for a crime of domestic violence are not eligible for the position. Applicants/employees tentatively identified for placement in a covered position must complete DD Form 2760, Qualification to Possess Firearms or Ammunition, before being placed in the position. If a selectee/employee refuses to self-certify, the offer will be withdrawn. **Employees in covered positions have an affirmative, continuing obligation to inform their supervisors if they have, or later obtain, a qualifying conviction.** In addition, in the overseas area, incumbents of covered positions who have a qualifying conviction are ineligible for weapons training. Employees occupying covered positions convicted of domestic violence may not be deployed to or in a hazardous duty location/high threat area (HTA).

Commanders are required annually to inform employees in covered positions of this amendment, its consequences and the AF/DoD policy.

Further information will be provided to both management and employees in identified positions as this policy guidance is implemented.

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TSP Open Season - 15 April through 30 June 2004

The next Thrift Savings Plan Open season will be 15 April through 30 June 2004.

Air Force-serviced employees will submit elections to contribute, change the amount of contributions, or terminate contributions electronically through the Employee Benefits Information System (EBIS) web application or the Benefits and Entitlements Service Team (BEST) automated telephone system, Air Force Personnel Center (AFPC), Randolph AFB, TX. **Hardcopy election forms will not be accepted.** Once you complete an election in EBIS or the BEST phone system, you can change it as many times as you like until it becomes effective. Once it becomes effective, you cannot make another TSP election even if the TSP open season is still in effect.

EBIS is a secure web program. As a result, before you can access EBIS you must log into the AFPC Secure Web via UserID and password. To get started, go to www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/dpc/BEST_GRB/EBIS.htm, or click on the EBIS link provided on the BEST Homepage. Once within EBIS, you'll enter your social security number (SSN) and BEST personal identification number (PIN) -- another method of ensuring the security of your personal records and benefits transactions. Your BEST PIN is the same for both EBIS and the BEST phone system. Detailed information on how to access EBIS is contained in the BEST brochure "How to Access the Benefits and Entitlements Web Automated System."

The EBIS system is also used, if you want to elect or chance your health insurance or to waive life insurance.

For further assistance you may contact Ms. Marina Kappler or Ms. Ollie Wilson at DSN: 480-4212, Marina.Kappler@ramstein.af.mil or Ollie.Wilson@ramstein.af.mil, your POCs at the Civilian Personnel Office, Employee Management Relations (EMR) Section.

Air Force Policy Guidance on Temporary Quarters Subsistence Expense (TQSE)

TQSE is a discretionary allowance, not an entitlement, that is intended to provide reimbursement “reasonably and equitably” for subsistence expenses incurred as a result of occupying temporary quarters while seeking a permanent residence in connection with the employee’s transfer to a new duty station in the United States or in a non-foreign area (i.e., Alaska, Guam, Hawaii, etc.). There are two types of TQSE: (1) TQSE (F) is a fixed rate up to 30 days based on the locality per diem rate where temporary quarters are occupied in the United States (CONUS) or in a non-foreign (OCONUS) area. TQSE (F) is limited to no more than 30 days with no extensions under any circumstances. (2) TQSE

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(AE) is an actual expense reimbursement up to 60 days, may be extended another 60 days and is based on the Standard CONUS per diem rate which, as of 15 Mar 04, is \$86.00. TQSE is approved, only for the time spent in temporary quarters that is actually required and necessary. Extensions must be acceptable to the authorizing /order-issuing official as “compelling reasons” and are granted on a case-by-case basis and in situations where there is a demonstrated need for additional time due to “circumstances beyond the employee’s control and acceptable to the agency.” The initial authorization will be for the time period determined necessary by the authorizing/order-issuing official, not to exceed 60 consecutive days unless individual circumstances warrant a shorter period. The maximum number of days authorized for Actual Expense TQSE by statute is 120.

Please be advised that the gaining activity rather than Ramstein AB or other overseas location of the losing activity funds TQSE. As such, determinations regarding TQSE are made by the gaining activity or, for career funded moves, AFPC/DPKD. The Air Force policy and guidance is posted on the AFPC Civilian Permanent Change of Station Home Page at <http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/dpc/pcs/pcs.htm>
Close-Out of AF US Appropriated Fund Civilian Appraisal Cycle

Closeout of the current civilian appraisal cycle is here. A letter from the Civilian Personnel Office will be forthcoming once the proposed award policy for 435 ABW is finalized. Supervisors who have employees failing to satisfactorily perform one or more elements of their performance work plans should contact their servicing Employee Relations Specialist (EMR) **immediately** for advice and assistance. Your EMR

Specialist may be reached at 480-2008 or 0049-6371-47-2008. Some important dates to keep in mind:

Close-Out of AF US Appropriated Fund Civilian Appraisal Cycle
Appraisal Processing Milestones 2004 Performance Rating

Date	Milestones
31 Mar	US Air Force APF Civilian Annual Appraisal Cycle Ends
01 Apr *	Rating Official accomplishes appraisal
05 Apr	Spreadsheets are sent to the QCROs
16 Apr *	Rating Official submits appraisal to Reviewing Official
23 Apr *	Reviewing Official submits appraisals to Award Approving Official
30 Apr *	Award Approving Official returns appraisals, with approved award to QCRO

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14 May	QCRO emails spreadsheets back to 435 MSS/DPCE to Marina.Kappler@ramstein.af.mil
17 May	QCROs return appraisals to Rating Officials. Supervisors go over appraisal with employee and obtains employee's signature on the appraisal. Supervisors give one copy of the appraisal to the employee and keep the original in the Employee Performance File, kept with the supervisor's 971 file. NO hard copy appraisal forms are submitted to 435 MSS/DPCE. **
Beginning with 17 May	Civilian Personnel Office uploads appraisal database and works problems with QCROs, where necessary.
16 May	Effective date for QSIs approved 14 May 04 or earlier. All QSIs approved after 14 May 04 become effective at the beginning of the pay period following the date of approval.
1 Jun	Effective date for performance cash awards.
3 Jun	Effective date for time-off awards.
12 or 26 Jun	Anticipated performance award pay dates

* These dates are approximate. Dates may vary depending on internal organizational procedures.

** Exceptions: Appraisals for employees on LWOP and for employees who have transferred to another AFB between 1 Jan – 31 Mar and Technical Appraisals should be brought to CPO, Bldg 2120, Room 219 (Second Floor). Also provide fund cites if an award is given to an employee who retired or resigned after 31 March or has PCS'd.

Classification

Civilian Personnel Classification Policy

General John P. Jumper, the Air Force Chief of Staff, recently released policy changes pertaining to the civilian classification program. In preparation for the implementation of the National Security Personnel System (NSPS), General Jumper addressed three areas intended to improve the delivery of civilian personnel management service while guiding the Air Force toward successful implementation of NSPS. These policies are designed to increase the use of Standard Core Personnel Documents (SCPDs), establish an Air Force-

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wide policy for processing review actions, and revise the process for management disputes over classification determinations. The policy changes are as follows:

Use of Standard Core Personnel Documents: The General directed that new SCPDs be implemented within six months of their development. Also, as new SCPDs are developed, the SCPD library will also develop companion documents based on the NSPS requirements for eventual use when the Air Force implements NSPS. Existing SCPDs will also have companion documents developed. Upon implementation to NSPS, the SCPDs will automatically convert to the NSPS documents. In addition to minimizing the workload during implementation, the documents will also serve as an effective training tool for managers, employers, and personnel specialists regarding the classification process and documentation required under NSPS. The policy emphasizes the use of SCPDs and states that exceptions to their use will be made by host and appropriate tenant commanders. However, it is critical that these commanders continue to emphasize and enforce this policy within their organizations.

Position Review Actions: In order to streamline personnel processes, improve the cycle time to fill positions, and prepare for transition to NSPS, it is critical that excessive workload on the personnel community be eliminated. Therefore, the personnel office will not process position review actions within a period of two years from the date a position was previously reviewed/classified except under the following circumstances: AF directed (or comparable) reorganization or position restructuring/change, significant MAJCOM or local approved reorganization that results in substantial change in positions,

application of OPM classification standards or DoD/AF classification guidance, SCPD application, or classification appeal or other third party decision.

Management Disputes over Classification Determinations: This supersedes parts of AF PD 36-14, Position Management and Classification, and AFI 36-1401, Position Classification, which required management disputes over local classification determinations made by the servicing personnel office to be elevated to the MAJCOM for a binding evaluation decision. The new policy still requires the same management procedures and documentation for the reclama process. However, the binding decision is made by the Commander with an appointing authority (usually the wing commander) or appropriate tenant commander. The same burden of proof is on management to demonstrate where the servicing classification specialist has erred in application and/or interpretation of the classification standard, and using that standard to support the requested grade. Management should not view this change as an easier or potentially more favorable process. Each commander will take this delegation of authority very seriously.

General Jumper's policy memorandum can be viewed on the Civilian Personnel Flight's website by clicking US Program Information, Classification.

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Career Program Registration No Longer Necessary

Effective immediately, registration with the Career Programs is no longer required for employees occupying career program covered positions to take advantage of training opportunities offered through the Career Programs. The On-Line Registration has been turned off. All documents pertaining to Career Program Registration and On-line Registration have been removed from the AFPC Web page.

In March 2002, the start-up of the On-Line Career Program Registration was announced. Registration, at that time, was no longer required to apply for Career Program positions, but was retained as a method of assessing training resources, nominations, selections, career counseling, and workforce analysis for employees on career program covered positions.

The AF has now moved to a more deliberate, strategic approach to civilian force development and no longer requires employees to self identify by registering for training purposes. However, the use of the Career Enhancement Plan (CEP) as a means for employees and their supervisors to identify individual training needs for FY05 will continue to be used, until a new process is in place for individual development planning. Employees occupying career program covered Position, should look for the CEPs to be sent to them within the next few weeks for review, update and approval by the

supervisors.

Detailed information and instructions on AFPC's new business process can be found in the FY 2005 Civilian Training & Development Guide located at:

(<http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/cp/dpkd/guide/>).

