



**CIVILIAN PERSONNEL ADVISORY CENTER**  
**670 Lee Blvd**  
**Fort Eustis, Virginia 23604-5096**



**EMPLOYEE/SUPERVISOR INFORMATION BULLETIN**

**#2-06 FEBRUARY 2006**

*This bulletin is designed to inform employees and supervisors of new civilian Human Resource issues and refresh their knowledge of existing policies and procedures. If you have topics you would like us to address, please contact your Human Resource Specialist.*

**TOPICS:**

**National Security Personnel System (NSPS) Update**

**USA Learning Tool**

**FEEA Accepting Scholarship Applications**

**Annual Appraisals – Reminder**

**Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program: Extended  
Coverage for Employees Called to Active Military Duty**

**Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) Benefits for Common Law Spouses**

**Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) Contribution Limits Rise in 2006**

**Notification of Personnel Action (NPA/SF50)**

**Fort Eustis Human Resources (HR) for Supervisors**

**Farewell to CPAC Staff**

**National Security Personnel System (NSPS) Update**

In December 2005, DOD and DA announced the delay of NSPS implementation. More time is needed to focus on simplifying the performance management design, getting performance objectives right, and ensuring all understand the system. In January, notification was received that Spiral 1.1 will be implemented April 30, 2006. The only impacted organization on Fort Eustis in this Spiral is the CPAC. For more on this and other information on NSPS - access <http://www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps/>.

## **USA Learning Tool**

Did you know that <http://www.USALearning.gov> is the e-Learning website for the federal government? Sponsored by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), USALearning.gov is part of the President's e-Training Initiative.

There are over 55 **Free** online courses on a broad range of topics, to include: Desktop applications (MS Word, Excel, Access, etc.); Leadership; Professional Development; and online books covering IT and Business topics. This resource allows you to update the skills you need to perform your job.

For more information on USALearning.gov, visit the press article at <http://www.opm.gov/news/opm-announces-revamp-of-elearning-website-now-known-as-usalearninggov,939.aspx> today!

## **FEEA ACCEPTING SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS**

Are you a federal employee who wants some money to help pay for school?

The Federal Employee Education Assistance Fund announced last week it is accepting applications for its 2006-2007 scholarship program.

FEEA's scholarship program is open to all federal civilian and postal employees with three or more years of service (and their dependents.)

Federal employees must be part-time students and dependents must be full-time students to apply. Everyone who applies must be enrolled in an accredited post-secondary school that will lead to a two-year, four-year or graduate degree. FEEA requires those who apply to maintain at least a 3.0 grade point average on a 4.0 scale.

Scholarship awards range from \$300 to \$1,500. Awards consisting of more than \$500 will be paid in two installments, one in the Fall of 2006 and one in December 2006/January 2007.

Scholarship winners will be announced by September 30th.

To download a scholarship application, visit FEEA's Web site, which is maintained by FPMI, at [http://www.feea.org/files/FEEA\\_06-07\\_app.pdf](http://www.feea.org/files/FEEA_06-07_app.pdf)

## **Annual Appraisals – Reminder**

The rating period for employees occupying GS/WS1-8 & all WG/WL positions serviced by the Fort Eustis CPAC will end as follows:

All Fort Eustis/Story Employees (except ATSC)	-	31 December
ATSC Employees	-	31 January

All supervisors should remember the following tips when completing DA Forms 7223 and 7223-1:

- Make sure that the employee information is accurate.
- Check assigned rating chain to make sure it is accurately reflected for each employee.
- **Ensure that all counseling sessions are properly documented (i.e. initialed and dated).** Key points made during the sessions should be annotated and initialed.
- When using Part III of DA Form 7223 to document a performance award, make sure the approving signature is included. Note: A Request for Personnel Action (RPA) must be created to affect an award. Appraisal ratings must be received and entered into the DCPDS database, prior to submission of the award RPA for processing by the CPOC.
- Make sure a rating for each responsibility has been completed to include responsibilities 5 & 6 for positions with supervisory duties.
- Last, but not least, ensure that the overall success level is reflective of the responsibility ratings assigned. Supervisors are reminded to ensure that percentage calculation is correct and warrants the rating assigned. For example, if there are 4 objectives with three annotated as “exceeds” and one annotated as “met”, then the employee has exceeded 75% of the performance objectives and the summary rating equates to a level one rating (Excellence/75% or more objectives).

If there are any questions, contact the HR Specialist assigned to your organization. For more information check out the CPAC website at: [www.eustis.army.mi/cpac/tapes](http://www.eustis.army.mi/cpac/tapes)

### **Federal Employee Health Benefit (FEHB) Program: Extended Coverage for Employees Called to Active Military Duty**

Federal employees who are called to active duty **in support of a contingency operation** can now receive up to 24 months of continued Federal Employee Health Benefits (FEHB) coverage to include agency payment of both the employee’s share and the government’s share of premiums for the entire 24 months.

Employee’s who are called to active duty but do not have orders showing that they are called in support of a contingency operation can also receive up to 24 months of continued FEHB coverage, but they are NOT eligible for agency payment of the premiums during the active duty period. Further information can be obtained from <http://www.opm.gov/retire/asd/htm/2006/06-401.asp> .

### **TSP Benefits for Common Law Spouses**

Common law spouses are now eligible for Thrifts Savings Plan (TSP) benefits. The Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board (RTIB) which was established as an

independent agency by the Federal Employees Retirement System Act of 1986 to administer the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) has determined the need to recognize a common law marriage. The Board which is one of the smaller Executive Branch agencies, with just over 100 employees, will rely on a TSP participant's marital status as stated on their federal income tax form.

Common law marriage is recognized if the state in which the TSP participant resides recognized common law marriages and the participant and the spouse meet the requirement of the state. To determine if a TSP participant has a valid common law marriage, the Board can base its decision on the participant's most recent federal income tax form. The Board decided to use the tax form because "such a form is submitted to the Internal Revenue Service under penalty of perjury and, therefore, is presumed to be reliable."

### **TSP Contribution Limits Rise in 2006**

In 2006, employees may contribute up to \$15,000 to their Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) account, with taxes on earnings deferred. Those ages 50 or older **who are contributing the maximum under their regular TSP** may make an additional "catch-up" TSP contribution of up to \$5,000. Both limits are \$1,000 higher than in 2005.

To enroll or adjust your TSP contributions for 2006, access Army Benefits Center, employee benefits system (EBIS) at <https://www.abc.army.mil/>. For more information about catch-up contributions, see the Fact Sheet "Catch-Up Contributions" on the TSP Website at <http://www.tsp.gov/forms/oc03-03.pdf>.

### **Notification of Personnel Action (NPA)**

**Did you know that as a Department of Army Civilian Employee, you can now electronically access and print your Notification of Personnel Actions (NPAs)?** Well, you can and it's easy. All you have to do is log on to the Army's Civilian Personnel On-line website at <http://acpol.army.mil>; log in under the Employee Portal using your AKO login; click on the employee tab; click on the "Open" tab to the right of "My SF50 Information"; once you see the list of NPAs/SF50s, simply click on the Adobe PDF icon on the left to open and view and/or print your NPA/SF50.

### **Fort Eustis Human Resource (HR) for Supervisors**

The Fort Eustis Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC) is pleased to offer the Human Resource (HR) for Supervisors course March 20-24, 2006 from 0800-1630. Nominations are now being accepted through close of business on 10 February 2006.

The course is designed to teach new civilian and military supervisors of appropriated fund civilian employees about their responsibilities for Civilian Human Resource management. Modules will focus on fundamental concepts of civilian human resources management and

Army's HR tools (e.g., Army Regional Tools, Position Management and Classification, Hiring Flexibilities and Special Employment Programs, Interviews/Selection Criteria, Workforce Reshaping, Performance Management and Awards, Leave Administration, Maintaining Time and Attendance, Employee Benefits Programs, Safety, Workers Compensation Programs, Employee Development, Employee Assistance Programs, Civilian Drug Testing, Discipline and Adverse Action, Labor Relations, Grievances/Appeals, Equal Employment Opportunity, etc.).

REMINDER: This course is designed to supplement the mandatory on-line Supervisor Development Course. All newly appointed DA civilian or military supervisors who supervisor DA civilians are still required to complete the on-line course. Contact your servicing Human Resources Specialist or organizational training POC for further details.

### **Farewell to CPAC Staff**



The CPAC bids a sad farewell to two of our Human Resources Specialist, Carol Aldridge and Gayle Botelis. Both are retiring soon. Carol will retire 28 February and Gayle on 3 March. We wish them well and know that they will enjoy their well-deserved retirement! We will miss them greatly!