

Southwest Civilian Personnel Operations Center Fort Riley, Kansas

SWCPOC

Trailblazer

Issue 7-02

Together Everyone Achieves More

December 2002



SWCPOC Director Retiring

- ★ Daniel M. Clawson, the first Director of the Southwest Region, will be officially retiring effective March 2003. He has been with the SWCPOC since June 1996 when the Southwest Region first stood up following regionalization of personnel services.
- ★ "Mr. C", as he is affectionately known by SWCPOC staff members, will be at work till the end of December. His retirement ceremony and luncheon is scheduled for Friday, 10 January 2003. His colleagues and staff have all been invited to attend this event that is gearing up to send him off into retirement in grand style!
- ★ When Mr. C leaves, though, he will not be leisurely resting as a Federal civilian retiree. He will be very busy heading a new business, Virtual TeamWorks (VTW), from his office in Manhattan, KS.
- ★ Mr. C has brought the SWCPOC to great heights and will be remembered for his determined leadership and strong commitment to providing exceptional service to all our customers.

Daniel M. Clawson

- ? the first SWCPOC Director,
- ? always first to take on new and emerging technologies,
- ? first to step forward and implement Army programs,
- ? and through his untiring efforts, he led the SWCPOC to be first in the world!

He will be sorely missed!



Reduction-In-Force



With downsizing and major reorganizations, employees may be faced with a Reduction-In-Force (RIF) action. RIF occurs when an employee is released from his/her competitive level by separation, demotion, furlough for 30 days or more, or reassignment requiring displacement of another employee.

RIF may be necessary due to (1) lack of work; (2) shortage of funds; (3) reorganization; (4) a person exercising their re-employment rights; or, (5) reclassification of an employee's position due to erosion of duties.



In most cases, RIF is initiated only after other alternatives fail. There are several ways for management to avoid the need to have a RIF. This may include management actions such as (1) offer of VERA- Voluntary Early Retirement Authority; (2) offer of VSIP - Voluntary Separation Incentive Pay; (3) hiring freezes; (4) stock-piling vacancies; (3) hiring temporary employees; (4) reductions in other expenditures such as training and travel; and (5) pre-RIF placement of employees.

If a RIF becomes unavoidable, it is very important for everyone involved to ensure that the process is carried out smoothly. Contact between the Civilian Personnel Operations Center (CPOC) and Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC) is crucial to carry out the RIF process. Supervisors should keep their employees informed and ensure that position



descriptions are accurate and performance ratings are accurate, current and submitted on time. Employees need to ensure that information on their veterans' preference, experience, and education is up to date.



See 5 CFR, Part 351 for more information regarding RIF. In addition, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Restructuring Handbook is an excellent tool that can be used when management is looking for options to consider in restructuring situations. This source also provides regulatory procedures that are mandatory to the RIF process. This handbook can be located at OPM's website: <http://www.opm.gov/rif/handbook/rih.htm>.

Time-In-Grade Restrictions



In addition to meeting eligibility requirements for promotion as outlined in the 5 CFR 335, employees must also meet the time-in-grade restrictions. These restrictions that were proposed for abolishment by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), but are still in effect, were made to protect competitive principles. Also these restrictions prevent excessively rapid promotions in competitive service General Schedule (GS) positions.



For positions GS-5 and below, candidates may be promoted to a position no more than two grades above the lowest grade held within the preceding 52 weeks under a non-temporary appointment OR have met this restriction at some time in the past. For example, promotion from a GS-3 to GS-5 is

allowable. However, advancement from a GS-2 to GS-5 is not.

For promotion to positions GS-6 and above, candidates may be promoted (1) after 52 weeks at the next lower grade (one-grade interval positions); or (2) after 52 weeks at the second lower grade (two grade interval positions). For positions GS-12 and above, candidates must serve 52 weeks at the next lower grade.

Yes, there are some exceptions to time-in-grade and the following are some examples of actions may be taken without regard to the restrictions:



- (1) appointment from a competitive examination register of eligibles (DEU or OPM) or under direct hire authority ;
- (2) promotion after a RIF separation or demotion to grade previously held;
- (3) accelerated promotions (in accordance with an approved training agreement);
- (4) re-promotion to a grade previously held;
- (5) promotion to the next higher grade if there is no intervening grade (one-grade interval series); and
- (6) conversion of a Veteran Readjustment Appointment (VRA) appointee to a new higher graded VRA appointment.

Time-in-grade restrictions and the exceptions to the restrictions are outlined in 5 CFR, Part 300, Subpart F.



Human Resource Certification Program on the Horizon

The Human Resource Development Division (HRDD) is in the process of developing an HR Certification Program to be implemented within the SWCPOC.



The purpose of certifying employees is to provide professional credentials and academic portfolios to those employees who need to keep pace with the shifting demands of the job caused by changes in mission, rules, and technology.

Who can become certified? Employees that are in the Human Resource field are eligible for certification.

What are the benefits to certification?

- ? Certification as a professional demonstrates that certified employees possess the knowledge and skills that are vital to human resource management.
- ? Employees who acquire certification can use their earned designation for career enhancement and promotion.

As the program develops, procedures on how to become certified will be addressed in future issues.

2nd Qtr DL Courses Add Up to Lots of Savings



The second quarter of FY03 is jam packed with great Distance Learning courses, and some of them are at no cost to the participating sites!

If you're interested in participating, check them out! Contact Kathy Bassett at her email address: Kathy.Bassett@cpocswr.army.mil.

Check Out These Courses

8 Jan 03
0800-1200



Deposit/Redeposit and Post 56
NO COST
Vendor: SWCPOC

9 Jan 03
0830-1100
Preparing a Quality Resume
NO COST
Vendor: SWCPOC

9 Jan 03
1300-1530
Using the Web Based Referral System
NO COST
Vendor: SWCPOC

28 Jan 03
1130-1530
Deposit/Redeposit and Post 56
NO COST
Vendor: SWCPOC

29 Jan 03
0800-1530
Improving Customer Service
\$550/Site
Vendor: Jeff Magee International



Training Needs Survey

The FY04 Training Needs Survey (Assessment) Survey was released to the Southwest Region on 25 November 2002. Based upon input from individual organizations and installations, the Human Resource Development Division (HRDD) will be able to determine the training needs of its customers for the next fiscal year.



The survey is a web-based tool that also permits each organization and installation to determine their training needs at their level. Questions on participation and usage of the Training Needs Survey can be directed to Hans Hart at telephone 785-239-2740 or through his email address: Hans.Hart@cpocswr.army.mil.



Send comments or suggestions to:
Lucy Gonzalez, Office of the Director
DSN 856-0015, FAX 856-2393,
Lucy.Gonzalez@cpocswr.army.mil