



Information Bulletin

**US Army Corps
of Engineers**
Engineer Research and
Development Center

Topographic Engineering Center

*U.S. Army 1999 Research & Development
Organization of the Year*

May 18, 2000
Number 00-20

OFFICIAL

Conversion to Modern Civilian Personnel Data System (MDCPDS)

The South Central Region will deploy the Modern Defense Civilian Personnel Data System (MDCPDS) beginning July 7, 2000. The "Modern System" is the single automated civilian personnel data system to be used by all components of the Department of Defense. It is a user-friendly windows-based system that will replace the current Functional Process Improvement suite of software tools commonly referred to as PPIs (PERSACTION, COREDOC, Regional Application) and the legacy Defense Civilian Personnel Data System (DCPDS).

The magnitude of the changes and the large population base to which it must be applied necessitates a phased deployment schedule throughout DoD. We are the third continental CPOC to deploy MDCPDS. Deployment in all regions will be completed by Dec. 31, 2000.

In order to effect the conversion, the current system will be shut down from July 7-21, during which there will be no automated personnel processing capability. The Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC) team is working with the ERDC management team to plan ahead for all foreseeable personnel actions so that there is minimum disruption during the shut-down. Manual processing will be used for bona fide emergency personnel actions. A deployment action plan has been prepared and provided to the ERDC Commander and Director.

While the deployment of this new system is disruptive in the short-term, the Modern System has automated features that will help management officials fulfill their personnel management responsibilities more efficiently in the long-term. Any questions or concerns you may have regarding conversion can be addressed to the CPAC generalist servicing your organization. For more information, contact Susan Koh, 603-646-4500.

Thrift Saving Plan Open Season

The Semi-Annual Open Season for the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) will be held between May 15 and July 31, 2000. You are eligible to enroll if you are covered by the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) or the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) and were hired prior to Dec. 31, 1999. Members under FERS, who meet the above criteria for the first time, will be eligible for the automatic 1 percent government contribution during this open season.

Federal employees covered by the FERS can currently contribute up to 10 percent of their basic pay each pay period with the government matching up to 5 percent. Employees covered by the CSRS can contribute up to 5 percent of basic pay each pay period, but receive no agency contributions. Employees may choose to invest or change their distribution of the three funds available - the G Fund (Government Securities Index Investment Fund), the F Fund (Bond Index Fund) or the C Fund (Common Stocks Index Fund).

The TSP web site provides all the latest guidance available (<http://www.tsp.gov>).

ERDC Commander's Retirement Ceremony Set

The official retirement ceremony for Col. Cababa will be held May 24 at 1:30 p.m. Central Standard Time at the Headquarters Building in Vicksburg. The ceremony will be broadcast in Conference Room 1. Lt. Gen. Joe N. Ballard, Chief of Engineers, will officiate at this ceremony. For more information, contact Bill Bridges, Chief, Public Affairs Office at (601) 634-2504.

Travel Update

Here is the current schedule for approving travel in CEFMS:

May 22-26	Betty O'Donnell	(603) 646-4355
May 29-June 2	Vicki Ray	(601) 634-2378

The Travel Support Team has created an ERDC travel web page on the inside ERDC site, which is now available for your use. We hope you will find this page useful.

If you feel there is additional information that would be beneficial, please do not hesitate to let us know. E-mail information or comments to Betty O'Donnell.

<http://erdcinfo.erd.usace.army.mil/lmo/travel/index.htm>

Thank you for taking this opportunity to review what the ERDC travel web page has to offer.

As always, if you have a question please contact your local Travel Specialist. In the event she is not available you may contact any ERDC Travel Specialist. (Terri Norman, Team Leader, Travel Section (217) 373-6708)

Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen Message for Armed Forces Day

Throughout our nation's history, men and women of courage and devotion have willingly defended our nation's liberties at freedom's front — in any sky, on any ocean, on any shore. Fifty years ago, President Harry Truman deemed that a day be set aside to commemorate this tradition by honoring those of you who serve this nation in uniform. What President Truman observed then remains true today: it would be impossible to maintain peace and freedom without our armed forces.

Today, you carry the torch of this rich tradition of faithful and devoted service — here at home and around the globe. Wherever you serve, whether patrolling the waters of the Pacific, risking all in the no-fly zones over Iraq, or maintaining peace in the Balkans, you are the finest force for peace the world has ever known. You are a truly inspiring team that holds tremendous hope and opportunity for people the world over.

On this 50th Armed Forces Day, the American people join me in expressing our profound gratitude to you, aware that your commitment to this nation does not come without peril or price. Duty often calls for prolonged periods away from family and home, in missions that can be difficult and dangerous. So it is truly fitting that we pause on this day to recognize these sacrifices and to honor you — patriots whose passion and dedication preserve the blessings of freedom every day.

As your Secretary of Defense, my message for you today is simple, and a feeling shared by all Americans: we need you. We are enormously proud of you. We thank you for your selfless service.

Commander's Mailbox

ERDC team members are reminded that an electronic mailbox has been established to allow employees to send questions and/or comments to the Commander. If an employee wishes to remain anonymous, his or her name will be deleted from the question before it is forwarded to the Commander for comment. Employees' questions will be answered via return e-mail. Answers to anonymous and frequently asked questions will be posted in the Employee Information Bulletin.

The address in Outlook is, "ERDC Commander." Again, all information is kept strictly confidential and all questions are addressed directly by the Commander.

ERDC Publications on Internet

The ERDC Publication Bulletin serves as the official notification of new ERDC forms and publication, as well as rescissions or changes to existing forms or publications. As of Sept. 10, 1999, ERDC official publications ceased to be printed (i.e., Center Regulations, Circulars, Pamphlets, or Commander's Policy Memoranda). All ERDC official publications are now distributed in electronic format on the ERDC web site located at <http://erdc.usace.army.mil/pubs/index.htm>.

Open Announcements

Computer Specialist (GS-0334-13)	GID	Open: May 5, 2000 Close: May 19, 2000
Hydrologist (GS-1315)/Geologist (GS-1350) GS-7 (FPL GS-11)	OPS Div	Open: May 11, 2000 Close: May 24, 2000
Interdisciplinary (GS-0401; 1320)-13	TRD	Open: May 10, 2000 Close: May 23, 2000
Administrative Officer (GS-0341)-9	GID	Open: May 10, 2000 Close: May 23, 2000
Secretary (GS-318-7) TEMP NTE 120 DAYS	GID	Open: May 10, 2000 Close: May 23, 2000

Calendar of Events

May 22-26	American Society of Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing Annual Conference, Washington, D.C.
May 23	Informal Social for Col. Cababa, Vicksburg
May 24	Official Retirement Ceremony for Col. Cababa, 1:30 p.m., CST, Vicksburg
June 8	Retirement Luncheon for Lt. Gen. Ballard at the Fort Belvoir Officers' Club
June 9	Retirement Ceremony for Lt. Gen. Ballard, 10 a.m. Summerall Field, Fort Myer, Va.
June 15	Engineer Day Ceremony, Conference Room 1 at 9 a.m.
June 22	TEC Open House 10 a.m. until Noon
June 22	TEC Picnic at Veterans Memorial Park, Woodbridge, Va.
June 23	TEC Blood Drive

Departures

<u>Name</u>	<u>Organization</u>	<u>Departure Date</u>
John Clark	OD	June 4, 2000

FOR THE DIRECTOR

JACKIE L. BRYANT
Public Affairs Office

UNOFFICIAL

Congratulations!

Congratulations to Teisha Harper, Contracts. She graduated from Northern Virginia Community College on May 12 with a degree in Information Systems Technology - Networking.

TEC Member Featured in Publication

Lauretta Williams (Ellis), FDD, is featured in the June issue of *Money* magazine in an article titled "The Best Online Brokers of 2000."