



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*

Jan. 25, 2001
Number 04-01

OFFICIAL

Patents and Inventors Display Dedication Ceremony slated for Jan. 30

The dedication ceremony for the unveiling of TEC's Patents and Inventors Display will take place Jan. 30 at 10 a.m. in Conference Room 1. The display is intended to recognize past and recent recipients of U.S. patents. The following TEC members are scheduled to attend: Roger Brown, Donald Dere, Dr. Robert Leighty, George Lukes, Michael McDonnell, Richard Rosenthal and William Seemuller. Refreshments will be served in TEC's Snack Bar following the dedication.

Lt. Gen. Robert Flowers, Chief of Engineers to Visit TEC Feb. 2

Lt. Gen. Flowers will visit TEC on Feb. 2 for a variety of events. At 9:30 a.m. in Conference Rooms 1, 2 and 3, he will participate in the promotion ceremony for Lt. Col.(P) Joseph Fontanella. Refreshments will be served in TEC's Snack Bar following the ceremony. At 10:30 a.m., the Chief will participate in a Town Hall meeting in Conference Rooms 1, 2 and 3. All members are encouraged to attend. A TEC overview and briefings by each Division will follow (a working lunch).

Bank of America Travel Charge Requirements

Bank of America travel charge card cardholders need to be aware of the following requirements: Travel charge card account balances must be paid in time for the contractor to receive payment by the due date.

An account balance becomes delinquent, the account is suspended, and the card cannot be used if payment is not received within 60 days from the billing date. An account will be canceled the third time it is suspended in a 12-month period.

An account is canceled if payment of the account balance is not received within 126 days from the billing date. An account that is canceled for late payment will not be reinstated. Bank of America is enforcing this contractual provision.

Bank of America will report an account that is not paid within 126 days past the billing date to National Credit Bureaus. This is a contractual provision that the bank has not previously been enforcing.

Army travelers are exempt from mandatory use of travel charge cards for Permanent Change of Station (PCS) moving expenses. Travel advances are authorized and recommended for PCS expenses. If a traveler uses a travel card for PCS expenses, the card account balance on the monthly billing must be paid by the due date.

A cardholder transferring between Department of Defense activities needs to inform the Agency Program Coordinator (APC) at the losing activity, and promptly locate the APC at the gaining activity and request that the travel card be transferred there.

Questions about the travel charge card program should be referred to your site Agency Program Coordinator.

Alexandria - Shirley Armentrout

Champaign - Diane Baysore

Hanover - Lillian Guay

Vicksburg - Lois Williamson

Travel Card Program Places Emphasis on Decreasing Delinquency Rates

There is and will continue to be increased emphasis on the Travel Card program, focusing especially on decreasing delinquency rates. Bank of America is pushing for more aggressive action to make the program profitable to them. This latest reporting effort is part of that approach along with a new hard line approach on not reinstating cards, which were previously canceled due to delinquencies.

Credit Bureau Reporting for Individually Billed Accounts (IBA)

Effective Jan. 31, 2001, Bank of America will commence the reporting of any individually billed travel account that is in a charged off (accounts with a past due balance that is 210+ days past the billing cycle date in which the charge first appeared) status. Effective April 2001, Bank of America will begin to report all canceled individually billed travel accounts. For both types of accounts, the reports will be sent to Equifax, Experian, and TransUnion consumer credit bureaus.

Keep in mind, a cardholder (regardless of agency) whose travel card account is canceled but has not yet charged off, can AVOID being reported to credit bureaus if the account is paid in full prior to charge off and no later than April 2, 2001. The following criteria apply:

1. The account is in a canceled status, but has not yet charged off as of April 2, 2001.
2. The account balance must be paid in full prior to the account being charged off and no later than April 2, 2001. To clarify, Bank of America must receive and have posted the payment to the account via normal payment methods no later than April 2, 2001 (cardholders should allow at least 10 business days mailing time).
3. There will be no extensions or exceptions to the bank's Credit Bureau Reporting policy.
4. Even though canceled accounts, which meet the above criteria will not be reported to the credit bureaus, these cardholders will not be reissued new cards.

Promise to Pay Option Added to Client Service VRU Menu

The Government Card Client Service welcoming message (VRU-Voice Response Unit) is being enhanced in the following manner:

1. If the account is in a current status, there is no modification to the message options.
2. Accounts that are more than 30 days but less than 61 days past due will now have the option to complete a Promise to Pay transaction.
3. Accounts that are more than 61 days past due will now be routed automatically to the Government Card Services Collections Department.

Questions about the travel charge card program should be referred to your site Agency Program Coordinator.

Alexandria - Shirley Armentrout

Champaign - Diane Baysore

Hanover - Lillian Guay
Vicksburg - Lois Williamson

Travel Reminders: Lodging Success Program

The Lodging Success Program (LSP) is a mandatory use program, when processing travel order to any of the listed LSP area's you must comply with all requirements at this web site.

http://trol.redstone.army.mil/mwr/lodging/acrc_lsp_main.html Current LSP areas include - National Capital Region; San Antonio, Texas; Atlanta, Ga; Hampton/Newport News, Va; Miami, Fla; San Juan, Puerto Rico; Ohau, Hawaii (only if TDY to Fort Shafter)

If lodging success applies, the remarks must include a non-availability number or LSP confirmation number, or a note that the TDY destination is not in the LSP area. (for blanket orders, LSP remarks are to be noted on the travel voucher). Failure to make the appropriate notations in the remark section will result in the order being rejected so it may be processed correctly.

No cost orders - are processed on paper DD Form 1610 and must be staffed through the Legal Office before being sent to Travel to be authenticated and issued a travel order number.

Foreign Travel

Foreign Travel should be processed 45 days prior to departure. If this requirement may not be met a complete justification must accompany the foreign travel request. Note: The "Notification of Foreign Visit form" (DA Form 2374) must include the date and location of the traveler's last AT/FP briefing in the remarks. Also, with the name of the person to be visited you must include phone number and position.

Questions may be directed to any Travel Specialist:

Terri Norman, Champaign Site (217) 373-6708

Betty O'Donnell, Hanover Site (603) 646-4355

Lillian Guay, Hanover Site (603) 646-4356

TEC Bulletin Submission Deadline

Items for publication in TEC's Employee Bulletin should be submitted to the Public Affairs Office by COB on Wednesdays either via Outlook or stop by Room 138.

(Jackie Bryant, PAO 428-6655/ICOM 2364)

Name the Publication Contest

Ideas for a permanent name for *The ERDC Connection* are requested. A committee will select the winning name and the winner will receive an 8-hour Administrative Leave Award from the Commander.

Submit ideas to: e-mail at Deborah.H.Quimby@erdc.usace.army.mil, by fax at (601) 634-2361, or by mail at Public Affairs Office, ATTN: Debbie Quimby, 3909 Halls Ferry Road, Vicksburg, MS 39180-6199 by COB Jan. 31.

Pin Design Contest Ideas Sought

Design ideas for an ERDC pin are requested. Submit ideas to: e-mail at Deborah.H.Quimby@erdc.usace.army.mil, by fax at (601) 634-2361, or by mail at Public Affairs Office, ATTN: Debbie Quimby, 3909 Halls Ferry Road, Vicksburg, MS 39180-6199 by COB Jan. 31.

Please make sure the design is legible, whatever method you use for transmission. The winner receives a \$100 savings bond.

Calendar of Events

Feb. 2	Promotion ceremony for Lt. Col.(P) Joseph Fontanella in Conference Rooms 1, 2 and 3 at 9:30 a.m. Following the ceremony, refreshments will be served in TEC's Snack Bar.
Feb. 2	Town Hall meeting with Lt. Gen. Robert Flowers, Chief of Engineers in Conference Rooms 1, 2 and 3 at 10:30 a.m.
Feb. 15	DCSINT visit to TEC (Lt. Gen. Robert Noonan and Maj. Gen. Robert Harding)

ERDC Travel Update

All travel orders will continue to be signed by the Hanover Site Travel Office, Betty O'Donnell at (603) 646-4355 and Lillian Guay at (603) 646-4356.

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

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>.

ERDC Job Vacancies

Reminder: Information on all current ERDC job vacancies can be found on the ERDC Intranet at <http://erdcinfo.erd.usace.army.mil/hr/vacancies/index.htm>. All job announcements are also posted at the CPOL web site <http://www.cpol.army.mil/va/scripts/public.html> and at the OPM USAJobs web site at <http://www.usajobs.opm.gov/a9.htm>.

FOR THE DIRECTOR

JACKIE L. BRYANT
Public Affairs Office

U N O F F I C I A L

Civilian Employee Fund Sponsors Spirit of Washington Trip

The Civilian Employee Fund invites all Fort Belvoir and Department of Defense Civilian Employees and their immediate family members to come cruise, dine and dance aboard the 600-passenger luxury vessel, the Spirit of Washington on March 24.

Tickets are \$25 per person and includes a Sunset Dinner Cruise:

3-hour harbor lights cruise

Musical Revue

Dancing to live bands

Bountiful Buffets

Passengers will board at 6:30 p.m. at Pier 4, 6th and Water Streets, SW, Washington. The ship sails at 7 p.m. Tickets may be purchased on Fort Belvoir at the Civilian Employee Fund Office, 5820-21 Streets (Basement) from Tuesday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. until Feb. 23.

For more information, contact Mary Pumphrey at (703) 805-4126.

Classifieds

For Sale: 1994 Toyota Camry LE; green; am/fm cassette stereo; ac; power windows and locks; 136k; timing belt changed at 110k; runs great! Asking \$6,795/obo. Please contact Valerie at (703) 428-6773.