

Career Transition Update

9/9/05

Those on AL to get to retirement. – As announced in the Flyer issue 19 this afternoon you will be able to go to work for Lockheed Martin on Oct. 4. This ethics ruling now allows you to work for Lockheed Martin while in a “terminal” leave status. This process of using AL to get to retirement is not automatic. You must notify your regional HR that you would like to use your AL to get to your earliest retirement date. Forms will then be sent to you to complete the process.

Many thanks to those in the bargaining unit that facilitated this ruling by requesting waivers. If you think that one person can't make a difference or that it is too late to change things you are wrong. I suggest you get involved in some of the actions NAATS is currently involved in on your behalf. Contact your Regional Director on how you can help.

FERS –SEPT 30 Retirement – On an inquiry from the WP Regional Director I checked on this retirement issue. **For FERS employees eligible for an optional retirement only** (optional, MRA, or MRA+10). If you retire in Oct. you will not get your retirement benefits until Nov. 1. Gloria Quay (HQ HR) informed me that if you want to qualify for benefits in Oct. you must retire on Sept. 30. The choice in this case is retire Sept 30 and get a check starting Oct. 1 or retire Oct. 3 and checks will start Nov. 1. This information and much more is contained in the FAQ at:

http://www.faa.gov/aca/employee_resource/faq/entitle.htm.

For any affect this may have on Lockheed employment please contact Lockheed.

AK openings – 7 of the 9 positions have been selected and 2 more are in process with tentative offers made. There were 150 bidders considered for these openings. Congratulations to those selected!

HR and other contacts. – Kate told you of problems with severance pay experienced by an employee who resigned in lieu of being RIF. I have had many more accounts of difficulties with HR in the regions. Some of you may already do this but for the rest - some advice. When you contact a government agency make note of the date, time, name of the person contacted, any delays involved and the outcome of the contact. If you do not get an answer or wish to proceed further ask whom to contact next or to speak to the supervisor. If you do not receive a timely response let me know or contact the person listed on the HR help line with the details listed above that you have recorded. The help desk information is at <http://www.faa.gov/ahr/competitive/action.cfm#poc>

Bids - If the contact listed on your bid is Pamela Bennett she is not accessible right now and her voicemail does not indicate that you may contact Sandy Brown (202) 493-4394 or Paulette Randolph (202) 267-3897 instead. Please make note, as this is the contact listed on bid AWA-AJS-05-PGB0998-80413. Many of you have called me about the progress on this bid's selection. The bids were rated and ranked yesterday, the selection

official was selected today, and you are on the fast track to be notified. Hopefully this will be by the end of next week.

Employee Express - A few weeks ago I covered how your leave and earnings statements would be handled for the last couple of pay periods. In that posting I referred to Employee Express as a way of obtaining that information. Many of you responded that from numerous sources you had been informed that we would not have access to employee express after Oct. 3. I checked further and this is the response I received from the FAA with a little extra information on TSP:

Employee Express - When an Employee separates from the FAA, their access to Employee Express terminates, although it can take up to 2 weeks for that to happen.

The FAA does not control access to the employee's On-line FSA Account. That is managed by FSAFEDS. They are notified when an employee separates, however, that does not mean that the employee's account is automatically closed. Remaining balances in the Dependent Care FSA and Health Care FSA are treated differently. Consequently, the accounts would remain open for a period of time, depending on the type of account and balance. More information can be found at www.fsafeds.com.

The FAA does not control access to the employees On-line TSP Account. This is managed by the Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board. The FAA notifies TSP once the employee is separated. At this point, TSP will contact the employee with information about their options. More information can be found at www.tsp.gov.

Military – There are five AFSS employees currently or soon to be overseas that will not be RIF with the rest of us. They can maintain their civilian pay as long as they have leave however when that leave runs out they are left with just their military pay and a family to support back home. Last week the FAA announced that these personnel could be included in the AL and SL donation program. I know some of you will not be utilizing all your leave and would like you to consider donating it to this group. As yet the process for donating to this group has not been specified. I will let you know how to do so hopefully next week. The names of those from AFSS are: Kevin Bender, Mike Dasaro, Troy Eck, Dan Raynor, and Jeff Trabold.

Health insurance – A reminder that if you let your health insurance lapse that you will have much higher rates and preexisting conditions may not be covered when you get new coverage.

The Age 31 waiver extension – no news yet.

Bids – I don't know why they waited until the last minute but there are a few bids that will be posted over the next few weeks. There is still time for you to be selected but

usually there is a very short window between opening and closing dates so please check FAA jobs site often.

MIV AFSS – no progress on reopening or alternatives. What a mess - no one answering the radios, the stations with offload traffic not knowing who to contact for clearances or not having lines to facilities for those clearances, not to mention the increased traffic to facilities already burdened with the DC ADIZ requirements. No decisions have been made on the future of MIV AFSS.

GWO, DRI, and ANB – All employees are accounted for and systems are returning. I hope your families are all accounted for as well. Life outside work is difficult with food shortages, long gas lines, and continued power outages. Many of us have been there in the past with other disasters. You are in our thoughts and prayers. Everyone else please remember that excessive exposure to the media coverage of the Hurricane damage and the current stress in your life can be damaging to you. Here are a couple of web sites to visit if you need help or want to help.

The National Institute on Mental Health has a webpage entitled: "**Hurricane Katrina: Information on Coping with Traumatic Events**". The link is below.
<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/healthinformation/traumaticmenu.cfm>

Next, if you are hungry for or need information, CNN has opened a webpage entitled: "**Hurricane Katrina Help Center**". There is information and many links related to donations, volunteer opportunities, getting help, locating the missing and finding local information. The link is below.
<http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/2005/katrina/help.center/>

There have been a surprising number of reports of bids being canceled or people being informed that no selections would be made. To address these issues I need to have the vacancy announcement number so if you have been told there would be no selection made let me know the number when you call.

Only 24 days to go.

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