

DOT Today

November 1993
Volume III, No. 2
U.S. Department of Transportation



Moving America Together

DOT Provides Expertise to Russia and the New Independent States

Every magazine seems to have a feature on it. Nightly news programs look at how things are changing. There is a new trend in Russian/U.S. relations as Russia and the New Independent States (NIS) struggle to move into a free market economy.

In the NIS, moving from a state-owned, military-driven way of doing business to a free economy is turning out to be easier said than done. Land is being opened up for sale, privatization of ports is on the horizon, and hope for modernization is strong. But, the Russians desperately need help. During the past year, the Department of Transportation has stepped up efforts, along with other government agencies, to get Russia and the NIS started on the road to success.

Nearly every operating administration is involved in some way with technical assistance. Although the department's financial resources for providing help are limited, DOT officials have been able to develop relations with other agencies, such as the Agency for International Development (AID), the World Bank, the U.S. Trade and Development Agency, and others to obtain funding for travel and other activities. A number of important initiatives are underway:

Office of the Secretary

OST conducted a department-wide survey to inventory the interest and availability of staff to provide short-term (3 to 4 weeks) assistance to the

NIS. More than 200 responses were received, about one-third from senior departmental executives with significant expertise in the management, administration, analysis and legal aspects of making and implementing transport policy. The other two-thirds included senior staff who can provide detailed technical training in the specific areas of user charges, budgeting, financial management and planning — areas in which the NIS transport managers so urgently need assistance.

Two senior staff from the Office of Policy and International Affairs, and one senior staff person from the Volpe National Transportation Systems Center completed an assignment this summer in Moscow as part of a DOT/World Bank/private sector team. They helped the Russian Ministry of Transport establish the legislative, regulatory and administrative framework necessary to begin a market-based transport sector. The Volpe staff member provided guidance on the privatization of transport firms operating both passenger buses and trucks. He remains in Russia under funding from the World Bank Group.

Secretary Peña and the Russian Minister of Transport have worked out a plan for a joint DOT/Ministry of Transport Working Group on Russian Transportation. A Memorandum of



Understanding is being negotiated that will set the framework for cooperation in science and technology covering all modes of transportation.

U.S. Coast Guard

The Coast Guard is scheduling training in marine safety, marine environmental protection, merchant vessel inspection and maritime law enforcement. Under the DoD's "Military-to-Military" program, the Coast Guard is preparing

In a boatyard near Murmansk (l to r): interpreter Andre Mazurin, J.F. Joffray (former director, Port of New Orleans), Victor Nikrutenko, head of Russian Transportation Division, Privatization Ministry; John Carnes (Marad), Valery Nikulin, Russian deputy in charge of economics and operations, and Vasily S. Stizh, Murmansk port director.

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RADM Roger T. Rufe Jr. goes over plans for the exercise with Anatoly Sidorenko, vice president of the Far East Shipping Co. aboard the Cutter Midgett.

Russia and the Coast Guard: Learning From Each Other

Story and Photos by PA2 Don Atwell, 17th District

Boaters and aviators are familiar with the rescue techniques of the

Coast Guard: one of their aircraft lowering a rescue basket or dropping a pump is a welcome and commonplace sight.

Bering Sea fishermen from Alaska and commercial aviators flying over the North Pacific Ocean, however, may be hours away from the nearest U.S. rescue unit. In a life or death situation, they may have to put their lives in the hands of people from a very unfamiliar place—Russia.

With the United States and Russia

just a few miles apart, both countries often have an interest in the same search case. But, where fishing boats in the Bering Sea used to be the only concern for the two countries, now they have to watch both sea and sky.

Coast Guard search-and-rescue experts (SAR) from Alaska, a C-130 from Air Station Kodiak, Alaska, and the CG Cutter Midgett from Seattle, recently visited the Russian Far East to conduct a joint SAR exercise.

Since the lifting of the "iron curtain," more commercial airliners are traveling into Russia than ever before. Officials from both countries agreed that an airline-disaster scenario would be an excellent test of their ability to work together.

According to the drill scenario, an airliner crashed about 25 miles off the coast of Petropavlovsk, Russia. Survivors from both countries were in life rafts, waiting to be rescued. Coast Guard and Russian rescuers had to find

them. Officials from the two countries had to cooperate in developing search areas and determine the most appropriate rescue techniques.

"We hope to learn if we can work together," 17th District Commander RADM Roger T. Rufe Jr., said. He expressed some concern after the initial meeting between the two countries, that there may be a few problems. "The planning stages were confused at first," he said. That's to be expected. I think that was more of a language problem."

After several planning sessions, Rufe's optimism grew. "The cooperation has been great," he said. "We didn't know how enthusiastic the Russians were going to be. Now we have a better understanding, and they have aggressively pursued the exercise. Russian rescue techniques "incredible"

CDR Gerry Donohoe, formerly of the National Search and Rescue school in Yorktown, Va., now assigned to the

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Employee Profile: FTA's All-American

Russia and the New Independent States *(Continued from page 1)*



training programs in Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia.

Federal Aviation Administration

In addition to negotiations on bilateral agreements, FAA is involved in a broad range of technical activities with Russia, the Ukraine, and other states in the NIS. These activities are funded by the FAA with some support from the U.S. Trade and Development Agency and the Air Transport Association member airlines on the government/industry effort to open more efficient, cost-effective air routes. Efforts by the FAA and key airlines continue to open shorter overflight routes between the U.S. and the Asia-Pacific region. Estimates of the savings in fuel costs alone are in the billions of dollars.

FAA and DoD officials are working closely to convince our Russian counterparts to integrate their civil and military air traffic control systems for

greater safety and efficiency and to modernize the ATC systems of Russia, the Ukraine and other NIS members. The estimated cost to modernize the Russian system alone is well over \$10 billion. Safety assessments of their system are continuing.

Russian and U.S. officials at a Russian port, where a ship delivers goods through the humanitarian aid program

GLONASS navigation satellites in a single airborne receiver. Use of both systems could speed worldwide introduction of the Global Navigation Surveillance System.

In September, FAA and the U.S. Trade and Development Agency hosted a finance seminar in St. Petersburg to better acquaint key NIS political and technical officials with alternative approaches for financing modernization of airports.

Federal Highway Administration

Technology transfer and familiarizing the Russians with U.S. highway-related goods and services are important objectives of FHWA officials. Several study tours by Russian government transport officials have been hosted, and senior FHWA staff have made several trips to Russia. FHWA is also contributing funds to accelerate startup of the World Bank-funded highway rehabilitation project. FHWA will contribute \$5 million of the \$340-\$360 million project, plus a staff for a project implemen-

tation unit consisting of up to five engineers and a financial analyst.

Federal Railroad Administration

In September, a FRA railway specialist went on a fact-finding trip to Belarus, the Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan to develop an understanding of the rail systems in NIS countries other than Russia, and to identify investment and assistance opportunities for the U.S. railroad industry.

OST and Maritime Administration

In September a team consisting of John Carnes, a Marad port operations expert; Charles Vandervroot, an OST economist, and J.F. Joffray, the former director of the Port of New Orleans, went to Russia to begin plans for port privatization and improving port efficiency. The goal is to pass on the technical assistance of how the private sector functions and what works best in the U.S. While on the visit, the group toured a number of ports in Russia and chose Murmansk, on the Barents Sea (north of the Arctic Circle) as the location for a model port privatization project. A consultant will start work in Murmansk sometime in January to implement the work program developed by the team, DOT, AID, and the Russians. The plan is for the other ports in Russia to be privatized along the model developed for Murmansk.

DOT is currently working with the AID in preparing a report to Congress called "Transportation Infrastructure Needs of Eastern Europe, Russia and Mongolia," due at the end of October, which is expected to identify specific areas where the U.S. transportation industry can benefit from the Russian relationship.

Russia and the Coast Guard *(Continued from page 1)*

17th District, says it's when the Russians arrive on the scene that they do their best work. "The rescue part was incredible," he said. "We have a lot to learn about their rescue techniques."

Many types of rescues were demonstrated for the benefit of both countries. Russian aircraft dropped parachutists and other rescue equipment out of their two airplanes. When rescue aircraft flew overhead, the crash "survivors" used international distress signals to help the aircraft find them.

SN Scott Randy, a crewman from the Midgett, noticed one major difference between how the Coast Guard conducts hoists and how the Russians conduct them — the altitude. Russian helicopters hoist from a much greater altitude (more than 100 feet) so that the rotors don't disturb the surface of the water.

Later, the Midgett's HH-65A Dolphin helicopter shadowed the performance of the Russian helicopter by hoisting two survivors, and transferring them to the deck of a Russian ship.

The copilot of the Dolphin, LT Tim Rourke, admitted that the aid of interpreters made the hoist much easier. In a real-life situation, there probably would not be an interpreter aboard the helicopter. In the future, the Russians plan to have English-speaking people at many key locations in the Russian Far East.

After watching some of Russian's rescue techniques, all eyes turned to the sky as a

Russian airplane demonstrated a particularly impressive technique.

Inside the

plane, three men strapped themselves into a fiberglass rescue boat. Below, survivors watched intently as the Russian aircraft first dropped a marker and made another pass. When the door opened the second time, a drag parachute shot out the back of the airplane. It was followed by the boat.

Four parachutes opened a short while later, and the "Yersh" rescue boat and three crewmen drifted slowly down to the ocean. Once on the surface, they disconnected the parachutes, started the motor and picked up a survivor, whom they transferred to the Midgett.

"We were particularly impressed with the rescue-boat drop," said CAPT Kirk Colvin, head of SAR for the 17th District.

Hopes for more joint exercises

The Coast Guard plans to do several such exercises in the future to help American rescuers become more familiar with the Russians. "Seeing the exercise become such a success gives us more confidence that we can open up even more air routes," said David Morse, deputy regional administrator for the Federal Aviation Administration. "Those new routes will be a tremendous benefit to both countries."

"I think all of the American delegation feels much more confident now after seeing what the Russian rescue services can provide," said Colvin.



Russian sailors help tie up the Coast Guard Cutter Midgett in Petropavlovsk.

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Secretary of Transportation
Director of Public Affairs
Editor
Staff Writer
Design

Federico F. Peña
Richard Mintz
Sue Challis
Susann Lee White
Tomara Arrington and Catherine Vass,
OST Graphics

This is your publication, and we value your input.

If you would like to submit letters, comments or articles, please address them to: Editor, DOT Today, OST, Office of Public Affairs, A-10, Room 9419, 400 Seventh Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20590. (202)366-5578; FAX (202)366-7270.

The deadline for the December 1993 issue is November 22

This newsletter is
recyclable



Please Recycle

We're Thinking of You, Bob

OST Public Affairs Officer Bob Marx has been seriously ill for the past few months, but we are happy to report, is making progress.

While on a vacation trip to Kenya and then on to Rome in late August, Bob contracted a severe viral infection and, after a two-week hospital stay in Rome, had to be medically evacuated. The infection has been identified as Guillain-Barre Syndrome, a symptom of which is lower motor neuron paralysis, caused by the destruction of the coverings on nerve endings. It is unclear exactly how Bob was infected. He is still on a respirator and is unable to speak because of the paralysis.

He is in the intensive care unit at George Washington University Hospital and is not permitted visitors. Recovery, we are told, is a gradual process that could take up to a year. Bob has many friends around the country who have called headquarters to check on his progress. His wife, Harriet, tells us he really enjoys receiving notes and cards from friends, but it is best to send them to Bob at his home address, 3102 Wessynton Way, Alexandria, Va. 22309.

Secretary Peña Visits Middle East to Strengthen Ties and Promote U.S. Products

Last month, Secretary Peña and FAA Administrator David Hinson went on a three-day official visit to Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and the United Arab Emirates. The delegation they led also made a stop in Brussels for consultations with European Transport Commissioner Abel Matutes on a new framework for U.S.-European aviation agreements. Secretary Peña is the first DOT secretary to visit Saudi Arabia.

"U.S. economic and security interests are closely linked with the interests of the Persian Gulf nations," said the Secretary. "This visit will further our cooperative efforts in the region and help advance important transportation initiatives."

The Saudis are also considering a major purchase of new commercial jetliners, Peña announced. "This administration is committed fully

to promoting U.S. products abroad," he continued. "U.S. exports mean U.S. jobs, and sales of transport equipment, especially commercial jetliners, represent the single biggest share of the U.S. balance of trade."

For more than 15 years, DOT has provided technical assistance to the Saudi Ministry of communications in planning highway, mass transit, rail, maritime and intermodal systems. The FAA has provided a range of technical, safety and air traffic management assistance and training. The Saudis are also considering a large acquisition of new transit buses.

The meetings in Brussels were part of continuing consultations between the U.S. and the European Community on a wide range of transport issues. The U.S. wants to move to a multilateral



framework that would promote a more open, competitive regime for international aviation regime. The U.S. and Germany recently signed a new bilateral pact that grants cargo carriers open skies and enhances access for passengers and airlines in both countries.

National Native American Heritage Month

Reaching Out Through Education Story and photo by Susann Lee White

National Native American Heritage Month is being celebrated throughout the department with activities ranging from panel discussions to festival dances. About 989 Native Americans who work for DOT nationwide, including Alaskan Native Americans, will bring their culture to the public in the month-long program, "Reach Out Through Education." Activities begin with the opening ceremony and a panel discussion on "Education as Experienced by Native American/Alaskan Natives" Nov. 4 in the FAA auditorium.

Other events for the month include a dance performance by Preston Adkins of the Chickahominy Tribe from 11 a.m. to noon Nov. 8 in the FAA auditorium; Indian craft vendor, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Nov. 29 in the FAA cafeteria; and

the closing ceremony, Nov. 30 in the headquarters Nassif Building, Room 2230. The FAA will feature a special lobby exhibit all month.

The month of November is now designated National Native American Heritage Month. The month containing Thanksgiving was chosen to remember the help given by Native Americans to the struggling Pilgrims.

An Alaskan Success Story

Fred Jack, 42, an Alaskan Native from the Philngit tribe, was born in Southeastern Alaska and grew up in the Hoonah Village, the youngest of a family of 11 children. At 18, he won a scholarship through the Bureau of Indian Affairs and received an Associate of Arts degree from the University of Alaska. Since 1972 he has worked with the FAA, starting as a GS-4 electronic technician, and is now

a GS-15 sector manager. "I believe that education and learning are the keys to success," he said. "Diversity education also has value. We need to put talents where they belong. Often, we don't take into consideration the talents that people have who don't have opportunities for an education. I believe everyone has something to contribute."



Freedom Triumphant

More than 50,000 people converged on the U.S. Capitol October 23 for a ceremony commemorating the bicentennial of the Capitol, and to watch the 15,000 pound bronze Statue of Freedom resume her prominent position upon its dome.

On this crisp autumn day in Washington, D.C., President Clinton said he

hoped this celebration would lay the groundwork so that our grandchildren's grandchildren can celebrate and commemorate the U.S. Capitol 200 years from now.

Although there were speakers, music and poetry, hoisting Freedom back to her perch (with the help of a special helicopter) was the high point of the event. Soaring more than 300 feet in the air, the bronze 19' 6" statue holds a sheathed sword in her right hand, and a laurel wreath of victory and the shield of the U.S. with 13 stripes in her left hand. She stands on a cast iron globe encircled with the national motto, E Pluribus Unum. Her helmet is encircled with stars and features a crest made up of an eagle's head, feathers and talons, a reference to the costume of Native Americans. Ten bronze points tipped with platinum are attached to her headdress, shoulders, and shield to protect her from lightning.

The Statue of Freedom is the work of sculptor Thomas Crawford and has adorned the Capitol dome since December 1863, when the final section of work was hoisted in place to a 35-gun salute, answered by the guns of the 12 forts around Washington.

In May of this year, after 130 years in place, Freedom was removed from her pedestal for restoration, paid for by private funds from the United States Capitol Preservation Commission.

Police Traffic Services

by Susann Lee White

Law enforcement has been a key element in NHTSA's highway safety programs since the agency was created in 1966. The Police Traffic Services (PTS) division of Traffic Safety Programs is continuing NHTSA's mission — to save lives, to improve driver safety, and to prevent and protect against accidents on roads and highways in the United States.

"We are proud of the effort that PTS has made over the years in developing training programs for law enforcement at the local and state levels," says Police Traffic Services division chief Mike Sheehan, a former police officer and Department of Justice employee. He is one of a staff of nine professionals, most of whom are former local or state police men and women. "We deal with all types of law enforcement agencies, municipal, county and state, including sheriffs, in coordination with other offices in Traffic Safety Programs," Sheehan says. The staff also includes four to six police officers from various states, who come to Washington, D.C., to work with PTS on a one- to two-year alternating basis.

PTS is responsible for NHTSA's speed enforcement efforts. In support of this program the division has developed public information workshops, basic training programs in radar speed measurement, and improved techniques for detecting drugged and drunk driving. The division is also responsible for publishing many other documents for law enforcement use. Each year, PTS, in conjunction with the office of occupant protection, offers the Chief's Challenge, a nationwide competition among law enforcement agencies to promote safety belt use and to enforce state belt laws. PTS also sponsors the Clayton J. Hall Memorial Award for Excellence in memory of the retired Air Force Captain who served as the former director of the Office of Enforcement and Emergency Services (OEEES).

The OEEES grew out of NHTSA's expanded efforts to provide effective training and to improve the delivery of police traffic services. "Hall felt that OEEES should work very hard to serve the needs of law enforcement in traffic safety programs," Sheehan says.

"NHTSA provides funding to the states to improve highway safety. The ultimate goal is voluntary compliance by drivers and pedestrians with the traffic laws, not to encourage officers to write more tickets," Sheehan concludes.

Another member of the division staff, a former police inspector for the Washington, D.C., police department, is highway safety specialist Brian Traynor, who is responsible for NHTSA's national radar training course for police officers. "We felt an obligation to try and assure members of the motoring public who are cited for violations of the law, that they receive the ticket from a well-trained officer, and that the ticket is issued based on accurate and reliable equipment," Traynor says.

"As law enforcement agency budgets are reduced, PTS will continue to assist them in developing smarter, more efficient ways to provide the public with police traffic services," says Traynor, who helped develop a national emergency vehicle operators training course intended to reduce police vehicle crashes, injuries, and deaths. PTS has conducted workshops across the country for law enforcement academy directors and chief driving instructors, as well as public information workshops. Traynor also works with the National Institute of Standards and Technology in Gaithersburg, Md., and Boulder, Colo., in developing specifications and testing protocols for speed measurement devices.

At NHTSA, the work of PTS remains vital in assisting the American public in traffic safety awareness and preventing injuries and deaths on our highways.

THE SECRETARY'S 26TH ANNUAL AWARDS

In a more intimate ceremony than in past years, more than 65 employees and their guests attended a luncheon October 13 at Ft. McNair in Washington, D.C., for the 26th Annual Secretary's Awards.

Master of Ceremonies was Deputy Secretary Mort Downey, who welcomed the Coast Guard Color Guard and combo to open the ceremony, then introduced the departmental officers and administrators in attendance. Secretary Peña made brief remarks, then remained on stage to give out the awards.

We recognize and congratulate our colleagues on their achievements.



MERITORIOUS ACHIEVEMENT SILVER MEDAL

This Award is given by the Secretary in recognition of exceptionally meritorious service to the Department or Federal Government, or for exceptional achievement which substantially contributed to the accomplishment of the Department's mission or major programs.

CHRISTOPHER T. TOURELLOT
Attorney-Advisor,
Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C.

For outstanding service in conjunction with the USAir/British Airways transactions of 1992 and 1993.

CAMILLE H. MITTELHOLTZ
Environmental Program Analyst,
Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C.

For exceptionally effective oversight of Departmental activities implementing the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990.

KATHERINE E. COLLINS
Director of Budget,
Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C.

For serving with dedication and distinction as Acting Assistant Secretary for Budget and Programs.

DONNA R. SMITH
Program Analyst,
Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C.

For providing leadership and technical expertise in the area of substance abuse and workplace testing.

MARTHA S. HENDRICK
Laboratory Chemist,
United States Coast Guard
Groton, Connecticut

For distinguished leadership and performance of duty as a Chemist at the Marine Safety Laboratories.

NORMA L. LOZADA
Civilian Personnel Officer,
United States Coast Guard
Governors Island, New York

For creative and effective leadership in developing an exemplary human resources management program.

CAROL M. ARNOLD
Program Evaluation Specialist,
Federal Aviation Administration
Washington, D.C.

For personal leadership and dedication to improving work force diversity in the FAA.

LOK YAN KOO
Test Director,
Federal Aviation Administration
Atlantic City, New Jersey

For establishing the new ACA Test and Evaluation Program.

DONALD V. SCHMIDT
Acting Director,
International Area Office
Federal Aviation Administration
Singapore, Singapore

In recognition of demonstrated professionalism and high quality performance in managing international civil aviation efforts.

EMILY M. TRAPNELL
FAA Representative,
Federal Aviation Administration
London, England

In recognition of extraordinary expertise and professionalism which has contributed significantly to international civil aviation.

RANDOLPH M. WILLIAMS
Equal Employment
Opportunity Manager
Federal Aviation Administration
Fort Worth, Texas

For outstanding contributions, dedication, and visionary support of the

Federal Aviation Administration's mission.

LAWRENCE J. YOUNGBLUT
Aviation Safety Inspector,
Federal Aviation Administration
Washington, D.C.

For successfully accomplishing goals efficiently, effectively, and always in a timely manner.

ALLEN W. BURDEN
Chief, Program Planning, Development,
and Administration Division
Federal Highway Administration
Washington, D.C.

For exceptional leadership in developing Federal Lands Highway Programs, and for achieving outstanding program performance.

SUSAN J. BINDER
Chief, Industry and Economic
Analysis Branch
Federal Highway Administration
Washington, D.C.

In recognition of outstanding leadership in analysis of the relationship of transportation investment to economic productivity.

JAMES M. TUMLIN
Division Administrator,
Federal Highway Administration
Richmond, Virginia

For superior service in advancing Virginia's transportation program.

ARNE J. BANG
Senior Manager, Special Program,
Federal Railroad Administration
Washington, D.C.

For exemplary management of the High Speed Ground Transportation Task Force Supporting Safety Regulation Development.

WILLIAM A. LEASURE, JR.

Director, Office of Crash Avoidance Research
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Washington, D.C.

For intermodal leadership in developing and implementing the Department's Intelligent Vehicle Highway Systems program.

BRIAN CUDAHY

Program Analysis Officer
Federal Transit Administration
Washington, D.C.

For developing important policy statements and reports of outstanding quality pertaining to the transit program.

STEPHEN C. HUNG

Director, Operations,
Maintenance and Marine Safety
Saint Lawrence Seaway
Development Corporation
Massena, New York

For outstanding leadership in the promotion of utilizing new technologies to enhance the efficiency and safety of seaway operations.

Stephen Hung, SLSDC,
Massena, N.Y., receives his
award from the Secretary

JANE PACHT BRICKMAN

Associate Professor,
Maritime Administration
Kings Point, New York
For serving as a professional advocate for the female midshipmen at the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy.

BRUCE J. CARLTON

Director,
Office of Policy and Plans,
Maritime Administration
Washington, D.C.
For outstanding and innovative management of the Office of Maritime Labor and Training.

PHILIP S. COONLEY

Director, Office of Administration
Research and Special Programs
Administration
Cambridge, Massachusetts
For significant contributions to innovative quality management and administrative cost reduction at the Volpe National Transportation Systems Center.



Coast Guard electrician Joseph Stammer's quick actions earned him the Award for Valor. When a fire broke out aboard the Cutter Valiant, he alerted everyone and immediately shut off ventilation to reduce the spread of smoke and fire. Then, putting others ahead of himself, made sure that his co-workers in the engine room made it to safety.

VOLUNTEER SERVICE

This Award is granted by the Secretary to honor an employee who has made significant contributions to improving a community organization or program, for which the Department provides support or sponsorship, by unselfishly donating personal time and effort.

LUTHER G. GODFREY, Equal Opportunity Specialist, FHWA, Albany, N.Y., for his long-term dedication as a volunteer, particularly for working to meet the educational needs of young people.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

This Award is granted by the Secretary to honor an employee who has excelled in voluntarily improving conditions of a community or organization by unselfishly donating personal time and effort.

BONNIE-KATE ALLEN

Highway Safety Specialist, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, White Plains, New York
In recognition for her untiring efforts on behalf of children throughout the northeast and in particular for her advocacy work for New York State to prevent child abuse and neglect.

VALOR

This is the highest Departmental award for acts of heroism or courage involving great risk by civilian employees under unusual circumstances. To be eligible for this award, an employee must have demonstrated heroism or courage in an emergency on or off duty.

JOSEPH S. STAMMER
Electrician

United States Coast Guard
Curtis Bay, Maryland

For exceptional heroism in preventing the serious injury or death of 15 to 20 employees.

LLOYD ALLRED

Supervisory Electronics Technician
Federal Aviation Administration
Salt Lake City, Utah

For disregarding personal risk while helping a trapped woman and rescuing other injured accident victims.

MILES R. MILLER

System Management Specialist
Federal Aviation Administration
Amherst, New Hampshire

For saving two strangers from drowning without regard for his own safety.

EXCELLENCE

This Award is granted to employees in grades GS-1 through GS-9 and WG-1 through WG-8 who have achieved outstanding performance in all aspects of their work and deserve special commendation.

ROSEMARY HARRIS

Secretary
Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C.
For outstanding public service and contribution to the Licensing and Safety Division's regulatory program.

MONA E. MORGAN

Secretary
Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C.
For outstanding performance of secretarial duties.

RONALE E. TAYLOR

Secretary
Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C.
For sustained excellent performance, especially in support of implementation of the North American Free Trade Agreement.

CATHY L. KEYSER

Staff Assistant
Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C.
For leadership, dedication, and support of the key management staff of the Office of Administrative Services and Property Management.

KRISTIE A. ALBRIGHT

Secretary
Office of Inspector General
Washington, D.C.
For demonstrated excellence in administrative support, unbridled enthusiasm in her approach to work, and exemplary interpersonal skills.

SHEILA MONTAGUE

Computer Specialist
Office of Inspector General
Washington, D.C.
For outstanding contributions in providing microcomputer support and training to the Office of Inspector General.

CAROL LYNNE AKENS

Secretary
United States Coast Guard
Yorktown, Virginia

For superb performance as secretary for the Training Division at Coast Guard Reserve Training Center.

GLORIA A. FAULHABER

Secretary
United States Coast Guard
Washington, D.C.
For exemplary commitment to goals of the office, fostering strong intra-division cooperation, and faithfully supporting office leadership.

MAXINE Y. LUM

Secretary
United States Coast Guard
Honolulu, Hawaii
For truly exceptional continued performance.

PAMELA S. CASTRO

Personnel Management Specialist
Federal Aviation Administration
Hilliard, Florida
For exceptionally outstanding leadership and contributions to her facility.

RUBY E. HENDRIX

Secretary
Federal Aviation Administration
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
For outstanding achievement, professionalism, and leadership in all aspects of aeromedical office administration.

MARY JANETTE IKER

Aviation Safety Assistant
Federal Aviation Administration
Miami, Florida
For excellence in flight scheduling, administrative innovations, currency control, and being an FAA role model.

CHARLENE D. WASHINGTON

Secretary
Federal Aviation Administration
Washington, D.C.
For outstanding judgment, determination, work ethic, and poise in the Office of Budget.

NANCY K. WALL

Secretary
Federal Aviation Administration
Fort Worth, Texas
In recognition of her dedication, support, initiative, and overall excellence.

JUDY A. DOVE

Secretary
Federal Highway Administration
Washington, D.C.
In recognition of exemplary office management and coordination of secretarial functions in Program Development.

PATRICK G. WALSH

Personnel Clerk
Federal Highway Administration
Kansas City, Missouri
In recognition of outstanding performance and dedication in contributing to the successful operation of the Region 7 Personnel Office.

CAROLYN V. BODDIE

Secretary
Federal Highway Administration
Washington, D.C.
For service to DOT significantly beyond the requirements of duties as secretary.

LINDA L. MAYNARD

Personnel Management Specialist
Federal Railroad Administration
Washington, D.C.
For outstanding professional achievement in developing internal personnel processing procedures for the Records and Processing Staff.

SHIRLEY JACKSON

Secretary
Federal Railroad Administration
Washington, D.C.
For sustained excellence in supporting the Office of Research and Development's administrative and management responsibilities.

RITA I. GIBBONS

Administrative Staff Assistant
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration



Washington, D.C.
For extraordinary initiative in expanding administrative support to include significant program research and management.

ARLEANE C. SWEETNEY

Secretary
Federal Transit Administration
Washington, D.C.
For demonstrating outstanding initiative and skills in providing support to the Office of Communications and External Affairs.

EUNICE BROWN

Management Analyst
Federal Transit Administration
Washington, D.C.
For serving as an outstanding Point of Contact for FTA during the departmental IRM review.

MARY E. HOLLOMON

Secretary
Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation
Washington, D.C.
For sustained superior performance in providing customer service both in SLSDC and to the outside.

SANDRA J. FERGUSON

Secretary
Maritime Administration
Washington, D.C.

Charlene D. Washington,
FAA headquarters, with
Secretary Peña

For continuing excellence in performing the administrative functions of the Office of Information Resources Management.

LORRAINE M. HECHT

Admissions Assistant
Maritime Administration
Kings Point, New York
For exemplary achievement as an Admissions Assistant at the United States Merchant Marine Academy.

BRUNILDA SANTOS

Office Automation Clerk
Research and Special Programs Administration
Cambridge, Massachusetts
For outstanding achievement in improving office work methods, efficiency, and administrative analysis.

MICHELLE L. UPTON

Program Assistant
Research and Special Programs Administration
Washington, D.C.
For outstanding performance in coordinating and tracking Freedom of Information Act Requests.

LAWRENCE R. SCHNEIDER AWARD

This Award was established to honor the memory of Lawrence R. Schneider, Chief Counsel of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration from August 8, 1971, until his death on July 12, 1974. Presentation is made annually to an especially competent and productive practicing Department of Transportation attorney who has been admitted to the bar within the last ten years.

JOHN C. KNUDSEN

Trial Attorney, Federal Aviation Administration, Washington, D.C.
For the exceptional level of performance sustained during his employment at the Federal Aviation Administration and for his extraordinary achievements in litigation.

FOR OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT IN DIVERSITY

This Award is granted by the Secretary to honor and recognize an employee, supervisor, or manager who has excelled in efforts to promote diversity through unusually effective leadership, skill, imagination, and perseverance.

GARY WILLIAM TUCKER

FAA Air Traffic Division Manager, Eastern Region.
For his record of exemplary personal behavior and "first ever" selections to key management jobs—and his willingness to hold others accountable for their diversity commitments and responsibilities.

QUALITY

This Award is given by the Secretary in recognition of an outstanding Departmental organization which is customer-focused and committed to achieving excellence through continuous quality improvement.

U.S. COAST GUARD YARD, United States Coast Guard, Curtis Bay, Maryland
For outstanding commitment to customer satisfaction and quality improvement.

OFFICE OF AVIATION SYSTEM STANDARDS, Federal Aviation Administration, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
For outstanding achievements in quality improvement and customer focus through extraordinary leadership, employee involvement, and organizational pride.

THE SECRETARY'S AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT GOLD MEDAL

The Gold Medal is the highest level award granted within DOT. It is for outstanding achievement, for rare and distinguished contributions of major significance to the department, the nation or the world. This year there was no individual recognized. Instead, the Secretary announced that the award was being presented collectively on behalf of the efforts of all those who helped during the Midwest Flood—on site at flood locations, in local communities and at headquarters. Representing the many employees involved in that effort were:

PSI Darrell T. Griffith, USCG, who evacuated dozens of people from homes, carried hundreds of sand bags, and worked 12 hour days.
Ken Jensen, FHWA, Region 7, representing the Regional Emergency Transportation Coordinators (RETCOs) who served as the focal point for DOT's emergency activities in aviation, water, rail and highways.

Barbara Barajas, RSPA, who accepted on behalf of the department, for her work in preparing daily situation reports.
The Secretary also acknowledged Acting RSPA Administrator Rose McMurray, who, he said, "Put forth a great management effort during the entire flood relief program."

"You and your colleagues represent the essence of public service," he concluded.
Then, McMurray had a surprise for the Secretary and his chief of staff, Ann Bormolini. They were each presented with a special award, enclosed appropriately in a sand bag, for their outstanding leadership in the flood relief efforts.
Congratulations to all this year's honorees!

Those presented with military decorations for Distinguished Military Service will be listed in the December issue of DOT Today. The list of those recognized for 40 years or more of service will also appear in the December issue.



Lori Keough

Deaf Employee Meets the Challenge

Recently, Lori Keough and her supervisor, Rick Ryerse, came to Washington, D.C. to attend the department's Deaf Awareness Week events. The theme this year was "See Through Our Hands," a theme that has been with Lori all of her life. You see, Lori Keough was born deaf.

Lori, who has been an employee in the Financial Division at RSPA's Volpe National Transportation Systems Center in Cambridge, Mass., for the last four years, began as the Imprest Fund Cashier/Accountant Technician, and then was promoted to a career ladder position as a Budget Analyst two years ago. She is the only deaf employee at the Center. During the last year and a half, she and two of her co-workers have been teaching sign language classes to interested employees, and she hopes that the classes and other activities she's involved with will help more deaf people become interested in working for the government. "It really doesn't bother me that I'm the only deaf person working here," she says. "I am treated just like anyone else without any exceptions. I have communication skills. I use interpreters, machines and sign language to express my views."

Lori attended the Lexington School for the Deaf in Queens, N.Y., and later majored in accounting at the National Technical Institute for the Deaf in Rochester. It was there that she met her husband of seven years, David, who is also hearing impaired, and a bio-medical photographer at Boston University School of Medicine and University Hospital. They have a two-year-old son who has normal hearing.

For her strong advocacy of deaf awareness and outstanding efforts to further communication between co-workers, supervisors and the Volpe Center staff, Lori was given the "Outstanding Employee" award during the National Disability Employment Awareness Month event hosted by the Boston Federal Executive Board.

"I want to let the hearing and hearing impaired people all around the world know that there is no difference between hearing and deaf people," says Keough. "There is no difference in what you can do or what you can accomplish for being a deaf or a hearing person. My personal accomplishments have come not only from my self-confidence, but also from the support I receive from my husband and my beautiful parents, who throughout my life have told me that as long as I believe in myself, I can accomplish anything."

First Day for the ICE

by Gordon J. Smith, FRA

Oct. 5. It was obvious to anyone approaching the Union Station platform to board the noon Metroliner to New York that something was different. In place of the usual Amtrak equipment stood a gleaming white and red streamliner radiating the siren song of "speed, comfort, luxury." While this was not the first time the German ICE (InterCity Express) train had made the Washington to New York City trip, it was the first day of revenue service for the general public. When at 11:59 the conductor signaled the doors shut, passengers settled into the plush seats and admired the various amenities and ultra modern decor. At precisely noon the train smoothly accelerated out of the station, moved rapidly through the maze of track that is the station backyard, and headed north. It proved to be a most relaxing and enjoyable ride.



Two ICE train riders enjoy the dining car.

Photo by Marty Katz

An informal survey of passenger reactions to the ICE was made during both segments of the round trip. The passenger list included rail aficionados and surprised regular travelers, people with diverse occupations and varying exposure to rail service both here and abroad. There were kudos for the club car, with its in-seat TV screens and individual food service; the diner, with its gourmet menu, spotless silverware, glasses and dishes; and the bistro car with its comfortable surroundings. Other items drawing high praise included the restroom facilities, the on-board communications equipment, and the excellent seating arrangements. Operating personnel are also enthusiastic about the central control room for the conductors. Current train speed is a maximum of 135 mph; however, the ICE travels at much higher speeds throughout Germany. The ICE has been in service in Germany for a decade and operates at approximately 250 KmH (approximately 160 mph) between major cities.

ICE is one of several foreign trains being brought to the United States for testing by Amtrak. After the evaluations of all the options are complete it is anticipated that any equipment Amtrak selects will be manufactured in the United States, under appropriate licensing contracts. The new trains would see the most service on the Northeast corridor between Washington, New York and Boston.

Departing passengers were quick to express their satisfaction with the ICE train. Many asked questions of the train crew and the German Railways personnel in attendance, and most expressed a hope they would see similar trains available in the United States in the near future.

The potential ecological and economic benefits of rail travel are creating greater demands for new and improved passenger trains. The ICE, like the Swedish X2000 train, shows Americans that high speed rail travel may be just around the corner.

DOT Sponsors Seminars on Defense Conversion

The department recently sponsored four seminars nationwide on "Promoting Transportation Applications in Defense Conversion and Other Advanced Technologies." The seminars were designed to reinforce DOT's commitment to transportation-related research and to advance President Clinton's technology policy.

The president's technology policy issued in February calls for resources formerly devoted to defense-related research and development to be shifted to civilian technology programs and "strategic" research aimed at meeting a wide range of critical national ideas.

"The conversion of defense industries and the applications for advanced technologies at national laboratories and other research facilities present real opportunities for new commercial products and markets," said Secretary Peña upon announcing the seminars in September.

The seminars were held September 28 at the University of Michigan; October 26 at the University of California, Davis; at Massachusetts Institute of Technology on October 28,

and the University of Texas, Austin on November 2. Leaders in community development and industry, small businesses, national laboratories, academia, and state and local government attended. The discussions focused on the links between transportation and the environment, as well as infrastructure, rehabilitation and maintenance, and new vehicle technology.

"Technology reinvestment is key to America's long-term economic growth," said the Secretary. "This investment in technology development and commercialization will play a fundamental role in stimulating and sustaining an economy that is competitive, creates quality jobs and protects the environment."

DOT is working with the Department of Defense (DoD) and its Advanced Research Projects Agency, the Department of Energy (DOE), the National Laboratories operated under DOE and DoD, and the National Institute of Science and Technology on the feasibility and direction of transportation-related research that will apply the skills the nation developed in defense.

American Express to Replace Diners Club Cards

The General Services Administration has awarded a new Travel Charge Card and Travelers Checks contract to the American Express Company. The current contracts with Diners Club and CITIBANK expire at midnight November 29, 1993. Efforts are currently being made by the department and each operating administration to have new cards in the traveler's possession before the expiration date. Employees who currently have Diners Club Cards will be receiving their new American Express Cards through the mail in plain white envelopes.

As with the Diners Club card, the American Express card will be issued without a credit check and at no cost to the traveler. The card will also provide accident and baggage insurance, along with the security and convenience of carrying a major charge card which is accepted at millions of service establishments in every price range.

Contact your servicing finance office for additional details for obtaining and using the card.

EmployeeProfile

Avon Meacham — FTA's All-American

by Sue Challis

On opening day of the Decatur Pride's season this year in Illinois, the fast pitch softball team was driven onto the field in limousines, cheered by their fans. Sky divers landed in center field, carrying the official game balls. There were balloons and bands. And Avon Meacham, who five days a week works as an FTA budget analyst at DOT headquarters, was the lead-off hitter, playing center field.

"The people in Decatur, in fact all over the Midwest really love fast pitch softball," says Meacham. "They make a big deal about us as players. The pitchers are the real stars. They do a lot of recruiting for them and they become celebrities — bring them in from other states, other countries."

Fast pitch softball is the closest game to major league baseball, he explains. Fast pitch balls are thrown at 90 to 100 mph. "For me it's a hobby that keeps me young — keeps me active," he says. "It makes me feel like a world-class athlete."

In fact, he is a world-class athlete. He started back in 1980 with a local Washington, D.C., team called the "Twangers" (a team he still plays with during the week). In 1986, he went on to another team out of Annapolis, Md., from which he was selected to the All-World Team for the first time. Being named to this elite group gave him the opportunity to try out for the 1987 Pan American Games held in Indianapolis. He went on to become a member of the team, winning a silver medal.

The following year, he gained even more recognition, playing with a new team out of Reading, Pa., where he won the batting title (at .636) in the World Tournament. In 1990, he represented the

U.S. in the World Championships in Canada. These honors earned him a tryout for the 1991 Pan Am Games in Cuba. Again, the U.S. team came in second to Canada, by a final score of 2 to 1. Last

year, he was recruited by a team out of Clearwater, Fla., a team that finished third in the World Championships. Then this year, he was asked to join the Decatur Pride. "I hope to retire with this team," says the 16-year federal employee, "but first, I want to win a national championship or a world championship."

Not that he'll get a gold watch or a retirement check from them — all he'll get is a sigh of relief from his very patient wife of 12 years. During the fast pitch softball season, May through early September, Avon Meacham leaves Washington, D.C. on most Friday afternoons and joins his Midwest team for a weekend of cheers from his fans and a lot of personal satisfaction for himself. He has it timed just right to get the subway to the airport, then the shuttle to the boarding gate for his flight. Then on Sunday night, he reverses the procedure. "It's kind of hard on my wife and children," says Meacham (he has two, ages 7 and 3). "But when I'm home, I spend as much time as I possibly can with them." For about three of the weekends during the season and the week-long championship tournament, the team pays the family's travel expenses so they can come to watch him play.

Meacham doesn't receive any pay — only his traveling expenses and a stipend for expenses incurred during the season. "I don't play for money," he says. "I play for love of the game —

"Meacham's glove is the place that would-be doubles and triples go to die."

- Fast Pitch Chronicle



for personal achievement." This year, in addition to finishing in second place in the National Tournament, he made first team All-American, something he hadn't yet accomplished in his career. "I'll carry that honor for a year," he says. It has also earned him a third consecutive tryout for the Pan American games to be held in 1995 in Argentina.

But now that softball season is over, how does he fill those "lonely" weekends? "I stay in shape in the off season," Meacham says. "And, on Sunday mornings, I play football with my son." Oh, by the way, back in 1983, Meacham had a walk-on tryout with the Seattle Seahawks football team. Out of 250 participants, they made contract offers to four that year. Yep, you guessed it. He was one of the four. But he was unable to play. The age cutoff for rookies was 25 — he was 27 at the time. "But I proved to myself that I was good enough to make it," he smiles.

What a patient woman he's married to.



National Performance Review Implementation Begins: The DOT Success Stories

In a personal message to employees in last month's DOT Today, Secretary Peña pledged his commitment to the National Performance Review recommendations for reinventing government so that it works better and costs less. Increasing the department's productivity and achieving cost savings happens when each DOT organization reduces paperwork, red tape, and other time-consuming waste while improving the delivery of services to customers. DOT Today will feature organizations around the department that have hit the ground running with their ideas. Write and tell us what's going on in your area to implement the recommendations of the Vice President's National Performance Review.

Remember - the process of reinventing government has just begun.

The first feature comes from the Federal Highway Administration:

FHWA Re-Engineers Its Information Highway

Consistent with National Performance Review recommendations to re-engineer business processes through the use of information technology, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is using electronic communications media to improve the way the highway program works and to streamline internal operations nationwide. These initiatives support FHWA's strategic planning program and focus on improving customer communications and service.

When FHWA employees decided there was a need for greater information sharing among offices — especially between headquarters and field offices — an extensive network of electronic communications was developed and installed linking every FHWA employee in more than 70 locations around the country. Known as a wide area network, it now permits nearly instant transmission of mes-

sages, formal memoranda, and data files. The high speed infrastructure provides a level of information sharing among offices that is unprecedented in the agency, presenting opportunities for teamwork and opening the door for "reinventing" the way business is conducted.

This effort was so successful that FHWA took a closer look at improving communications with their external customers. In cooperation with the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), FHWA helped develop and install the AASHTO Value Added Network, opening direct electronic communications channels among all state transportation agencies. During the past year, FHWA has built on this network to connect nearly all state DOTs to local FHWA division offices.

Another important plus is the access this connection can give states and FHWA division offices to each other's information systems. It is here that the potential is greatest for using information technology to support a more effective, efficient program, and where recent progress has been most dramatic. In many states — the number is growing every month — project and financial information the states and FHWA both need now passes electronically from database to database. Consistent with a National Performance Review recommendation to reduce costs through data sharing, project approvals and payments have been accelerated. States taking full advantage of this capability are able to request and receive payments from FHWA on the same day. And with electronic signatures on key "documents" — the latest development from a successful

Reinventing Government pilot lab — this can all be done with less paper.

"As we implement these strategic policies," said FHWA Administrator Rodney E. Slater, "we must continue to look at new ways of doing business and explore new ways of communicating. Only by integrating our information management strategies with our business and organization strategies will we realize the greatest return from our efforts."

FHWA employees say this is just the beginning. Recent advances in electronic communications are an excellent platform for what promises to be an explosion in information sharing and business re-engineering on FHWA's "information highway of the future."

EEO Award Goes to Bill Williams, FAA

William H. Williams, Jr., director of the FAA's Office of Aviation System Standards, received the C. Alfred Anderson Award during the 17th Annual National Training Conference of the National Black Coalition of Federal Aviation Employees (NBCFAE) in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., September 22-25.

The award, established in 1982, recognizes pioneers in the field of aviation who have been instrumental in developing or fostering aviation careers and programs in the minority community, or those who have made major contributions by inspiring minority youth to seek careers in aviation.

Williams is a past president of the Northeast Region Tuskegee Airmen, and an experienced pilot and flight instructor with 4,500 flying hours. He holds an airline transport pilot certificate, is rated in single, multi-engine, instrument, and gliders, and is qualified as a flight instructor in each category.

You make it happen

1993 Combined Federal Campaign

DOT has until November 12 to reach its 1993 CFC campaign goal of \$1,212,000. This year, more than 2,000 voluntary agencies will benefit from your contributions. A few minutes of your time to fill out a pledge card can mean meals for hungry children, relief for victims of the Midwest floods, help for families in need of counseling, research on cures for diseases, comfort for the dying, access to water in the Third World, environmental protection, and better lives and renewed hope for millions of people in our global community.

Through your designation, you ensure that your donation goes to meet those needs that you personally feel are most important. CFC has one of the lowest administrative expenses of any charitable campaign. One 4 percent of every dollar contributed goes to campaign administration (printing materials, training volunteers, processing and auditing contributions). Ninety-six percent of your contribution goes to member charities.

Last year, DOT achieved the highest level of employee contributions, and the second highest level of employee participation among the cabinet level departments. Let's try to make the department first in both categories this year! **YOU MAKE IT HAPPEN!**

Automatic withholding per pay period makes giving convenient and spreads out the cost over the whole year. Take a few minutes to look over your Catalog of Caring and to fill out your pledge card. Or, if you prefer to give a one-time gift, you can contribute by cash or check to the campaign, either generally or to a specific organization.

CALENDAR

November

- 11 Veterans Day
- 13 Secretary's Cup Football Game (Coast Guard Academy vs. Merchant Marine Academy), USCG Academy, New London, Conn.
- 18 Great American Smokeout
- 25 Thanksgiving
- Nov. 30-Dec. 2 National Aviation Weather Users' Forum, Sheraton Reston Hotel, Reston, Va. Contact Richard Heuwinkel (202) 267-7400. Designed to develop federal and industry consensus on industry service needs and priorities; federal vs. private responsibilities for providing weather-related services.

December

- 1 World AIDS Awareness Day
- National 3-D (Drunk or Drugged Driving) Awareness Month

Transit Benefit Bill Goes to Congress

Assistant Secretary for Budget and Programs, Louise Frankel Stoll, recently testified before the House Subcommittee on Compensation and Employee Benefits in support of continuing the transit fare subsidies of up to \$60 per month for federal employees in various parts of the country who use mass transit to commute to work. The current three-year program is scheduled to end December 31, 1993. There is now a bill in Congress that would make the program permanent.

Stoll said the program should be continued because "it helps reduce highway congestion and improve air quality, and provides equity for federal employees who commute by transit." She pointed out that 88 federal agencies and an estimated 24,000 federal employees in the Washington area alone currently participate in the program, which is offered at the discretion of each government agency. At DOT headquarters, more than 4,800 employees - 46 percent of the eligible workforce - are enrolled.

In response to the administration's proposal, Eleanor Holmes Norton, chair of the House subcommittee on Compensation and Employee Benefits, introduced a bill October 20 which will allow federal agencies to continue to provide transit benefits effective January 1, 1994, called the "Federal Employees Clean Air Incentives Act." The House subcommittee conducted a mark-up of the bill on Oct. 21 and the full committee mark-up was Oct. 28. On the Senate side, Maryland Democrat Barbara Mikulski is the sponsor of a similar bill.

This bill authorizes the head of each agency to establish a program to encourage their employees to use means other than single-occupancy motor vehicles to commute to or from work. It includes features of the current Transit Benefit Program and some new provisions that are non-monetary incentives, such as services for bicyclists. Under the proposal, the program would also be extended to members of the uniformed services.

A full House vote on the bill is expected the first week in November. The bill would then go to the Senate.

Hatch Act Amendments Signed by President

by Susann Lee White

New Hatch Act '93 amendments go into effect February 3, 1994. The new act will allow most federal workers to become active members in political clubs and hold positions within a political party structure, such as a central committee or affiliated organization. Also under the new law, employees will be allowed to carry posters at political rallies, distribute campaign material, and participate in voter registration drives or phone banks provided they do not wear any uniform that would identify them as a federal or postal employee.

"Our own citizens have been denied one of the most basic democratic rights, the right to participate in the political process," said President Clinton as he signed the bill. "We now put an end to a vexing contradiction in America's public life with a solution that is neither Democratic or Republican, but American in nature."

The U.S. Office of Special Counsel has a hot line, 1-800-85-HATCH (854-2824), to answer questions about the new amendments. The Office of Personnel Management will be issuing regulations in the near future. Interim guidelines from the U.S. Office of Special Counsel are listed here.

Under the new Hatch Act Amendments, federal employees:

| | |
|---|---|
| Can be a candidate for public office in non-partisan elections | Cannot use their official authority or influence to interfere with an election |
| Can register and vote as they choose | Cannot collect political contributions unless both individuals are members of the same federal labor organization or labor organization and the one solicited is not a subordinate employee |
| Can assist in voter registration | Cannot knowingly solicit or discourage the political activity of any person who has business before the agency |
| Can attend political fundraising functions | Cannot engage in political activity while on duty |
| Can attend and be active at political rallies and meetings | Cannot engage in political activity while wearing an official uniform |
| Can join and be an active member of a political party or club | Cannot engage in political activity while using a government vehicle |
| Can sign nominating petitions | Cannot solicit political contributions from the general public |
| Can campaign for or against referendum questions, constitutional amendments, municipal ordinances | Cannot be a candidate for public office in partisan elections |
| Can campaign for or against candidates in partisan elections | |
| Can make campaign speeches for candidates in partisan elections | |
| Can distribute campaign literature in partisan elections | |
| Can hold office in political clubs and parties | |

Note: Certain federal employees will continue to be covered under the old law, e.g., career employees in the Senior Executive Service

Health Benefits Open Season November 8 - December 13

Many of us stay with the same health insurance provider year after year, whether or not the plan continues to meet our changing health needs. This year's Federal Employees Health Benefit (FEHB) open season gives eligible employees an opportunity to reassess their current situation and either elect to enroll in an FEHB plan, or change their current plan, option, or type of enrollment.

To enroll in a health plan or change your current enrollment, simply complete Standard Form 2809, Federal Employees Health Benefits Registration Form, and

return it to your servicing personnel office no later than December 13. To assist headquarters employees in making informed choices about the full range of health plans offered, health benefit fairs will be held on:

November 8: USCG, Transpoint building, room 2415, 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.

November 16: FAA, FBIOA lobby, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

November 17: Nassif building, room 2230, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Talk directly with representatives from health benefit providers serving the greater Washington metropolitan area

about the latest information on their plans and changes for the coming year. Health benefit fairs are also planned at a number of regional and field locations. Employees should check with their servicing personnel office for information about these fairs.

For those considering retirement: Remember, you must be enrolled in the FEHB program for five years immediately before retirement to be eligible for continued enrollment following retirement. Enrollment during this five-year period does not have to be in the same plan or option.

WARNING

Don't be misled by health and life insurance or investment sales schemes. There have been several reports of salespeople contacting DOT employees at home or at work using official-sounding titles and offering information on "government benefits" and assistance with financial planning. These individuals are not affiliated with any federal agency, but simply use this tact to establish contact, usually to sell insurance or some kind of investment. For official information about life and health insurance, retirement benefits, or the Thrift Savings Plan, contact your servicing personnel office!