



**HUMAN RESOURCES SERVICE CENTER  
NORTHEAST  
PHILADELPHIA, PA**

**Annual Business Report**

**~ The Year 2000 in Review ~**

**The Liberty Bell  
Philadelphia, PA**



***“Proclaim liberty throughout  
all the land unto all the  
inhabitants thereof”***

**January 2001**



## From the Director...

Dear Reader:

It is again a privilege to provide this, our second annual business report, to the senior managers of the Commands that are supported by the Human Resources Service Center in the Navy's Northeast Region. It has been another year of change, frustration, challenge and accomplishment and I'm pleased to have the opportunity to provide this retrospective now that year 2000 has closed.

Our organization, two years old in January 2001, has had an exciting and, I believe, successful year both in improving our business response and accepting new, major and (frankly) unanticipated challenges. We have been extremely effective in reducing the average timeliness in the critical business areas of retirement calculation, merit promotion and external hiring. This has been accomplished despite the unexpected introduction of four new, large organizations into our HR jurisdiction. The attached pages provide details of that growth. You'll note that the Northeast Region now has the largest customer base of the eight Navy Regional Centers.

The impact of these events was significant relative to our day-to-day operations. Each of the four new organizations required transition teams and a long-term comprehensive transition process, which we believe is the key to a successful human resources support under regionalization. The team members were made up of our most experienced people and they were required to depart their normal positions to accomplish this tasking. Our experienced people were again redistributed to provide support to the new organizations and were provided the additional responsibility for training the many new additions to our staff.

Although this created a continuously difficult working environment, I can point with pride to many accomplishments that our staff achieved during the year 2000. And, I am proud to say, we effectively address the two areas I cited as targets for improvement in last year's report. Allow me to talk about these and other things.

First off, I'd like to direct your attention to page 3 of our report, which shows the contrasts between our performance in 1999 and 2000 in our two key areas, filling vacancies and providing retirement calculations. Please take a look at it. Notice the dramatic drop in timeliness in all of our key work areas. And notice too, the concurrent growth in the actions processed in these key areas (reflecting, of course, our continued growth from a 28,000 customer base to an almost 40,000 customer base). For all intents and purposes we are now meeting our BOD timeliness goals in recruitment and we are bettering those timeliness goals (in fact, by a very significant margin) in our critical retirement work. So we are very proud of the statistics we are able to provide in this area of our report.

If you peruse the rest of our report some things may be of interest to you, others may not. However, I'd like to point out certain things that you may wish to review:

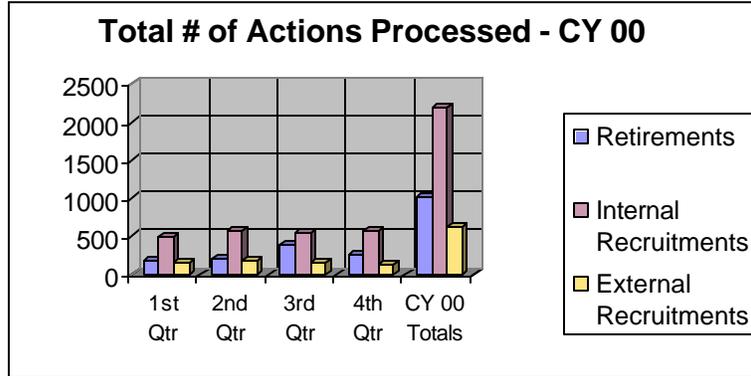
- Last year one of our two stated targets for improvement was the work of our external recruitment staff (the so-called DEU group). Page 3 provides the figures on the statistical improvement (you'll note a drop from an average of 85.4 days in 1999 to 51.8 this year). But was that achieved at the expense of quality? The answer to that is demonstrably negative. On page 4 we report a full external audit of that function with wonderful results that reflect on the quality of the work of that staff. Indeed, many of the practices they have developed have been suggested for exportation to all Department of Defense (DOD) HR components. So please take a minute to review this area, I think you'll be impressed.

- Resumix, the automated merit promotion system, is reported on page 6. Our original target date for implementation was deliberately deferred because of other major and unanticipated changes to our workload. But the deferral was brief and the system is now almost fully deployed. Our phasing plan resulted in early deployment at a number of major Commands a year or so ago. So we have had actual and regular experience with the system. In truth, there have been some minor glitches in this system but fewer than we anticipated and our overall view is that this system delivers the goods. Further, with experience and some more enhancements, it will only get better. The message to you then is simply to keep your eye on this innovation because once it has ripened, it will have a dramatic favorable impact on our ability to fill vacant positions through merit promotion. We are nearing the day when a merit certificate will be in a manager's hands within a day or two from the closing of the merit announcement
- In last year's report, I expressed concern about the quality of our data. If you recall, I declared year 2000 as the year of "micro-quality." We have had great success in attaining the improvement we had hoped for. Please note our report on the Quality Assessment Project (page 7) and, in another section, the Data Quality Conversion Test (discussed in the Modern breakout in our "Future Initiatives" section -page 8). Our data error rate is below 5%. A 5% initial error rate is acceptable to our Center since most of those errors are subsequently corrected in our varied reconciliations. Further, during Year 2000, we re-reviewed every one of our almost 4,000 accession personnel folders (i.e., the accessions that we processed since our stand up in October 1998) to ensure that those early data points (i.e., vet's preference, seniority, benefits coding) were set correctly. Was this effort effective? The best measure of its effectiveness, we think, was in the data quality conversion test. That review is done by parties who are not associated with our particular Center. In that review, we achieved an accuracy rate of 99.97% - it was the highest rating in Navy and the second highest in all of DOD.
- You may want to look at what we plan on the Virtual Senior Management Advisory Board website (page 8). We are "thisclose" to implementation. You may also want to check out our business maps on "local news" on the Navy HR website. The business maps are a user-friendly set of diagrams portraying who does what in the Navy HR environment. And please take just a minute to review our efforts at Community Outreach (page 10). We are very proud of the HRSC-NE contributions to these very worthy causes (such support is built into our formal strategic vision). I am convinced that this kind of altruism on the part of our staff somehow converts to a conscientious and caring attitude on the part of our employees toward their customers and their work.

We believe, again with the active and substantial support of your local HR offices, that HRSC-NE has had good success in the year 2000. Next year, with the introduction of Resumix, we will be shooting again at a recruitment timeliness record that better the BOD timeliness goals. Please note that we have listed the addresses and phone numbers of our senior managers on the last page of this report. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call.

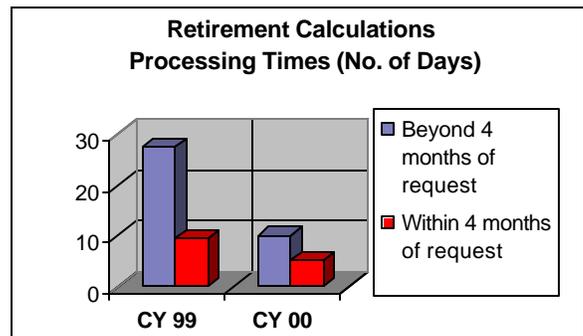
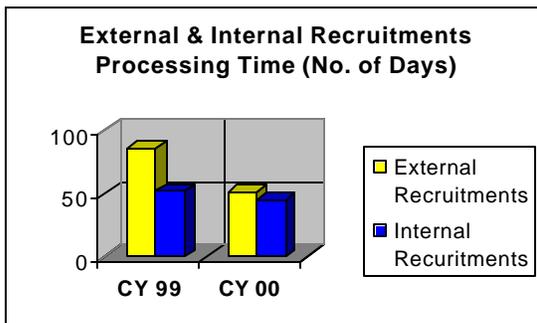
JOHN R. CONWELL

## RECRUITMENT/RETIREMENT HIGHLIGHTS



*\*External action totals reflect number of certificates issued*

Action	Average Processing Time (# of Days)		HRSC Standards	Total Actions Processed	
	CY 99	CY 00		CY 99	CY 00
External Recruitments (14 day announcement)	85.4	51.8	50 days	593	645
Internal Recruitments (14 day announcement)	52.3	45.2	45 days	1,239	2,208
Retirement Calculations					
Retirements beyond 4 months of request	27.5	10.1	30 days	828	997
Retirements within 4 months of request	9.4	5.1	10 days	794	971



## **ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2000**



### **Growth in HRSC-NE Serviced Population and Employees**

On 10 September 2000, the HRSC-NE commenced servicing of the Civilian Intelligence Personnel Office (1,650 employees), and the Naval Research Laboratory (totaling 2,900 employees). Additional work was transferred on 24 October 2000 encompassing the Naval Surface Warfare Center at Carderock (3,300 employees) and the Office of Naval Research (450 employees). This growth brought the HRSC-NE covered population to 39,130. The HRSC-NE is now the largest Regional Service Center in the Navy.

### **Audit of the Delegated Examining Unit (DEU)**

The DEU is the portion of the HRSC-NE staff that is dedicated to hiring new employees from external sources. A team from the DEU Oversight Section of the Civilian Personnel Management Service conducted a Staff Assistance Visit at the HRSC-NE during the week of 29 September 2000. They reviewed twenty-five random DEU packages as well as the HRSC-NE's written policies and procedures and found full compliance with laws, rules, regulations, and merit system principles.

The audit team commented on the professional and innovative protocols employed by the DEU and recommended that other DEUs use four of the HRSC-NE's processes. In addition, the HRSC-NE's DEU has developed reports that improve the ability to track and analyze the external recruitment workload. The DEU has made excellent strides this past year and decreased its average processing time from 85.4 days in 1999 to 51.8 days in 2000.

### **Activity-Based Costing (ABC) Pilot Project**

In June 2000 the HRSC-NE was chosen by the Human Resources Operation Center (HROC) to conduct an ABC Pilot Project in the human resources area. This Pilot Project was conducted during the July-August 2000 timeframe.

A team of HRSC-NE employees designed a survey that assesses the time spent on every function in Navy human resources; provides an estimate of the cost to perform the work, and pinpoints areas of function duplication and overlap. The survey lists 12 core business processes, 53 activities, and 356 human resources tasks and functions. We believe this to be a valuable product and we have recommended its use Navy-wide.

As a result of the Pilot Project, the HRSC-NE team produced an ABC Users Guide as a model for other federal activities interested in the ABC process and procedures. Its content is based on the team's experience in formulating, conducting, and analyzing the results of the survey. The guide is posted on the Internet at [www.donhr.navy.mil/hrsc/northeast/localnews/htm](http://www.donhr.navy.mil/hrsc/northeast/localnews/htm). The team also produced a "how-to" guide for use in administering the ABC survey.

### **Benefits Forms (FaxBack) and Websites**

In September 2000, the HRSC-NE issued guidance concerning the availability of a variety of Benefits forms through sources other than paper copy mailing. Life Insurance, Health Insurance and Thrift Savings Plan forms are now also available to employees through an HRSC-NE FaxBack number (215-408-4500/DSN 243-4500) and through the Office of Personnel Management's on-line website [www.opm.gov](http://www.opm.gov).

These additional sources significantly increase employees' direct access to benefits information 24 hours per day (from home or office) and free up HRSC-NE Benefit Specialists' time to address specific entitlement questions and problems. This FaxBack program was established as part of the initiative to minimize the management and expense associated with the distribution of hardcopies of the numerous benefits forms.

### **Retirement Site Presentations**

On 16 November 2000, the HRSC-NE prototyped an on-site activity retirement presentation. Employees within a five-year window of retirement can obtain basic information on the retirement benefits process. The initial presentation was widely attended and very well received. Plans are underway to fine-tune the presentation and make offerings available at various HRO sites. The second presentation is scheduled for March 2001.

### **Employee Development**

The HRSC-NE staff input 23,874 HRO and serviced activity training records into the Defense Civilian Personnel Data System (DCPDS) during the year. Also in CY 2000, the HRSC-NE brokered over 200 training courses for the HROs and serviced activities. Sixty-six of these courses were conducted at the requested locations, significantly saving travel, per diem and other administrative support costs.

The HRSC-NE unilaterally re-established the Philadelphia Area Federal Executive Board's (FEB) training organization formerly known as the Federal Employee Development Society (FEDS) and the Interagency Training Council – a metropolitan Federal training organization that had been dormant for years. By reinvigorating the FEDS organization, HRSC-NE hopes to remain abreast of training developments and trends which are not only peculiar to Navy, but are being generated in a wide variety of DOD and non-DOD Federal activities.

### **Re-Employment Priority List (RPL) and the Internet**

In accordance with applicable regulations, the HRSC-NE maintains an RPL to give priority consideration to former competitive service career and career-conditional employees. Priority

placement is given to those individuals who are: (1) separated or soon to be separated by a reduction in force, and, (2) fully recovered from a compensable injury after more than one year. RPL registrants must be given priority consideration over external applicants when filling all competitive service vacancies including temporary, term and permanent appointments.

Through the efforts of several HRSC-NE employees, RPL information can now be accessed through the Internet. The RPL database contains positions for which employees throughout the Northeast Region are registered. RPL information can be accessed through the DONHR website at [www.donhr.navy.mil/hrsc/northeast/localnews/htm](http://www.donhr.navy.mil/hrsc/northeast/localnews/htm). This database serves as a useful tool - providing a comprehensive list of individuals eligible for this program in the Northeast Region.

## **Resumix**

The HRSC-NE is pressing ahead to introduce the latest technology to make staffing more efficient and responsive to our customers' needs. The Standard Inventory and Referral System (STAIRS) combines new business processes with information technology. The main technology behind STAIRS is the automated software system, Resumix. Resumix is a commercial "off the shelf" software program that automates the recruitment process and recruitment file, using artificial intelligence and a large knowledge base to identify and match skills in resumes to position skills.

The HRSC-NE has now, with the support of your local HR staffs, deployed Resumix to most of our serviced population in the Northeast region. We expect full deployment within weeks. Local testing has shown that this automated system produces almost identical candidates to its manual counterpart, only in a much more rapid fashion. While the entry of applications into this system is still a bit sluggish, enhancements that are just down the road should correct the problem. Once corrected, the production of merit promotion certificates and the attendant documentation (e.g., notices of rating) will become dramatically more efficient.

## **Use of the DONHR Website**

The HRSC-NE has introduced a great deal of management information on the Northeast Local News web page of the DONHR website. Contained in the General Information section are the HRSC-NE's Business Process Maps and Business Philosophy and information on various HRSC-NE initiatives. The Customer Service section contains "Frequently Asked Questions" concerning regionalization, current vacancy announcements, and HRSC-NE customer service contact information. The Training Section includes an on-line writing tutorial as well as links to other government training sites. The HRSC-NE "local news" Internet address is: [www.donhr.navy.mil/hrsc/northeast/localnews/htm](http://www.donhr.navy.mil/hrsc/northeast/localnews/htm).

## **Quality Assessment Project**

We dedicated this year to the improvement of "micro-quality." Throughout the first several months of CY 2000, the HRSC-NE initiated a continuous tracking and review of the quality level of our core work processes - identifying patterns of errors and taking steps to correct the apparent patterns through changed processes or additional training. Out of 56,000 personnel actions

processed over a four-month period, the correction rate was below 5%. Further, the study showed that, across the board, the percentage of correction actions was on a downward trend for ALL serviced HROs.

### **Noise Level**

Our management goal is to "... generate work products which are highly valued by the region's HROs and the commands they service." One of the ways to assess if our products are valued is to review the number and pattern of complaints and challenges we receive relative to our work. During the year, many issues, of course, bubble up and are expeditiously resolved in the day-to-day work at the HRSC and at the HROs. But issues that are a serious irritant to serviced employees show up in the form of Congressional inquiries or formal third-party complaints. It is an area that we believe we should report each year in this publication. Here is what we have seen in year 2000:

- ✓ Congressionals: 10 were received in the HRSC-NE during 2000; three of which were from current federal employees (all Navy civilians within the region). Of those three, one cited an HRSC-NE related problem (a complaint which was valid and corrected).
- ✓ MSPB Complaints: 1 – Involving a RIF determination, but not yet adjudicated.
- ✓ EEO Complaints: 1 - Involving a challenge to a decision on overseas return rights. Not yet adjudicated.

## **FUTURE INITIATIVES**



### **Mock Conversion of the Modern Defense Civilian Personnel Data System (MDCPDS)**

The MDCPDS is a human resources information system that will support human resources operations throughout the DOD. In the past, DOD had multiple human resource information systems that did basically the same thing. MDCPDS will provide an integrated system that supports multiple human resources applications. Locally, the Modern System will replace our use of the DCPDS and Personnel Process Improvement software. It is a user-friendly system with Windows-based software that will allow increased access to data and new report generation tools.

In preparation for MDCPDS deployment, the HRSC-NE worked hard in CY 2000 to correct errors in the current database that will prevent the data from porting, or transferring, to the new MDCPDS. To enable an efficient transfer of data, a mock database conversion was conducted. Tapes from the mock conversion were analyzed to determine additional corrections that must occur prior to the official conversion. Overall, the mock conversion went very well, with 99.97% of the HRSC-NE database converting error-free. Out of 32,199 records, only 95 distinct errors were detected.

### **Virtual Senior Management Advisory Board (SMAB) Website**

The HRSC-NE is currently working on a prototype of a Virtual SMAB website that will serve the Navy Northeast Management Community concerning Human Resources issues. This innovative, restricted-access website is the first such HR website in the Navy and DOD. It will allow representative HRSC/HRO/Activity Key Senior Managers to communicate contemporaneously - posting comments, observations, and generating discussions on various human resources issues. The deployment of this website is scheduled for the first quarter of 2001.

### **Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS) Benefits Line**

The Benefits Line is the Department of the Navy (DON) Interactive Voice Response System that allows employees to obtain information on and make changes to their benefits. By calling the Benefits line (a toll free number), the employee will be connected to an IVRS system which will:

- Provide basic employee benefits information

- Allow the employee to enroll in/change their Thrift Savings Plan (TSP), Federal Employee Health Benefits (FEHB) or Federal Employee Group Life Insurance (FEGLI) coverage
- Furnish automated retirement annuity estimates

Employees can also speak to a Benefits Counselor, who will be available Monday through Friday from 0730-1630 to personally assist them. Implementation is scheduled for the end of 2001.

### **Employee Benefits Information System (EBIS )**

The EBIS is a web-based application that will allow employees to access general and personal benefits information and make health insurance, life insurance and TSP changes *electronically*. Employees will access EBIS through the DON benefits website at [www.civilianbenefits.hroc.navy.mil](http://www.civilianbenefits.hroc.navy.mil). Employees will be able to:

- View FEHB, FEGLI and TSP benefits information
- View and/or void projected FEHB, FEGLI and TSP actions
- Enroll, change or stop FEHB, FEGLI or TSP benefits
- Receive retirement annuity estimates
- Obtain information about death benefits
- Obtain personal benefits statements
- Print benefits information documents

Employees using EBIS for the first time will set up a user account and establish a Personal Identification Number (PIN). When employees finish a transaction, they can print a receipt of the transaction. All transactions will be processed overnight. Implementation is currently projected for mid-year 2001.

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The HRSC-NE has built into its formal strategic vision a commitment on the part of its employees to support the varied charity drives that take place in the local community. We believe that in cultivating an altruistic spirit, we create a more introspective and thoughtful workforce. Recent business publications have supported that exact notion. Consequently, we are very proud of our efforts in this area, a few of which follow:

### Our Charity Drives

The HRSC-NE just completed its third annual Holiday Charity Drive.



- \* The HRSC-NE participated in its first annual "Aid for Friends" campaign. This program is aimed at helping the isolated, homebound, frail and elderly in the five county area. The effort was a resounding success! Employees contributed batches of cookies and "gifts of warmth" to help brighten the holidays for the Aid for Friends shut-ins. More than 200 bags, boxes, and tins of cookies and over 200 sweaters, gloves, hats, and blankets were assembled and packaged by HRSC-NE volunteers.
- \* The Salvation Army holiday drive was also a success. HRSC-NE employees contributed by filling approximately 200 holiday stockings and providing more than 175 "Angel Gifts" to children and needy families in the local area.
- \* The Marine Corps Reserves Toys for Tots Campaign also went well in 2000. HRSC-NE employees donated a total of 220 new toys.

### Our Winter Food Drive

The Federal Executive Board recognized the HRSC-NE for its work in the Winter Food Drive in February 2000. Almost 500 pounds of food was contributed during the Food Drive.

Additionally, in May 2000, the HRSC-NE donated food from its Memorial Day celebration to the local St. John's Hospice for the poor and homeless.

### Our Combined Federal Campaign (CFC)

The HRSC-NE employees raised a total of \$14,466, which surpassed the assigned goal by 34%. In addition to pledges, fundraiser activities contributed \$908 towards the organization's total donations. In only its second year in the CFC, 49.4% of HRSC-NE workers contributed to the CFC (average participation for the CFC region was 34%).

This year consistent with the HRSC-NE's strategic vision in this area, the Director of the HRSC-NE volunteered to serve as CFC Chairperson for the Southeastern Pennsylvania Region. The success of the overall campaign has also been gratifying:

- ✓ The average annual growth for the CFC in the last four years has been 1.3%. This year's growth was 7.6%.
- ✓ The goal for the year was \$2,000,000. The achievement was \$2,109,948 or 5.5% in excess of goal.



## **AWARD HIGHLIGHTS**



### **Excellence in Government**

The Federal Executive Board's Excellence in Government Awards Program honored two HRSC-NE employees by awarding them Gold Medals for their heroism during Hurricane Floyd. In addition, three other employees received Bronze Medals: one for Community Service and two for Improved Federal Image - Group .



### **Financial Management Award**

Several HRSC-NE administrative staff employees received the Financial Management Excellence Award which is sponsored by the Philadelphia Area Federal Financial Managers Council. The group was recognized for its fiscal responsibility, customer responsiveness, and innovation in training and information support.

## HRSC-NE MANAGEMENT



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<b>Title</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>Voice #</b>	<b>Fax #</b>
Director	00	5090	5092
Deputy Director	01	5099	5092
Administration	S1	5096	5120
EEO Office	10	5250	5252
Automation & Information	20	5004	5008
Employee Development	30	5215	5218
Appeals & Investigations	40	5241	5245
Customer Service	50	5173	5172