

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

IT'S OFFICIAL: The Air Force symbol is now official, four years after the service first applied for trademark protection.

"I'm proud our symbol is now an official part of our heritage," said Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. John Jumper. "It represents our storied past and links our 21st Century Air Force to our core values and capabilities."

The decision to designate it as the official symbol of the Air Force demonstrates the service's conviction to preserving the symbol's integrity and should ease concerns that the symbol is temporary or remains a test. Trademark protection designates the symbol as exclusive property of the Air Force and gives the service authority to control and enforce its use.

A team of lawyers, public affairs officers, artists and historians are working to expand guidance and standards for the use of the symbol. An official Air Force Instruction is scheduled for release in fiscal 2005.

In the meantime, the intent is to expand use of the symbol today and protect it for the future. Use must be consistent with applicable Air Force instructions and symbol guidelines posted at www.af.mil/library/symbol/.

The service is licensing use of the symbol on a variety of commercial goods, from candy and furniture to tires and jewelry, which allows Airmen to display their service pride off-duty.

On duty, the symbol is featured on optional military tie tacs, the proposed utility uniform and gray boots, the Air Force lightweight blue jacket and is being showcased in Air Force marketing campaigns. (Staff Sgt. Melanie Streeter / Air Force Print News)

OPEN FOR BUSINESS: The Defense Department's new Reserve Pay Center of Excellence has officially opened for business.

The operation, part of Defense Finance and Accounting Service, will further improve service "to the men and women who defend America," according to a DFAS news release. It will

NSPS

DoD has personnel system on its radar

By Donna Miles

American Forces Press Service

The new **National Security Personnel System** will improve the working environment within the Defense Department while creating a more satisfied, more productive workforce, said Navy Secretary Gordon England.

"That's what this is about: great job satisfaction," England told his audience of Pentagon workers and Web and Pentagon Channel viewers. "We want everybody to go home every night and brag about the great job they accomplished that day. That is what we are trying to accomplish."

Congress authorized the new personnel system as part of the fiscal 2004 National Defense Authorization Act. It introduces sweeping changes to the way the department hires, pays, promotes, disciplines and fires its 700,000 civilian workers, doing away with antiquated practices England said have bogged down the department for decades.

For example, the new system will consolidate nine separate personnel systems that now govern DoD civilian workers. England said streamlining these systems into one "will make it easier to manage and it will certainly be better for our employees."

Details of the new system are still being worked out, said England, who was tapped by Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld earlier this year to put NSPS into place. He added that valuable input has come from a variety of pilot projects,

which he called "learning exercises to make sure we've got it right before we start."

By the year's end, England said he expects to publish in the Federal Register proposed regulations for the new civilian human resources, labor-management relations and employee appeals and grievance systems.

The first DoD civilians are expected to come under the new system in summer 2005, and DoD will phase in the system for the next three years, through late 2008, England said.

In the meantime, England said DoD is seeking input from all corners to make sure it comes up with the best civilian personnel system possible. "It's a collaborative process, it's not negotiating to an answer," he said. "It is getting input from literally thousands of people around the country and around the world so we can understand their views."

He acknowledged that putting the new system into place while continuing DoD's mission will be a bit of a challenge. "It's a little like maintaining an airplane while it's flying," he said. "The process has to be thoughtful and reasonably measured."

He said the new system, when fully in place, will benefit employees while making the department better able to respond to the challenges ahead.

"The whole premise is to have a highly effective workforce that dearly loves to work for the Department of Defense, is well-trained and that is highly competitive."