



GIPSA News

A newsletter for the employees of the Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration

May 2006

Cybersecurity

James E. Link



Administrator James Link

With the onslaught of new online threats such as identity theft and spyware, engaging in safe online behavior is crucial for our Agency. We use computers in virtually every aspect of our lives and we must understand the risks, along with the steps we can take to help protect ourselves and our information online.

For GIPSA users, taking the annual security awareness training is a good first step. However I wondered what more could we do as an agency to get the word out about cyber security. GIPSA's Security Staff approached me with the idea for a "Cyber Security Awareness" month. This is an

excellent idea and I need your help to make it a success.

The GIPSA Information Security Staff will be hosting "Cyber Security Awareness" month this May. The main purpose of this initiative will be to raise awareness of cyber security so that users improve their cyber security preparedness.

I encourage GIPSA managers and employees to give their full support to the Security Staff and participate in as many activities as possible.

These activities will include guest speakers, office visits with headquarters staff, pamphlet and trinket giveaways, informational e-mails, and a poster contest (see page 3 for poster contest details).

And as always, please contact a member of the Security Staff if you have any questions regarding cyber security matters.

Advisory Committee to Meet

The GIPSA Grain Inspection Advisory Committee will meet June 13-14, 2006, in Kansas City, Mo.

The Committee provides advice to the administrator on implementation of the U.S. Grain Standards Act.

The agenda will include an update on the agency's finances, marketing activities, progress report on reengineering of domestic operations, use of third party contracting, hard white wheat rule implementation, and methods development activities.

For further information, contact Terri Henry at (202) 205-8281.

In This Issue

Names in the News	2	Regulatory Info	5
TSD Team Recognized	3	Poster Contest!	5
Burk in EPP	3	Travel Bits & Pieces	5
Exploring Contract Services ..	4	Passwords 101	6
Advisory Committee Members ..	4	Scale Training Program	6
Issuances	5	For Your Health	7

Names in the News

PERSONNEL

Bob Lijewski has been temporarily promoted to the position of deputy director, Field Management Division. During Bob's temporary promotion to deputy director, **Henry Greenwood** been temporarily promoted to chief of the Policies and Procedures Branch. These promotions are effective April 30, 2006, to August 19, 2006.

The Compliance Division is pleased to announce that effective May 1, Greg Tomas is the new Regulatory Branch chief and Karen Guagliardo is the new Review Branch chief.

RETIREMENTS

Shift Supervisor **William Digdo** retired on March 3, from the New Orleans Field Office with 28½ years of service. He worked mostly in the Philadelphia and Baltimore field offices transferring to New Orleans in December 2002. **Bill** and his wife, **Marilyn**, moved to Tampa, Florida.

Barbara Fielder, secretary to the administrator, retired on April 28, with nearly 34 years of service. She started in the Lancaster field office and later transferred to the Atlanta regional office. After 13 months in Atlanta, she transferred to Washington, DC, to be secretary to the director of Field Operations and then secretary to the administrator.

Lawrence "Eric" Poling, Technical Services Division, retired on May 2, after 34 years of dedicated service to the Federal Grain Inspec-

tion Service. After serving in the U.S. Army (including service in Vietnam), **Eric** graduated from Tarelton State University in 1971. He worked for the Texas and Southwest Cattle Raisers Association before joining USDA in 1975 as an agricultural commodity grader in Houston, Texas. In 1976, **Eric** moved to Washington DC, where he worked in FGIS' Training Branch, which was relocated to Kansas City in July of 1978. After working with the Research and Development Branch and the Kansas City Field Office for a short period, in 1984, **Eric** joined the Board of Appeals and Review. While with the BAR, **Eric** served as the rice specialist and was also involved in developing video-based training, developing and maintaining photographic Interpretive Lines Slides, and creating training aids such as the Wheat Classification Handbook. In 1998, **Eric** transferred to the newly formed Digital Media Group, where he continued to work on the interpretive line images and was instrumental in converting the photographic slide-based system to the current digital format. **Eric** and his wife **Joy**, who are horse enthusiasts and judges for The United States Pony Club, plan to continue teaching and instructing young people as well as working with their Church and its mission projects. **Eric** looks at retirement not as an end but as a beginning of something new.

Shift Supervisor **Will Shilling** retired from the New Orleans Field Office with 30 years of service on April 3, 2006. He began his career as an ACG-5 in the Indianapolis Field Office and transferred shortly thereafter to the Destrehan Field Office.

We wish **Will** all the best as he begins a new journey.

James Wilhelm, ACG from the Brunswick, GA office, retired on March 31, 2006, with 30 years of service. We wish **Jim** well as he begins a new adventure.

LEAVE DONATIONS

Joan Danielson, an economist in the Western Regional Office of the Packers and Stockyards Program, remains in need of donated annual leave. **Joan** continues her on-going battle with cancer and remains unable to return to active duty. **Joan** highly appreciates the generous leave donations that she has received so far. We appreciate your continuing support for **Joan** through the courageous and difficult battle with cancer that she is fighting.

CONDOLENCES

Walter (Tommy) Cox, formerly an agricultural commodity technician with the Stuttgart Field Office, passed away on April 8. He is survived by his wife **Sylvia**, two sons, and a daughter.

Ben Johnson, retired officer-in-charge of the Jonesboro suboffice, passed away in March. He began his grain inspection career with a state agency in Kansas. For FGIS, he worked in Jonesboro, Memphis, and the Board of Appeals and Review. He is survived by his wife **Betty** and two sons.

Continued, see Names on page 3.

Public Employees Recognition Day Distinguished Team Award

Steven N. Tanner, Technical Center

Congratulations to **Mark Leppert, Virgil Kelly, John Bass, Sandra Lockridge, Jamie Pitman, Ryan Rudder, Cathleen Brenner, and Richard Pierce** for receiving the 2006 Public Employee Recognition Program Distinguished Team Award from the Greater Kansas City Federal Executive Board (FEB).

This award is part of the Greater Kansas City FEB's Public Employees Recognition Event to showcase the invaluable contributions of our public workforce. The event is held annually during National Public Service Recognition Week, to acknowledge those employees who are making a positive and notable difference in our agencies.

GIPSA's team is being honored for the implementation of two programs which directly benefited U.S. producers and the grain industry, and significantly improved the quality and efficiency of program delivery. First, the implementation of a global artificial neural network (ANN) calibration for wheat protein resulted in: (1) improved accuracy and reproducibility of official protein determinations for all six wheat classes, (2) better agreement between the U.S. system and the international market, and (3) a significant reduction in the standardization needs of official testing equipment. The new calibration resulted in an 80% reduction of standard reference materials and a corresponding reduction in the quality assurance efforts of the Agency, resulting in an annual cost savings of \$58,000. In addition, the U.S. grain marketplace gained an estimated cost benefit of over \$500,000 annually through reduced equipment standardization needs and reduced testing errors.

Second, the implementation of a new service for official barley protein provided producers and processors with an accurate and reproducible method of determining barley protein, and provided maltsters with a rapid, accurate method of determining the suitability of barley for the malting process.

The implementation of these programs was an enormous undertaking. The resulting wheat and barley programs saved significant resources for GIPSA and all official inspection agencies, while providing the industry with more accurate and reproducible protein results. The NIRT group's careful planning and staging of the ANN implementations enabled both program changes to be adopted without disruption of the official inspection system or domestic and international grain marketing.



Names from page 2.

AWARDS

Ed Durgin, Office of International Affairs; **Jan Hart**, Compliance Division; **Larry McDonald**, Technical Services Division; and **Norma Phelps**, Field Management Division, received spot awards for their work on the FGIS Human Capital Team, which contributed to GIPSA's succession plans.

Ron Jenkins, chemist, Technical Services Division, received a Spot Award for excellence in planning, organizing, and implementing a 3-day workshop on modern biotechnology testing methods for a Mexican trade team.

Tandace Scholdberg and **Luke Shokere**, physical scientists, Technical Services Division, received time off awards for excellence and extra effort in providing a 3-day workshop on modern biotechnology testing methods for a Mexican trade team.

Burk in EPP

Brian Burk, P&S senior auditor, Denver, was selected to participate in the USDA Graduate School Executive Potential Program (EPP) 2006-2007. The EPP is a yearlong competency-based leadership program for GS 13-15 employees. The program includes assessments, experiential learning, classroom instruction, developmental assignments, etc. It will be an exciting but extremely busy year for **Brian**. He will be challenged to stretch, grow, and contribute in different ways. Congratulations **Brian!**

Exploring Contract Services

John Giler, Washington, DC

Based on Congressional and Office of Management and Budget direction GIPSA has received, and the projected attrition of GIPSA's front-line inspection personnel, GIPSA plans to pilot test the use of the existing contracting authority in the U.S. Grain Standards Act to improve the cost effectiveness of mandatory export grain inspection and weighing services in a way that ensures the integrity of the official inspection system. During FY 2006 and 2007, GIPSA will conduct pilot projects at select locations in which private entities will provide export grain inspection services under direct GIPSA oversight.

The first pilots to assess the impact of using contract service agreements to provide inspection and weighing services at export port locations will run in California and Wisconsin. The States of California and Wisconsin had been delegated to provide services at the export port locations in their states. When the State of California closed its grain inspection and weighing program, and the State of Wisconsin elected to end its delegation in Milwaukee, the export port locations serviced by these states became the responsibility of GIPSA.

These low-volume export port locations, where GIPSA does not retain permanent staff, provide us the opportunity to explore the use of the contracting authority in the Act as a new tool for providing services. For example, since these locations are not home to any GIPSA staff, contracting for export service provision in these two locations should minimize travel expenses to the grain exporter, which will, in turn, make them more competitive in the global market. On March 22, GIPSA published a request for proposal for potential contracts in California and Wisconsin. Interested parties had until April 21 to submit their proposals to the APHIS contracting officer. The request for proposals defines the scope of the work as providing all services in these export port locations, with GIPSA providing direct oversight of export vessel services. Contractors will be required to follow the official procedures, maintain inspection and weighing documentation, and prepare certificates for issuance. GIPSA will provide oversight of stowage examinations and export vessel services, and issue export certificates after reviewing the documentation for the export vessel.

A GIPSA technical evaluation team will review the submitted proposals to determine which contractors are eligible to provide these services to the grain industry. Eligible contractors should be in position to begin services by late May. GIPSA will then have the chance to see how contracting works in the export grain market. In the end, contracts will be implemented only if their use improves the cost effectiveness of service delivery and maintains the official inspection system's high level of integrity.

Employee Assistance Program

For Confidential Assistance

Washington, DC personnel, call...
301-570-3900
or 1-800-222-0364

Field personnel, call...
1-800-222-0364

New Advisory Committee Members

Secretary Mike Johanns appointed six members and five alternate members to serve on the GIPSA Grain Inspection Advisory Committee. The appointees will serve 3-year terms.

"I am pleased that these individuals have agreed to serve on the Grain Inspection Advisory Committee," said Johanns. "They bring a great deal of knowledge and experience to this board."

The new members are: **William Crockett**, superintendent, Mound Bayou Public Schools, Mound Bayou, Miss.; **Mark S. Fulmer**, agency manager-president, Lincoln Inspection Service, Lincoln, Neb.; **Kenneth L. Dalenberg**, production agriculture farmer, Mansfield, Ill.; **John R. Hewitt**, associate counsel, California Farm Bureau Federation., Sacramento, Calif.; **Curtis Engel**, senior group manager, The Scouler Company; Salina, Kan.; and **Timothy D. Paurus**, assistant vice president-terminal operations, CHS, Inc.; Inner Grove Heights, Minn.

The new alternate members are: **Joseph R. Allen**, president, Allen Group International, Bullwin, Mo; **Chester Boruff**, chief executive officer, Association of Official Seed Certifying Agencies; Moline, Ill.; **Robert C. Smigelski**, Agricultural Group Operations, Waterville, Ohio; **Lyle V. Riddle**, farmer, Wapella, Ill.; and **Brent A. Turner**, manager of export grain, ADM Grain Co., Division of Archer Daniels Midland Company; Galveston, Texas.

Issuances

Terri Henry, Washington, D.C.

New Issuances

- Grain Inspection Handbook, Book III, Grain Grading Procedures”, Change No. 98, dated March 13, 2006
- FGIS Program Notice 06-02, “Performance Evaluation Criteria for Deoxynivalenol (DON) Test Kits, dated March 27, 2006
- Grain Inspection Handbook, Book II, Grain Grading Procedures”, Chapter 13, Change No. 99, dated May 1, 2006
- Aflatoxin Handbook, Change No. 12, dated April 10, 2006

Regulatory Info

Tess Butler, Washington, DC

Federal Register Publications

- United States Standards for Sorghum – Published March 29, 2006
- United States Standards for Soy beans – Published March 29, 2006
- Proposed Posting, Posting, and Deposting of Stockyards – Published April 5, 2006
- Fees for Rice Inspection Service – Published April 11, 2006
- Designation for the State of Texas Area – Published April 12, 2006

Cyber Security Poster Contest

To help inspire GIPSA employees to become more “cyber aware,” the GIPSA IT Security Staff is sponsoring a security poster contest! GIPSA employees will get the chance to design new awareness posters that will be seen throughout GIPSA! In addition to all the recognition and accolades, the top three winners will receive:

- 1st Place: Outback Steak House Gift Certificate
- 2nd Place: Amazon Gift Certificate
- 3rd Place: “Summer” gift basket (filled with summer goodies!)

The judges will be Administrator Jim Link; Deputy Administrator Dave Shipman; and CIO Gerry Bromley.

Official Rules

- 1) Please remember: official duties ALWAYS come first.
- 2) Submissions must be on 8 ½ x 11 inch paper or e-copy printable to 8 ½ x 11
- 3) Please do not “borrow” any copyright-protected material. Only use public domain images and graphics or create your own!
- 4) Please use one of these slogans OR create your own slogan.: “Stop. Think. Click”, “Protect that Laptop!”, “Beware of E-mail Scams!”, “Practice cyber security!”
- 5) All entries must be e-mailed or sent to Carol Remmers at carol.a.remmers@usda.gov or at Room 2446-South, 14th & Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250
- 6) **The deadline for submissions is COB May 31, 2006.** Winners will be announced in June 2006 and in July, winning posters will be distributed to all GIPSA offices — with due credit, of course!

Travel Bits & Pieces

Peggy Smith, Washington, DC

CREDIT BALANCE REFUNDS. If a cardholder has a credit balance of \$1.01 or more on his/her Bank of America travel credit card, there are two ways to get those funds. A cardholder may request a refund by calling Customer Service, toll-free, at 800-472-1424 or by submitting a written request to Bank of America Government Card Services, PO Box 1637, Norfolk, VA 23501-1637. If a customer does not request a refund, Bank of America automatically refunds a credit balance after 150 days (or five billing cycles). The cardholder is notified of this on his/her billing statement. Once the process is initiated – either by the customer or automatically at the 150-day mark – the cardholder will receive a refund check within 10 business days.

Passwords 101

Carol Remmers, Washington, DC

No password is 100 percent secure. It can always be guessed or worked out. However, you can swing the odds in your favor by using a strong password. A strong password cannot be easily worked out by anyone else. You should use strong passwords wherever you need a password, such as for your network logon, a Web account login, or for protecting documents.

Strong passwords:

- Are at least eight characters long.
- Include both uppercase and lowercase letters, numbers, and a symbol character between the second and sixth position.
- Look like a random collection of characters.
- Have no repeated characters.
- Have no characters that are consecutive, as in 1234, abcd, or qwerty (from the keyboard).
- Do not contain patterns, themes, or complete words (in any language).
- Do not use any part of your user name for logging on to the Internet or a network.

Change passwords frequently—at least every 3 months. When you replace a password, make sure it's totally different from the previous one and do not reuse any portion of the old password.

*Continued, see Passwords
on page 7.*

Scale Training Program

Bryce Wilke, Midwestern Regional Office

The Midwestern Regional Office conducted a scale training program for Packers and Stockyards Program (PSP) employees during the week of March 27th in Omaha, Nebraska. The agenda for the training included discussion of PSP's authority and responsibility relating to its scales and weighing regulations. Individuals attending the meeting got the opportunity to conduct dynamic scales test at Greater Omaha Packing Co., Inc., Omaha Nebraska, and Hormel Foods, Inc., Fremont, Nebraska. This training effort was designed to allow employees to gain on-hands investigative experiences to enhance their abilities to identify violations of the Act and regulations. A second training program is scheduled for June 2006.



Dewey Blatchford, Midwestern Regional Office Industrial Specialist demonstrates how to weigh trolleys.

**Are EEO/CR issues or concerns
affecting your employment with GIPSA?**

Do you have questions?

Need help?

Then let your voice be heard.

Call the EEO Advisory Committee at...

1-800-639-5167

Civil Rights Hotline

For Your Health

Mavis Rogers, Washington, DC

Scrub and sweep, dust and discard this spring—but be careful. Experts at the American Academy of Orthopedics Surgeons (AAOS) say spring cleaning is prime time for injury.

In the United States in 2004, there were more than 547,000 ladder-related injuries, nearly 12,000 raking injuries, and about 221,000 lawn mowing-related injuries treated in hospital emergency rooms, doctors' offices and clinics, according to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.

"Many spring cleaning injuries occur when people rush or do not follow the proper safety precautions," Dr. Jeffrey M. Smith, an orthopedic surgeon who specializes in trauma, said in a prepared statement. "Because most injuries are preventable, it is important to use the appropriate equipment for each project and take your time to minimize spring cleaning-related accidents."

The American Academy of Orthopedics Surgeons offers the following tips:

- ✿ Stretch and do warm-up exercises before you begin clean-up projects around the home, such as gardening or painting.
- ✿ Place ladders on a firm, level surface. Never place a ladder on ground or flooring that is uneven, soft or wet.
- ✿ Use proper technique for lifting, carrying and bending. Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart while tightening your stomach muscles. Lift with your leg muscles as you stand. If an object is heavy or has an awkward shape, don't try to lift it by yourself.
- ✿ Don't over-reach or lean too far to one side when you are working on a ladder. You could lose your balance and fall. When you are on a ladder, your bellybutton should not go beyond the sides of the ladder.
- ✿ Don't twist your body when you are raking. Use your legs to shift your weight and switch sides often while raking.
- ✿ Have your lawnmower serviced before the start of each season to ensure that it is working properly. Never attempt to dislodge grass, dirt or anything else from the lawnmower while it is running.
- ✿ Never use lawn and garden equipment in damp or wet conditions.
- ✿ When you are gardening, avoid prolonged repetitive motions, such as digging, planting, pruning and trimming. Wear gardening gloves to reduce blistering and protect your skin.
- ✿ After you are done using gardening tools and equipment, store them properly to avoid tripping over them.
- ✿ Take frequent breaks and replenish fluids to prevent dehydration.
- ✿ When using gardening or cleaning chemicals, read product labels for proper use and wear protective clothing and gloves. Store all chemicals at the proper temperature and out of reach of children and pets.

Courtesy of Medline Plus, trusted health information for you. A service of the U.S National Library of Medicine and the National Institutes of Health.

Passwords, from page 6.

Use caution when a Microsoft Windows dialog box asks if you want Windows to remember a password. If you say yes, in effect, you are giving anyone who logs on to that computer access to that password-protected item.

If you forget a password there's nothing you can do. You're locked out. The situation might not be too drastic, depending on which password you've forgotten. If it's a network password, the administrator can reset it. If it's the password for a Web account, most service providers will send you an e-mail message with the password or a reminder. But if you forget the password to open a document, you're locked out until you can remember it.

Keeping track of numerous passwords can be daunting. One way to cope is to create a Word document with all your passwords then password protect that document. Just be sure you do not forget the password to your Word document.

GIPSA News is the employee newsletter of the USDA Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration. Send your news, ideas, suggestions, comments, questions, or thoughts for the next issue to:

Dana Stewart
USDA, GIPSA, Stop 3614
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-3614
Phone (202) 720-5091
FAX (202) 690-2333
dana.b.stewart@usda.gov

by May 25, 2006!

OFFICE OF THE ADMINISTRATOR
USDA, GRAIN INSPECTION, PACKERS
AND STOCKYARDS ADMINISTRATION
STOP 3601
1400 INDEPENDENCE AVENUE, SW
WASHINGTON, DC 20250-3601
