



GIPSA News

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

August 2008

GIPSA Welcomes Deputy Administrator Randall Jones



Randall Jones

On July 20, 2008, **Randall Jones** became the new deputy administrator of the Agency's Federal Grain Inspection Service.

"We are delighted that **Randall** is leading the national grain inspection and weighing program," said GIPSA Administrator **James Link**. "He brings to this critically important position proven leadership ability and expertise in programs that enhance trade in domestic and international markets."

Prior to joining GIPSA, **Randall** served as associate deputy administrator of the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service's Livestock and Seed Program. During his tenure, he oversaw research and promotion programs for beef, pork, lamb and soybeans; livestock and grain market reporting; domestic and foreign seed trade activities and quality management programs to market seed and meat products domestically and internationally. He also was directly involved in the development and implementation of a new research and promotion program for sorghum.

During his 7 years of service with the Agricultural Marketing Service, **Randall** contributed directly to the effective marketing of meat and seed products, primarily through the implementation of programs that would enhance trade with domestic and foreign markets. Since September 2001, he oversaw the implementation of quality management systems and development of three accreditation programs for seed, providing uniformity of procedures and methodology and thereby enhancing seed commerce across the globe. He was also involved in the recent development of an agreement with Canada that facilitated the direct marketing of U.S. seed upon import, saving U.S. seed producers and exporters thousands of dollars a year in seed testing and exporting costs. Further, his oversight of OECD Seed Schemes activities has enhanced U.S. seed movement in international seed trade.

Before his service with the Agricultural Marketing Service, **Randall** served more than 16 years in various management positions with the USDA Farm Service Agency and the former Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service.

Randall is a native of Grayson County in southwest Virginia, where he grew up on a beef cattle and dairy farm. He received his Bachelor of Science from Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, VA. He now resides in Warrenton, VA, with his wife and daughter.

*13th Annual
Administrator's
Awards*

*Nominations due
September 1, 2008*

*More information
on page 3.*

Names in the News

PERSONNEL

Robert Dorman, grain marketing specialist, joined the Field Management Division's Policies and Procedures Branch (PPB) on July 6, 2008. **Rob** earned a Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Business with emphasis in Ag Engineering Technology from the University of Wisconsin, Platteville. After receiving his BA, he worked in the crop production/crop science field for a period of time. He then was hired on at the Kansas City Commodity Office, Farm Service Agency, as a Federal warehouse examiner.



Andy Greenfield, grain marketing specialist, joined PPB on July 6, 2008. Prior to joining GIPSA, Andy earned Bachelor of Science



degree in Multinational Business Operations and a minor in Spanish from Florida State University. While in school, Andrew served as the academics and alumni relations chairperson for his fraternity, Alpha Epsilon Pi. Andrew was also involved in real estate and banking in South Florida but is looking forward to a new and exciting challenge with the Federal government.

Mark Kemp is onboard as GIPSA's new Safety and Health Manager, Management Support Staff, Washington, DC. **Mark** joined the U.S. Air Force immediately after high school, serving the first 10 years of his military service as a jet engine mechanic on a variety of cargo and fighter aircraft. **Mark** deployed in support of several operations, including Desert Shield/Desert Storm and Operation Southern Watch in Iraq. Later, as a manager in the Air Force, **Mark** managed and taught a variety of programs including: customer service, Quality Air Force (based on ISO 9000), strategic planning, Operational Risk Management, metrics management, career planning, and a host of environmental and safety courses. In 2001, he assumed responsibility for the environmental and safety programs for an aircraft maintenance complex that included over 50 aircraft, 7 squadrons, and 1,500 personnel. There he developed the Air Forces Aircraft Deicing Fluid Recovery and Recycling Program, which became the benchmark program for the Air Force and has been implemented at other bases across

the United States. **Mark** retired from military service in September 2006 after more than 24 years of service and spent nearly 2 years working for private industry as an environmental program manager for a company in Austin, Texas. **Mark** has a BS from Southern Illinois University-Carbondale and is currently pursuing his MBA and MS in Environmental Program Management at the University of Maryland.

Pat McCluskey, Market and Program Analysis Staff, will assume the position of leader of the Analytical Services Group (the reference laboratories and pesticide analysis laboratory) effective July 7, 2008, for approximately 90 days. Pat has previous experience managing a laboratory, prior to his joining GIPSA.

Raymond "Dexter" Thomas II, supervisory regulatory analyst, has joined the Management Support Staff. Dexter is a career USDA employee, having spent 23 years with the Agricultural Marketing Service's Perishable Agricultural Commodities Act (PACA) program, working to foster fair trading practices in the fruit and vegetable industry. Most recently, he was a senior marketing specialist and assistant to the PACA branch chief where he was responsible for all PACA rulemaking activities.

Continued, see Names on page 4.

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Now Accepting Nominations for the 13th Annual Administrator's Awards

James E. Link, Washington, DC

I am pleased to announce that the GIPSA Awards Committee is now accepting nominations for the **13th Annual Administrator's Awards**.

In the past 12 years, the Administrator's Awards have offered unique opportunities for GIPSA employees to recognize the outstanding accomplishments of our coworkers – those who went the extra mile, made an extra effort, did something especially noteworthy, or just work at an exemplary level each day. This year, we are continuing the tradition of acknowledging the contributions of our fellow employees. Remember, anyone may nominate anyone, regardless of grade level. Administrator's Awards are given for the following categories:

1. **Distinguished and Superior Individual Awards** are for employees who make extra effort to fulfill GIPSA's mission.
2. **Distinguished and Superior Group Awards** for those teams of GIPSA employees that have come together to meet an Agency need.
3. **EEO/Civil Rights Awards** recognize an individual(s) who contributes to ensuring that GIPSA is free from prejudice and discrimination.
4. **Safety Awards** are for individual(s) who have helped make our work environment safer and healthier.
5. **GIPSA Support Awards** recognize a non-GIPSA employee who has provided direction or support that has furthered GIPSA's effectiveness.

The deadline for submitting your nomination is **September 1, 2008** (nominations must be "postmarked" by this date — U.S. post office, fax, or e-mail).

Mail nominations to:
Incentive Awards Committee
Office of the Administrator
USDA/GIPSA
STOP 3611
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250-3611

Fax your nomination to:
202-720-4628

Email your nomination to:
Ruth.Ortiz@udsa.gov

For a sample nomination, please see attachment 2-B of GIPSA Directive 4451.1, "Employee Recognition Program". Please address the selection criteria for Distinguished and Superior Individual Awards, EEO/Civil Rights Awards, and Safety Awards in Section 3.6 (2) of the Directive. If you have questions about the program, please contact the co-chairs of our awards committee: **Ruth Ortiz**, 202-720-6719; or **Monica Alexander**, 202-720-7045.

After a dozen years, we may become complacent and take exceptional contributions for granted. Please don't! People are what make GIPSA the productive, successful organization it is today. Please take the time to look around and use the Administrator's Awards to recognize those who play a vital role in our success.

I look forward to seeing this year's nominations!

Names, from page 2.

Dexter is most proud of his work as a PACA team member that developed and implemented an Internet-based PACA training program that received a group Secretary's Honor Award in 2001. Dexter grew up in Lee County in southwest Virginia and received his Bachelor of Science degree in agriculture from Virginia Tech.

Beth Walter joined the P&SP Midwestern Regional Office on July 6, 2008, as a market inspector based in Mercer, MO. **Beth** grew up on a family farm in north central Missouri near the town of Lucerne. During her time on the farm, **Beth** gained a lot of experience working in a cow/calf operation. In 2000, **Beth** graduated from Northwest Missouri State University with a Bachelor's of Science Degree in Agriculture Science with an emphasis on Agriculture Business, Agronomy, and Animal Science. During college, **Beth** completed an internship with Premium Standard Farms that focused on swine production. Upon graduation, she worked for nearly 8 years for the Mercer County Soil and Water Conservation District as a Soil Conservation Technician/Project Manager. As a Market Inspector, **Beth's** main duties will be conducting checkweighs, and performing market sale day reviews and identifying unregistered entities. Her territory includes the state of Missouri and parts of southern Iowa and western Illinois.

Sarah Welch, Wade Berteau, Vernett Knight, and Gary Holmes, New Orleans, have been selected as supervisory agricultural commodity graders in the field office.

RETIREMENT

Martin Begley, PPB, retired on August 1, 2008, with more than 32 years of service. **Marty's** first 12 years of his career were spent in the Portland and Galveston field offices. He then moved to Washington, DC, in 1987 where he's worked since. **Marty** and his wife **Camille**, a USDA National Resources Conservation Service retiree, plan eventually to move to the Bend, Oregon, area. We wish **Marty** and **Camille** a long and healthy retirement.

AWARDS

Wesley Blake, physical scientist, Technical Services Division (TSD) received a spot award for authoring a special request report to US Wheat Associates in support of the Export Cargo Sampling Program, expressly reformatting historical data to customer specification. This was done in addition to maintaining his usual schedule of duties conducting and overseeing trace lab operations.

Amy Blechinger, Washington, DC, received a spot award for developing new Policy and Litigation Division (PLD) employees by providing informal training opportunities, inspiring teamwork and motivating to achieve PLD goals.

Cary Brown, Field Management Division (FMD) / Chicago, received a time off award for volunteering to cancel a scheduled day of leave to unload an unannounced shipment of calibrated weights at the Master Scale Depot.

Jackie Crull, Des Moines, received a spot award for extra effort in assisting resident agents in another geographic territory in support of P&SP's Business Plan.

Michael Eustrom, supervisory grain marketing specialist, TSD, received a spot award for outstanding service in assisting the Farm Service Agency to identify and resolve problems with U.S. commodities.

Brenda Evans, physical science technician, TSD, received a spot award for her exceptional dedication and initiative in conducting analysis of surface lipid content in a special rice project.

John Giler, FMD, received an extra effort award for performing a superior job while serving as acting deputy administrator of the Federal Grain Inspection Service while performing his many duties and critical responsibilities as Director of Field Management Division.

Lynn Polston, chemist, TSD, received a spot award for outstanding effort in managing the Quality Systems and Services Reference Laboratories to provide excellent customer service.

Al Rupert, FMD/Chicago, received a time off award for volunteering to cancel a scheduled day of leave to unload an unannounced shipment of calibrated weights at the Master Scale Depot.

Continued, see More Names on page 6.

Soar Ahead! Make Your Voice Heard

Jim Link, Washington, DC

You will soon have another opportunity to help GIPSA become a stronger, more responsive organization. The U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) will soon be issuing a second Organizational Assessment Survey (OAS) to gather information about our agency's climate, culture, and work environment. The survey will ensure that your voice is heard.

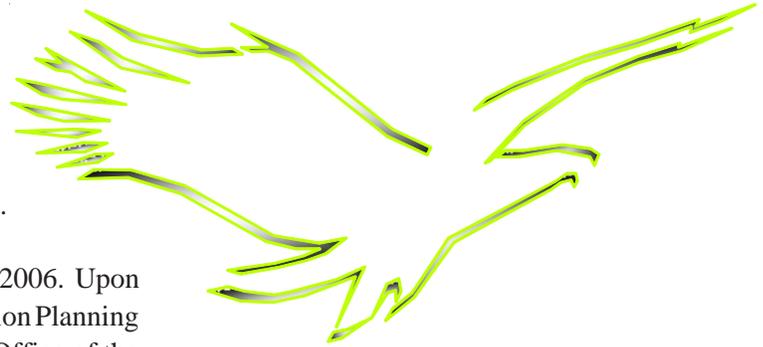
GIPSA's first OAS was administered by OPM in 2006. Upon receipt of the survey results, GIPSA established two Action Planning Teams. The first was comprised of P&SP and GIPSA Office of the Administrator (OA) staff. The second included members from FGIS and OA. Each team addressed key issues and offered a variety of improvement recommendations based on their study of the results.

You may have read about some of the change outcomes in "You Asked For It" articles in the March and May editions of *GIPSA News*. Noted were such activities as performance appraisal training for supervisors, the Specialized Enhancement Program, the P&SP Mentoring Program, suggestion boxes, open forum meetings, the upcoming redesigned inGIPSA web site, and a variety of training programs, some of which are complete and others that remain available for those who choose to participate. Additional improvements were instituted at the local level.

The 2008 survey results will again be used to identify strengths and challenges, and to identify change strategies to help GIPSA improve its work environment. The survey directly addresses rewards, training, innovation, customer orientation, leadership, fairness, communication, employee involvement, use of resources, quality of work life, work and family balance, teamwork, job security, strategic planning, performance measures, diversity, supervision and job satisfaction. Actions taken as a result of the survey may address any combination of these areas. A summary of the survey results will be provided to all employees.

We need your input to chart GIPSA's course. The 2008 survey will offer you the opportunity to reflect on what has been accomplished and give your perspective on the GIPSA of today.

Please make your voice heard with the goal of making GIPSA an ever-improving place to work. Let's continue to "Soar Ahead!" Watch your email for survey specifics.



Visit inGIPSA's "Personnel Info" section for more information on the 2006 Organizational Assessment Survey. You'll find:

- ✘ 2006 Organizational Assessment Survey Results
- ✘ Summary of Results
- ✘ P&SP Action Team Report
- ✘ FGIS Action Team Report

Issuances

Terri Henry, Washington, D.C.

- ❑ FGIS Directive 9180.35, “Phytopsanitary Inspection,” dated June 2, 2008
- ❑ FGIS Program Notice 08-09, “Use of Probe Samples as an Alternate Standard Reference for Testing Diverter-Type Sampling Systems,” dated July 14, 2008
- ❑ FGIS Program Notice 08-10, “Inspection of Flood Damaged Grain,” dated June 30, 2008
- ❑ Deletion of FGIS Policy Memo # 159, “Grading Flood Damaged Grain.” dated April 9, 1997, which was incorporated into FGIS PN 08-10
- ❑ Issuance Change No. 107 to the Grain Inspection Handbook, Book III, Chapter 1, “Inspection of Shiplots, Unit Trains, and Lash Barges,” dated June 9, 2008; Book IV, Chapter 2, “Work Records,” dated June 9, 2008; and Book IV, Chapter 3, “Certificates,” dated July 14, 2008

Regulatory Info

Tess Butler, Washington, DC

Federal Register Publications

- ❑ Request for Revision of a Currently Approved Information Collection – published July 7, 2008

Employment Verification Number

Employees in need of employment history and salary verification by a third-party are reminded to use **The Work Number (TALX)** as a resource. The Work Number, in cooperation with your employer, provides a secure and convenient way to authorize third-party verifiers (like lenders, landlords, social service agencies, and prospective employers) to verify your employment and/or income. The system is accessed by logging on to www.theworknumber.com or calling 800-996-7566. Enter (use) company **code 10284** to access the system.

More Names, from page 4.

35-YEAR SERVICE AWARDS

David Fulks, Portland, OR
Roy Shepherd, New Orleans, LA
Carl Tutt, League City, TX

25-YEAR SERVICE AWARDS

Anita Heckenbach, Kansas City, MO
Jay Johnson, Des Moines, IA
Angela Roper, Destrehan, LA
Terry Taylor, Des Moines, IA
Sharon Williams, Washington, D.C.

15-YEAR SERVICE AWARDS

Cary Brown, Chicago, IL
Ron Glass, Destrehan, LA
Mavis Rogers, Washington, D.C.

Employee Assistance Program

Call for confidential help.

Washington, DC personnel, call...
1-800-222-0364

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

Travel Bits & Pieces

Monica Alexander, Washington, DC

Since the implementation of the GovTrip travel system, expenses charged and claimed to individual travel cards have been paid through the process of “split disbursement.” Split disbursement allows travel reimbursements to be paid to the employee and the travel card account, thus reducing or eliminating the need to make payments to the travel card after vouchering for travel. The split disbursement process has reduced the Agency travel card delinquency occurrences, thus improving our fiscal indicators. With this new process, employees need to remember the following:

- ◆ Reconcile travel card statements each month to ensure all transactions (charges, credits, and payments) are valid,
- ◆ Dispute any unauthorized charges with Bank of America within 60 days of the transaction date, and
- ◆ Voucher for unclaimed travel related charges.

Employees are encouraged to pay any balances owed through the Bank of America Easy Pay Online system at <https://www.myeasypayment.com/Enter.aspx>. You will need the credit card number, three digit code on the back of the card, and a checking account and routing number. The payments are posted within 2-3 days.

Packing for Your Next Trip. Many employees traveling by air are experiencing delays and cancellations, which may cause stress, hardship, and outright frustration. With this in mind, prepare for these unexpected occurrences by:

- ◆ Packing a carryon bag with at least one change of clothes,
- ◆ Carrying basic toiletry items (not to exceed 3 ounces per item),
- ◆ Carrying plugs and peripherals for electronic equipment,
- ◆ Researching phone numbers of local lodging facilities (if laying over),
- ◆ Shipping work-related materials ahead of time instead of checking them as luggage,
- ◆ Taking a good book, music, puzzle, magazine, game or work assignment to occupy the waiting time, and
- ◆ Packing only necessities and leaving valuables at home!

POV Mileage Rate Increase. On July 28, 2008, GSA issued a final rule that increased the privately-owned vehicle (POV) mileage reimbursement rates. The implementation date for the new rates is **August 1, 2008**. All travel commencing on or after this date will use the following rates when using a POV:

Mode of Transportation	New Rate	Old Rate
Privately owned vehicle (if no government vehicle is available)	\$0.585	\$0.505
Privately owned airplane	\$1.26	\$1.07
Privately owned motorcycle	\$0.585	\$0.305

IT Tidbit

David Will, Washington, DC

In the past few weeks, the Information Technology Staff has been preparing your computer for Microsoft Office 2007.

In late July or early August 2008, depending on the other coordinated events, we will be migrating from Office 2003 to 2007. We will let you know well in advance of the date when Office 2007 will replace Office 2003, and what you will need to do to facilitate its installation.

One of the goals of each major product release is to simplify routine tasks. Office 2007 offers many enhancements. Email is a fundamental way of communicating with our colleagues and customers. Many of us frequently send and receive email attachments. Accessing e-mail attachments is often a multistep process with no easy way to gain quick insight into the content. Now, with Attachment Preview, you will be able to easily preview your attachments in one click directly from within Office Outlook 2007.

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

GIPSA's 2008 New Leader Program Participants

Rosemary Mayne, Washington, DC

Congratulations to **Carla Thomas**, Eastern Regional Office, and **Jared Koch**, Western Regional Office, on their selections into the New Leader Program at the USDA Graduate School. **Carla** and **Jared** submitted exceptional applications and received the highest rankings from GIPSA's evaluation panel. Their goals included leading teams and motivating others to accomplish the business goals of the Packers and Stockyards Program. In congratulating **Carla** and **Jared**, **Alan Christian**, P&SP deputy administrator, said, "I am a strong believer that everyone has an opportunity to take a leadership role in moving our organization forward. I appreciate your taking this step to improve your skills and ability."

The New Leader Program begins on August 3, 2008. Please support **Carla** and **Jared** in their efforts to take full advantage of the wonderful learning opportunities the program offers. The next 6 months will be busy and challenging for them.

AgLearn Usage Tops 2,000,000

Since its inception, AgLearn has become an important part of educating and training USDA employees. The training available to you through the AgLearn site ranges from retirement courses to high-level computer training. The system also has specific training developed by the mission areas for several USDA-managed programs.

In fiscal year 2007, over 1,000,000 courses were completed through AgLearn, bringing the total number of courses completed over the life of the system to 2,181,695! That total makes AgLearn the most successful learning tool in the civilian agencies.

Whether at work or at home, you can train in a subject area that is associated with your job or a specific area of interest. Classes are provided free of cost.

Apply for the 2008 Executive Leadership Program

*Rosemary Mayne,
Washington, DC*

The USDA Graduate School offers a 9-month nationwide program for full-time permanent GS-11/12/13 employees who have demonstrated significant leadership potential with minimal supervisory experience. The Executive Leadership Program (ELP) prepares high-potential employees for a career in Federal leadership or management.

The ELP is delivered during four residential seminars. Participants are absent from their current positions a minimum of 3 months spread over a 9-month period. Individuals are nominated based on both their leadership/management potential, and their motivation to fully participate and complete all program requirements. To graduate, participants are required to complete all program components and assignments during the 9-month period.

GIPSA is now selecting a nominee through a competitive process.

Suspension of Guaranteed Home Buyout Option for Employee Relocations

Monica Alexander, Washington, DC

Earlier this summer, the General Services Administration (GSA) notified all Federal agencies of the temporary suspension of the guaranteed home buyout (GBO) option as a relocation allowance due to the housing market downturn. The GBO option is a **discretionary allowance**, meaning the Agency is not required to provide this benefit to relocating employees.

While GIPSA has provided this option to a number of its employees, the relocation services companies on the GSA contract schedule have suspended this service throughout the Federal government for Executive Branch employees. GSA and the relocation services companies are reviewing the contract terms. As of July 2008, the contract negotiations have not been completed.

The temporary suspension may impact supervisors' plans to offer this relocation allowance to employees being hired under the merit promotion process or for duty station transfers.

According to the *Agriculture Relocation Regulation* (DR 2300-002, May 31, 2007), agencies must pay for the allowances listed in column A. They have discretionary authority to pay for allowances listed in column B.

USDA Relocation Allowances

COLUMN A	COLUMN B
Agencies must pay or reimburse (<i>Entitlements</i>)	Agencies have discretionary authority to pay or reimburse (<i>Discretionary Allowances</i>)
1. Transportation and per diem for employee and immediate family member(s) (§302-4)	1. House hunting per diem and transportation, employee and spouse only (§302-5)
2. Miscellaneous moving expenses (§302-16)	2. Temporary quarters subsistence expense (TQSE) (§302-6)
3. Sell or buy residence transactions or lease termination expenses (§302-11)	3. Shipment of privately owned vehicle (POV) (§302-9, subpart B)
4. Transportation and temporary storage of household goods (§302-7)	4. Property management services (§302-15)
5. Extended storage of household goods (§302-8) \1\	5. Home marketing incentives (§302-14)
6. Transportation of a mobile home or boat used as a primary residence in lieu of the transportation of household goods (§302-10)	6. Use of a relocation service companies (§302-12)
7. Relocation income tax allowance (RITA) (§302-17)	

Source: *USDA Relocation Travel Regulation-DR 2300-002 (May 31, 2007)*

Given the current suspension of GBO services, employees relocating within the Federal government in the future must sell their residential property on their own. Employees will be reimbursed for up to 10 percent of expenses related to selling the residence (Table 1, Allowance #3). All relocation allowances are noteworthy employee benefits. The Agency will continue to use as many of the allowances as possible to ensure GIPSA employees' relocations are conducted smoothly.

Contact the GIPSA Travel Coordinator at (202) 720-7045 for additional information regarding the relocation policy.

HSPD-12 Implementation

Monica Alexander, Washington, DC

On August 27, 2004, President Bush signed Homeland Security Presidential Directive-12 (HSPD-12). The goal of the HSPD-12 initiative is to eliminate wide variations in the quality and security of forms of personal identification verification (PIV) cards issued to government employees and contractors. Since then, Federal Agencies have been preparing their employees and contractors for the implementation, such as ensuring each has a minimum background investigation. Compliance with the HSPD-12 initiative will require this criterion, in order for stakeholders to obtain a PIV card. The PIV card will be used to access Government property, such as buildings and later to access information technology equipment and systems. Each Federal Agency (Department) was allowed to name their PIV card, which the Department of Agriculture (USDA) chose to call a *LincPass*.

Over the past several months, GIPSA employees across the U.S. have been gradually becoming compliant with the HSPD-12 program, which requires employees to enroll and activate the LincPass cards at a nearby enrollment station. The USDA's goal is to enroll and activate 60 percent of all Department employees by October 1, 2008. GIPSA currently has over one-half of our employees prepared to enroll, with the remaining being sponsored by September 2008.

The process of obtaining a LincPass involves several steps; however only a few are experienced by the employee, namely the Enrollment, Communication and Issuance and Activation steps. The steps include:



The Linc Pass card contains minimal personal identifiable information (PII), which is stored on a microchip imbedded in the card. The information is encrypted, meaning, sources seeking to access the data will not be able to “unscramble” the data into a coherent, readable information. As we know, all technology is not “fool proof”; therefore, the Agency is issuing protective holders that are to be used exclusively for the LincPass. Employees must store the cards in the holder at all times, unless the card is being scanned for official Government purposes, such as accessing the GIPSA network. Placing commuter passes, other IDs, credit, cards or any items that may fit in the holder is prohibited. The holders contain a metal backing that will block any scanning equipment from reading the card. The card can only be read when taking out of the holder.

During the HSPD-12 Implementation in GIPSA, employees and contractors are required to:

- § Coordinate enrollments and activation appointments with their supervisor or designee,
- § Upon issuance of the card, store the card in the Agency-issued card holder with the metal backing,
- § Wear the card in Federal buildings or as required as a form of identity when on public premises,
- § Remove the card from visibility when leaving Federal buildings or premises, and
- § Report misplaced, lost, damaged, or stolen cards to GIPSA MSS.

Inquiries regarding the HSPD-12 implementation should be forwarded to the GIPSA Management Support Staff at 202-720-7045.

Individual Development Plans Due August 2008

Caroline Thorpe, Washington, DC

Do you want to improve your job performance? An Individual Development Plan (IDP) could help to get you outside of the routine box and develop your skills.

Planning is important! GIPSA's IDPs are due August 25, 2008 — please ask your Collateral Duty Training Officer for the specific due date for your office.

The IDP is both a development and a training tool, and is an important component of a good overall development plan. It is also tailored to your development. How you approach it is very individual as the name says. The key is what works for you and how you best acquire new job related knowledge, skills, and abilities.



You can be creative in finding the ways and means of enhancing your career. There are many options from which to choose for improving yourself and meeting your goals while on the job. To address performance needs, consider: 1) online training in AgLearn; 2) books, videos, CDs, and DVDs from the GIPSA Library; 4) details; 5) cross training; 6) developmental activities (volunteer for tasks, challenging work assignments, and other activities); 7) getting a coach;

8) attending meetings; and 9) investigate community resources and opportunities to assist with your development.

Be mindful of the June 2008 USDA training policy, which requires that you review and take what is available on AgLearn first before requesting more advanced training from other sources. AgLearn is also available as a training resource for courses that cannot be listed on your IDP because they are not work related. These courses can be done on your own time via the Internet.

If you need assistance, please contact **Caroline Thorpe** at caroline.c.thorpe@usda.gov, **Mary McCoy** at mary.m.mccoy@usda.gov, or **Rosemary Mayne** at rosemary.k.mayne@usda.gov at the GIPSS-MSS Training Office or call 202-720-0094.



National Grain Center Update

This month at the National Grain Center... the current Technical Center got some parking and access to docks back, and the footings for the addition are going in.



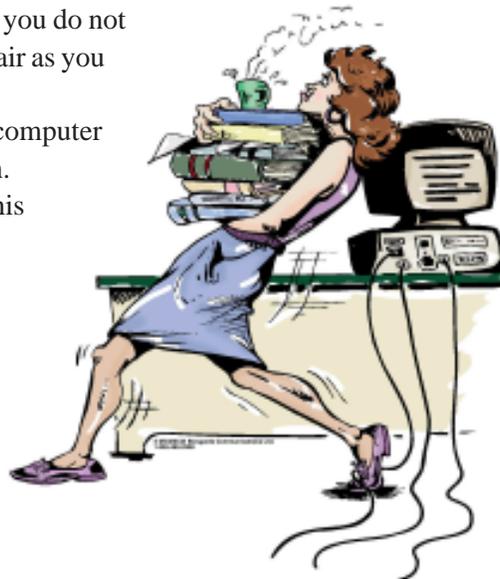
For Your Health

Mavis Rogers, Washington, DC

Safety in the Office. Accidents do happen in the office. Few office workers realize that they are twice as likely to be injured in a fall as a non-office worker. Nationally, only automobile accidents outnumber falls as the leading cause of all accidents. In the office, slips, trips, and falls are the number one cause of disabling injuries.

Thinking and working safely can prevent most accidents. You can become aware of the most common hazards in the office environment. The following are some examples of common hazards and what you can do to prevent them from becoming accidents.

1. Don't lean back in your chair. Keep all legs on the floor so that you do not end up on the floor. Take time to reach out and hold on to the chair as you sit down.
2. Keep the floor and walkway clear of electrical, telephone, and computer cables, boxes, etc. They are tripping hazards waiting to happen.
3. Close one drawer of a filing cabinet before opening another. This prevents the file cabinet from tipping over on you.
4. Close the drawer of your desk before getting up, and close file drawers before walking away from the file cabinet. This prevents the danger of people walking into an open file drawer or desk drawer.
5. Store supplies inside cabinets, not on top of them. Store heavy items in lower drawers or on low shelves.
6. Watch out for slippery surfaces. Spilled drinks or water from umbrellas are typical hazards, and need to be cleaned up/or identified immediately.
7. Look where you are going. Don't block your view by carrying loads higher than eye level.
8. Don't read while walking. It doesn't save enough time to justify the risk.
9. Walk, do not run. Please slow down.
10. Don't climb on chairs, desks, or boxes. Use a step stool instead.
11. Hold onto handrails when using stairways.
12. Use elevators when carrying boxes if one is available.
13. Don't throw matches, ashes, or cigarette butts into wastebaskets. If the building has been designated as a smoke-free building, DO NOT smoke in the building.
14. Don't overload wall sockets and extension cords.
15. Don't touch electrical switches, sockets, plugs, etc. with wet hands.
16. Watch for unsafe conditions such as defective equipment, burned out lights, loose steps, torn carpet, etc. and report them to your supervisor immediately.



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 August 25, 2008!

Retiring? To be included on our email distribution list after you retire from GIPSA, please send your email address to dana.b.stewart@usda.gov.

Courtesy Brent Bowlin, Health and Safety Researcher.

OFFICE OF THE ADMINISTRATOR
USDA, GRAIN INSPECTION, PACKERS
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