



THE BRIDGE: Connecting Civil Service and You

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The DSCS Mission:
To provide human resource services and programs that enable state government to attract, develop and retain a productive and diverse workforce that excels in delivering quality services to the citizens of Louisiana.

We Want Your Feedback!

This publication is intended to provide for increased communication between the Department of State Civil Service and all stakeholders within our system. E-mail your questions, comments, or suggestions to us, and we'll do our best to respond promptly. Your feedback may even be chosen for publication as part of this feature! Participants will remain anonymous if requested. Please note that not all feedback will be published and that only fact-based questions will receive a response.

[Click HERE](#)
to submit your feedback!

STAYING CONNECTED

From the Desk of Shannon S. Templet, DSCS Director



As many of you know, “pay for performance” has been a hot topic both in the legislature and in the media lately. Inside this issue of the *Bridge*, we are pleased to share the success of Phase II of DOTD’s Pay for Performance pilot program with our readers. DOTD used flexibilities found within existing Civil Service rules in order to create a pay for performance program that helps employees have a better understanding of how their efforts directly contribute to the agency’s strategic objectives, while providing rewards for achieving those objectives. DOTD reports that effective communication was a key element in the program’s success, and we congratulate them on their innovative use of the Civil Service rules to achieve their agency’s goals.

We encourage readers to contact us through the links provided in this magazine if there is an outstanding employee, agency accomplishment, comment, or question that you would like to see featured in the *Bridge*.

Public Pension Reform Proposed in Constitutional Amendment No. 2

A constitutional amendment is being proposed to voters on October 22nd that will use a portion of surplus funds in the state’s budget to help pay down the unfunded accrued liability (UAL) that currently exists for state retirement systems. To read more about this issue, click [HERE](#) to go to the website for the Louisiana State Employees’ Retirement System. On the website, you will find details about the proposed constitutional amendment and what impact it will have on the UAL.

The Bridge is produced quarterly by a committee of [Civil Service staff members](#).

Pay for Performance Success at DOTD

By Janelle Haynsworth
Compensation Consultant

The Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD) recently presented the results of Phase II of its Pay for Performance pilot program at the May 2011 State Civil Service Commission meeting. DOTD deputy undersecretary, Kirt Clement, reported that efforts in Phase II were successful and that DOTD will be moving forward to Phase III, which involves agency-wide implementation on a voluntary basis.

DOTD began experimenting with Phase I of its Pay for Performance program in 2007. This initial phase tied performance incentives to special projects and gave awards to employees for achieving specific outcomes. Although DOTD management found that rewards of \$500 were sufficient to motivate employees to work harder and more cooperatively on the special projects, they noticed that projects linked to the pilot program were given the highest priority by DOTD employees – sometimes to the detriment of regular work activities. These outcomes prompted DOTD to discontinue incentive pay for special projects and to design Phase II with a focus on normal work operations.

Phase II of DOTD's Pay for Performance program tied performance to the operational objectives of individual work sections. DOTD ensured that section operational objectives aligned with the agency's overall strategic and operational plans. The specific and measurable section objectives were integrated with employee performance planning and rating documents in order to tie monetary incentives to core work processes. At the end of the pilot, participants believed that the section objectives were achievable and helped them to work harder as a team. Based on these results, DOTD believes that Phase II was a success and that the

program helped to cultivate a workforce with a better understanding of the mission, values, and goals of the agency.



The DOTD procurement section participated in the Pay for Performance pilot and met their objectives. From left: Charlotte Garrison, Jennifer Fontenot, Erica Hancock, Jeanie Prejean, Joyce Coston, Debbie Rock, Lorraine Louque, Amy Gotreaux, Carla Parent, and Darlene Francis.



Read more from DOTD deputy undersecretary Kirt Clement and Pay for Performance pilot program manager, Sarah Ragona, in their interview with the *Bridge* by clicking [HERE](#).

Click [HERE](#) to view DOTD's presentation to the State Civil Service Commission about its Pay for Performance pilots.

Recruiting in Today's Job Market

By Aeli Poydras
Staffing Consultant

In the midst of the current economic crisis, many individuals are searching for employment. Although a large applicant pool is generally a good thing, it can make recruiting a more challenging process for human resource professionals in assuring that the best candidates are selected. The Department of State Civil Service (DSCS) recently presented a seminar in New Orleans at the annual conference of the National Association of State Personnel Executives that specifically addressed the concerns of recruiting in today's economic marketplace. The presentation focused on how DSCS has streamlined its hiring methods so that large numbers of applicants do not hinder its ability to find and hire the best talent.

The seminar partnered Kim Price of the DSCS Staffing Division with Ed Cavazos, a NeoGov representative. The presentation explained how Louisiana has reformed many of its recruitment processes over the past 10 years in order to select superior candidates from among the many who apply for state jobs, while decreasing the time required for recruiting and hiring. Responsibilities that used to be centralized at DSCS such as position approval, job posting, accepting applications, qualification screening, and test score verification have been delegated to state agencies.

Additionally, with the state's recent move to the NeoGov online application and tracking system (LA Careers), many procedures are now performed electronically, which eliminates paperwork in many parts of the recruiting process. These advancements allow agency hiring managers to hire candidates more



DSCS staffing supervisor, Kim Price, reviews recent enhancements to the LA Careers system.

quickly because it takes less time to generate a list of certified candidates. This enhances efficiency in the delivery of vital state services to our citizens and results in a tremendous cost savings to the state by reduced paper usage and lower postage costs.

The technological improvements to recruiting processes allow DSCS staffing consultants to provide state agencies with value-added services, such as counseling on staffing considerations and innovative recruiting mechanisms. Consultants are also available to assist agency human resources personnel with hiring issues such as exceptionally large applicant pools. DSCS is committed to progressive hiring methods in order to meet the state's recruiting challenges, thereby fulfilling its mission to attract, develop, and retain a productive and diverse workforce that excels in delivering quality services to the citizens of Louisiana.

Click [HERE](#) to view the seminar segment presented by Kim Price at the NASPE conference.

We're Looking for Your Agency's Accomplishments!

Has your agency been recognized for something lately? Are you proud of a program administered by your agency? Do you want to inform *Bridge* readers about a service your agency provides to Louisiana citizens?

Click [HERE](#) to let us know!

The *Bridge* is always looking to promote state agency accomplishments and the employees that helped to make them successful!

DSCS Receives National Recognition for Outstanding Program

By Paul St. Dizier
Chief Referee

The National Association of State Personnel Executives (NASPE) presented its Communications Award of Merit to DSCS's Staffing Division at the 2011 NASPE annual meeting held in New Orleans in July. Shannon S. Templet, DSCS Director, and Rainette Stephens, HR Division Administrator, accepted the award on behalf of DSCS. Also in attendance and thanked by Director Templet for their efforts were Staffing Division employees Kim Price, Aeli Poydras, Robert Wood, and Joan Haase.

The Communications Award of Merit is given annually in recognition of state human resources program excellence in communication efforts and strategies, including but not limited to such forms of communication as newsletters, reports, websites, brochures, commercials, and posters. The Staffing Division received this prestigious award for the biweekly conference calls it conducts with agency human resources staff across the state concerning LA Careers, Louisiana's online job application system. This innovative practice allows DSCS staff to effectively and economically disseminate information and answer questions about LA Careers, while at the same time providing a forum for agency human resources staff to share their experiences and concerns. Human resources personnel who are new to LA Careers can access summary notes from past biweekly user calls through the HR Info website by logging on [HERE](#).

The LA Careers biweekly conference call program exemplifies DSCS's commitment to providing the highest quality of services and assistance to state agencies in the most cost-effective manner possible. Although winning the Communications Award is a certainly an honor that reflects well upon DSCS, the real winners are the beneficiaries of LA Careers and

the conference call program itself: state agencies, job seekers, and the tax-paying public.



DSCS accepts the NASPE Communications Award of Merit. From left: Kim Price, Rainette Stevens, Shannon S. Templet, Rob Wood, Aeli Poydras, and Joan Haase.



The *Bridge* is Connecting Civil Service and You!

In this issue, we feature questions from our readers pertaining to Performance Planning and Review documents.

[Click on the question to read *Bridge Answers!*](#)

Q1. Will state employees be receiving their merit raises retroactively any time soon? If not, is it still necessary to complete the Performance Planning and Review (PPR)?

Q2. After an employee receives his/her PPR and disagrees with it, what is the process for having the scores changed? Can the supervisor of the person who rated the employee change it? What is the process for handling this matter? Who can resolve this at the agency level?