



# Reinvention Roundtable

Helping Federal Workers Create A Government That Works Better and Costs Less

## President Stands Up for Federal Employees

President Clinton has made strong statements in support of federal employees in recent speeches. Here is one excerpt:

*"...we must never contribute to this atmosphere of resentment of the people who work for the federal government, because most people who work for the federal government are like most people anywhere....Given the choice between being relevant or irrelevant, most people would gladly chose to be relevant....And what we have tried to do with this National Performance Review, which the Vice President has doggedly pursued...is day by day, week by week, department by department, agency by agency, employee by employee to chip away at the habits and institutional conduct of the federal government that are not good for America....And all of you who have been a part of that deserve a lot of credit for what you've done. And I just want to urge you to keep doing it."*

—Reinvention announcement at the U.S. Treasury, June 9.



*Vice President Gore, President Clinton, and Small Business Administration Administrator Phil Lader Celebrate Plans to Eliminate 16,000 Pages of Rules*

## Federal Regulators Did It: 16,000 Pages of Rules Cut

In a regulatory reform initiative unmatched in the Nation's history, federal regulators outdid themselves in carrying out the President's February 21 mandate to cut obsolete regulations, create partnerships with those they regulate, and transform the government's regulatory culture from one of process and punishment to results and cooperation.

In reports submitted on June 1, agencies told the President that collectively they propose to get rid of 16,000 pages of outdated or unnecessary rules on American businesses and the public. In a challenging 100 days of activity, federal workers from 35 agencies looked at 86,000 pages of rules that affect everything from clean air to workplace safety.

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### IN MEMORY

*We dedicate this issue to the federal workers, their families, and their customers who died as a result of the April 19th Oklahoma City bombing. We also honor the heroism and public outpouring that occurred in its aftermath.*



## Reinvention Roundtable

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### How to Order Bulk Copies

The most economical way for federal organizations to get bulk copies is to share costs by "riding" our printing requisition. Each newsletter would cost about 20 cents. Ask your agency's printing officer at headquarters or call Linda DiPietro at (202) 632-0150, ext 158.

## OSHA Will Nationalize "Maine 200"

One of the voluntary programs the Occupational Safety and Health Administration will roll out nationally is "Maine 200." Maine 200 began in 1993 when OSHA officials in Maine decided to set aside their punishment and penalty regulatory approach.

They offered to work in partnership with the 200 most unsafe employers in the state as determined by their high annual percentage of compensable illnesses and injury claims. "We began to see that penalties were a means to an end, not an end itself," said Bill Freeman, OSHA Area Director for the state of Maine.

### Employers Could Conduct Their Own Inspections

"We decided to let employers conduct their own inspections with guidance from us," he said. "We also restructured the way we worked, moving toward teams that cooperated, rather than individuals who competed to give the most citations." OSHA offered the companies a chance to work with their own company employees to develop and implement a comprehensive safety and health plan. Ninety-eight percent took OSHA up on the offer.

During the first 18 months, the businesses identified nearly 100,000 workplace hazards, eliminating more than half. This is more than 14 times higher than OSHA's own rate through inspections. Nearly 60 percent of the employers have reduced their injury and illness rates, workers' compensation claims and insurance premiums. For more information on Maine 200, call Bill Freeman at (207) 941-8177. ✪



*President Clinton thanks OSHA Area Director Bill Freeman for reinventing regulatory culture in Maine. Looking on is Kevin Dean who represented all union presidents from Georgia Pacific's Woodland, ME plant at the announcement of OSHA's national reinvention reforms in Washington, DC on May 16.*

**Next Issue:**

✪ New U.S. Business Advisor ✪

# Natural Resources Conservation Service Helps Staff Cope with Major Reorganization

The former Soil Conservation Service began more than 60 years ago during the Depression, starting out as a temporary Soil Erosion Service to counter a national emergency. Moved by the wind, huge bowls of dust swept the western prairies—created unwittingly by farmers and others who did not know how to manage and use the arid land. Some of the dust from the “black blizzards” billowed into the atmosphere, finding its way to the Eastern seaboard and even out to sea.

The agency did its job, and over the years it also added significant roles in the natural resource management of water, animals, plants, and air.

It had another resource to manage as well—its own employees, many of whom “would work themselves to the point of exhaustion because they believed in the mission of the agency,” according to Sherman L. Lewis, Deputy Chief for Management and Strategic Planning. Until the late 1980s, the agency, although always employee-oriented, still had—and succeeded with—a traditional top-down, line-staff management style.

## The World Changed

But the world was changing, and the agency wanted to keep up. It introduced the quality principles pioneered by Dr. W. Edwards Deming, including employee empowerment and customer service. But that forward move alone did not budge the heavy concentration of staff at headquarters and did not redirect staff and resources as customer needs changed, new programs were added, and budgets began to decline.

Top management decided the agency had to make the needed changes itself or someone else would. Indeed, in 1994 the entire Department of Agriculture reorganized, shifting programs into the agency and renaming it the Natural Resources Conservation Service, reflecting a broader mandate. Reinventing government was underway all over government.

## Reinventing from the Bottom Up

Chief Paul Johnson asked his managers and employees to work together to redesign a leaner, more efficient agency, one dedicated to customer service. The agency’s quality management experience helped. “We were a jump ahead of many agencies,” Lewis said. “We knew we had to get employees and stakeholders involved.”

Chief Johnson set up teams and workgroups to gather information and design the reorganization. A Reinvention Forum Group gathered opinions from employees, customers, partners (such as local conservation districts and national conservation organizations), and the general public to help chart the new direction of the agency. From July 1994 until January 1995, this group collected information from more than 18,000 participants in 351 forums nationwide and statistical data from nearly 27,000 survey responses and 1,250 phone interviews.

*Continued, next page*

*No one ever said reinventing government would be easy, and it isn't, especially on the workers whose jobs are directly affected by the history-making changes that are underway in every federal agency. Even the words—streamlining, reorganization, privatization, downsizing—strike terror in our hearts when they come close to home. But we must carry on with our vision, or we will never free the good people who are trapped in a bad system, we will never create a government for our tomorrows.*

*USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service—the widely-known Soil Conservation Service before reinvention—is dealing with this human dimension as fairly and humanely as it can, mainly by involving and communicating with its employees at every step of the way. For NRCS, this is a work in progress. Perhaps their story will help your agency.*

*Continued from previous page*

During 2 weeks in April 1995, NRCS surveyed employees to find out what information they wanted and how they wanted to get it as the planning and implementation proceeded. Employees rated many information vehicles, and the majority preferred person-to-person communication to break important, and probably career-changing, news.

Here are some of the decisions that directly affect employees:

- The number of employees will go down from about 14,000 to just over 12,000 by 1999.
- About half the headquarters staff positions will be eliminated. Some staff will be relocated to new regional offices or other locations.
- State offices will remain, but support functions will be transferred to the new regional offices.
- Four national technical centers will close; staff will be relocated to regional or field offices.

### **No One Will Lose a Job**

“Many employees are somewhat eased by Chief Johnson’s and his top staff’s commitment to try to make this reorganization as painless as possible,” Lewis said. NRCS is able to say that no employee will lose a job, although it may not be the employee’s job of choice. This is important because most employees want to remain.

The agency will not have a reduction-in-force because of their advance planning, and the use of attrition, voluntary transfers, early retirement, and buyouts along with other tools. As asked, NRCS is using a variety of ways to communicate with employees—memos, newsletters, satellite broadcasts, and the like—but the principal way is using teams of people who go directly to sites to talk with and counsel employees and their families.

Despite the agency’s organized and fully informative briefings, training sessions, and written messages, many employees facing relocation are denying the need for change, according to Lewis. “Yes, our reorganization is painful and reengineering processes are difficult to master. They are expected to be. Yes, NRCS employees and managers are experiencing a great deal of stress and anxiety and are losing sleep at night, but they still work faithfully on priorities and deadlines, just as they always have,” Lewis continued.

With NRCS management’s openness and receptivity for feedback from employees—as well as conservation partners and customers—many employees recognize that an agency-initiated change is far better than outside mandates. “There is a consensus that once we have finished this process,” Lewis said, “we will agree that it was the ‘right thing to do’ as we learned to say in our quality training. It’s the right thing because it will ensure the survival of the agency and its mission into the 21st century.”

For more information, call T.K. Brown at (202) 720-0130. 📞



*Mildred Watkins from headquarters helps employees and spouses in Fort Worth cope with relocation.*



Employees and their spouses at NRCS's South National Technical Center in Fort Worth receive advice on how to cope with relocation.

## How to Help Employees Through a Major Reorganization

Here are tips from the Natural Resources Conservation Service that might help your employees cope with major staff relocation or downsizing. These ideas came from NRCS's survey of its employees.

- Use personal methods of communication in dealing with employees whenever possible. This includes person-to-person discussions, small group seminars, large gatherings, and even telephone calls or voice mail.
- Give employees clear and consistent written and verbal information on employee rights and how to apply for jobs. Also inform them about severance pay, early retirement, and retirement options.
- Keep in mind that major influences on relocation decisions include whether the employee wants to stay with the agency and whether the employee can relocate, considering the spouse, who may also work. Happiness with the quality of life, economic factors, and children in school are next in importance.
- In the event that an agency's restructuring will involve advertising positions within the agency, provide seminars on the job application process, and give all employees memos and fact sheets on this process. Groups especially desiring this information include (at NRCS) employees in lower grade levels (data showed usually female employees) with few years of service.

NRCS is not offering outplacement services because none of its employees will lose employment. Agencies that must let staff go should consider offering outplacement services for work in other federal agencies or the private sector. ❖

## Selected Resources

### Books

- A Survival Guide to the Stress of Organizational Change*, Price Pritchett and Ron Pound, Pritchett & Associates, 1995.
- Adapting to Change: Making It Work for You*, Carol Gorman, Crisp Publications, 1992.
- Coping with Workplace Change: Dealing with Loss and Grief*, J. Shep Jeffreys, EdD, Crisp Publications, 1995.
- Effective Downsizing: A Compendium of Lessons Learned for Government Organizations*, National Academy of Public Administration, 1995.
- Guide to Responsible Restructuring*, Department of Labor, 1995. Government Printing Office.
- Healing the Wounds—Overcoming the Trauma of Layoffs and Revitalizing Downsized Organizations*, David M. Noer, Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1995.
- New Directions: Improving Transition Assistance for Federal Employees Affected by Downsizing. A report to the U.S. Congress*, Office of Personnel Management, 1995.
- Surviving the Survivor Syndrome*, William Bridges, Will Bridges & Associates, 1987.
- Federal Quality Institute Workshops**  
(1) *Leading Organizational Change* and (2) *The Human Side of Restructuring*. Call (202) 376-3747.

## Write Regs the Right Way: Use Plain English

Jim Shaw is a frontline regulator who believes if you write clearer regulations, users won't have to waste time figuring out what the government wants.

Jim runs the Royalty Management Program for Interior's Minerals Management Service in Denver. "Our business is regulatory-based," he said. "People have to read our regulations to know how much to pay in royalties. If someone makes a mistake because they don't understand our regs, that's our fault, not theirs."

When he joined Interior in 1992 after 17 years in the mining business, he found Minerals Management's regulations overly complex and burdened by legalese. "Here in Denver," he said, "we decided our job was not to catch people underpaying but to help people pay the right amount the first time." Jim and his staff, already well-versed in customer service and quality management, pioneered Interior's first plain English reg-writing team.

Plain English advocates like Jim used to be a rare breed in government. At Interior, however, they're breeding like



Here's Royalty Management Program's plain English reg-writing team in Denver.

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*"Writing simpler regs is one of the things we're most proud of in our regulatory reinvention."*

*—Julie Falkner, Director of Interior's Office of Regulatory Affairs*

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crazy. Now all its bureaus have trained some of their employees in plain English regulatory writing. Several pilot projects are busy simplifying employee directives as well as public rules.

### Employees Applaud Clearly Written Instructions

Rewrite efforts are going well. When a group of employees in the National Park Service received new, clearly-written instructions, they burst into applause, according to Julie Falkner, Director of Interior's Office of Regulatory Affairs.

The initiative at Interior has support from the top. "You're doing important work," Tom Collier, formerly Interior's Chief of Staff, told a regulation writing team from the Office of Surface Mining and the Bureau of Land Management a year ago. "We

support you and count on your doing it well. If someone turns a regulation you write into the old way, show me and I'll fix it. Write it the right way. You have support from above."

### Clarity Increases Compliance

Over the years, the private sector has done better than the government with its regulatory writing, according to Tom Murawski, a consultant who works with Interior's reg writers. "Among its successes are readable loan forms, utility bills, insurance policies, and software licenses," he said. "Companies report real gains from readable rules: shorter training time, greater good will, improved sales, less litigation. For government, the incentives are similar. Clarity increases compliance, strengthens enforcement, and decreases frustration, mistakes, correspondence, phone calls, appeals, and distrust of Washington. Everyone gains, the regulated and regulators alike."

### Vice President Gore Urges Plain English Regs

Vice President Gore put in a plug for plain English regulations at a special meeting of the heads of regulatory agencies and the cabinet on February 21. He praised Comptroller of the Currency Eugene Ludwig for his office's work in revamping its regulations and translating "stilted regulatory language into plain English." ✪

## How to Write Clear Regs

Like all federal agencies, Interior is eliminating obsolete regulations, changing its performance standards to reward results, and creating partnerships with those who are regulated. But the department is doing more. It's writing internal and external rules in plain English.

By making rules more readable, Interior believes it will serve its customers better. Here are some tips for plain English writing.

- Keep your reader in mind at all times. Who will read the rule? How will they use it? What questions and problems do they have? If you don't know, ask them.
- Create models first as standards for future regulatory writing.
- Make headings informative. Questions work well: "Why is interest due?"
- Use "you" to speak directly to the reader—a key technique. For example, "If you own operating rights that were transferred,...."
- Use verbs in the active (not passive) voice. Write "Test the sample," not "the sample must be tested."
- Avoid wordiness and legalese. Change "for the purpose of evaluating" to "to evaluate." Change "pursuant to" to "under." Change "shall" to "must."
- Keep words and sentences lean and to the point.
- Use short sections and paragraphs. White space helps readers.
- Use vertical lists and "if-then" charts.

See the before and after sample on the right. If you have questions, call Julie Falkner at (202) 208- 5271 or Jim Shaw at (303) 231-3058. ✉

### *BEFORE: Old Way*

Notwithstanding the above and when both parties agree that the continuation of the program would not produce beneficial results commensurate with the further expenditure of funds, OSM or the state agency may determine that the grant or cooperative agreement should be terminated in whole or in part.

### *AFTER: Plain English Way*

If you and OSM agree that your plan is not cost effective, either may cancel all or part of the grant or cooperative agreement.



## Outstanding Reinventors Get Hammer Awards

More than 50 teams of empowered federal workers, some with partners from state and local governments, recently received Hammer Awards for what they are doing to reinvent government.

The award—a framed \$6 hammer tied up with a red, white, and blue ribbon—is the Vice President’s answer to the \$600 hammer that symbolized government bloat of the past.

### We Want Nominations All Year

“More than 180 teams have won the award since it was begun,” said Coordinator Carol Cribbs. “The Vice President is always looking for accomplishments to celebrate, so we encourage nominations all year. Each organization can structure the award process as it sees fit.” For nomination procedures, call the NPR customer service desk at (202) 632-0150.

Here are a few recent winners.

#### *What’s in a Name? Ask G.O.R.E.*

A creative interagency team of federal real estate professionals in Atlanta called G.O.R.E. (Government Owned Real Estate) did not win a Hammer Award because of its name, although the Vice President thinks it’s a good one.



*Atlanta’s G.O.R.E. team gets Gore award.*

The team, a Reinvention Lab, won because members came up with quick, cost-saving ways to dispose of government property. Team members removed stumbling blocks by separating law from policy—or just plain habit. They also adopted successful methods used by others (such as using master key lockboxes to show property thus not having to pay brokers to hold open houses) and worked together to hold housing fairs and agency auctions. Reaction from the public has been overwhelmingly positive.

The General Services Administration facilitates the team. Members are from Treasury, Resolution Trust Corporation, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation,

Housing and Urban Development, Small Business Administration, US Marshals Service, Veterans Affairs, Rural Economic and Community Development, and the Army Corps of Engineers. For information, call Laura Yeager at (404) 331-1142.

#### *Consumer Product Safety Commission Beefs Up Its Hotline*

To speed delivery of life-saving information to the American people, a U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission team transformed its outmoded telephone center into a cutting-edge interactive information system that

*Continued on page 10*

## BenchNet Is Open

What if you, as a federal manager, team leader, or analyst, had access to hundreds of promising practices from other federal workers right at your fingertips?

You do. It's a free, searchable electronic database called BenchNet located on FedWorld. The entries are short descriptions of what federal managers and others are doing to make government work better and cost less. Each description comes with a contact person.

### BenchNet Encourages Benchmarking

BenchNet can be used for casual searching and informal discussion, although it was set up to help federal agencies benchmark. "BenchNet gives you a network of managers and others who are willing to share information across agencies," said the National Performance Review's Pam Johnson who is spearheading the project.

The database features "promising practices" rather than "best practices" because what is best for one agency may not be best for another.

### Here's a BenchNet Sampler

Here are some of the promising practices:

- The Black Hills National Forest in South Dakota, other Agriculture agencies, Interior, and Custer State Park are sharing staff, databases, services, and facilities.
- The labor/management partnership at the San Antonio Air Logistics Center at Kelly Air Force Base has reduced Unfair Labor Practices by 85 percent and employee grievances by 77 percent.
- A cross-agency team from Social Security, the Health Care Financing Administration, the Administration for Children and Families, Food and Nutrition Service, Housing and Urban Development, and the Georgia Department of Human Resources in Atlanta streamlined the applications for six different types of aid (with 64 pages of duplicate paperwork) into one 8-page common access form.

BenchNet has benchmarking tutorials, a bibliography, and a calendar. It also sponsors consortia studies. NPR's partners in setting up BenchNet are Defense, Veterans Affairs, Internal Revenue Service, Commerce, Library of Congress and others.

### What You Can Do

Send your promising practice (a page or two plus a 75-word abstract and contact's name, address, phone, fax, and e-mail) to BenchNet at NPR. We prefer e-mail ([bench.net@npr.gsa.gov](mailto:bench.net@npr.gsa.gov)) or a disk in ASCII to 750-17th St., NW, Suite 200, Washington, DC 20006. For more information, call Fran Walinsky at (703) 487-4293. 📠

## How to Access BenchNet

You may access BenchNet on FedWorld 24 hours a day:

- *Direct Dial*  
(703) 321-3339. Modem must be set to N,8,1,full, no parity, 8 data bits, 1 stop bit, full duplex.
- *Internet:*  
Telnet (telnet to [fedworld.gov](http://fedworld.gov)) or FTP (connect to [ftp.fedworld.gov](ftp://ftp.fedworld.gov) or connect to 192.239.203 and log on as anonymous).
- *When You Connect*  
Register and select a password. If you are already a FedWorld user, log on with your name and password. Once on, select *F*, then *B*, then *I* from the menus.

### If You Need Help

Call FedWorld at (703) 487-4608. 📠



*Hammer Awards, continued from page 8*



incorporates a 24-hour Hotline, Internet, bilingual operators, and fax-on-demand. They also cut the per call cost from \$2 to \$1.40. Working feverishly, the team put the improvements in place in just four months.

More than 266,000 people contacted the reinvented Hotline during its first year in operation—78 percent more than the year before. Those calls led to increased CPSC actions to remove hazardous products from the marketplace. For more information, call Doug Noble at (301) 504-0014. The Hotline number, by the way, is (800) 638-CPSC.

### ***Defense Group Teaches Schools to Refurbish Give-Away Computers and Everybody Gains***

Federal agencies have the authority to donate excess computer equipment to schools in support of national goals to improve math and science education. But what can schools do with out-of-date technology that doesn't work?



*Students will learn to fix and use these discarded computers.*

Systems and Services in the Office of the Secretary of Defense had a clever idea. They won a Hammer Award for teaching students on a Saturday to refurbish the equipment. A local Virginia school with a vocational school attached gained 65 IBM 286 computers that have been repaired and upgraded by vocational students who learned repair and inventory skills. Non-vocational students got working computers. DoD bypassed tons of rules and paperwork associated with surplus equipment.

After winning the award, the reinventors went on to work out a partnership between the Virginia school and a vocational school in the District of Columbia. The DC vocational school will donate the refurbished computers to the Office of the Secretary of Defense's adopted elementary school in the District. For information, contact Charleen Wilson at (703) 604-1506. 📧

## **Energy Establishes Partnerships With Internal and External Customers, Stakeholders**

The Department of Energy is using concepts like reinvention, empowerment, customer service, quality management, and partnership to change the way it does business. It's paying off for the agency's customers, stakeholders, and employees.

### **Public Confidence Goes Up**

A survey conducted at the end of 1994 by Washington State University shows that the Department's efforts to decrease secrecy and increase public participation are paying off in greater trust and confidence among the people who deal most frequently with the agency.

The university conducted the first such survey in 1992 at DOE's request. The attitudes of stakeholders toward the department showed improvements in all categories in the new survey. Trained interviewers called more than 300 stakeholders—those with a stake in the department's defense programs, radioactive waste and environmental clean-up missions. They include state and local governments, hospitals and universities, industry and environmental groups, and labor unions.

Here are some of the survey results:

- 51 percent agree that DOE can be counted on to do the right thing, a 17 percent improvement over 1992.
- 63 percent agree that DOE provides all relevant unclassified information to the public, an increase of 23 percent.
- 58 percent also believe DOE manages its functions better than some other agency or department could.

"These measurements...validate the time and effort we've put into building partnerships with our customers," said Secretary of Energy Hazel R. O'Leary. "What is clear, however, is that we have a long way to go...I don't want anyone in the Department thinking this improvement means we can relax...it means we're on the right track, especially with our openness initiative, site advisory boards, and public participation efforts," she said.

*Continued on page 12*

16,000 pages, continued from page 1

Regulators also plan to substantially reinvent about 40 percent of their rules to conform to a new regulatory spirit of trust and cooperation. But, as the President directed, they will vigorously enforce both the remaining and reinvented rules for those who willfully pursue actions that threaten the health and safety of the Nation.

In later summary reports, the agencies said they held more than 250 meetings across the country to create grassroots partnerships with those who are affected by regulations. Agencies also reported plans to increase use of negotiated rulemaking, and said they will develop performance measures that focus on results, not processes. For example, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) will develop a system that measures workplace safety results rather than the number of inspections and penalties.

### Business People Applaud the New Approach

President Clinton and Vice President Gore summarized the regulatory reform underway before an enthusiastic audience of 3,000 participants at the White House Conference on Small Business in Washington, DC on June 12.

"We're committed to making the regulatory burden lighter—literally lighter," the President said, as he asked that the 16,000 pages be stacked on the stage. "Specifically 39 pounds lighter."

### Grits and French Fries Are on the Hit List

The President gleefully read from one fallen rule—how to test grits—and then said he was personally giving up the 2,700-word regulation on french fries. He also told the cheering delegates about pension reforms and one-place wage and tax reporting. Later in the conference, the President announced the new U.S. Business Advisor, an online service directly linking the federal government to American businesses.

### What Went Before

Regulatory reform is one of four themes of the second phase of reinventing government (REGO II) that the President announced in December 1994. Led by Vice President Gore, REGO II also focuses on agency restructuring, realigning the federal/state relationship, and continuing implementation of Phase I, including customer service. For more information on regulatory reform, call Bruce Smith, National Performance Review, at (202) 632-0150, ext. 165. ✦

## Highlights of 100+ Days of Regulatory Reform

In the weeks after kicking off regulatory reinvention on February 21, President Clinton and Vice President Gore unveiled a host of reforms. Here are a few:

- *March 17*—All agencies except IRS will cut regularly-scheduled reports in half and allow regulators to waive fines where small businesses have unwittingly violated rules.

The Environmental Protection Agency will allow businesses to use a single form to report air, water, and waste emissions; will consolidate air pollution rules for each industry; and will allow state, tribal, and local recipients of grants to combine air, water, and waste funds to achieve local goals.

The Food and Drug Administration will reduce the burden on pharmaceutical and biologics manufacturers by dispensing with a variety of outdated special requirements, environmental assessments, pre-approvals, and pre-market reviews for selected drugs and medical devices.

- *April 12*—The Social Security Administration will stagger payments for new beneficiaries—about 3.5 million each year—throughout the month instead of the third day of each month. This will eliminate workload spikes for SSA, banks, and businesses.
- *May 16*—OSHA will cut red tape, stress common sense, and help business comply with the goal of achieving workplace health and safety. OSHA plans to spread Maine 200, a voluntary program, nationwide. (See story on page 2.)
- *May 25*—Veterans Affairs will simplify the confusing and complicated eligibility criteria for veterans' medical care, including cutting the eligibility form from 93 questions to four.
- *June 9*—Internal Revenue Service, Labor Department, and Social Security will streamline wage and tax reporting. Taxpayers will file one report and the agencies will share the information.
- *June 12*—The Administration will propose major changes in legislation and regulations that will make it easier for small business owners to offer pension savings plans to their employees. ✦

## Energy Is Also Improving Things for Employees

"Partnership" is also the key word as Energy focuses on its internal customers.

The Office of Human Resources and Administration surveyed departmental employees. "Our customers told us what they needed and wanted—that was clear," said Assistant Secretary Archer Durham. "So what we had to do was align our human resources people in a way to deliver the service to fulfill those needs. That meant doing some groundwork first—self-assessment, reinvention, streamlining, training, and very importantly, instilling and practicing a new can-do quality and customer service commitment and approach. This groundwork was the investment we had to make in ourselves so that we would be able to serve others."

An "Idea Day" among Durham's staff brought in 2,000 ideas for serving internal customers better in the age of restructuring, rightsizing, and cultural change. These were suggestions about increasing and improving training and communication, increasing customer input, simplifying procurement, making better use of software and hardware, and many others. More than 1,400 of the ideas were implemented.

### Internal Reg Burden Lifted

Durham's office also responded to the most urgent employee plea: give us more flexibility, less paperwork and fewer regulations. Employees teamed up to streamline internal processes and cancel unnecessary directives, cutting that office's number in half.

*Energy's most urgent employee plea: give us more flexibility, less paperwork and fewer regulations.*

Overall, Energy's various organizations have reduced the number of directives by 25 percent. By December they expect to achieve a 50 percent reduction. The number of pages will go down from 7,200 to 2,400. Clarity is expected to go up for Energy's 19,000 employees.

### For More Information

For information about the public trust survey, call Jana Prewitt at (202) 586-4940. For information about improvements for employees, call Marcia Morris at (202) 586-9383. 



*Assistant Secretary of Energy Archer L. Durham*



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**REINVENTION ROUNDTABLE**  
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