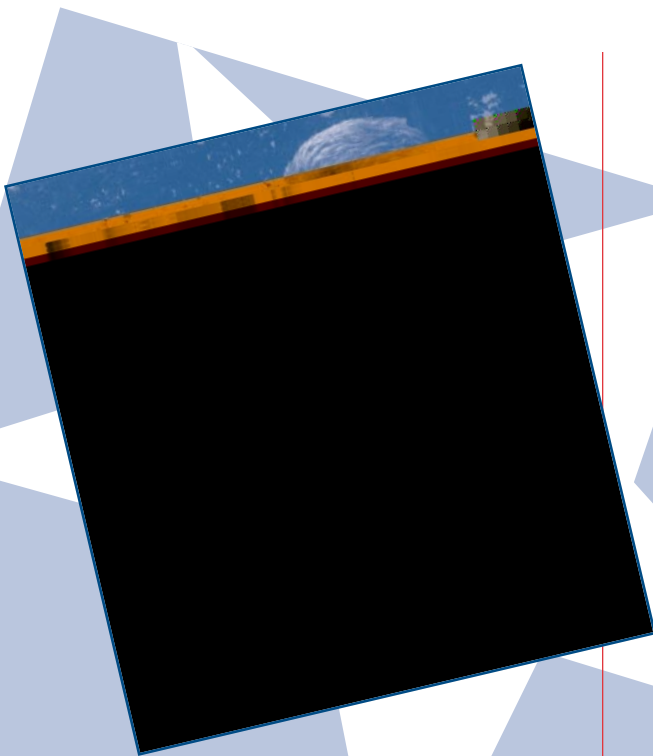


# Reinvention Roundtable

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



Linda Frost, Social Security teleservice representative, flashes the same world-class smile she shows on SSA's customer service booklet, held by President Clinton at the White House ceremony on September 7. SSA's world-class phone service was highlighted in the Vice President's book, "Common Sense Government."

## Vice President Presents "Common Sense Government" to President in White House Ceremony

At a ceremony on the White House south lawn on September 7, Vice President Gore presented President Clinton with a report describing what federal workers have accomplished in the second year of reinventing government.

"The entire government has been doing the hard work of changing," Gore told 100 special guests from the private sector and government, including federal workers mentioned in the report. "Common sense government is making a comeback," he said.

*Common Sense Government: Works Better & Costs Less*, the National Performance Review's third major report, highlights significant progress made by federal agencies since the initial report was issued exactly two years earlier.

Accepting the report, President Clinton said, "There's nothing quite like our reinvention progress in the history of modern American government." He thanked federal employees for their contributions, noting "...they have worked very, very hard at this difficult job, and they have done it remarkably well."

*Continued on page 8*

## Innovation Pays!

### Six Federal Programs Win \$100,000 Each

Six federal programs have won the coveted Innovations in American Government Award sponsored by the Ford Foundation and the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

Vice President Gore presented the awards at a gala awards dinner in Washington, DC on October 26. The six federal programs joined nine state and local programs as awardees. This is the first year that federal programs could compete. Winners are honored for their efforts to forge new and highly effective approaches to programs and policies that meet public needs.

"Let's give them a cheer," the Vice President said.

From 1,451 applicants, 30 federal programs were chosen as semi-finalists and 10 as finalists. *Continued on page 10*

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## Open Letter to Federal Employees

### President and Vice President: Calling Federal Workers Non-Essential Is Just Plain Wrong

Out of concern about the term "non-essential" workers, President Clinton and Vice President Gore released an open letter to federal employees on November 22 following the first government furlough. The letter was released first to the media and then relayed by e-mail and fax networks government-wide. Here is the text of the letter.

We are proud of the people who work for the federal government. Any Fortune 100 company would be lucky to have such a work force. Your work makes all Americans more safe, free, and prosperous. We are glad you are all back on the job.

We know it hasn't been easy for you, wondering when and if you would get your next pay check. And many of you had to bear the indignity of being called "non-essential," some by government critics, some even by your own supervisors. Calling furloughed workers non-essential is deeply offensive and just plain wrong. The law forced us to furlough 800,000 workers whose jobs were not of an emergency nature. The law says nothing about "essential."

No one could say that medical research is non-essential. Or helping Americans go to college. Or rehabilitating a million disabled Americans. Or supporting the widows and orphans of veterans. Or keeping our drinking water safe. Or recruiting new volunteers for the armed forces. Or any of the long list of essential government activities that had to be temporarily suspended. In the short term, they were not











### “Almost Like Miracles”

Philip K. Howard, best-selling business author of *The Death of Common Sense*, wrote the foreword to the commercial version of the Vice President’s report published by Random House in October. Howard writes that the book “is loaded with stories that, to those familiar with government, are almost like miracles....When Americans are released from rigid and mindless rules, as the many stories...make clear, we can accomplish things we had almost given up on. *Common Sense Government* is an important event for America. I urge all Americans to read it and then demand it in their dealings with government.”

In reviewing the Vice President’s report, quality guru Joseph M. Juran lauds the results achieved by the reinventing government undertaking. “Our government people are quite as creative and gifted as their industrial counterparts,” he said. “The system may be stupid but the people are not.”

### The Miracle Workers

The report’s reinvention stories illustrate what these creative federal workers and their agencies are doing to bring common sense, an entrepreneurial spirit, a customer focus, and compassion to government. Here are a few examples:



Linda Frost

- **Ringing Success** When Dalbar Financial Services, North America’s biggest financial news publisher, went looking for the best 800-number customer service in their World-Class Benchmarks survey this year, they didn’t find it at L.L. Bean, Disney World, or Nordstrom. They found it at Social Security. Dalbar rated attitude, helpfulness, knowledge, time to answer, and time to reach a personal representative. While SSA lagged in time on hold, it was tops in the nation for being courteous, knowledgeable, and efficient. The agency is training 3,300 more people on its own staff to cut that “on-hold” problem. Contact Jack McHale at (410) 966-7758.
- **No Hold Up at the Bank** A Small Business Administration program envisioned by Rodney Martin in San Antonio provides a quick application procedure for loans up to \$100,000. The entire SBA process takes about three days, start to finish, and requires only a simple one-page form. Compare that to the earlier 78-page application process and 90-day review. Contact Rodney Martin at (210) 229-5900.
- **Going Places** The National Security Agency’s travel management operations, a reinvention lab, was selected this year by *Business Travel News*, the newspaper of the travel industry, as one of the four best in the country—right up there with Hewlett-Packard, Bankers Trust, and Texas Instruments. NSA had found that its travel operation took 79 days to process the paperwork for the average business trip and cost more than \$8 million a year to process.

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“Our government people are quite as gifted as their industrial counterparts” – *Quality guru Joseph J. Juran*

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To find a better way, they visited Apple Computer, IBM, Texas Instruments and other companies. Thanks to this benchmarking, NSA reduced the processing time by 93 percent, travelers’ form-





## Innovation Pays! continued from page 1

Finalists underwent a rigorous four-stage, six-month evaluation, including site visits.

Criteria included the degree to which an innovation can be replicated. The winners received a stipend of \$100,000 each, which most winners said they would use to help spread word of their innovations. Finalists received \$20,000 each. Federal winners are:

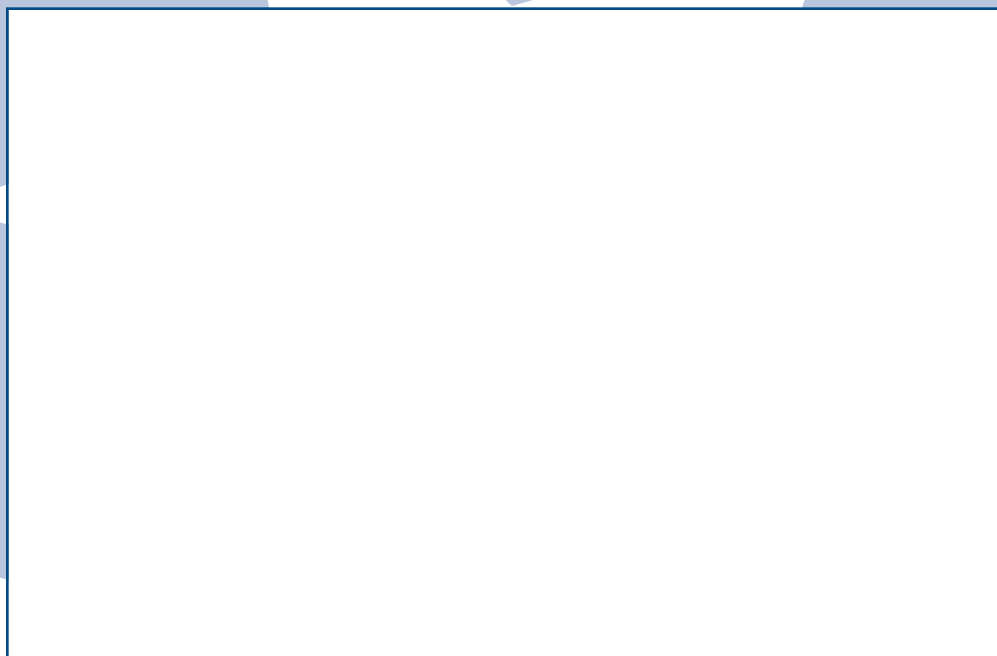
- **Occupational Safety and Health**

**Administration:** Its “Maine 200” program improves safety and health conditions in the workplace through employer initiatives and voluntary compliance. Company workers in 200 companies are finding and fixing 14 times as many hazards as OSHA. Maine 200 will expand to other states.

- **Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation:** Its

Early Warning Program uses sophisticated analysis to detect transactions that might jeopardize underfunded private pension plans for millions of Americans.

- **Defense Personnel Support Center in Philadelphia (part of the Defense Logistics Agency):** Its National Defense on the Offense project connects consumers with suppliers of food, clothing and medicine when needed. Electronic ordering technology replaces a cumbersome system that stockpiled those items just in case they were needed.
- **Air Force Aerospace Guidance and Metrology Center:** Its Ozone-Depleting Chemical Elimination Program replaces chemical solvents with equally effective water-based cleaners.
- **Immigration and Naturalization Service:** Its Operations Jobs project in Dallas partners with businesses to help them detect illegal aliens in their employ and replace them with unemployed people who can work legally.
- **Bureau of Reclamation:** This 92-year-old dam-building agency transformed itself into a leading water resource management agency.



*Army Brig. Gen. Carl H. Freeman, Ron Ogburn (L) and Todd Baxley (R) inspect produce at the Defense Subsistence Office, Jacksonville, FL. Freeman commands the Philadelphia-based Defense Personnel Center; the Jacksonville DSO is one of its world-wide food-buying offices.*

Four other federal programs were finalists:

- **Department of Defense Civilian Assistance and Re-Employment Program:** Used outplacement, incentives, early retirement, and reorganization to reduce 110,000 employees with minimal involuntary layoffs.

- **Navy Multimedia Medical Language Translator:** Lap-top computer application allows health-care providers to communicate with patients who do not speak English.



- **Bureau of Labor Statistics Re-engineering Establishment Survey Data Collection Program:** PC-based system uses touchtone and voice recognition to collect data from 400,000 American businesses, giving policy makers nearly instantaneous access to accurate monthly employer data.
- **Department of Veterans Affairs Re-engineering Ambulatory Care Program:** Overhauled its health care delivery system at the Medical Center in Northport, New York.

## Is There a Ford In Your Future?

For information about the Innovations in American Government Award, call (617) 495-0558. ✦

## Reinvention Lab Conference Set for March 25-27

The National Performance Review will co-sponsor a federal reinvention lab conference at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, MD, March 25-27, 1996.

Reinvention laboratories are innovative work teams that test reinventing government principles. Employees are empowered to experiment with radical new ways of doing business and to share their experiences across government.

In addition to the 200 existing labs, the conference is aimed at other government innovators, Hammer Award winners, GPRA pilots, reinvention "wannabes," and government officials who want to help remove barriers to innovative, entrepreneurial government.

### Vice President Asks Cabinet Heads to Support Conference

Vice President Gore has written the heads of cabinet departments and independent agencies asking them to support the conference. "If our Labs are to continue to thrive," the Vice President wrote, "they must begin to learn from each other. Common problems, successful solutions and strategies, and even mistakes can teach the rest of us how to change government."

The conference is also sponsored by Syracuse University's Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, *Government Executive* Magazine, and the Council for Excellence in Government.

### For More Information

For more information, contact Laszlo & Associates, Inc., (202) 393-7022; FAX (202) 393-7027; or e-mail, govexec@laszlo.smart.net or <http://www.npr.gov>.

NPR contacts are Jeffrey Goldstein at (202) 632-0387, and Linda Walker at (404) 331-4762. ✦

## Mapping a Reinvention Route Defense Mapping Agency Chooses Road that Connects to Customers

Last July, the Defense Mapping Agency unrolled a new map—a reinvention road map that directly connects employees with customers and charts a course of improved service. The reinvented DMA is organized around core business processes and features newly formed Customer Support Teams (CST). Teams form partnerships with customers to plan, prioritize and produce products, services and information for the operational armed forces and other customers.

This customer-focused reinvention occurred after ten months of planning by an eight-person team that relied on suggestions from employees, customers, past and present DMA leaders, subject matter experts, and private sector firms. In addition to improving customer service, the agency also:

- Pruned management layers between producer and customer from 11 to three.
- Pared headquarters staff by almost fifty percent. Staff




*Roberta Lenczowski, Director, DMA Acquisition and Technology Group, accepts the DMA flag from Air Force Major General Philip W. Nuber at a ceremony on July 10 marking the “sunrise” of the reinvented DMA.*

became members of CSTs or moved to locations where the production work is actually done.

- Empowered customer support and production teams to get the job done.
- Reduced the practice of stockpiling prodigious quantities of mapsheets just in case they are needed. DMA is instead focusing on populating a database (accessible to customers) for just-in-time production.

### Mother of Reinvention

Operation Desert Storm was the necessity that became the mother of reinvention for DMA. During Desert Storm, agency employees produced in six months the equivalent of two years’ normal production of its mapping and charting products and services. DMA reinvented itself to perform in peacetime the way it performed in a crisis. This means production time is halved for some maps.

DMA will receive the Vice President’s Hammer Award. The agency’s reengineering effort is a model for other agencies. If you’re interested in a briefing or want more information, contact Terry Meehan, (703) 275-8409. 



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