



HOTLINE

PRINCETON PLASMA PHYSICS LABORATORY

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ORC SURVEY STATUS BULLETIN

The status of work in response to the employee survey conducted by the Opinion Research Corporation (ORC) earlier this year is summarized below.

Last month, the Director established a Follow-Up Task Force, composed of members of the General Council, to analyze the survey findings and to recommend actions to respond to these findings. In the intervening month the Task Force has reviewed the ORC findings in detail, met with the Director to obtain his guidance, and organized itself into five working panels to address concerns in specific areas, as follows:

- Job Training and Career Development: C. Staloff, R. White, W. Johnson.
- Managerial and Operational Effectiveness: J. Sinnis, R. Gould, D. Mullaney.
- Pay, Promotion, Benefits, Job Posting: S. Iverson, W. Mizutowicz, C. Staloff.
- Working Conditions and Equipment: D. Mullaney, R. Gould, R. White.
- Communications: J. Clark, S. Bernabei, W. Johnson

The first named on each panel acts as chairperson.

Preliminary reports of these Panels have been developed and are now being discussed in the full Task Force. Task Force members also have received valuable input from many PPPL employees through informal meetings, telephone calls, and memos, and this information has become part of Task Force deliberations. The Task Force is now considering new ways to receive ideas and suggestions from interested employees across the Laboratory.

In January, PPPL Department and Division managers will be briefed on ORC results so they can initiate actions in their areas and contribute to the Task Force deliberations on Laboratory-wide matters. Following this, the Task Force findings will be presented to the Director and the Laboratory Council. In February, the Director in a State-of-the-Laboratory address will report actions he will take in response to the Survey.

This process takes time, but it is necessary in order to obtain a fuller understanding of what should be done to improve quality of life at PPPL and a broader commitment at all levels to the actions indicated. Moreover, the process

will not end with the Director's State-of-the-Laboratory Message. The Director has asked the Task Force to continue to operate for at least a year in order to monitor the effectiveness of the response program and to consider mid-course corrections if needed.

ORC Action Notes

Some actions relating to the Survey are already being implemented. The Director and the Council yesterday approved a recommendation of the Job Training and Career Development Panel to offer courses at the Laboratory to help employees improve their skills and career potentials. Up to a dozen courses will be offered in the semester starting about February 1, 1987, ranging, for example, from English Composition, through basic math, physics and computer usage, to Digital Signal Processing. The courses will be taught by instructors from local colleges and by Laboratory staff. Specific course offerings will be announced in mid-January.

A second action by the Council was to appoint a committee of representatives from various staffs to review the Laboratory's Calendar of Social Events. The objective is to see whether the Laboratory's Morale Fund is being

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optimally used to meet the needs of employees. This Committee will review past events (e.g., the picnic, Christmas dinner dance, etc.) and new ideas and will report back to the Council by the end of February. The Committee membership is: Steve Iverson (Chairman), Tony Bleach, MaryAnn Brown, Angelo Candelori, Fred Dylla, Elmer Fredd, Dinah Larsen, Susan Murphy, Martha Redi, Barbara Sarfaty, and Jim Taylor.

New Government Travel Rules Take Effect

PPPL staff who travel on Laboratory business are experiencing significant changes in the way they plan and are reimbursed for trips.

On October 1, new Federal travel expense regulations went into effect, changing the rules for Government contractor personnel. PPPL business travelers will find the new policy to be fairly straightforward, but constraining, and some adjustments will be necessary, especially when planning a trip.

The most significant change affecting PPPL staff is the establishment of two per diem allowances, one for lodging and one for meals and incidental expenses (M&IE). The lodging allowance is dependent upon the locality, reflecting the fact that hotel and motel charges in and around major population centers are considerably higher than elsewhere. Rates range from a high of \$93 for New York City to \$30 for Tonopah, Nevada.

Meals and Incidental Expenses are limited by a separate per diem allowance for which

there are only two rates, \$25 and \$33, depending upon location. The M&IE allowance covers costs for breakfast, lunch, and dinner; fees and tips to waiters, bellhops, etc.; laundry and dry cleaning; transportation between lodging and the place of business; and transportation related to meals.

PPPL managers have been provided with a list of approximately 500 geographical locations specifying lodging and M&IE allowances. I. Gusciora, Travel Services, can also supply this information.

Expenditures beyond the lodging and M&IE allowances are not reimbursable and are the responsibility of the traveler. However, as with all rules, there are exceptions. Travel expenses may be reimbursed on an actual expense basis under special or unusual circumstances. The traveler's department head must approve such reimbursements. These will be subject to audit.

Perhaps the most common exception for PPPL employees will involve travel to a conference or training course where lodging and meals must be procured at a conference center or hotel. Under these circumstances, when costs exceed the applicable per diem allowances, travelers may be reimbursed for actual subsistence expenses. Under no circumstances, however, will reimbursements exceed the sum of the two per diem allowances by more than 150%.

Obviously, there are other allowable travel costs not covered by either per diem allowance. For these, more general guidelines apply. For example, the actual cost of intercity travel may be claim-

ed, but it should be at the government contracted rate or lowest available rate, if there is no contract. For air transportation, PPPL policy requires the use of discount airfare whenever possible. Transportation from the airport to hotel or business location and business telephone calls must be held to necessary and reasonable levels.

A new PPPL travel policy incorporating the new Government regulations will be issued shortly. It will detail the Laboratory's policies relating to travel approval, advances, registration fees, credit cards, rental cars, foreign travel, and reimbursement procedures, most of which remain unchanged.

Questions involving travel planning should be directed to Ilse Gusciora, ext. 2658. For information relating to reimbursement policies and procedures, staff should contact Ilse or Charles Kahil of PPPL Accounting, ext. 2699.

Suggestions Solicited

HOTLINE would like to receive input from PPPL employees as to the kinds of information and articles they would like to see published in the newsletter. Send your suggestions to: Carol Phillips, Room B366, C-Site.

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