



## Federal Judge Sets Timeframe to Hear Unions' Challenge Of Defense Department's New Personnel Rules

### Gage Warns New System May Cause Corruption, Scandal, Mismanagement

A federal court will hear an AFGE-led lawsuit against new Department of Defense (DoD) work rules on Jan. 24, 2006.

Judge Emmet G. Sullivan of the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia will hold a hearing on that date on the rules, known as the National Security Personnel System (NSPS), and has said that he will make a speedy determination on the merits of the case.

The judge's decision came after arguments made by AFGE Associate General Counsel **Joe Goldberg**. "We are eager to make our case on the illegality of the Department of

Defense's new workplace rules," said Goldberg.

AFGE, together with nine other unions, filed the lawsuit against DoD on Nov. 7. Those unions are the Metal Trades Department, AFL-CIO; United Power Trades Organization; International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers; International Brotherhood of Teamsters; International Association of Fire Fighters;



Pres. John Gage testifies against DoD's personnel regulations.

Association of Civilian Technicians; Laborers International Union; National Association of Government Employees; and National Federation of Federal Employees.

On Nov. 15, representatives from AFGE and the Department of Justice, which represented DoD, agreed to delay implementation of major sections of the NSPS until Feb. 1, 2006. Judge Sullivan set *(continued on page 3)*

### Table of Contents

#### Page 2

John Gage  
Katrina: A Preview of Institutionalized Cronyism

#### Page 3

New Union Benefits Announced

#### Page 4

AFGE Members Foretold FEMA Disaster on Katrina

#### Page 5

Contracting Out Reform Called Victory for Taxpapers, Feds  
Concept Paper Raises Concerns

#### Page 6

Katrina Hurricane Heroes

#### Page 8

Spotlight: Field Services Department



## AFGE Beats Back DHS Bid To Implement New Work Rules

A federal court judge has denied a motion by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to allow near-total implementation of its new personnel system, known as Max<sup>HR</sup>, giving DHS employees across the nation a major victory.

For the second time in two months, Judge Rosemary Collyer of the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia upheld the position of the American Federation of Government Employees that DHS's new regulations concerning collective bargaining so circumscribe the negotiating process as to virtually eliminate it.

The labor-relations portion of its new Max<sup>HR</sup> personnel system would replace the current Federal Labor Relations statute. AFGE and four other unions have said the new work rules would impede whistleblower and other employee protections.

The unions challenged the proposed personnel system on the basis that it violated the Homeland Security Act (the legislation that created DHS), among other issues. The rules addressed areas such as collective bar-

gaining, mitigation of disciplinary actions, and the role of the Federal Labor Relations Authority (FLRA) as an arbiter of disputes between management and employees.

AFGE National President **John Gage** said the union "made every effort to design a fair and efficient personnel system in collaboration with DHS. Unfortunately, our efforts and concerns virtually were ignored, which left us with no choice but to file suit."

AFGE Deputy General Counsel **Charles Hobbie** said in response to the judge's decision, "It is indeed a triumph to be vindicated by the District Court on the critical issue of collective bargaining. If the current human resource management system is to be improved, I urge DHS to listen to its employees in the 'renewed rulemaking effort' urged by Judge Collyer."

AFGE represents the largest constituency of DHS employees, comprising Border Patrol, Customs & Border Protection, and Immigration & Customs Enforcement officers; FEMA workers; and civilian Coast Guard employees.



John Gage

## A Message from National President John Gage

# *Katrina: A Preview of Institutionalized Cronyism*

**W**e hate to say, "We told you so." And we especially hate to do it in the throes of a crisis of the proportion wrought by Hurricane Katrina, a crisis that has affected AFGE members in countless ways. The sad truth, however, is that the institutional disaster that has come to characterize the botched response to our nation's worst-ever hurricane not only was predictable, but predicted—by the leaders of AFGE Local 4060 who represent the rank-and-file at FEMA headquarters. So let me step out on a limb to say: If the administration has its way with its new personnel systems for the Department of Defense (DoD) and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the mess created by FEMA's political appointees will look small by comparison.

More than a year ago, **Pleasant Mann**, then president of Local 4060, wrote to nearly 20 senators and members of Congress, imploring them to look into the dismantling

More than a year ago, Pleasant Mann, then president of Local 4060, wrote to nearly 20 senators and members of Congress imploring them to look into the dismantling of FEMA's disaster mitigation program by the agency's political appointees ... As Hurricane Katrina approached, Leo Bosner, Local 4060 current president, sounded an alarm, begging higher-ups to step up efforts to put resources and personnel in place before the Category 5 storm lashed the Gulf Coast.

of FEMA's disaster mitigation program by the agency's political appointees. He pointed out how the input of career FEMA employees with long disaster management experience was being set aside as inexperienced cronies and their contractor friends were tasked with forming policy for the agency as it was folded under the DHS umbrella. He asked for an investigation of the agency's mismanagement, but no one heard his plea.

As Hurricane Katrina approached, **Leo Bosner**, the local's current president, sounded an alarm, begging higher-ups to step up efforts to put resources and personnel in place before the Category 5 storm lashed the Gulf Coast. His pleas also fell on deaf ears. And we all know the rest—the lives lost and the resignation of the FEMA director whom President Bush told us was doing one "heck of a job."

Today, as it plots the implementation of its new personnel systems, the administration wants to put activists like Mann and Bosner out of business. In both Max<sup>HR</sup>, the personnel plan for DHS, and the so-called National Security Personnel System (NSPS) for DoD, whistleblowers like these AFGE local officers will be vulnerable to all means of retaliation, especially under the rubric of ostensible "pay-for-performance" schemes—rules that allow supervisors to punish those they don't like by

withholding raises. In the Defense Department, new work rules will pave the way for the escalation of minor infractions to firing offenses through the use of a new standard for the mitigation of penalties. And both agencies will be able to circumvent the standard practice of due process by replacing independent bodies with management-selected boards that regulate the mitigation of penalties.

But we're not going to let them get away with it. Earlier this fall, in response to a lawsuit filed by AFGE and four other unions, a federal court threw out significant portions of the new DHS plan, Max<sup>HR</sup>.

When the Department of Defense ignored this warning shot fired by the D.C. District Court and published its own new illegal personnel system, AFGE filed a new lawsuit—in addition to one filed last February—in federal court contesting the new system. We were joined in this endeavor by nine other unions which are part of the United Defense Workers Coalition.

As we learned from the mess at FEMA, management already has more than enough of the "flexibility" it claims it needs to screw things up. Under the new DHS system, Bosner and Mann could well have lost their jobs for trying to save lives and taxpayer dollars. That's not just a bad deal for them; it's a bad deal for the American people.

### AFGE—The Government Standard

Vol. LXXII, No. 5

November/December 2005

AFGE—The Government Standard (USPS 003-219, ISSN 1041-5335) is published bimonthly and is the official membership publication of the American Federation of Government Employees, AFL-CIO, 80 F Street, NW, Washington, D.C., 20001 Phone: (202) 737-8700, [www.afge.org](http://www.afge.org). John Gage, **National President**, Jim Davis, **National Secretary-Treasurer**, Andrea E. Brooks, **National Vice President for Women and Fair Practices**. **National Vice Presidents:** District 2-Derrick F. Thomas, (732) 828-9449; NY, NJ, CT, MA, ME, NH, RI, VT. District 3-Jeffrey R. Williams, (610) 660-0316; DE, PA. District 4-Joseph Flynn, (410) 480-1820; MD, NC, VA, WV. District 5-Charlotte Flowers, (770) 907-2055; AL, FL, GA, SC, TN, Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico. District 6-Arnold Scott, (317) 542-0428; IN, KY, OH. District 7-Dorothy James, (312) 421-6245; IL, MI, WI. District 8-Jane Nygaard, (952) 854-3216; IA, MN, NE, ND, SD. District 9-Michael Kelly, (405) 670-2656; AR, KS, MO, OK. District 10-Roy Flores, (210) 735-8900; LA, MS, TX, NM, Panama. District 11-Gerald D. Swanke, (360) 607-3735; AK, CO, ID, MT, OR, UT, WA, WY, Guam, Okinawa. District 12-Eugene Hudson, Jr., (760) 233-7600; AZ, CA, HI, NV. District 14-Dwight Bowman, (202) 639-6447; District of Columbia, Montgomery and Prince George's Counties in Maryland; Arlington and Fairfax Counties and the City of Alexandria in Virginia.

Produced by the AFGE Communications Dept.: Director, Enid Doggett; Web Site Developer, Rodrigo Munera; Communications Specialists, Kurt Gallagher, Emily Ryan & Jemarian Jones; Staff Assistant, Kim Kennedy. Union-designed by GO! Creative and union-printed by Mount Vernon Printing Co. Periodicals Postage Paid at Washington, D.C. **Postmaster:** send change of addresses to AFGE—The Government Standard, ATTN: AFGE Data Processing Dept., 80 F St., NW, Washington, D.C. 20001.



# Defense Department's New Personnel Rules

(continued from page 1)

the Jan. 24 timeline for hearing the case on the work rules.

"We are very pleased that the court has agreed to hear the case in a timely manner," said AFGE National President **John Gage**. "More than 600,000 federal workers await the ruling. The NSPS could have grave implications for the safety of America's fighting men and women and for safeguarding the public coffers."

The agreement negotiated with the Justice Department mitigated the need for AFGE to file a temporary restraining order against the NSPS.

Meanwhile, Gage warned that if the new rules are implemented, they will "become the source of corruption, scandal and mismanagement and will deflect the agency from its important national security mission for years."

In testimony before the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs on Nov. 17, Gage said: "I cannot over-

state the level of anger, alienation and outrage that the NSPS regulations have generated among DoD civilian workers, many of whom are veterans. Our members are loyal Americans who help defend this country every day. They are astonished by the campaign of misinformation and deception conducted by DoD and [the Office of Personnel Management] to put in place an agenda that is so in conflict with American values, the proper maintenance of a civil service system, and good management principles."

DoD, Gage continued, "cleverly uses all the right words in an attempt to mislead Congress, the press, and the public, but DoD workers know that agency officials have abused their authority and breached the trust given to them by Congress."

Gage testified on behalf of the United Defense Workers Coalition (UDWC), an umbrella organization created by 36 unions representing civilian defense workers to establish coordinated opposition to the pro-

posed work rules for DoD. In February, the UDWC filed a lawsuit against DoD when the initial proposal was released to the public. In November, UDWC filed a subsequent lawsuit and amended its original lawsuit upon release of the final NSPS rules.

AFGE won a major legal victory against similar personnel changes proposed for the Department of Homeland Security when U.S. District Court Judge Rosemary M. Collyer ruled that the DHS rules could not be implemented because of specific illegal provisions.

Gage also said the NSPS would radically curtail collective bargaining; end the right to appeal labor-management disputes to an impartial third party; and establish an unprecedented, and virtually impossible to meet, legal threshold for overturning or reducing disciplinary actions or penalties. He added that NSPS provides no safeguards to prevent a general lowering of pay for the civilian defense workforce, weakens veterans' preference and completely eliminates seniority as a factor considered during a reduction-in-force.

For more information go to [www.afge.org](http://www.afge.org).

## 2 NEW WAYS AFGE WORKS FOR YOU

### New Education Benefit

The Membership and Organization Department is pleased to introduce a new benefit for members and their children: personalized tutoring. Tutoring has not been an affordable option for most working families. AFGE is changing that through its partnership with MINDsprinting. Similar programs cost between \$100 and \$500 a month, but AFGE members can buy a proven program for mastering

- 1 **math** (K-12) and
  - 2 **reading comprehension** (4-12)
- for just \$12 per month per subject.

Any member with Internet access and a printer can use MINDsprinting's self-paced Math and Reading Comprehension programs. Students take a FREE interactive assessment test to determine their appropriate starting point in the program and then MINDsprinting creates a specially tailored program and e-mails a detailed report to the parent.

MINDsprinting is simple to use. After the student completes the printed assignment, a parent corrects it (using the printable answer key), reports the results, and MINDsprinting does the rest. Students enjoy MINDsprinting's great prizes, achievement awards, and improved self-esteem. Parents will enjoy being involved in their children's education and the progress reports and transcripts that can be printed or e-mailed to teachers, friends, and family.

For more information, visit 'Education' under the 'Member Benefit' section on the AFGE web site at [www.afge.org](http://www.afge.org). To receive the member only discount, enter AFGE-9205 in the Group ID box when you enroll.

## AUTO CLUB BENEFIT

For as little as \$1 a week, AFGE members can be protected by the Pinnacle Auto Club — a premiere auto club whose benefits exceed most AAA Plus plans.

Membership follows you, not your vehicle. No matter whose vehicle you are travel-



ing in, you are fully protected anywhere in the world. You'll receive benefits like:

- ✓ Up to 50% savings over AAA Plus.
- ✓ Assistance that follows you in any vehicle including RV's, motorcycles, company cars, rental cars, and recreational trailers.
- ✓ Free custom trip routing, maps and road atlases.

For more information or to enroll online, visit the 'Member Benefits' section of the AFGE web site: [www.afge.org](http://www.afge.org), or call 1-800-366-1165.

# FEDERAL EMPLOYEES WERE AHEAD OF THE CURVE ON HURRICANE RESPONSE

The tragic consequences of three major hurricane strikes this year revealed weaknesses in the federal government's ability to respond to national emergencies.

In spite of the rhetoric used to justify personnel changes in the federal sector, top level managers proved to be the weakest link during these recent challenges—not career employees.

Although FEMA received much deserved attention in response to Hurricane Katrina, other federal agencies exhibited their own mobilization and response failures. Government employees in virtually every federal agency stood ready to provide assistance in the aftermath of the storms, yet decision makers in some agencies seemed slow and inflexible.

Experienced emergency managers inside FEMA have been working to correct agency failings for some time, but those efforts have been largely unsuccessful.

In June 2004, AFGE Local 4060, which represents employees at FEMA headquarters, sent a letter to members of Congress warning that "FEMA has gone from being a model agency to being one where funds are being misspent, employee morale has fallen, and our nation's emergency management capability is being eroded." Despite the extensive and detailed exposition of agency problems, the letter went virtually unnoticed until Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf Coast region.

Much of the media attention following Hurricane Katrina focused on former FEMA Director **Michael Brown**, who has come to personify incompetence, cronyism and administrative impotence for many Americans.

However, Brown is not the only top official who had little or no emergency management experience prior to joining the

agency. A recent news story reported that five out of the top eight FEMA officials had limited disaster expertise.

**Leo Bosner**, president of Local 4060, explained that FEMA employees expected President Bush to appoint qualified Republican emergency managers to top agency positions but were shocked when inexperienced and unknowledgeable persons were put in those roles instead.

Problems in other agencies seemingly point to failures to prepare for emergency situations. In a post-9/11 world, however, such a lack of preparation is negligent.

For example, virtually the entire population of the area surrounding the Federal Correctional Complex at Beaumont, Texas, was evacuated prior to the landfall of Hurricane Rita, including first responders. Yet the workers and prisoners of FCC Beaumont, who weathered a near direct hit from the storm, were abandoned without emergency provisions or equipment deployed in advance.

When the power failed at the Beaumont facility just a few hours before Rita made landfall, the storm was a Category 5, the most powerful type of hurricane. Fortunately Rita weakened before striking FCC Beaumont, which spared the facility casualties.

The Beaumont staff remained completely isolated for several days, without electricity or air conditioning—essential to maintaining order and preserving the health of the staff and inmates alike—until the Bureau of Prisons deployed a relief crew of correctional workers from other facilities.

Workers from the Customs and Border Protection (CBP) division of the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) were among the federal employees deployed following the storms to provide assistance. However, top officials in neither agency utilized volunteers as efficiently or effectively as possible, according to government workers.

The story for CBP seemed to follow an on-again-off-again plot whereby managers seemed to vacillate over whether or not to deploy volunteers, and if so, how many. Some qualified CBP volunteers were never officially considered for deployment while one worker, who suffered his own personal tragedies, was nearly forcibly deployed.

The experience of HUD volunteers, though not as dramatic, demonstrates a further shift from experienced, government professionals in favor of private contract workers. HUD employees have long played a role following natural disasters, helping survivors to find housing. In this case, HUD dispatched employees to the disaster zone, only to have them reporting to inexperienced contract workers.

"Top federal decision makers need to hold themselves to the same standard of flexibility that they allege is necessary for career employees," said **Charles Showalter**, president of AFGE's Homeland Security Council, which represents the CBP workers. "Following these devastating storms, it was the career workers who were ready and willing to help and were forced to wait for the bureaucrats to play catch up."

**"Following these devastating storms, it was the career workers who were ready and willing to help and were forced to wait for the bureaucrats to play catch up."**

**In spite of the rhetoric used to justify personnel changes in the federal sector, top level managers proved to be the weakest link during these recent challenges—not career employees.**

# Contracting Out Reform Called Victory for Taxpayers, Feds

The federal workforce won a major victory on Nov. 18, when House and Senate conferees considering an appropriations bill required federal agencies to implement reforms in their contracting out procedures.

Conferees to the Transportation-Treasury-HUD Appropriations Bill agreed to require the White House's Office of Management and Budget to make changes in its Circular A-76 privatization process. AFGE and others have criticized the process as unfair to federal employees and a waste of taxpayers' dollars.

These reforms were included in the appropriations bill because of the bipartisan leadership of Sens. **Christopher Bond** (R-Mo.) and **Barbara Mikulski** (D-Md.). "Inclusion of the Bond-Mikulski reform provisions is a big first step toward eliminating waste in the OMB," said AFGE National President **John Gage** of the conferees'

action. In the House, efforts were led by Reps. **Joe Knollenberg** (R-Mich.) and **Steny Hoyer** (D-Md.).

The conferees agreed to require all agencies except the Transportation Security Administration to subject functions that were last performed by 10 or more federal employees to public-private competitions before such work could be given to contractors. As part of such competitions, federal employees would always be able to submit their best bids, and contractors would always have to at least show savings sufficient to cover the costs of conducting privatization reviews.

These reform provisions also would limit use of the controversial and highly subjective "best value" process—by which agencies can give work performed by federal employees to contractors even when the in-house workforce submits more responsive and less expensive bids. Instead, agencies would be able to specify the levels of qual-

ity they need, and technically qualified bidders would then compete on which one could provide the service at the lowest cost.

These long-overdue reforms were forced out of the fiscal year 2004 and fiscal year 2005 conference reports because of OMB objections, even though this same language has applied to the Department of Defense since FY04.

Sen. Mikulski said, "This language is the first step in leveling the playing field for federal employees and the first year federal employees have made real progress against unfair contracting out. Our federal employees are on the front lines every day, working hard for America. These hardworking men and women deserve to be treated fairly and, at the very least, deserve to have the same rights that contractors do. I will keep fighting to fix the competition process that is shamefully slanted in favor of private contractors."

Rep. Hoyer sounded a similar note. The measure approved by the conferees would "correct fundamental flaws in the current OMB Circular A-76 privatization process and guarantee a level playing field for federal employees competing to keep their jobs," he said during the House's consideration of the appropriations bill.

## Law Enforcement Personnel System Concept Paper Cause for Concern, Says AFGE

A concept paper on the law enforcement personnel system fails to address many of the problems that make it difficult for the federal government to attract and retain the best and brightest law enforcement officers, according to AFGE National President **John Gage**.

Gage recently told the House Government Reform and Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs subcommittees on the federal workforce that the proposal also would expand upon the Department of Homeland Security personnel system in ways that would encourage attrition.

The proposal would allow the Office of Personnel Management to determine government employees' eligibility regarding retirement benefits as well as in pay and classification decisions. "Given OPM's clear opposition to recognizing [Customs and Border Patrol] officers as the law enforcement officers they are and always have been, we have no reason to

believe this proposal will lead toward improved benefits or better pay for these officers," said Gage. "In fact, the reverse is more likely to be true."

Gage also raised concerns about other aspects of the proposal, including the establishment of a pay-for-performance system similar to that proposed for all DHS employees. "The problem with pay-for-performance in law enforcement is that it discourages teamwork which often is the most critical element of success in this field," Gage said.

Gage added that the union is troubled by language in the paper suggesting that changes in collective bargaining, adverse actions and appeals under Title 5 of the United States Code may be necessary.

Gage, however, said the union supports a provision in the proposal that would set up a new Housing Allowance Trust Fund for law enforcement personnel in the amount of 10 percent of the median value of homes in the area.

## iPod Sweepstakes

*We're giving away an iPod nano.*



AFGE members are invited to enter a sweepstakes for a chance to win a 2GB iPod nano, courtesy of the Member-Only Benefits program and Apple Computer.

Enter online or by mail. Go to the Member Benefits section of the AFGE Web site: [www.afge.org](http://www.afge.org), or send your name, address and Local number to: AFGE, M&O Department, 80 F Street, NW, Washington, DC 20001.

The Apple Member Purchase Program also offers AFGE members a variety of great deals on popular Apple products—some surely will bring music to your ears. For more information go online to AFGE's website: [www.afge.org](http://www.afge.org) or call 1-800-MY-APPLE.

# Federal Workers Show HEROIC EFFORTS in Katrina Relief

When Hurricane Katrina swept into the Gulf Coast, federal workers were among the first to respond to the crisis. Despite having their homes and places of employment destroyed, federal workers in the Gulf Coast area bravely and unselfishly went to the aid of their fellow workers and any one else in need. Additionally, federal workers from around the country descended on the area to aid in the relief efforts. In fact, in the two weeks after Hurricane Katrina, more than 70,000 federal employees were deployed to the affected area. From rescuing stranded evacuees to helping thousands of people get free medicine, federal workers performed gallantly and admirably in the face of the nation's biggest natural disaster. Federal workers would never use the word "hero" to describe themselves, but it's a fitting description for those who went beyond the call of duty to help their fellow citizens.

Here are just a few examples of what federal workers did to help in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina:

- ▶ The Coast Guard deployed more than 3,000 members and rescued nearly 24,000 victims.
- ▶ The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) deployed teams to conduct aerial assessments of damage and support clean up efforts. Additionally, AFGE Local 3331, which represents federal workers at the EPA, held a vigil at the agency's headquarters to show support for the victims of Hurricane Katrina.
- ▶ The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) deployed workers who treated patients, assisted families in locating evacuated VA patients, and helped affected veterans receive benefit checks and prescription drugs. Additionally, VA police officers provided security support to the New Orleans VA Medical Center and fended off looters.
- ▶ Customs and Border Protection (CBP) deployed more than 500 employees. Using marine vessels and aircraft carriers, CBP carried out 44 rescues. Additionally, 200 Border Patrol agents helped restore order to New Orleans in the aftermath of the hurricane.
- ▶ The U.S. Army Tank-Automotive Research, Development and Engineering Center (TARDEC) based in Detroit deployed employees to provide clean drinking water to victims using newly developed water purification equipment.



ALEXANDRIA, La. (Aug. 30, 2005) Capt. Frank Paskewich, commander of Coast Guard Sector New Orleans, looks out over the ravaged Super Dome after Hurricane Katrina. The Coast Guard conducted numerous damage-assessment over-flights along the Gulf Coast in the days following Katrina's aftermath. USCG photo by PA3 Luke Pinneo



An FPS officer observes the flooded streets of downtown New Orleans. Photo courtesy of ICE

AFGE Local 3331 and EPA employees hold a silent vigil for Hurricane Katrina victims at EPA headquarters in Washington, D.C. Photo courtesy of AFGE

- ▶ The Department of Defense (DoD) docked the USS Iwo Jima in New Orleans as the military's onsite command center. Additionally, 20 Navy ships were sent to the region to provide medical support, humanitarian relief and transportation. DoD personnel also provided a 500-bed hospital and 50 helicopters to support relief operations.

These are just a sampling of heroics displayed by federal workers. Employees from every federal agency offered aid and support during the Hurricane Katrina relief efforts. If you would like to share your Katrina stories, please send them to [communications@afge.org](mailto:communications@afge.org).

For more information about Hurricane Katrina efforts visit the Katrina files at [www.afge.org](http://www.afge.org).





LAUREL, Miss., October 31, 2005 — At the FEMA/State Disaster Recovery Center (DRC) #14, Whitney Danté Johnson is discussing how to file a claim for disaster unemployment with a potential applicant. The employment of many residents in this area has been severely impacted by Hurricane Katrina. George Armstrong/FEMA



CBP officers rescue a family stranded in downtown New Orleans. Photo by Gerald Nino, courtesy CBP.



U.S. Air Force and Navy medical personnel lead a Hurricane Katrina victim to a Navy SH-60B Seahawk helicopter for airlift to an evacuation center in New Orleans on Sept. 5, 2005. Department of Defense units are mobilized as part of Joint Task Force Katrina to support the Federal Emergency Management Agency's disaster-relief efforts in the Gulf Coast areas devastated by Hurricane Katrina. COURTESY: DoD photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Jay C. Pugh, U.S. Navy. (Released)



BILOXI, Miss., November 3, 2005 — Meals are being provided to these disaster workers as they clean up debris in the Bay Point area. The Red Cross continues to be a primary source of food for many families displaced by Hurricane Katrina. George Armstrong/FEMA



ICE Federal Protective Service Agents prepare to aid in the Hurricane Katrina relief efforts. Photo courtesy of ICE



GRAND ISLE, Orleans Parish La., November 1, 2005 — PA1 Allison Sakara and Lynn Rimer of the Disaster Medical Assistance Team (DMAT) stitch up an injured patient. Marvin Nauman/FEMA

## At Your Service: Field Services Department

If you have an NSPS concern or need information on contract negotiations, then **Terry Rosen** and **Charlie Bernhardt**, both labor relations specialists, are the folks you need to see. Combined, they have more than 60 years of experience in the labor relations field.

Terry began her labor relations career at the Social Security Administration, where she was active in the local union. She served as women's coordinator, legislative coordinator, newsletter editor, chief steward and vice president of the local union in San Francisco. As an AFGE activist, Terry wanted to put more of her energy into public union causes, so in 1990, she began working for the



Charlie Bernhardt and Terry Rosen

new regulations for DoD, known as the National Security Personnel System (NSPS), revoke most due process rights, allow supervisors to punish employees in their paychecks, create a so-called pay-for-performance system that pits employees against each other for pay

at conferences and facilitate workshops for AFGE activists.

For almost 30 years, Charlie worked in the federal sector labor relations field and eventually moved on to the National Federation of Federal Employees. Since being recruited to join the AFGE family in 1993 by the late AFGE President **John Sturdivant**, Charlie has become a household name at AFGE in the area of contract negotiations.

Charlie's main focus is to assist in contract negotiations for AFGE workers. He negotiates contracts for employees seeking alternate work schedules and alternative work arrangements. He's worked with and bargained for contracts with the following agencies: National Transportation Safety Board, Veterans Affairs, Environmental Protection Agency,

Defense Contract Management Agency, and D.C. Water and Sewer Authority. In the near future, he'll be working on contract negotiations with the Small Business Administration. Ultimately, his work improves the lives of workers on the job.

"People need whole lives," Charlie said. "They need fulfilling work, whole work."

Charlie sits on both the Federal Prevailing Rate Advisory Committee and the Defense Wage Committee. These committees focus on and operate using the Blue Collar Pay System.

Charlie is a long time labor leader. In addition to his job as a labor relations/wage specialist, he's an accomplished musician. He recently released a new CD titled, "A Bridge Between Two Worlds." You can learn more about Charlie's music at [www.cantorcharlie.com](http://www.cantorcharlie.com).

increases, and end all meaningful collective bargaining. She also has worked on the DHS design team and the meet-and-confer process, which involves writing comments on personnel rules.

As part of her job, Terry works with AFGE CaseTrack, a free system offered to AFGE union representatives to help manage and keep track of cases, including grievances, unfair labor practice charges, equal employment opportunity complaints, Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB) appeals, bargaining requests and others. During this process, local presidents are signed up for CaseTrack, and Terry answers any questions they may have, as well as assists them in resolving problems. More than 220 AFGE locals are using this web-based system.

Additionally, she continues to collaborate on DHS rules as well as speak

**"People need whole lives... They need fulfilling work, whole work."**

—Charlie Bernhardt

American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) and finally ended up at AFGE in 1994.

In the last few years, Terry has been deeply involved in Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and Department of Defense (DoD) work rules. The