



The NSSC News

DECEMBER 2010



Rick Arbuthnot
Executive Director

The Executive Director's Desk:

Introducing "The NSSC News"

Another year has passed, and as the NSSC matures and changes—tweaking processes, fine-tuning skills, and perfecting capabilities to provide unparalleled service to customers, one of the most common constructive criticisms of the NSSC continues to involve the transfer of information to those working in the field. In fact, in the results of the most recent Broad-Based Surveys, the most important opportunities for improvement reported were communicating with customers and keeping them informed, so that they know where to go when they need assistance.

The NSSC agrees that communicating with customers is critical to our mission. This quarterly newsletter was developed as an additional way to reach out to NSSC customers with information that affects their day-to-day operations.

In this first edition of "The NSSC News," there is information about the Broad-Based Survey results, updates regarding recent year-end close out activities, as well as information about what is new on the NSSC Customer Service Website.

This publication represents our effort to close gaps in communication between the NSSC and our customers at the NASA Centers. Feel free to provide input about information you'd like to see in future issues of this publication to the NSSC Customer Satisfaction and Communication team: NSSC-Cust-Sat-and-Comm@nasa.gov.

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What's New on the Web:

Voice of the Customer

The NSSC Web team recently debuted one of the most important Web pages on the NSSC Customer Service Website to date. It is the Customer Satisfaction and Communication Web page. As the name implies, the content on this page is dedicated to customer satisfaction. To that end, content on the page not only includes [recent survey results](#) and informational materials, but also a link that allows customers to share their NSSC experiences.

Customer feedback is accepted anonymously, but customers also have the ability to include contact information, if desired. Few things are more valuable to the success of the NSSC than feedback. Share an NSSC experience at: www.nssc.nasa.gov/voice.

The Customer Contact Center:

From the Front Lines

While working hard to accomplish something, unexpected snags can delay progress. The desire is to make one quick phone call to the person who can remedy the situation, so that you can move forward with other activities. At the NSSC, that go-to resource is the Customer Contact Center (CCC). In fact, 97% of routine calls to the CCC are successfully resolved with just one call.

Calling the CCC means the leg work is done by the CCC representative, eliminating time wasted calling the wrong Point of Contact (POC) or listening to out-of-office messages. The CCC representative creates an incident report and troubleshoots the issue, locating the appropriate POC currently on duty, to help find answers as soon as possible. The efficiency of the CCC saves frustration, time, and money. To view CCC hours of operation and contact information, visit: <https://www.nssc.nasa.gov/>

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Anita Harrell
Division Chief
Human Resources

Human Resources Update:

Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) Changes Federal Benefits

The NSSC Benefits team wants to review some of the highlights regarding changes to the federal health benefits plan, which were put into place by the signing of the ACA. These changes are important because they may affect the 2010 Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) open season.

Changes in Federal Spending Account Program (FSAFEDS)

Over-the-counter medicines or drugs will not be eligible for reimbursement without a prescription from a physician. *The only exception to this rule is insulin.*

Changes in the FEHB Program

Children under 26 years of age can be covered under their parent's FEHB health plan's Self and Family enrollment. *Due to this change, a child of an FEHB enrollee who is under age 26 and currently enrolled under Temporary Continuation of Coverage (TCC) may no longer need TCC enrollment.* TCC enrollment can be changed from 31 days before until 60 days after January 1, 2011, under the "Change in Family Status" Qualifying Life Event. To add an eligible child to existing coverage, contact your FEHB carrier directly. The NSSC cannot accept Standard Form 2809 (Health Benefits Election Form) for this change. The enrollment change to Self and Family will take effect on the first day of the pay period that includes January 1, 2011.

To read more about the changes to federal benefits and how they will affect families, visit: <http://www.opm.gov/retire/pubs/bals/2010/10-201attachment.pdf>.

Fast Facts: Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA)

- Signed into law on March 23, 2010
- Some changes take effect January 1, 2011
- May affect FEHB open season



Bruce O'Dell
Division Chief
Information Technology

Information Technology Update:

Federal Data Center Consolidation Initiative

The Agency Data Center Consolidation (ADCC) team was established at Kennedy Space Center (KSC), with Center POCs coordinating their Center activities. In developing an Agency-wide strategy for consolidation, the team established the Automated IT Discovery and Application Mapping Services (IDAMS) project. The goal of this project is to discover IT server hardware and software assets and map relationships between application components Agency-wide. The ADCC team chose a discovery and application mapping tool suite from Hewlett Packard (HP) to accomplish this goal.

The IDAMS project team is deploying the HP tool set at KSC and will soon perform on-site visits to all other Centers. Their goal is to complete the installation at all Centers by the third quarter of FY11.

The team's schedule for Center installations begins with the NSSC on December 6. The NSSC has received the first of two IDAMS servers and is completing the installation checklist supplied by the KSC Deployment team in preparation for the visit.

HP reps were at the NSSC on November 8, to give a presentation and answer questions about the NASA procurement of the HP Discovery and Dependency Mapping tools, as well as to discuss the suite of optional products associated with the enterprise license agreement. Center consolidation activities will occur over the next six months.

Fast Facts:
**Federal Data Center
Consolidation Initiative:**
Established by OMB to reduce the overall cost and energy consumption of Data Center operations

Recommendation: The use of an automated IT discovery capability

What this means for NASA:

- NASA must-
- Assess and inventory the current Agency IT environment
 - Establish a Data Center Consolidation Plan

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Cindy Epperson
Division Chief
Financial Management

Financial Management Update:

Year-End Status

Travel

The NSSC Travel team successfully processed all complete, correct, and funded travel vouchers submitted by Agency-established deadlines. In addition, the NSSC was able to pay approximately 1,390 domestic and foreign vouchers (combined total), that were approved after the established official cutoff dates. The last payments were made on September 24, 2010.

Accounts Payable

The NSSC Accounts Payable team processed 70,383 invoice payments for \$14B and 13,783 IPACs for \$615M. They also processed approved payments due on or prior to October 8, 2010, before the FY10 disbursement cutoff. Their diligence ensured that NASA closed FY10 with a green rating. Also, within two days of completing year-end close out, the Agency was experiencing normal processing timelines in regards to receiving, parking, and posting invoices.

Accounts Receivable Billings and Collections

- Created 23,121 billings in the amount of \$1.6B
- Processed 3,047 collections in the amount of \$178M
- Processed 1,028 Pay.Gov transactions in the amount of \$8M
- Processed 48 Fed Wires in the amount of \$15.3M
- Processed 14,453 IPACs in the amount of \$1.2B

Fast Facts:

Year-End Status

Travel: Successfully processed all complete, correct, and funded travel vouchers submitted by Agency-established deadlines

Accounts Payable:

Within two days of successful year-end close out, the Agency was experiencing normal processing timelines



Mike Sweigart
Division Chief
Procurement

Procurement Update:

NASA Selects Proposals for Award of Phase II SBIR Contracts

On October 18, 2010, NASA selected 215 proposals for negotiation of Phase II Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) contracts. The projects have a value of approximately \$129M. The contracts will be awarded to 162 small technology firms in 35 states.

SBIR provides small businesses with opportunities to propose unique ideas that meet specific research and development needs of the federal government. The program works with NASA's mission directorates to competitively select ventures for Agency program needs.

"Investing in small businesses innovations designed to meet our future mission needs is paramount for NASA's continued success," said Bobby Braun, NASA chief technologist. "These awards will help small businesses across the country continue to employ and develop the high-tech workforce America needs for the future, while providing new knowledge and capabilities to NASA."

The Ames Research Center manages the SBIR program for NASA's Office of the Chief Technologist. All Phase I and II SBIR contracts are awarded and administered by the NSSC.

Fast Facts:

Selected Proposals

- A sensor system to detect and monitor clear air turbulence; increasing aviation safety
- A process technology for converting carbon dioxide and methane, for power co-generation and oxygen production
- A software defined radio that supports reconfiguration, flexibility, and increased performance and bandwidth; to benefit communications on the surface of Mars or the Moon
- Large-format focal plane detectors for ultraviolet to infrared radiation; to improve telescopes and

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In Other News:

NSSC Articles and Releases

There is a lot happening at the NSSC, and to keep customers informed of all the changes and the newest developments, the NSSC often submits articles to designated Center publication contacts. Still, with all the important work going on at NASA, NSSC customers may not have had the opportunity to review some of the information that they need to know. Here is an opportunity to catch up. Below are links to a few of the articles recently submitted:

NASA is awarding new contracts that will change the way the Agency provides Information Technology services and support is provided. [Read More](#)

Help desk assistance is available for many of the systems used by NASA employees, but it can be difficult to know who to call. Here is a list of helpful contact information. [Read More](#)

SATERN recently underwent a major upgrade to better support training requirements throughout the Agency. [Read More](#)

Budget & Operations:

ESD Rates

The NSSC recently received approval from the Office of the Chief Financial Officer to reduce the Enterprise Service Desk/Enterprise Service Request System (ESD/ESRS) rates for FY11 to the current (PPBE12) rates for FY12. This reduction is based on the changes in the I3P transition schedule and the adverse impact to those Centers transitioning in the first waves.

In addition to the reduction in the service rates, this also resulted in reduced utilization for the Centers/ Mission Directorates.

The adjusted rates for FY11 can be found in Section 3.3 on page 23 of the [Service Level Agreement \(SLA\)](#). The adjusted utilization for ESD and ESRS can be found in Appendix A on page 37 of the SLA. As a result of these changes, the total cost reduction is \$4.6M, and each Center/Mission Directorate received a reduction in their respective NSSC bills. Learn more at: www.nssc.nasa.gov/esd, or follow ESD on Twitter: <http://twitter.com/>

Voice of the Customer:

The NSSC's Broad-Based Survey results are in. The full [Executive Summary](#) is available online, but listed below is a short synopsis of responses:

Accolades: Overall satisfaction ratings are mostly positive, with all mean scores for overall satisfaction falling in the positive range of the rating scale (above 3) and the lowest mean score being 3.50.

According to results, the NSSC staff continues to exhibit positive customer service attitudes, including courtesy, willingness to help, and showing an interest in solving their customer's problems.

Opportunities for Improvement: Areas for improvement include: informing customers where to go for support, striving to deliver error-free service, process efficiency, and communication.

The NSSC has already begun to use the feedback to improve services and enhance transitions. With this new newsletter, the goal is to improve communication and dialogue with NSSC customers.

Did You Know:

NSSC Information Center

The NSSC Information Center is a new, Web-based tool that puts nearly 1,000 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) at the fingertips of website users. FAQs are easily accessed through a user-friendly search mechanism. They are also categorized, so an individual can easily browse by service.

The order of FAQs changes day-to-day based upon what customers are viewing and finding valuable. Users have the ability to rate comments on a four-star scale. The feedback can be provided anonymously and takes only seconds to share.

The NSSC Information Center also provides a significant upgrade to the NSSC's website's search capabilities. The software crawls FAQs, Web content, and public documents in the NSSC TechDoc electronic library. The improved site search also simplifies site navigation and ensures customers find the specific page they need.

To try the NSSC Information Center, visit: <https://answers.nssc.nasa.gov/>.