

Subject: All CPF E-Mail - PA Article on BEST Services
Sent: Tuesday, 19 August 2003

The purpose of this E-mail is to provide you with a copy of the article AFPC/PA released advising of the services provided to Air Force-serviced civilian employees by the Benefits and Entitlements Service Team (BEST) (attached).

The article begins by advising the BEST web site has been hit approximately 260,000 times in the past year and goes on to advise BEST provides benefits and entitlements services through information available on the BEST Homepage, in the BEST Newsletter and bulletins, and via the automated system. A suggestion from our local AFPC Public Affairs office -- you may want to contact your PA office and "localize" the article (or any BEST article) with quotes.

Chief, Special Operations Division
AFPC/DPCM

Attachment:
PA Article on BEST Services

Aug. 19, 2003
Release No. 063

Civilian benefits and entitlements Web site reaches 260,000 customers

AIR FORCE PERSONNEL CENTER – Continuing a trend toward online self service, Air Force civilian employees used the Web about 260,000 times last year to manage their career benefits.

Another 63,000 civilian employees called and talked with a benefits counselor using telephone support in conjunction with the web, officials said.

When BEST [Benefits and Entitlements Service Team] went live in 1996, we provided services to 3,500 civilian employees at nine bases, said Janet Thomas, human resources specialist. “Today, we provide full servicing to more than 78,000 civilian employees at 83 bases and limited servicing to more than 57,000 employees at 13 bases from the time they come to work for the Air Force until they leave.”

BEST provides benefits and entitlements enrollment and advisory services to fully-serviced employees in the areas of Federal Employees Health Benefits, Federal Employees Group Life Insurance, Thrift Savings Plan, retirement counseling and processing, and death-in-service survivor assistance. The same services are provided to limited service employees with the exception of retirement counseling and processing and death-in-service. These benefits are provided by the local civilian personnel flight.

Employees can determine if they receive full or limited servicing by going to the BEST home page at www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/dpc/best/menu.htm and clicking on “Full versus Limited Servicing” or by contacting their local CPF to see if their records are maintained there.

Benefits and entitlement services provided by BEST:

- The BEST home page provides Web pages specifically related to new, rehired, transferred, retiring, separating employees, employees entering a leave without pay status and

employees entering military active duty. The “What’s New” area offers information on legislative updates and program changes.

- The BEST Newsletter provides timely reminders of FEHB and TSP open seasons and other pertinent benefits-related information. The newsletter is published electronically and e-mailed about six times a year to employees who have subscribed to receive it. New subscribers can go to the BEST home page and click on “Newsletter Subscription Service” to enroll.

- BEST provides an automated system which all Air Force-serviced civilian employees use to conduct insurance and TSP enrollments and changes. The Employee Benefits Information System is a web-based application, more commonly known as EBIS, and the BEST phone automated system is where the employee can transact business through a series of prompts or speak with a counselor. Instructions on how to access EBIS and the BEST phone automated system are located on the BEST home page under “How to Access the BEST Automated Systems and Reach a Counselor”.

More information on civilian programs can be found on the Air Force Personnel Center home page at <http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil>, then click on “Civilian Personnel Online”.