

New way of doing business leading to changes at KSC

NASA's new way of doing business is becoming apparent at Kennedy Space Center as changes are taking place in anticipation of the fall start of the Space Flight Operations Contract (SFOC).

Several announcements made in recent weeks highlight the fact that change is coming, said James L. Jennings, director of the Administration Office.

Although the contract between NASA and the single prime contractor United Space Alliance (USA) is not scheduled to take effect until Oct. 1, the transition work has already begun.

On April 12, NASA executed a novation agreement between the two parties and modified the existing Shuttle Processing Contract (SPC) to recognize USA's successor interests.

In essence the agreement allows USA to begin transition work, including the re-badging of former Lockheed Martin Space Operations Company and Rockwell International Corp. employees, before the contract formally begins, Jennings said.

The agreement does not affect the day-to-day operations at KSC, contract terms and conditions, or the roles and responsibilities of civil service employees in managing the SPC or the award fee evaluation process.

The arrangement will remain in effect until Sept. 30 when the SFOC is awarded.

Employee support requested

In a letter informing employees of the arrangement, Center Director Jay Honeycutt requested support for the coming changes.

"The KSC technical and procurement support team responsible for this effort is being formed," he said.

"This team will be dedicated to successful implementation of this program while ensuring that the vital interests of both KSC and the Agency are protected."

In a related move the Shuttle Operations Directorate has been reorganized to conform to the management structure necessary for the transition to the SFOC. The directorate is renamed the Shuttle Processing Directorate.

The second level Vehicle Engineering Directorate is renamed Process Engineering.

The Shuttle Processing and Operations Office has been combined with the Ground Systems sub-directorate to form the Process Integration Directorate.

That position, which is at the Senior Ex-

Merrilees takes phased retirement option

Kennedy Space Center Personnel Officer Bev Merrilees will soon be taking advantage of one of the new retirement options her office began offering last month.

Merrilees, who has 36 years of federal service, said she began to study the Careers Plus phased retirement option shortly after it became available at KSC and decided that professionally and financially it made sense for her.

"I feel really good about it," she said.

Merrilees will retire May 3 but will return a month later as a re-employed annuitant. She will work Tuesdays through Thursdays on special projects in the Administration Office. Merrilees will be able to work a maximum of 1,040 hours a year for up to two years. In addition to her annuity she will receive an hourly rate which is based on half of the difference between her salary at



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retirement and her annuity.

She said since she had been thinking about retirement anyway, the option was especially appealing since it will allow her to come back and finish some projects she had been working on.

And the addition to her pension fund will provide a "little cushion," she said.

Merrilees was staffing branch chief with the Department of the Army when her husband, Bob, transferred to KSC in January 1967. She began her career at KSC as a personnel clerk in the records section and became personnel officer in February 1993. Her husband will continue in his position as community relations specialist in the Protocol and Special Events branch of the Public Affairs Office.

ecutive Staff level, will be advertised, Jennings said.

In other organizational changes, the Space Station Launch Site Support Office is redesignated as the International Space Station Launch Site Support Directorate. And the Payload Operations Directorate is renamed the Payload Processing Directorate.

And, in a reassignment made to expedite space station hardware testing and integration, John (Tip) Talone has been named special assistant to the center director.

In another personnel change, Personnel Officer Bev Merrilees has announced that she will take advantage of one of the new Careers Plus retirement options for civil service employees.

She will retire May 3 and return a month later as a rehired annuitant (see related story). Ken Aguilar, deputy chief of the Personnel Office, will take over her position when she leaves.

Although changes are occurring rapidly at KSC, they are not yet as dramatic as those recently announced at NASA Headquarters. Employees there were notified April 17 that a plan is being developed to accelerate the downsizing of that staff from 1,430 positions currently to 650-700 by October 1997.

The new plan anticipates a Reduction in Force to be completed by Oct. 1, 1997.

The new plan increases the target reduc-

tion by approximately 400 employees and accelerates the timetable for completing the reduction.

NASA Administrator Dan Goldin called the news of the reductions "disturbing and unwelcome" but said he wanted to keep employees informed so they could make necessary career decisions.

Mars symposium planned

A Mars symposium is scheduled to be held July 18 through 19 at the National Academy of Sciences in Washington, D.C.

The symposium will be hosted by NASA, the Planetary Society and the Lockheed Martin Corp. NASA Administrator Dan Goldin and Dr. Carl Sagan have been invited to speak.

Dr. Mike Carr, former Viking Orbiter Imaging Team Leader, and others will summarize current knowledge of Mars and discuss future scientific exploration, including the coming Pathfinder and Discovery missions.

For more information, contact Judy Cole, symposium coordinator, Science and Technology Corp., 101 Research Drive, Hampton, Va., 23666, (804) 865-7604 (voice), or at via e-mail at cole@stcnet.com.