

Department of the Navy
Human Resources Office, Norfolk

"THE HISTORY"

What follows is an historical account of the Department of the Navy's Human Resources Office, Norfolk. It is a chronology that covers a period of almost sixty years. It is a history of growth, name changes, and expansion of responsibility. It is at the same time a story of consistent and continued provision of basic civilian personnel services to the Department of the Navy and its civilian employees.

What is now HRO Norfolk traces its origins to the civilian recruitment efforts generated by World War II. The office was established and designated in the early 1940's as the District Civilian Personnel Office. The DCPO was located on the staff of the Commandant Fifth Naval District on what is now Naval Station, Norfolk. Naval regulations at the time required that the office be headed by a military officer. Responsibility for managing the DCPO was therefore assigned to the Assistant Chief of Staff for Administration on the Commandant's staff. The original DCPO office had a staff of four employees providing basic personnel service to approximately 300 civilian employees. These customer employees were located in eight Naval organizations in the Commandant's chain of command. The core mission of the DCPO was to provide consolidated civilian personnel services to those small commands whose civilian employee numbers were insufficient to warrant an in-house personnel department.

In 1949 Mr. Charles D. Young became the first civilian director of what is now HRO Norfolk. He held that position until his retirement in 1957. During Mr. Young's tenure the customer base doubled to approximately 600 spread over 14 customer activities. The mission of the office, however, remained constant.

Mr. Hubert Johnson succeeded Mr. Young as the DCPO Director in 1957. Mr. Johnson served in a dual capacity as the Personnel Director and as a policy advisor to the Commandant.

It is in November 1958 that the first significant change in concept of operations for the office takes place. Mr. Johnson retained his advisory role and moved to the immediate staff of the Commandant. The DCPO was redesignated as the Consolidated Industrial Relations Office (CIRO). Mr. Wendell Weaver was selected as the Director of the CIRO. He held this position

until his retirement in 1971. It is during the 1958-1971 period that the nature of services provided by a Navy civilian personnel office and size of the customer employee population both experience significant change. The infrastructure expansion in response to the Vietnam War and the social action programs introduced during this period changed the civilian personnel business delivery in a fundamental fashion. It is during this period that labor relations, equal employment opportunity, and employee services programs become part of core business. For the CIRO this meant building program support staffs with expertise heretofore absent from the service menu. The CIRO customer population more than doubled in size to over 2000 civilian employees. The staff size of the CIRO itself had grown from the original four to a staff of approximately 20. What remained unchanged, however, was the mission of the CIRO to provide service to miscellaneous activities each small enough to preclude the establishment of an internal personnel department. Larger activities in the Tidewater area such as the Naval Shipyard, Air Rework Facility, and Supply Center, for example, provided civilian personnel support to their own employees within their own resources.

In 1971 Mrs. India Weber was selected as the CIRO Director following Mr. Weaver's retirement. She remained in that position until her retirement in May 1975. During Mrs. Weber's tenure a significant change took place with respect to both the ownership of the CIRO and the limited customer base serviced. In January 1974 the office was transferred in place to the Atlantic Fleet claimancy and redesignated as the Fleet Civilian Personnel Office (FCPO). A number of additional commands located primarily at Naval Air Station, Norfolk, were assigned to the FCPO for service responsibility. This move to the Atlantic Fleet set in motion a series of consolidations and mergers that has continued into the Twenty-First century.

In 1975 Mrs. Juanita Baldwin was selected as the FCPO Director. She remained in that position until her retirement in 1982. During that seven-year period the Navy established a number of new commands in the Norfolk area and assigned them to the FCPO for service. Customer population rose to approximately 3000 employees and the FCPO staff had increased to about 30. It was also during this period that the office was moved under the direct management control of the Commander, Naval Base, Norfolk. The office name was changed yet again to the Naval Base Civilian Personnel Office (NBCPO). The office was physically relocated to Building N26. Also during this period the NBCPO moved through a turbulent cultural change. Civilian Personnel Offices

had historically been structured to provide service upon request with no requirement to establish policy and procedures that customers would be expected to observe. This over the years had resulted in service delivery that varied significantly from customer to customer. During the Baldwin tenure a strategic vision was articulated and implemented which caused the NBCPO to take a proactive role in influencing customer command operating personnel policies. Consistent and uniform service delivery became reality despite a number of obstacles and impediments. This transition from passive to proactive service delivery proved ultimately to be the key to supporting the massive growth spurt that awaited in the 1980-2000 period.

Mr. George Wooten succeeded Mrs. Baldwin in 1982. It would be the first of two periods in which Mr. Wooten held the Director position.

During Mr. Wooten's first tour (1982-1986) another milestone was achieved in the HRO history. From its beginnings the Civilian Personnel Office had been a part of the staff of various Navy components such as COM 5 staff, Naval Station, Norfolk, and Commander, Naval Base. In October of 1984 the office became a separate Naval activity unto itself. It was renamed as the Consolidated Civilian Personnel Office (CCPO), Norfolk. By this time the CCPO had grown to service a population of over 6500 employees located in 70 separate customer activities. The CCPO staff size had grown to about 50 employees.

Following Mr. Wooten's transfer in 1986, Mr. Allen Johnson was selected as the CCPO Director. He served for one year with no significant changes taking place within the CCPO.

In 1987 a Navy directed reassignment returned Mr. Wooten to the CCPO Director position. Mr. Wooten's second tenure is marked by another series of massive changes in both the Navy civilian personnel community and the customer organizations. In 1992, the personnel offices at Naval Amphibious Base, Little Creek, Naval Air Station, Oceana and Naval Hospital, Portsmouth were disestablished and service responsibility moved to the CCPO, at which time the activity name changed to Human Resources Office (HRO), Norfolk. This also resulted, for the first time, in the forward deploying of HRO staff to geographically dispersed locations. It was, in fact, the beginning of regional delivery of personnel services from multiple delivery points. Customer base for HRO Norfolk now stood at about 10000 employees. This change also modified the basic concept that only individual small activities were serviced. In fact, the Naval Hospital

became, overnight, the largest customer activity not only to whom, but from which, service was provided, becoming the first of HRO Norfolk's serviced commands to retain an on-site complement of personnelists.

In 1994 HRO Norfolk was once again called on to expand its service responsibility to accommodate significant Navy infrastructure changes. The BRAC Commission at that time identified the Norfolk Naval Aviation Depot for closure. HRO Norfolk was directed to assume civilian personnel responsibility for the NADEP closure and to pick up service for additional nonclosing activities, the largest of which were the Navy Public Works Center, Norfolk, and the Atlantic Division, Naval Facilities Engineering Command (LANTNAVFACENGCOM). This transition moved the customer base for HRO Norfolk to approximately 14000.

In 1997 Mr. Wooten began a full time assignment with the Secretary of the Navy commissioned project team (RIT) that would put in place significant changes in basic personnel service delivery across the Navy. Mr. Wooten remained on that assignment until his retirement in 1999. Mr. Richard Grissom, formerly the Civilian Personnel Director at the closing Naval Aviation Depot, became the acting director of HRO Norfolk from 1997-1999. During that time, further consolidations occurred, including absorption of the Human Resources Departments at Fleet and Industrial Supply Center (FISC), Norfolk, Naval Weapons Station (NWS), Yorktown, and the Supervisor of Shipbuilding, Conversion and Repair (SUPSHIP), Newport News. Serviced population and internal staff increased once again, and the number of Satellite Offices rose to eight.

Upon Mr. Wooten's retirement Mr. Grissom was assigned permanently as the Director.

From the period of 1998 to the present, yet another series of watershed changes were implemented that caused HRO Norfolk to react, adapt and expand its sphere of responsibility.

In the 1998-1999 time frame the Department of the Navy implemented a massive HR Regionalization effort. Eight geographically dispersed Human Resources Service Centers were established. The HRSC organizations assumed from HRO offices the responsibility for personnel action processing and other nonadvisory (aka "backroom") tasks. For HRO Norfolk this resulted in the loss of approximately 125 staff positions that

were transferred to the HRSC East. Customer base remained at the 12500 employee level.

At Department of Navy direction, in December 1999, the large Human Resources Department at the Norfolk Naval Shipyard was disestablished. The HR staff at the Naval Shipyard was transferred to HRO Norfolk along with the service responsibility for over 7000 additional employees. Upon implementation of the realignment HRO Norfolk now stands as the second largest HRO in the Department of the Navy. Customer base exceeds 21000 employees with a combined HRO staff number of 150 employees. Service delivery is provided through a network of a central hub and geographically dispersed satellite offices.

As this office history is documented in December 2003, HRO Norfolk has been realigned from the Atlantic Fleet claimancy to the claimancy of the Chief of Naval Installations. Analysis is under way which is likely to expand the HRO Norfolk service responsibility into the Mechanicsburg and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania area.

The history of HRO Norfolk is of course unfinished. This 1940-2003 chronology has been written, however, so that the story is not lost over time. We are fully confident that the original four employees of the DCPO, the current staff of 150, and all who served in between share a common set of goals and purposes. We value our customers and are dedicated to service with excellence. We are confident that those who succeed us will continue the journey.

Appendix A
HRO Norfolk Directors

Charles Young	1949-1957
Hubert Johnson	1957-1958
Wendell Weaver	1958-1971
India Weber	1971-1975
Juanita Baldwin	1975-1982
George Wooten	1982-1986
Allen Johnson	1986-1987
George Wooten	1987-1999
Richard Grissom	1999-