

THE FORT LEAVENWORTH LAMP ONLINE

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S1 NET helps human resource personnel stay up to date

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By Alexandra Hemmerly-Brown | Army News Service

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Service members and Department of Defense civilians know they can turn to human resources professionals when it comes to setting their records straight - but who can HR personnel turn to in a bind?

Grown to 44,000 members today from about 345 in 2003, S1 NET, an interactive online forum for HR personnel, helps HR professionals help others by getting their questions answered quickly. Expanding at a rate of about 1,000 new members per month, S1 NET sparks an average 1,600 discussion posts in the same time period.

"We help human resources professionals help Soldiers, which helps their careers, morale, and their families," said Jerry Dillard, the S1 NET facilitator.

Started as a way to assist HR personnel deployed to Afghanistan and Iraq to obtain critical information when their Internet connection bandwidth wasn't enough, Lt. Col. Cindy Dillard created an e-mail service to provide updated HR information and answer the influx of questions coming from the field.

Now, with software and technical support provided by Battle Command Knowledge System, or BCKS, and the full functional support of the Army G1, S1 NET is more than an e-mail service - it's a live network of HR professionals who can share "For Official Use Only" information efficiently and in turn, help more Soldiers.

"It's a collaborative forum ... a community of practice for people who work in the field," said Jerry Dillard, the current facilitator of S1 NET, and husband of the forum's creator.

The site, which can only be accessed by those with a valid Army Knowledge Online e-mail address, is used by those outside the HR community as well, such as commanders and other unit leaders who want to keep current on personnel policies.

"Everyone is interested in promotions, evaluations and awards, especially their own," Dillard explained.

Dillard isn't alone in running the site - there are currently 58 subject-matter-expert volunteers who help answer questions in their area of expertise.

"It saves time for people out there who don't have much time," Dillard said.

S1 NET has also prompted policy changes in the Army.

Examples include All Army Activities, or ALARACT messages being available to anyone with an AKO account, and DD Form 93 (Record of Emergency Data) policy being updated after an S1 NET member noticed a legal problem.

Dillard also sends out e-mail messages every two work days to S1 NET members, updating

them on policy changes and other hot topics in the HR world.

"I'm very passionate about my job ... every day I get to help people," Dillard said.

To access the site, visit <https://forums.bcks.army.mil/secure/communitybrowser.aspx> (AKO login required).

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