

Ice jams up at an old railroad bridge on March 27, 1999, on the Red River of the North between Grand

Forks, N.D., and East Grand Forks, Minn. The bridge is now used as a pedestrian bridge. See page 3.

Photo by Tom Eidson

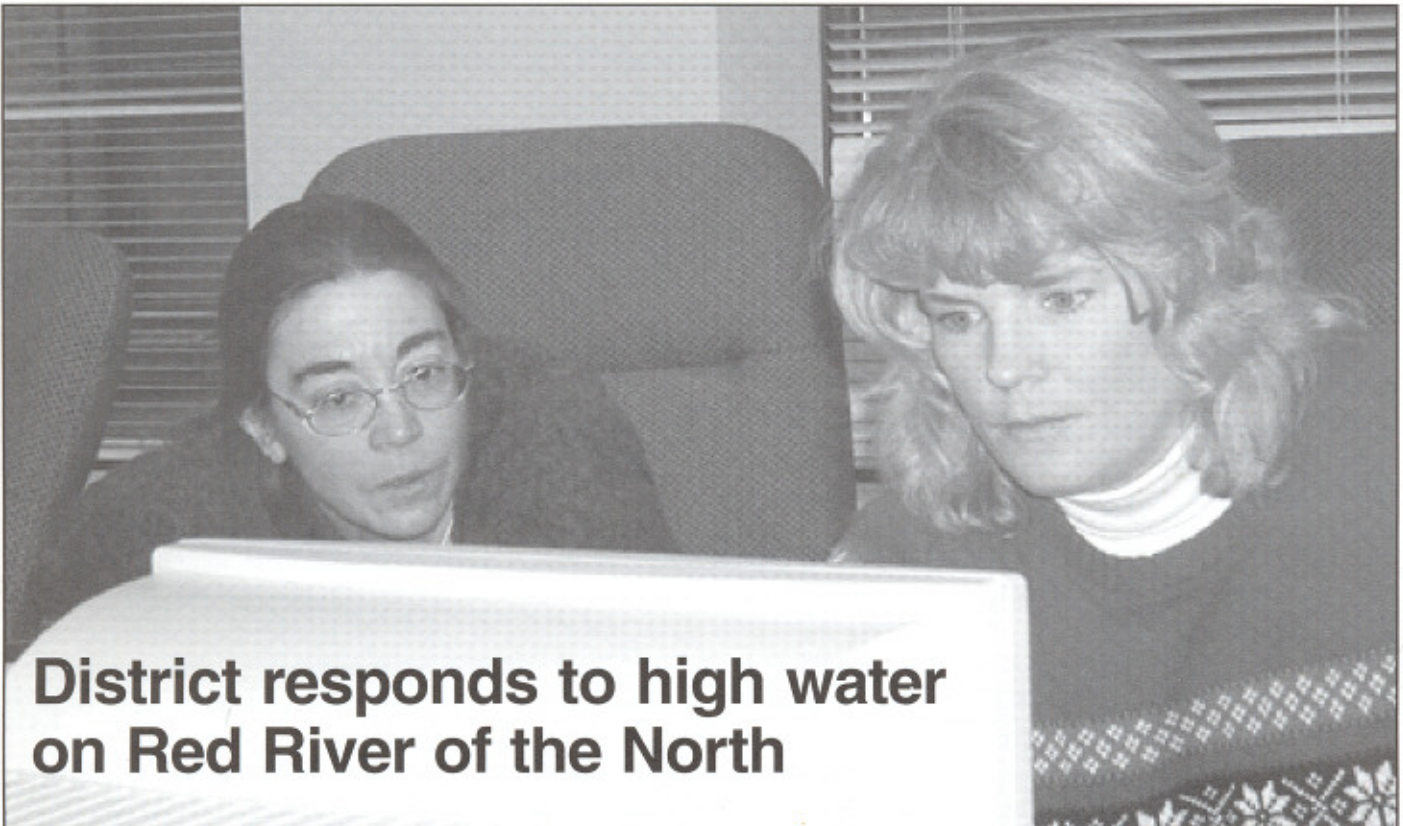


**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**
St. Paul District

Crosscurrents

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District responds to high water on Red River of the North

Photo by Peter Verstegen

The St. Paul District conducted a series of briefings the first week of March to train Emergency Operations Center (EOC) staff for spring floods. Above, Teri Alberico (left) and Michelle Shafer

practice with Englink, a new Corps-wide software application to assist in management of disasters. See "Readiness Branch prepares for flooding on Red River of the North," page 3.

Strategic Vision: *Satisfy the Customer***Mission essential: Respond to emergencies**

By Col. Kenneth Kasprisin
St. Paul District Commander

NEW YORK — Thousands of U.S. citizens died today as a result of a recent terrorist incident in New York City. Two days ago, terrorists released a combination of chemical and biological agents at scattered locations throughout the Manhattan metropolitan area. Initial reports indicate the agents were similar to those used in the 1995 Tokyo subway incident. It appears there were four primary target areas: the World Trade Center, the subway system, the water pumping station in northern Manhattan, and the theater district in the vicinity of Broadway and Times Square. So far, more than a thousand subway travelers who had previously complained of stomach cramps and convulsions have died in makeshift disaster centers. Thousands more, complaining of flu-like symptoms, have overwhelmed all available medical facilities.

"I saw several dozen people on the platform who had either collapsed or were on their knees, unable to stand up," said one eyewitness account. "One man was thrashing around on the floor like a fish out of water. Those who could walk staggered up three flights of stairs to the clean fresh air. Some vomited, others lay rigid.

"People who had moved more slowly, spent more time near the spilled liquid, were retching blood

and were half blind," said another eyewitness.

The first paragraph describes a fictional scenario occurring in New York City sometime in the future. The second captures eyewitness accounts from Tokyo in 1995. In both cases, simple but deadly weapons of mass destruction (WMD) were used.

The bottom line on these scenarios is that every individual within the St. Paul District must be prepared to support an emergency response effort. We need to ensure we're prepared to respond to disasters other than floods.

The scenario raises serious questions. Is America at risk? Why is America in this position and how does it now respond? Who is in charge and what role would the Corps play?

The answers are all fairly clear. Yes, an assortment of natural and man-made disasters put us at risk. We have recently entered the hurricane season, tornadoes are not an uncommon occurrence and flooding tends to attract our attention every spring. We must also recognize the potential for a disaster similar to the Oklahoma City bombing or a catastrophic event that uses weapons of mass destruction.

We respond under the direction articulated in the Federal Response Plan prepared by FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency). The Stafford Act (Public Law 93-228, Nov. 23, 1988) makes FEMA the lead agency with primary responsibility for how and when federal resources are brought to bear.

This district is authorized to respond in a number of ways. The two most obvious include our response to work from FEMA under the Stafford Act and our own response to floods under Public Law 84-99. Both responses offer unique challenges:

- Responding expeditiously and effectively to those in need;
- Tracking the monetary authorities and associated expenditures;
- Establishing effective command and control arrangements within the disaster area and this district; and
- Communicating aspects of the situation quickly and clearly to various local, state, and federal interests.

We can fully expect to be involved in any significant event as individual volunteers and tasked individuals or as part of specially trained planning and response teams.

Ken Buck of Construction Operations Division, John Bailen of Engineering Division and Dave Christenson from Readiness Branch and I recently attended an emergency management seminar with numerous division, headquarters, FEMA, state and local representatives. It highlighted the complexities and dynamics associated with a major disaster. It also highlighted the need for us to update and modify our internal operating procedures to ensure a rapid and effective response. Our previous efforts and our standard operating procedures tended to focus solely on a flood response.

It is time to seriously reexamine our internal policies and procedures

Emergencies, cont. on page 7



Strategic Vision: Satisfy the Customer**Readiness Branch prepares for flooding on Red River of the North**

By Peter Verstegen
Public Affairs Office

On March 23, the Readiness Branch (RB) at the St. Paul District alerted its Emergency Operations Center (EOC) staff to prepare for spring flooding on the Red River of the North. Preparations included the testing of "Englink," a Corps-

wide on-line software application that provides a comprehensive database for emergency management during floods, hurricanes and other emergencies. The application provides real-time information for disaster management and is accessible throughout the Corps.

"The states of Minnesota and

North Dakota have asked us to provide assistance," said Dave Christenson, chief of RB. "We are also providing advice to the cities and counties on construction management for emergency measures."

Preparations included sending a reconnaissance team to provide counties and cities with technical assistance. Flooding has occurred in low-lying areas along the river basin in northeast North Dakota and northwest Minnesota. Minnesota communities of Crookston and East Grand Forks and the North Dakota community of Grand Forks were eligible for technical assistance from the district. The district also provided technical assistance to Polk County in Minnesota and Grand Forks County in North Dakota. Each county abuts the river.

Technical assistance includes reconnaissance data on snow melt and runoff, geotechnical data and information on hydraulics and hydrology.

Richard Pomerleau and Greg Eggers, Engineering Division, provided reconnaissance data on flooding. "Our work focused primarily on the area between Grand Forks and Crookston," said Eggers.

"We supported technical assistance requests from Grand Forks, East Grand Forks, and Crookston, Minn.," said Tom Eidson, the area engineer and flood engineer for the Western Area Office in Grand Forks. "We met with officials in Drayton and Pembina. We worked with the City of Grand Forks on a daily basis for a month," he said.

Strategic Vision: Satisfy the Customer**Grand Encampment dredge project highlights successful alliance with USFWS**

St. Paul District file photo

Bob Drieslein, a manager for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) Upper Mississippi River Wildlife and Fish Refuge, received the Commander's Award from the St. Paul District at a meeting in La Crosse, Wis., this March. He negotiated an agreement for the successful placement of dredge material from the Grand Encampment site on the river. The above shows the Wabasha Prairie placement site where the dredge material ended up. "Bob's coordination with locals and the FWS staff was instrumental in reaching agreements to use the Wabasha site," said Steve Tapp, Mississippi River Project Office (MRPO). Dean Peterson, MRPO project manager, presented the framed plaque and medal to Drieslein at an Upper Mississippi River Conservation Committee meeting.

Strategic Vision:
Build the Team

Engineering chief comes full circle on water resources

Editors note: Bob Post, St. Paul District chief of Engineering Division for the past 12 years, retired at the end of March. The following is an edited question-and-answer interview that highlights some significant benchmarks of his career.

By Peter Versteegen
Public Affairs specialist

How did you get interested in engineering?

My interest in engineering in general stems back to my high school days in Dubuque, Iowa. I attended a career day in science and engineering. I wasn't particularly good at math and science, but I could see where the country needed people with skills in those areas.

What was your major in college?

Actually, I had a double major. I enrolled in the "3/2" program that was offered at Loras College in Dubuque, Iowa. It was an intensive five-year program. I took a lot of humanities and pre-engineering courses at Loras the first three years and then the balance of my engineering courses at the University of Iowa the next two

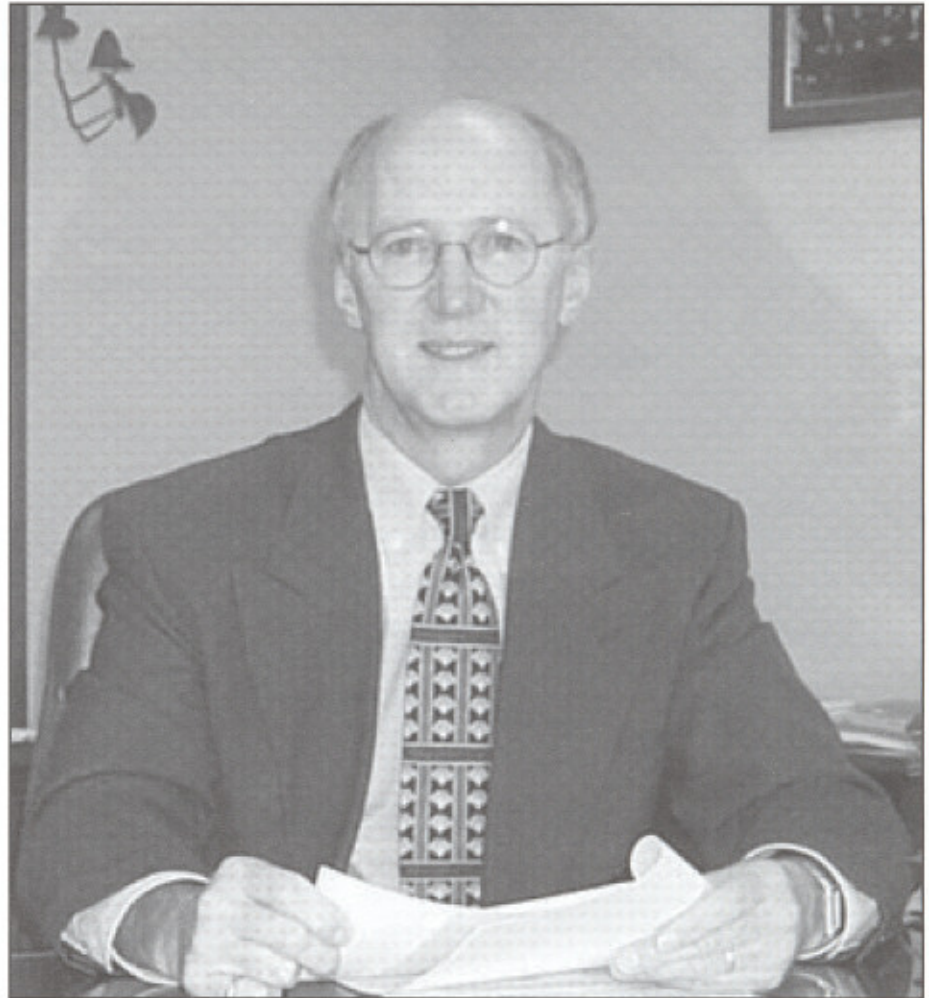


Photo by Peter Versteegen

Bob Post began his career at the St. Paul District in 1967. He retired from the district as Chief of Engineering Division at the end of March.

years. I earned a degree in philosophy from Loras and a second degree in civil engineering at the University of Iowa. A National Defense Education scholarship allowed me to complete my masters at Iowa.

How did you become interested in the Corps?

I loved hydraulics, hydrology and water resources. I and one other were the first in the water resources program. Also, in graduate school, I met a Corps employee from the Philadelphia District. Even my adviser was a huge fan of the Corps

of Engineers. I considered a Ph.D., but I was already married and had a child. I needed to get out in the real world. I completed my masters degree and had contacted the Philadelphia District. I was ready to go out East to work. Then I wondered, "Why should a Midwestern boy go to Philadelphia?" I inquired at the St. Paul District in the summer of 1967. I finished my M.S. in civil engineering at Iowa in '67 and came here. Harry Bock hired me to come work for Myron Tiemens in Planning.

What was your memory of your first 'real world' experience here?

When I came here I thought I knew what engineering was about. I soon discovered that I didn't. But I was in the right place at the right time. I also worked very hard at things. I was interested in doing a good job. I grew up with the Midwestern strong, hard work ethic.

What helped you once you'd been here?

Being nominated for the Planning Associate Program. It was a one-year program for promising water resource planners. The training was excellent. It gave me the opportunity to see the Corps from a policy perspective, from the district and from a headquarters level. The program exposed me to leaders in both policy and technical areas. I applied what I learned.

How did you build on the knowledge provided by the Planning Associate Program?

In 1974, I was assigned to head up a task force to complete an EIS (Environmental Impact Statement) for operation and maintenance of the nine-foot channel project in the St. Paul District. The EIS involved a potential lawsuit with the State of Wisconsin on the issue of dredging the nine-foot channel. We only had six months to complete the EIS. It had to hold up in court. I was given a separate area and a generous budget. The team produced the EIS on time. It cost a lot of money but we avoided a lawsuit. It was an opportunity for me to work with a close group of people on an interdisciplinary basis. It turned out to be my first assignment as a project manager. This led to my

District awards under Bob Post

- Four Minnesota "Seven Wonders" of Engineering Awards
- Two Merit Awards in the Chief of Engineers' competition
- Three Chief of Engineers' Awards of Excellence
- The Presidential Design Award
- 1996 USACE Outstanding Planning Team Award for Devils Lake
- 1996 USACE Outstanding Planning Achievement Award for the Mississippi River Floodplain Management Assessment
- 1998 Chief of Engineers Design Team of Year Award for the St. Paul Flood Control Project

first supervisory job as chief of Environmental Resources Branch. The job and the EIS were pivotal in the development of my management skills. I was blessed with extremely smart and dedicated staff and supervisors who believed in me and who helped.

What do you consider are your significant accomplishments as chief?

First and foremost, having the privilege to recruit and develop many of the people who are in what used to be Planning and Engineering Division. Second, with WRDA (Water Resources Development Act) of 1986, this district had about 10 projects that had to be designed and constructed,

including Chaska, Bassett Creek, St. Paul, Rochester, State Road, Souris River and Sheyenne, just to name a few. Much of it was urban flood control. We also conducted major maintenance-major rehabilitation of the lock and dam system. These all were completed during the past 12 years. Altogether, the total construction value was close to \$1 billion. It was my privilege to be a part of that effort and to work with a group of the most talented and dedicated people in the Corps. Every project should have won an award.

With many of the urban flood control projects now done, what do you foresee as the next opportunity?

I see a change of emphasis from flood control and navigation to environmental restoration, working with programs like EMP (Environmental Management Program) and on modifications to the operations and maintenance of the Mississippi River so we can minimize adverse impacts on the environment. I also see the Corps involved in watershed management for all purposes and stream restoration for flood control and environmental enhancement. The Corps has the expertise.

I hear that the main criticism of the Corps is its high overhead cost and that it takes too long with projects. How do you address these challenges?

The issues of high overhead and length are linked together. The amount of time is as a result of competing with projects of similar type. Part of it is the lengthy approval process. Also, we design to higher standards for long-term benefits. Local sponsors' projects

have fewer constraints and a shorter life span. They don't have to justify to as many levels of government. A project used to take 20 years. Now it's half that. It's a significant improvement. But we still need to streamline the process and become more efficient.

What's the best and the worst of the Corps?

The best thing about the Corps is that it's the premier water resource management agency in the world. The worst is having to endure the inefficiencies of working within the bureaucracy. The Corps is bound by certain bureaucratic constraints that make it hard to exercise one's judgment as a manager.

What is the significance for you of the series of summit meetings on Mississippi River?

I grew up on the Mississippi River. I live near the river today. I enjoy the hunting, sight-seeing, recreation and the benefits of bulk transportation. The river has given me a sense of responsibility of returning to the river what it's given to me. The summit has taught me there is not enough tolerance among stakeholders and that the river is a finite resource. And I emphasize the word 'finite.' The interests have to find a way to get what they need without destroying it. The summit produced a strong dialog among river interests. The key is to develop an integrated plan for balanced use and to recognize this resource has finite capabilities.

What started the summit process?

The old North Central Division had a partnering conference in 1996. Col. Richard Craig was the commander. We looked at the

navigation study and realized it did not offer enough opportunity to engage all stakeholders in healthy dialogue about all issues on the river. The Corps decided to initiate a river summit. I volunteered to coordinate a committee to bring together federal, state and private interests. Dave Loss and I managed the first coordination committee. We had a lot of help from other individuals who have a real passion for the river.

The summit is one unfinished item that I will continue to be involved in after I leave.

What do you do to nurture talent?

I've been blessed with good role models and talented professionals. They've given me more than I've given them. These role models have allowed me to use my strengths. Hire people who have strong talents. Reward good performance. Give people opportunities to develop so they can achieve their highest potential.

What do you find most rewarding with your work in emergency relief?

I was assigned by Cy Leonard in 1969 to work in Wahpeton (N.D.) and Breckenridge (Minn.). It was a privilege to work with the emergency staff during the 1997 flood.

It is most rewarding to be able to provide immediate assistance and relief and prevention of human suffering. Relieving human suffering and flood fighting is a tremendously recharging process for a flood control engineer.

You've worked directly with a series of district commanders.

What do the strongest and most effective ones share?

The strongest and most effective commanders are the ones who have worked in harmony with civilians. They develop a good symbiotic relationship with senior management who represent a long-term perspective. The district engineers are charged with one or two things to accomplish during their tour. They also bring a fresh perspective. The most successful are those with strong people skills. They listen. They communicate. They are willing to adjust based on advice from the civilian staff.

What opportunities do you see for the future?

The myth is that the work of the district is going away. The myth is that the future of the Corps and the district are in decline. I disagree. I have never seen better opportunities to get involved in water resource issues. We don't need to gain new skills. It's a matter of applying skills in a different way and on a larger scale. The Corps of Engineers can solve many watershed basin problems, including flood control, stream restoration, enhancing the environment and providing greater opportunities for fish and wildlife to thrive. We can plan, design, and construct these projects. Doing so is a matter of changing our procedures. The EMP program is a drop in the bucket. The Corps has the best resources to plan, design and construct basin-wide projects for the Mississippi, the Minnesota and the Red River of the North. These are the big projects of tomorrow in the St. Paul District.

Bits and Pieces

District contractor honored

A St. Paul District contractor has achieved the Small Business Administration's 1999 "Administrator's Award for Excellence" certificate. The award was announced in a letter dated March 26.

In October 1998 the district nominated Bowles Construction Services, Inc., for its performance on the Portage Wisconsin Flood Control project. Bowles was the 8 (a) prime contractor on the project, worth more than \$6 million and lasting for two years. "We've worked with Bowles on smaller projects," said Pat Johnson, Small and Disadvantaged Business Unit manager. "This is the first large project we've worked with them on. Company officials will be presented the award in Washington, D. C., on June 10, 1999.

At the Retirees' Reunion

Haumersen, Post latest members of Hall of Fame

Bob Post, who recently retired as Chief of Engineering Division (ED), and Dave Haumersen, who recently retired as Chief of Construction Operations Division (CO), will be honored as the newest members of the St. Paul District Hall of Fame.

They will be recognized when St. Paul District employees and retirees gather for the 24th Annual Retirees' Reunion at the Kelly Inn in St. Paul on Sept. 9, 1999. The reunion starts at 11:30 a.m. and ends at 3:30 p.m. Lunch is served at 1 p.m. The cost is \$13.50 for hot turkey dinner or baked walleye or \$12 for a Chef Salad. For more information, contact Jim Kursu at 651-224-0053 or Peggy Peterson at 651-486-0393. ED and CO divisions also have invitation forms.

Peak joins St. Paul District Engineering Division as assistant chief

James H. Peak has accepted the duties of assistant chief of Engineering Division (ED), effective March 22. Peak and his family returned to the U.S. from Japan. While in Japan, Peak served as the assistant chief of



Peak

Programs and Project Management Division. His tour in Japan District began in 1991. The district is located at Camp Zama, Japan. He also served as chief of the Army/Air Force Branch at the district.

He served at the Corps' Huntsville District from 1987 to 1991 prior to his tour of duty in Japan.

"I continue to hear nothing but good things about St. Paul District and the St. Paul area," he said. "My wife, Glenda, and I are very pleased to be going to an area that has an excellent reputation for fine schools." They have two children, ages 8 and 13.

John Bailen, who has been acting assistant chief of the division for nearly five years, became acting chief of ED. His initial 60-day appointment was effective April 1.



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Crosscurrents

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Strategic Vision: Satisfy the Customer

Corps drills Lake Pepin ice to assist early spring navigation

Survey Technician Steve Sing, Mississippi River Project Office, drills through the ice on Lake Pepin on the Mississippi River in late February. Sing and Bryan Peterson measured the lake ice each week, usually in February and March, to assist early spring navigation. Information on ice thickness was posted on the internet to assist the navigation industry with early-season shipping. The first tow broke through the



Photo by Bryan Peterson

ice on the lake to lock through Lock and Dam No. 2 at Hastings on March 19.

Fog and snow obscure the Wisconsin shore behind Sing as he measures the ice. Sing and Peterson rode in the airboat on snow and ice to sample 15 points on the river between river miles 765 and 786. "The airboat is like those used in the Florida Everglades," said Peterson, a technician and dredge inspector. A portable global positioning system (GPS) directed them to survey stakes located a mile apart on the river ice. "Our coveralls are personal flotation devices," said Peterson. "Our crew undergoes rescue training every year or two. We carry a two-way radio and cell phone for emergencies," he said. The crew launches the boat north of Wabasha, Minn., at Camp La Cupolis. The survey ends just south of Red Wing at Wacouta Point, near mile 786.

Strategic Vision: Reshape Culture

'Considering Others' is a way of life for Trcka

By Peter Verstegen
Public Affairs specialist

Considering others is a way of life for Mary Jane Trcka. This March 1999 "Considering Others" award recipient "is a



Photo by Peter Verstegen

role model for the consideration of others ideal," said Randal Brunet, chief of Finance and Accounting Branch (F&A). Trcka has both supported her co-workers and her family when they needed help. She has coordinated her leave "in a cooperative spirit" to support mission accomplishment at work. "In all things, she shows sensitivity, integrity, compassion, and consideration of others," said Brunet. The closeness of her residence to work allowed her to volunteer in the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) during spring flooding. This freed employees who would have traveled great distances from their homes to work EOC duty. Trcka works in F&A.

Emergencies, cont. from page 2

to ensure they address other emergencies such as terroristic actions. Accordingly, I have recently tasked Buck and Christenson to update our procedures and to propose a training and education plan for the district. Give them your full support and take our disaster mission seriously.

One of our key missions is: "Conduct emergency planning and operations pursuant to Public Law 84-99 and provide support to the Federal Emergency Management Agency pursuant to Public Law 93-288 during and after major disasters." (District memorandum CEMVP-M 10-1-1 22 Jun 99 expands on district organizations and functions.)

"Respond to Emergencies" is a mission essential task. Whenever a disaster occurs, response becomes our number one priority. **We owe it to the American public!**