

## Camp Pendleton and labor union officials negotiate new agreement

Contributed by Lance Cpl. Daniel Boothe , Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton  
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A new contract between Camp Pendleton and the National Federation of Federal Employees labor union was signed, March 10.

The contract will affect nearly 1,200 federal employees, and is now pending Headquarters Marine Corps approval, said Terry L. Hoeft, labor and employee relations specialist, Marine Corps Civilian Human Resources Office, Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton.

The union agreement streamlines the relationship between federal employees and the base, establishing clear guidelines both parties must follow. The new agreement also entitles new civilian police personnel to union member rights, and holds the base accountable for any violation of the agreed policy.

"The signing represents the culmination of successful negotiations on a new Collective Bargaining Agreement," said Hoeft. "Management and the Union are now better able to effectively deal with labor issues as they arise within the structure of the agreement."

The rising number of employed civilian personnel on base prompted an update to the original agreement made with NFFE's Local 919 chapter in 1998. Modifications to the 12-year-old agreement were first submitted to CPMS in August 2009, but were later returned with corrections that are now reflected in the pending contract.

"Even though the Department of Defense had a few minor issues with some of the wording, the negotiations went quite well," said Anthony Reyes, president, Local 919, NFFE. "The first sentence alone states that we negotiated in good faith."

The NFFE represents 85 percent of Camp Pendleton's federal employees and a majority of the union bargaining power on base. The organization was founded in 1917, and is the oldest labor union to represent federal employees, with approximately 110,000 members nationwide.

The new contract is significant to the base's newly hired civilian police force because the original contract was written prior to the

civilian officers' arrival, said Police Sgt. Daniel T. Fisher, civilian police officer, MCB Camp Pendleton and NFFE union member. The new agreement has an article specific to the civilian police force and plays a vital role in helping civilian law enforcement plant roots here on base.

Detailed information and provisions made to the agreement are required, by law, to be withheld until official approval and release of the contract.

"It is in the best interest of the base to fulfill the mission, and the best interest of the union to represent the employees and uphold their rights," said Reyes, who also works as a maintenance mechanic for the base's Facilities Maintenance Division. "We are mission oriented and it's our job to blend those two."

The recently revised agreement is the first union contract of its kind to place management and labor communication guidelines on the Continuous Process Improvement (CPI) managing method, recently adopted by the Department of the Navy, said Hoeft, a base NFFE negotiation representative since January 2009. The contract's CPI provisions are totally unique to the Navy and Marine Corps collective bargaining agreements.

"We need to always keep the mission of the base in mind as we partner together and conclude successful negotiations for both sides," said Col. Nicholas F. Marano, commanding officer, MCB Camp Pendleton, in his closing remarks at the signing.