

Protecting the NASA family

New Protective Services Division Chief strives to safeguard JSC people and resources

by Jenna Mills

Johnson Space Center welcomes a new division to the NASA family – the JSC Protective Services Division (PSD), which is now part of the Center Operations Directorate. This new division encompasses Security, Counterintelligence, Export Control, Travel and the Office of Emergency Management and will be able to more effectively protect JSC and its employees.

Each group at JSC has different protection needs. For example, the Space and Life Sciences Directorate's Genesis project has special access control concerns, while the White Sands Test Facility requires design assistance with a new security gate.

"Our goal is to protect their environment, so they can focus on doing their jobs and the nation's work without worry," said PSD Chief Alan Mather.

Mather brings with him the experience to handle the responsibilities of his new job. Prior to his arrival at JSC, Mather spent two years as the center chief of security at Stennis Space Center, where he helped to create a comprehensive security program.

PSD has implemented new security changes at JSC to make things safer and more efficient for everyone. Some of these new changes include access control to the Sonny Carter Training Facility (SCTF) that will be tied to the same system

at JSC, canopies for inclement weather at security gates onsite and a non-emergency security information line at x22222 that employees can dial, even from Ellington and SCTF, for questions about badging, exports, counterintelligence, travel and other issues.

"We're striving for a safe and secure environment," Mather said. "We have people and operations that we're trying to protect."

PSD is also on board with perfecting the OneNASA Smart Card project. The Agencywide goal is to have all NASA badges linked electronically. In the future, a chip could be added to the badge for computer log-in, access to buildings and biometric info such as fingerprints.

"The smartcard technology offers a tremendous capability, but the project is replete with many challenges," Mather said. "In the near term, though, NASA will adopt a different badge template with a new look and each JSC employee will receive a new badge."

PSD is eager to do things better, faster and more securely. To do that, they have worked with the Information Resources Directorate to design and beta-test the Personnel



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Reliability Program. This program will provide a quicker system to track medical, security and human resources information on employees.

Another project is the Electronic Questionnaire for Investigation Processing, which is now up and running. This Office of Personnel and Management project is a Web-based program to run employment suitability investigations, background checks and security clearances.

"No longer do people have to stop by an office and pick up paperwork, but simply log in and fill out their security questionnaires online at their convenience," Mather said.

Not only will Protective Services increase security measures, they also provide International Services, including Export Control, Counterintelligence and International Travel. Export Control is about more than shipping, Mather said, although PSD does check whatever is sent out for safety compliance. PSD also handles threat briefings and educates employees about security while traveling abroad.

The JSC Travel Office manages the travel contract and obtains all the visas, passports and documentation required for foreign travel.

The Office of Emergency Management, another branch of PSD, is also taking part in making JSC a safer place to work. The office is now running sophisticated training exercises in the event of an emergency onsite – for example, a confined-space rescue or tram accident.

Employee suggestions are encouraged by PSD. Mather said that everyone should take part in protecting the Center and its employees.

"We're all in this together," Mather said. "We all should be involved."

If employees have ideas or suggestions about how to make JSC a safer place to work, they are encouraged to let PSD know by contacting the Security Information Line at x22222 or by contacting Mather directly.

"It's a two-way street. We let them know what we're doing differently and listen to their needs as well. We want to fit in and be a part of their team," Mather said.

For more information about Protective Services, please visit their Web site at <http://www4.jsc.nasa.gov/scripts/org/ja/js/index.cfm>.

The secret to successful spaceflight missions

'Can do' attitude with safety in mind

by Mike Fincke

I am glad to have just returned safely from an exciting adventure in space to the open arms of my family – including my NASA family here at Johnson Space Center.

While aboard the International Space Station, Commander Gennady Padalka and I enjoyed each and every day and we felt a joy in our work. The views of our magnificent planet were particularly motivating – we cruised along the Amazon River, spotted the pyramids, counted hurricanes and had a chance to see many of the cities humankind has built upon the planet.

We both felt we had an especially close relationship with the mission control teams here at JSC and in Moscow, with the Payloads Operations Integration Center at the Marshall Spaceflight Center and with the Space Station Program Office. Working together, we accomplished more than we ever imagined: from routine daily operations to four breath-taking spacewalks to a wildly successful science program, it was teamwork that made us successful.

The true reason for our success, and the success of any space mission, however, is the “can do” attitude we shared, on the ground and in space.

For example, the fine international team who put together a spacewalk using Russian spacesuits to fix the power supply to the American gyroscope overcame many hurdles – technical and political – to come up with a workable plan to get the job done. Originally, we were going to use the American spacesuits, but when they turned out to be troublesome, the team said “can do!” and came up with a way to make it work using the Russian Orlan spacesuits.

One of the most memorable moments onboard was that happy feeling of shared success when we came back inside after that incredible spacewalk.

But this “can do” attitude is nothing new to JSC. We at JSC have gone to the Moon and back. We have launched Space Shuttles. We are in the middle of building a beautiful space station.



A smiling Expedition 9 Flight Engineer and Science Officer Mike Fincke poses beside the photographic quality window in the Destiny U.S. Laboratory. This window is used for Earth observations. Image was taken during joint operations conducted with the Expedition 8 crew.

Our “can do” enthusiasm will help us be successful in The Vision for Space Exploration that will take us back to the Moon, on to Mars – and beyond!

We must be careful to temper our “can do” spirit with an equal attention to safety.

Gennady and I felt that at any time during our mission, we could have called a safety “time out” to make sure what we were doing – or were about to do – was prudent. I believe the ground teams felt that they too had a responsibility to keep things safe. And together we were able to achieve close to maximum performance, safely.

It was a true privilege to serve with the teams here at JSC. Gennady and I would like to thank everybody for their efforts toward our successful mission.

Please, please keep that “can do” spirit alive every day as we work together for an awesome future. Not only is the American public counting on us to be successful on their behalf but so is – I believe – every human being on this wonderful planet of ours.

JSC celebrates expedition 9 crew return

'Let's do this again sometime'

by Kendra Phipps

The word “bittersweet” seemed to be on everyone’s lips at the Expedition 9 Welcome Home event Nov. 19.

“It’s bittersweet to see you, because that means that Expedition 9 is over,” Expedition 9 lead flight director, Matt Abbott said. “Did we have a blast or what?”

“In one way it’s terrible (to be here), because it marks the end of our Expedition,” Expedition 9 Commander Gennady Padalka said in agreement. “Our flight was eventful and very, very productive.”

Padalka put it mildly – the International Space Station mission was jam-packed with spacewalks, research and unexpected challenges such as malfunctioning spacesuits and equipment. The crew, and the Earth-bound team members, handled it all with what ISS Science Office Mike Fincke called “a can-do attitude.”

“Everything that was a success about this mission was a result of a can-do attitude. Everyone here who said ‘yes we can’ – thank you,” Fincke said to the hundreds of employees and friends gathered in the Teague Auditorium. “That attitude is going to be so important when we go to the Moon and Mars.”

Nearly everyone who spoke at the event praised Fincke and Padalka for their seemingly boundless optimism and enthusiasm. Kent Rominger, Chief of the Astronaut Office, called them “unselfish, hardworking, appreciative and cooperative.”

“You couldn’t have matched up two guys better than these two,” Rominger said.

“Your enthusiasm and attitude not only made you a joy to work with but also motivated the rest of us,” Abbott said. “You brought us up with you.”

Kathy Laurini, deputy manager of the Payloads Office, said that the crew reminded her of astronauts from a bygone era.

“Thirty-five years ago, people talked about astronauts with the ‘Right Stuff.’ You guys have it,” she said. Laurini also said she



Expedition 9 Commander Gennady Padalka and International Space Station Science Officer Mike Fincke are pictured at their Welcome Home event, holding plaques commemorating their mission.

was impressed with, and grateful for, how much scientific research the crew accomplished. “We had 19 experiments, six or more of which had direct applications for the Vision for Space Exploration,” she said. “Mike also donated his off-duty time for ‘Saturday Morning Science,’ which meant everything to us.”

Fincke said that he was proud of the crew’s groundbreaking work with ultrasound, which he called “the hallmark of our Expedition.”

The hallmark on the home front was undoubtedly the birth of Fincke’s daughter, Tarali, during the mission. Fincke expressed his gratitude to everyone who helped out his growing family in his absence, and also thanked all of the astronaut trainers, scientists, engineers, communicators and others present in the audience for their support during the mission.

“Without you, we wouldn’t have known what to do onboard,” he said. “Thanks for the great mission, folks. Let’s do this again sometime.”