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Some records left out of state hiring complaint

By Tom Loftus
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The Courier-Journal

FRANKFORT, Ky. — Whiteblower Doug Doering said yesterday that he didn't want to divulge confidential information so he left out some records from the extensive state hiring complaint he filed in May.

His complaint led to the special grand jury investigation this summer of hiring practices in Gov. Ernie Fletcher's administration. Doering, a 30-year Transportation Cabinet employee, resigned later in May.

In a deposition yesterday for the Personnel Board, a lawyer for the cabinet asked Doering about his meetings and conversations with his lawyer, who was handling separate cases before the board.

After the deposition, Doering had no comment.

His lawyer for the deposition, Phillip Shepherd, said Doering never disclosed privileged cabinet information to his lawyer, Paul Faust.

Cabinet lawyer Paul Harnick said the cabinet still has concerns.

"One of the favorite games

around town is to beat up on the Transportation Cabinet these days, but it does have an attorney-client privilege, and as its counsel, I was concerned that that attorney-client privilege may have or was breached," he said.

At issue was that Faust was representing Doering at the same time that Faust had other cases before the Personnel Board involving cabinet employees.

The primary case involved Ron Easter, who claimed he lost a manager's job at the Brecht County transportation district office to what he believes was a less qualified applicant.

Doering said yesterday that his 26-page complaint included some hiring actions he felt were driven by politics, and that some records in it mentioned Easter. He said he left out some records because he didn't think it was appropriate to show them to Faust.

"But I made a deliberate decision not to include a section on Ron Easter," he said.

Shepherd called Doering "a very dedicated public employee concerned about doing the right thing and following the law and upholding the merit system."

Masters of disaster: Mine rescue teams compete

By Gregory A. Hall
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The Courier-Journal

Steve Morgan compares coal mine rescue competitions to basketball games.

It's hard to keep your interest if you spend all your time practicing and never get to play, he said.

"The competition tells you where you're at" without the actual threat of a mine disaster, Morgan said, shortly after his Alliance Coal Co. team competed in yesterday's 2005 National Mine Rescue, First Aid Branch and Prohibit Competition at the Kentucky Fair & Exposition Center.

Morgan's team, from the Dotie Mine on the Webster-Hopkins county line in Western Kentucky, is one of 46 teams from 10 states taking part in the 42nd national competition, which concludes today.

Indiana has two teams, from Princeton and Vincennes.

Sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor's Mine Safety and Health Administration, the competition has been held regularly in Louisville since 1963. It originated in Pittsburgh in 1911 when President William Howard Taft attended the event.

The competitions require teams to react to a hypothetical emergency, such as an explo-



Bernie Smith of Lone Mountain Processing took part in an exercise at the Kentucky Fair & Exposition Center.

The competition, which includes 13 states this year, has been held regularly in Louisville since 1963.

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The competitions require teams to react to a hypothetical emergency, such as an explo-

sion, while judges rate members on their speed and adherence to safety procedures.

During the mine rescue field competition, crews of about 10 people went through a maze of simulated mine troubles while wearing masks and backpacks that fed them oxygen.

Morgan said his crew encountered "about everything they could throw at you." That included a simulated cave-in, water to the cave roof and other

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