

Solicitation for Defense Senior Leader Development Program (DSLDP) Class of 2011

Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness Clifford L. Stanley issued a memorandum on March 30, 2010, calling for nominations for the Defense Senior Leader Development Program (DSLDP) Class of 2011.

DSLDP is the senior-level component of DoD’s overall effort to ensure the deliberate development of civilian leaders with the enterprise-wide perspective critical to meeting all Department of Defense (DoD) missions. As outlined in DoDI 1430.16, “Growing Civilian Leaders,” DSLDP is DoD’s premier development program for senior civilian leaders. This program is designed for those who are leading high-performing organizations and programs today, and have the potential and motivation to assume more responsible senior leadership positions across the enterprise within the next few years.

The DoD components are invited to nominate up to a total of 120 nominees for the Class of 2011. Each Component shall establish a competitive nomination process, aligned with its talent management processes, and focused on the utilization of graduates and return on investment for the department. Component nominees will be further assessed through a department-wide process designed to identify the best nominees from across DoD. Component targets are as follows:

Department of the Army	36
Department of the Navy	30
Department of the Air Force	24
Fourth Estate (except Intelligence)	20
Intelligence (USDI, DIA, NSA, NGA)	10
Total	120

As with any competitive process, nominations should reflect each Component’s diversity and broad functional distribution. Submit nominations, in rank order, to the Civilian Personnel Management Service, Leader and Professional Development Division, Leader Development Programs Branch no later than **September 10, 2010**. The nomination package, with a detailed description of the program, can be downloaded from <www.cpms.osd.mil/lpdd/DSLDP/DSLDP_Program.aspx>.

The need for outstanding civilian leaders has never been more acute. Growing the leadership talent across DoD is a top transformational priority and an imperative of each current leader. To be successful, DSLDP requires the personal support of top leaders across the department. The challenge is to engage current executives (military and civilian) to nominate the right people for DSLDP, participate in their development, monitor their progress, and ensure their assignments make the best use of their talents.

Clifford concluded the memorandum by thanking and asking for the personal commitment of key department executives to ensure the right individuals are nominated.

For any questions on the program or the nomination process, contact Steve Harris, chief, leader development programs branch, at 703-696-9634 or steven.harris@cpms.osd.mil.

DoD Acquisition Strategic Workforce Plan Provided to Congress

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE NEWS RELEASE (MAY 20, 2010)

Secretary Gates announced on April 6, 2009, a major DoD acquisition reform strategy to revitalize the Defense Acquisition Workforce, to include increasing its size by 20,000 by FY2015—the most significant workforce initiative in the history of the federal government. The department’s plan and baseline for executing the workforce improvements are captured in the April 2010 *DoD Acquisition Strategic Workforce Plan* at <<https://acc.dau.mil/acquisitionworkforce>>. This plan was provided to Congress on April 27, 2010.

Research Provides Career Opportunities

EMERGING MEDIA, DEFENSE MEDIA ACTIVITY (APRIL 7, 2010)

Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class William Selby

WASHINGTON—Basic research not only pushes the boundaries of technology, but also provides exciting career opportunities for women, two researchers from the Air Force Office of Scientific Research said last week.

Joan Fuller, a program director, and Air Force Maj. Michelle Ewy, a program manager, were guests on the March 31 Women’s History Month edition of the “DoD Live” podcast “Armed with Science: Research and Applications for the Modern Military.”

The pair explained that their jobs at the office’s aerospace, chemical, and material science directorate are to seek out cutting-edge research projects that are particularly deserving of funding.

"If we find research that seems interesting or might be promising for future Air Force technologies, typically we either contact the researcher or the [principal investigators], and we'll have discussions over the phone or through e-mail about their research and where we think it might be able to fit in our particular program," Fuller said.

It can take years to advance from the discovery of a promising scientific inquiry to practical applications for the military. In 2001, for instance, Fuller started working on a high-temperature aerospace materials portfolio. She said she expects the resulting engineering advancements to roll out over the next 10 years.

"This portfolio is unique in that it is the only basic science portfolio in the world that focuses on materials that can survive oxidizing environments above 1,400 [degrees] Celsius," Fuller explained.

In addition to propelling the development of new technologies, Ewy said, Air Force Office of Scientific Research projects forge partnerships.

"One of the great benefits that come out of the research we fund is not just the fundamental knowledge that we gain, but also the collaborations we build," she said, noting that research labs involved in one project may start collaborating on other work that leads to new opportunities.

For Ewy, who grew up in a military household in Virginia, science and the military have opened many doors. She attended the prestigious Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology and continued on to earn an undergraduate degree in chemistry and a commission through ROTC.

"In the Air Force, I've had quite a few jobs, but I've also had the opportunity to get my Ph.D. from the University of Virginia through the Air Force Institute of Technology Civilian University program," Ewy said.

"I feel that I've been very, very lucky in my Air Force career," she added. "I've had a lot of wonderful opportunities, and I think it's given me a pretty good vantage point for sitting here as an Air Force program manager, specifically as an active duty program manager, to have a good idea of how important the basic research is for our Air Force."

Ewy said she encourages other women to follow in her footsteps.

"There are so many opportunities for young women, girls, and older women looking to get involved in science," Ewy said, and she cited the military as a good avenue for that pursuit.

"You never know what opportunities are going to come from unexpected places," Fuller added.

DoD Making Massive Investment in its Acquisition Workforce

88TH AIR BASE WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS (APRIL 29, 2010)

Derek Kaufman

DAYTON, Ohio—The Department of Defense is investing several billion dollars to rebuild, train, and educate its acquisition workforce, and it expects a return on its investment.

Shay Assad, director of Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, remarked there are about 127,000 people in the Defense Acquisition Workforce who currently contract some \$400 billion in goods and services.

He was one of several prominent Pentagon officials who spoke at the DoD Acquisition Insight Conference, held April 20-21 at Sinclair Community College in Dayton. The annual event attracted more than 700 acquisition, technology, and logistics experts from Wright-Patterson Air Force Base and across the Defense Department.

DoD is making a significant investment in growing and training its in-house acquisition workforce by 20,000 over the next five years, Assad noted. The growth will be relatively evenly split with about 10,000 contracting and contract oversight positions and an equivalent number divided up between program management, logistics management, acquisition management, and systems engineering. A small number of attorneys are also being hired.

Assad said there is a lot going right with acquisition. He noted DoD spends more on contract services than on weapons systems and information technology equipment combined.

"The idea that we are quote unquote 'broken' is not quite correct," Assad said. "However, we have a lot of room for improvement."

It is a myth that DoD simply can't get it right without inviting contractor protests, Assad said.

Providing some context, he noted that of 3,255,000 contracting actions across the Defense Department, only 13

procurements were overturned by contractor protests to the Government Accountability Office last year.

Years of nearly continuous restructure and wartime support have also led to a frenetic pace for the acquisition community. The Weapon Systems Acquisition Reform Act of 2009 signed into law by President Barack Obama last May, is the latest legislation to change the way the military buys weapons and other equipment and services.

Wartime deployments have also placed unusual demands on active duty contracting officers. Within the Air Force, military officers in the contracting career field typically rotate between four- or six-month deployments and an equal amount of time spent at home station.

Secretary of Defense Robert Gates and other senior Pentagon leaders recognize the department's military and civilian acquisition workforce is overstressed, Assad said, noting growth in contract dollars from \$135 billion in 2001 to \$400 billion this year, accompanied by large increases in oversight and documentation while workforce growth was flat.

Assad noted that Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, was once the preeminent DoD recognized leader at estimating program costs and negotiating prices with defense contractors. It's a skill that has been allowed to atrophy, he noted.

"We need to build that pricing capability back up," he said. "It's extremely important for us to have world-class pricing talent, so that we make sure that we get a reasonable deal for our taxpayers."

Rebuilding the workforce will be accomplished through a mix of newly created government jobs and in-sourcing of acquisition and acquisition support services currently performed by contractors.

Workforce training and education are critically important, Assad said. He lauded Defense Acquisition University conferences and training courses as extremely valuable to aid acquisition workers in honing their skills, networking, and becoming more professional.

Defense Acquisition Workforce professionals are required to obtain 80 continuous learning points every two years. The annual DoD Acquisition Insight Conference included town hall style briefings and focused breakout seminars on topics ranging from performance based logistics to combat mission support and services contracts. Participants earned 16 continuous learning points. The Defense Acquisition University



Shay Assad speaks to attendees at the DoD Acquisition Insight Conference April 21 at Sinclair Community College in Dayton, Ohio. The conference, sponsored by the Defense Acquisition University, focused on challenges faced by the Defense Department's acquisition workforce. Assad is director of Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy.

DoD photo by Erica Kobren

offers classes and online training. For more information, visit <www.dau.mil>.

Obama Calls for Federal Government Hiring Reform

AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE (MAY 11, 2010)

Elaine Wilson

WASHINGTON—President Barack Obama signed a memorandum today calling for a sweeping overhaul of federal government recruitment and hiring practices and creating a "historic opportunity" for the Defense Department to revamp its outdated hiring system, a defense official said.

"To deliver the quality services and results the American people expect and deserve, the federal government must recruit and hire highly qualified employees, and public service should be a career of choice for the most talented Ameri-

cans," Obama said in the memo. "Yet the complexity and inefficiency of today's federal hiring process deters many highly qualified individuals from seeking and obtaining jobs in the federal government."

The memorandum calls for, in part, the elimination of lengthy application processes, including essay-style questions for initial applicants; a reduction in the time it takes to hire mission-critical and commonly filled positions; and a greater involvement by managers in the hiring process.

"Americans must be able to apply for federal jobs through a commonsense hiring process, and agencies must be able to select high-quality candidates efficiently and quickly," the president wrote. "The ability of agencies to perform their missions effectively and efficiently depends on a talented and engaged workforce, and we must reform our hiring system to further strengthen that workforce."

Clifford L. Stanley, under secretary of defense for personnel and readiness, represented the Defense Department at an Office of Personnel Management news conference today where the details for the new initiative were announced, including the widespread impact on the department.

The hiring reform is a "historic opportunity" for the department to eliminate an outdated, bureaucratic hiring system, said Marilee Fitzgerald, the Pentagon's acting deputy under secretary of defense for civilian personnel policy.

"Not since 1978, with the Civil Service Reform Act, has there been such an opportunity to acquire and develop our talent with alacrity and contemporary hiring and development practices," Fitzgerald said in an American Forces Press Service interview.

"We have marvelous talent, and they can't figure out how to get to us because we have all of these rules and a proliferation of hiring authorities," she added. "All of these things distract our applicants from coming to us."

The department is one of the largest civilian employers in the world, Fitzgerald said, hiring more than 100,000 employees every year. This reform is vital to meet the department's goals of attracting and retaining the highest quality talent, she added.

The hiring reform will spur extensive changes throughout the Defense Department, she noted, with impacts to the hiring process at every step.

For job seekers, changes include:

- An enhanced website at <www.usajobs.com> that will provide job seekers a single, easy-to-use entry point to federal job opportunities
- The use of a simple resume and cover letter to apply for a job instead of pages-long resumes that bog down selection processes
- Modern assessment tools with simple, quick questionnaires rather than assessments that require long essay responses
- Application status feedback at a minimum of four points: receipt of application, qualification determination, referral status, and result
- Streamlining of job announcements from 10 to 12 pages down to about three pages. And rather than department jargon, the announcements will be written in simple, easy-to-understand terms
- Enhancement of the Student Training and Academic Recruitment Program, known as STAR, in which college students are hired to assist the department with its entry-level recruitment needs, offering peer-to-peer, on-site information.

For managers, the reform will put the focus on partnering with human resource practitioners to develop staffing plans, with the overall aim of reducing hiring timelines and providing access to the highest quality candidates.

Nothing is more disappointing, Fitzgerald noted, than waiting for a referral list and then discovering none of the applicants fits the bill. "Often," she said, "the lack of qualified candidates is a function of not planning for the requirement on the front end."

Human resources specialists now will work with managers two to three years out from a job opening to examine job requirements and create accurate job descriptions, Fitzgerald said. And when the opening is at hand, they will encourage managers to begin planning immediately to position themselves for making a quick hire. Managers can take care of administrative functions such as preparing interview questions and arranging hiring panels up front, she explained.

On the human resources side of the house, officials are looking at how they can reduce timelines on tasks such as candidate assessments and referral list development. Contemporary assessment tools, for instance, will help experts weed through applicants quicker and more effectively, Fitzgerald explained.

The department's goal, she noted, is to reduce the time it takes to hire new talent from the current 155-day average down to 80 days. "And the shorter the better," she added.

Fitzgerald projected the new assessments could be operational by as early as the end of the year.

In the meantime, the department has launched a new hiring reform website <www.cpms.osd.mil/hiring_reform> that includes easy-to-digest information customized for managers, applicants, and human resources specialists.

The timing is right for these comprehensive changes, Fitzgerald noted.

"Certainly, the complexities of the department's engagements at home and abroad demand a workforce with the right mix of expertise at hand to properly address these emerging opportunities and to thwart potential threats that face us," she said. "A workforce with a broad portfolio of capabilities with maximum versatility is a mission imperative for the Department of Defense."

Mandatory Courses Smooth Transition for AFMC NSPS Personnel

AIR FORCE MATERIEL COMMAND PUBLIC AFFAIRS (MAY 11, 2010)

Libby VanHook

WRIGHT-PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Ohio—New online training courses are available to help smooth the upcoming transition of more than 15,000 current Air Force Materiel Command National Security Personnel System employees into the General Schedule Personnel System.

Courses are required for all AFMC supervisors of NSPS employees, as announced by AFMC Commander Gen. Donald J. Hoffman during the recent AFMC Senior Leader Conference held at Eglin Air Force Base, Fla., in late April.

"We feel strongly that supervisors need to have the information and be prepared to address questions from their employees," said Sherre Collier, AFMC NSPS Transition Office program manager.

In addition, the courses are of benefit to current General Schedule employees, as well as employees transitioning out of NSPS back to GS.

The training courses are on the NSPS Transition Community of Practice and include "Classifying Positions under GS: A Primer for Supervisors," "Performance Management: A Tool to Achieve Results," and "GS 101."

Advantages to taking the course on the AFMC site are electronic registration and electronic updates to civilian employee personnel and training records. Employees can

print certificates for their own personnel records, according to Collier.

Completing the courses through the CoP will automatically update civilian personnel training records in the Defense Civilian Personnel Data System (DCPDS) along with ETMC Web (for both civilian employees and military members). Civilian employees do not have to update their completed training in DCPDS via Self-Service, My BIZ Training.

In "Classifying Positions Under GS: A Primer for Supervisors," supervisors are shown how to write and certify the duties and responsibilities of a position, as well as how to explain the classification process to employees.

To assist with writing the core documents, supervisors can use the Air Force Standard Core Personnel Document library, located in the Air Force Portal. The growing SCPD library currently includes more than 1,000 standardized classification documents, as well as templates for supervisors.

"Performance Management: A Tool to Achieve Results" is designed as a guide for supervisors to effectively involve their employees in accomplishing the Air Force mission. From setting proper goals to rating and rewarding performance, this training course sets the foundation for evaluating employee performance.

The third course required by AFMC is "GS 101," an introductory training that provides information on the structure and features of the GS system, covering topics from pay and promotion to appraisals and career development.

AFMC supervisors should complete all three courses by Aug. 2, 2010. The transition out of NSPS is a result of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010. The NDAA contained a provision that repealed NSPS and required the transition of employees out of NSPS no later than Jan. 1, 2012. DoD and the Air Force plan to transition the majority of the NSPS workforce to GS by the end of this fiscal year.

To access the NSPS Transition CoP, enter the AF Portal at <<https://www.my.af.mil/faf/FAF/fafHome.jsp>> and click on "Communities" at the top of the page; look under the Social Search for "Find a CoP" and type "AFMC NSPS Transition." Once on the CoP, follow the instructions to take the courses. (Before launching the courses, it's necessary to allow pop-ups.)

For more information, visit the NSPS Transition CoP, contact your training manager, or contact the local civilian personnel section.

Program Links Troops with Career Resources

AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE (MAY 18, 2010)

Sarah Lifshin

WASHINGTON—As the United States' economic crisis lingers, returning veterans are finding it harder to translate the skills they have learned on the battlefields onto a resume, but some employers are working with the military to bridge the gap.

The Employer Partnership Office of the Armed Forces is providing the resources needed to help enlisted soldiers, veterans, retirees, and spouses secure employment after their tours of duty end.

The program—formerly known as the U.S. Army Reserve Employer Partnership Initiative—was created in 2008 as an initiative under the leadership of Army Lt. Gen. Jack C. Stultz, chief of the Army Reserve. It offers candidates a jump start into the private sector through partnerships with employers worldwide.

“Through employer partnerships, we can further cultivate an affordable operational reserve force by sharing our men and women with selected civilian employers, who, in turn, will help us to develop and maintain talents, capabilities, and skills that are essential on the battlefield,” Stultz wrote in the January/February issue of *The Officer*.

“Participating employers see the skills our soldiers bring as value added to their enterprises, while we see employers' contribution in maintaining the skills the nation needs as value added to our force,” Stultz added.

As of this spring, the office has recruited more than 1,000 employment partners, including 480 of the Fortune 500 companies. More than 500,000 jobs are currently listed on the employer partnership website.

Job seekers are matched with such employers as Wal-Mart, General Electric and Con-way. These companies respect servicemembers' experience and understand the skills and background they can bring to the job, officials said.

Servicemembers provide the necessary qualified and trained human capital needed to fill a variety of positions, defense officials said. Through their experience in the armed forces, they acquire abilities in management, leadership, project execution, team building, and strategic planning.

Use of the program is a cost savings for employers, who often spend thousands of dollars in recruiting and screening expenses, officials said. Prior to employment, candidates receive background checks, medical screening, and aptitude testing as a result of their military backgrounds.

The partnership has made great strides in career placement, defense officials said. Among its placement and credentialing services, candidates receive coaching, counseling, and use of the program's job search engine, among other assistance. A new website the Employer Partnership Office will introduce later this spring will include tools to help veterans and employers translate military skills to civilian skills.

Faced with the insecurity of life after military service, veterans often find the civilian hiring process daunting, as hiring managers often don't understand how their skills will support their companies, said Dave Miller, senior vice president of global policy and economic sustainability at Con-way, a freight, transportation, and logistics company.

About 3,000 of the 30,000 workers worldwide for the San Mateo, Calif.-based company have served in the military. Veteran-filled positions include service center managers, mechanics, truck drivers, and administrators.

“We need to understand how to jump-start their civilian careers,” Miller said. “If we are going to support the all-voluntary military, where the defense of this nation rests on the shoulders of these soldiers, we must understand how to support their civilian and military careers, because they run concurrently. Employers need to put themselves into the shoes of those who protect our rights as Americans.”

Employers often have difficulties understanding how military job skills will transition into the private sector, he added.

“If you are a colonel, you are an executive vice president,” Miller said. “Many human resources professionals don't understand how you ran a forward unit or had a squad or company help set up a tribal village will help their companies,” he said. “These veterans have worked in the most arduous situations and hostile environments, and they are being asked if they ever had a real job. That's demeaning.”

One Con-way employee knows first-hand what it's like to cross over from the armed forces to the civilian workforce, and he's using his military background to help in placing veterans into jobs.

Retired Army Lt. Col. David “Duke” Ellington now serves as Con-way's personnel supervisor in Plainfield, Ind. He said

hiring managers often do not have an understanding of military job descriptions or what value recruiting veterans will bring.

"These candidates are drug-free, often have a security clearance, and [have] good work ethics—these are all advantages," Ellington said. "With their military backgrounds, they understand missions and can understand what a mission is. These analytical tools are essential in the corporate world."

Department Hires Acquisition Workers to Help Reforms

AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE (MAY 19, 2010)

Lisa Daniel

WASHINGTON—The Defense Department is making strides toward acquisition reform and budget reductions, starting with the buildup of its federal acquisition workforce, department officials told a congressional panel today.

The department created the Office of Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation and has hired more than 3,000 employees since the end of March to improve its purchasing processes, John Roth, deputy comptroller for programs and budgets told the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee's national security subcommittee.

Acquisition reform is a key component of Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates' efforts to improve processes while also cutting overhead costs. Part of that reform calls for reducing the department's use of contractors and replacing them with federal workers. The new hires are the first step in reducing contractors from 39 percent to 26 percent of the department's workforce, Roth said. Officials are requesting an additional \$218 million in the fiscal 2011 budget to expand the reform efforts, he said.

"Good people are an essential element of any acquisition reform strategy," said Nancy Spruill, the department's director of acquisition resources and analysis, who also spoke before the subcommittee. "We're committed to growing the workforce. But, more than numbers, we are focused on quality. We are pleased that we're attracting talented people every day to help us work on acquisition reform."

In addition, Roth said, the secretary already had made "unprecedented cuts" to major weapons programs that are underperforming or over budget. Overall cost savings will be converted to sustain combat power and make future investments, he said.

"The department has had a change of emphasis," Roth said. "That change is to a stronger, better controlled business environment."

The department has 102 major acquisition programs, and is focusing its reforms on the ones in which it can intervene in the early stages, Spruill said. "We have an increased emphasis on the front end of the process," she said, starting programs right, reviewing them early on, and getting independent reviews.

Department officials are working hard to implement the reforms of the 2009 Weapon Systems Acquisition Reform Act and the provisions of reform legislation this year, Spruill said. "We have made support to the warfighter our highest priority, and we are improving the acquisition workforce," she said.

Better systems engineering, technical maturity, and especially cost estimate improvements are driving reform, Spruill said, adding that cost estimates are the most difficult.

Michael J. Sullivan, the Government Accountability Office's director of acquisition and sourcing management, also spoke to the subcommittee, and outlined Defense Department progress on acquisition reform since the GAO reported in 2008 on problems in 42 programs. Acquisition workers, he said, have done a good job of recognizing problems, and are on track to make long-term changes.

Under Gates' leadership, Sullivan noted, 13 programs were removed from the department's acquisition portfolio at a cost savings of \$179 billion.

Defense acquisition problems have existed for decades, Sullivan said, but change is possible "when we have leadership in the department like we do now."

"It boils down to accountability and leadership, and when leadership takes charge of things, things can happen," he said.

Task Force Aims to 'Broaden' Officers, Manage Talents

ARMY NEWS SERVICE (MAY 20, 2010)

Gary Sheftick

WASHINGTON—Nine years of war have made it difficult for officers to gain the broad level of experience needed to run the Army, according to Col. Chris Robertson and his task force.

Career Development

Robertson is director of the Officer Personnel Management System, or OPMS Task Force, at the Human Resources Command in Alexandria, Va. He is working to devise a system that will help officers develop broad talents for the future.

“Constant deployments build exceptional tactical leaders,” Robertson said, “but wars are not won on tactical success [alone]. So you’ve got to build leaders for the future, too.”

He said in order for the Army to succeed as an institution over the long term, it needs to change. He said it can’t throw all its resources into the war indefinitely. It needs to allow officers the time for “broadening.”

“Right now I’m concerned that we’re building a good bench of linemen,” Robertson said in the way of an analogy. But when it’s time to run an option play, he’s afraid that there won’t be anyone available.

“It takes a lot of different players to build the team,” he said.

Robertson explained that everyone needs to know how to block and tackle—but somebody needs to know the specialized skills. And someone needs to know the whole game in order to run the team.

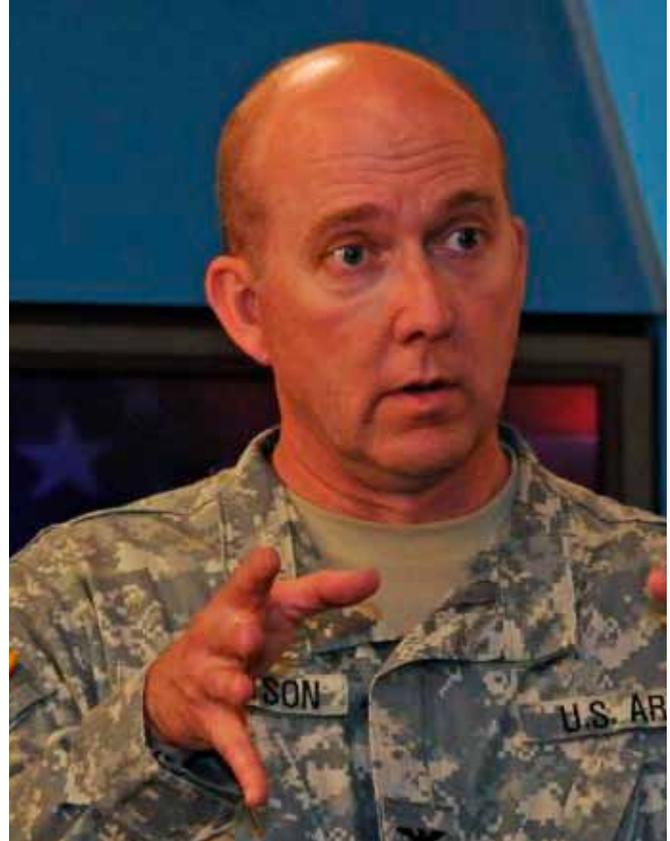
“We want to take [officers] out of their branch experiences and place them in ... an area that is a little uncomfortable for them—maybe Army staff, joint staff, TRADOC [Training and Doctrine Command]—any of those types of assignments that are outside their typical branch experience is a broadening experience,” Robertson said.

He said broadening includes fellowships and internships “on the higher end,” but it also includes teaching cadets or working interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational assignments.

“The tyranny of time is always a tough one with us,” Robertson admitted, talking about not only deployment, but time requirements for promotions. But he added that officers need to look at things from different angles in order to develop into senior leaders.

Another innovation that Robertson would like to achieve with OPMS is “talent management.”

He said one challenge that the Army has now is that it can track assignments and courses, but not unique experiences and contacts. He said the Army needs to further identify individual unique skills that it can use down the line.



Army Col. Chris Robertson, director of the OPMS Task Force, says officers need to broaden their experiences with jobs outside their branches as he discusses the proposed Officer Personnel Management System for a future segment of *Army Newswatch*.

Photo by Chondra Perry

“We need to bring ourselves up to the ‘graduate level’ of personnel management,” Robertson said.

In order to do that, he is working with other commands, other Services, and even corporate vice presidents from a wide variety of companies. He’s interested in how the private sector identifies and manages talent. He said a lot can be learned by meeting with a group of corporate VPs in an informal setting, with the promise of nonattribution.

“We’re looking at industry and taking their best practices back to the Army,” Robertson said.

One advantage corporations have over the Army, though, Robertson said, is that companies can go out and hire an expert. The Army must train that expert from the bottom up, over the course of a career.

Robertson said Human Resources Command now locates specialized skills largely on an “ad hoc” basis, by networking with other officers in that career field and finding out who has specialized experience. Special talents are often found through peer recommendations, he said.

“We have certain databases that carry some of this information,” Robertson said. “But ... a lot of it is stove-piped—it’s not necessarily brought together. Nor do the databases contain all of the information that we really need to better manage a population.”

It’s not just a software solution, either, Robertson said. Part of what he is trying to do is change the culture of the organization.

Human Resources Command Move Impacts Army Board Dates

ARMY NEWS SERVICE (MAY 20, 2010)

David Vergun

WASHINGTON—Some promotion boards, along with command and school selection boards, are convening earlier or later than usual this year, due to the Human Resources Command relocating to Fort Knox, Ky.

The move—resulting from the Base Realignment and Closure Commission mandate from Congress—affects all of HRC, currently located in Alexandria, Va., Indianapolis, and St. Louis.

The move will impact both active and reserve component boards, and those for both noncommissioned and commissioned officers.

No boards will convene during the move—July 1 through Sept. 30. During that time, soldiers who have questions or concerns should consult with their command S-1, said Army Lt. Col. Teresa Campbell, chief of the Department of the Army Secretariat for Selection Boards, a branch of HRC tasked with running the boards under the direction of the secretary of the Army.

Soldiers can access the board schedule posting at the Human Resources Command website at <www.hrc.army.mil>. Human resource specialists are being notified of individual boards by Military Personnel (MILPER) messages, and individual soldiers eligible for boards should still expect to be notified via My Board File e-mails over the summer.

About 43,000 NCOs, officers, and a small number of civilians will be considered by the 16 scheduled boards in Oc-

tober 2010. The largest population board will be the active component Master Sergeant Board.

Soldiers should have received adequate notification of the dates their board convenes, Campbell said. She added, however, that soldiers should always review and update their Official Military Personnel File records for data, including performance evaluations, awards, deployments, education, and official photographs that reflect current ribbons, badges, and patches.

“Leaders of today’s generation truly practice selfless service. They are dedicated to the mission, taking care of soldiers, and their families; they tend to put their own welfare last,” said Campbell, referring to soldiers who don’t take the time to update their files.

“Unfortunately, when board members review incomplete or inaccurate records, they feel the soldier is not invested in their own career. Little details and lack of attention really stand out, as selection board members may be reviewing many packages and have to base their decisions solely on what they see in front of them.”

It is important for soldiers to review their personnel files frequently to ensure that their information is always up to date, using iPerms (Personnel Electronic Records Management System) at <<https://statepermsompf.hoffman.army.mil/rms/login.jsp>>. Yet, soldiers being considered by an upcoming promotion board should make a special effort and check their files for 100 percent accuracy in advance.

Campbell also addressed the impact of the HRC move, noting that quality will be maintained at the new HRC Center for Excellence.

“We’ll be taking about 75 percent of our supervisory experience with us to Fort Knox,” she said, referring to the secretariat branch.

Army Lt. Col. Mike Moose, HRC public affairs officer, didn’t have an overall percentage of HRC personnel making the move, but he said it is relatively high and that professionalism and standards will be maintained. He said the co-location at Fort Knox of the three HRC locations will provide synergy and should result in a good level of teamwork.

The unsung soldiers are the selection board members, said Campbell.

“If there are any skeptics, they come away convinced that the Army has selected the best qualified and that the process

is fair and equitable," she said. "Board members take their jobs seriously and feel they are protecting the integrity and sanctity of the Army, as well as shaping its future."

Workplace Changes Must Have 'Net Generation' in Mind

AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE (MAY 25, 2010)

Jim Garamone

WASHINGTON—The federal workplace has to adapt to a looming personnel issue that federal managers ignore at the country's peril, the Defense Department's deputy chief information officer said.

During a phone interview, David M. Wennergren said the department must change to draw in employees who have not known a world without the Internet. Two shifts are happening in the federal government, Wennergren said, and each reinforces the other.

First, he said, 971,000 federal employees will become eligible for retirement over the next few years. Second, he explained, is that the world is vastly different from the early days of technology in the federal workplace.

"The world has moved to the Web 2.0 vision of services available anywhere—the ability to move things through the cloud, to use mass collaboration for networking services, and to bring speed and agility to the delivery of information capabilities," he said. "It's a radical set of changes moving us away from the old world, where the answer was always just to build big information technology systems."

"The Net Generation," as Wennergren called the rising pool of potential federal workers, sees information technologies as a given—like air or water. And unlike their parents, he said, they don't look at joining a company or agency and then staying with that job for life.

"They are our prime target for people coming into the workforce—whether it's 18-year-olds coming into the military or 21-year-olds coming out of college to join the military or the federal workforce," Wennergren said.

The "Baby Boom" generation is leaving government service. Even the youngest among them are retirement-eligible now, Wennergren said.

"The Net Generation will be taking leadership positions at a much younger age," he said. "So we think it is really important to understand what the workforce issues really are. What are the norms and behaviors and priorities of this new

workforce? What kind of environment can we provide that will help them thrive?"

Then, he said, the federal government needs to use the tools available to attract, hire, and retain these people. This must start now, he added, if the federal government is to succeed. Federal managers, he said, need to look at the nature of work and how to create leaders at a younger age. Other aspects include transforming the ratings system from a once-a-year rating to a more hands-on mentoring approach, he added.

The good news is that the Net Generation believes strongly in community service, Wennergren said.

"This is a generation that wants to serve and wants to make a difference," he said. "But they want to be at a place where they will have the tools and capabilities to get the job done."

The federal workplace must provide the type of environment that allows the new generation of tech-savvy government workers to use the capabilities they bring, Wennergren said. This includes providing systems "where people can get onto the network from anywhere, work from home, work on the road, [and] can use social media and instant messaging and chat [features]," he added.

Supervisors need to ask themselves if they are creating an environment that plays to the Net Generation's strengths.

"Are you helping them to grow and recognize that this is a place they can make a difference?" he asked. "That's the key."

Hiring Surge To Employ Thousands

AIR FORCE PERSONNEL CENTER PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

(MAY 25, 2010)

April Rowden

RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE, Texas (AFNS)—With contractor-to-civilian conversions, new organizations standing up, and overall increases in civilian positions, the Air Force civil service continues to grow as officials look to employ thousands of U.S. citizens.

Air Force Personnel Center officials have filled more than 3,000 new positions since the surge began earlier this year and are expected to advertise more than 17,000 additional new positions by the end of 2011 on USAJOBS.

USAJOBS is an online repository used by multiple federal agencies to announce job vacancies around the world.

"These career opportunities cover a broad spectrum of skill sets necessary to support national defense and Air Force objectives, from information technology specialists and aircraft simulator instructors to housing management assistants and biological scientists," said Michelle LoweSolis, the civilian force integration director at AFPC. "The importance of our civilian workforce cannot be overstated, nor our desire to get the best qualified people into these positions."

To guide individuals through the Air Force application process, the AFPC Civilian Employment website contains various resources to include tutorials, salary information, eligibility criteria, and the hiring authorities for special populations, such as military spouses, people with disabilities, students, and veterans.

In November 2009, President Barack Obama announced the Veterans Employment Initiative, an initiative that "underscores to federal agencies the importance of recruiting and training veterans" who have valuable knowledge and technical skills.

The combination of the employment initiative and the hiring surge gives transitioning airmen impacted by force management an opportunity to be considered for federal employment.

When applying for federal jobs, veterans have three hiring authorities for which they may be eligible: Veterans' Employment Opportunity Act of 1998, Veterans Recruitment Appointment, and 30 percent or more disabled.

An individual who is eligible for veterans preference, or who separates after three or more years of continuous active service performed under honorable conditions, is generally eligible for consideration under VEOA.

Any disabled veteran; a veteran who served on active duty in the Armed Forces during a war declared by Congress, or in a campaign or expedition for which a campaign badge has been authorized; a veteran who, while serving on active duty in the Armed Forces, participated in a military operation for which the Armed Forces Service Medal was awarded; or a veteran separated from active duty within the last three years may be eligible for consideration under the VRA.

Veterans retired from active military service with a disability rating of 30 percent or more; or veterans who have been rated by the Department of Veterans Affairs since 1991 or later, to include disability determinations from a branch of the Armed Forces at any time, as having a compensable Service-connected disability of 30 percent or more may be

eligible for consideration under a special appointing authority for 30 percent or more disabled veterans.

"My veteran status didn't guarantee me a job with the Air Force," said Tony Garton, a program analyst at AFPC, who was hired in 2002 under VEOA. "But it did help put my resume in the hands of the hiring official, so at least I had the opportunity to be considered for a federal job."

Family members may also be eligible for certain hiring authorities, including:

- A spouse of a servicemember who has received permanent change of orders to relocate
- A spouse of servicemembers who retired with a disability rating at the time of retirement of 100 percent, or retired/separated from the Air Force and has a disability rating of 100 percent from the Department of Veterans Affairs
- Un-remarried widows or widowers of servicemembers killed while in active duty status
- Certain family members returning to the United States from an overseas assignment in which they were a dependent
- Local airmen and Family Readiness Center officials can provide family members and airmen transitioning out of active duty service with additional assistance on using USAJOBS, writing resumes, and locating career fairs.

For more information on hiring authorities, visit AFPC's Civilian Employment website at <www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/afcivilianjobs/>. Air Force employees may also call the 24-hour Total Force Service Center at 800-525-0102.

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