

KEITH CHARLES

*Director, Acquisition, Technology,
and Logistics Workforce Management and
Leader, Acquisition Workforce 2005 Task Force*

“Acquisition Workforce 2005 Task Force Begins Implementation Efforts”

Despite 12 years of downsizing and an impending retirement surge, the Acquisition Workforce 2005 Task Force believes DoD is currently presented with a unique window of opportunity to reshape its talented civilian acquisition workforce to meet future challenges. This reshaping process is long overdue, and will require leadership commitment, new authorities and, most importantly, a cultural change in DoD's management of people.



Representing the joint efforts of DoD's acquisition and personnel communities, the task force released its final report in October 2000 entitled, "Shaping the Civilian Acquisition Workforce of the Future." In completing this report, we relied on input from the acquisition workforce, employee unions, industry, academia, and other federal agencies, the acquisition workforce, and employee unions.

Our report provides recommendations for acquisition career management tools to assist managers in the orderly transition of the aging DoD civilian acquisition workforce to one that will meet national security requirements of the 21st century. As leader of the task force, I believe DoD must begin to recognize its employee assets and then plan, develop, and manage the civilian acquisition workforce as carefully as it does those in uniform. This requires that DoD treat recruitment and development as investments — rather than costs.

Our report identifies new initiatives, ongoing initiatives, and best practices. The proposals fall into five broad themes: strategic planning, recruiting/hiring, career development, workforce management, and quality of life. Of the 31 recommended initiatives, 27 can be implemented, in whole

or in part, using existing legal authorities. The principal foundation of many of the initiatives is laid out in the first initiative, "Develop and Implement Comprehensive, Needs-based Human Resource Performance Plans for the Civilian Acquisition Workforce." Therefore, we believe this initiative should receive the highest priority.

With the report completed, we are now in the process of coordinating and overseeing the implementation of approved initiatives. Implementation results will be evaluated to determine whether desired effects are being

achieved. By continuing our outreach efforts, we will not only seek to educate DoD and non-DoD acquisition-related organizations on the initiatives, but also draw attention to, and support for, their implementation. We invite the acquisition community to review the completed report at <http://www.acq.osd.mil/yourfuture/story.htm#reports>.

In addition, we are currently developing:

- A Rapid Improvement Team (RIT) to define and establish a program to share best practices.
- A mechanism for acquisition certification of private-sector personnel accessions.
- A preliminary investigation into industry practices on conducting entrance and exit interviews to determine a reasonable approach to use within the acquisition community.

America's security will depend — as it always has — upon an acquisition workforce that has the education, training, and broad experience necessary to function effectively in the demanding new business environment of the 21st century. This program has got to deliver. At this we cannot fail.