



## Career Development

### AIR FORCE MATERIEL COMMAND NEWS SERVICE (FEB. 27, 2006) ACQUISITION CAREER TRACK MAY BE REDIRECTED

John Scaggs

**W**RIGHT-PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Ohio (AFPN)—Bringing more engineers into the Air Force acquisition career field is a priority for Air Force Materiel Command's top officer.

Gen. Bruce Carlson, AFMC commander, discussed this topic and other issues with 170 people attending the 2006 U.S. Air Force Acquisition Leaders Forum. The event was held in Charlotte, N.C., Feb. 15 to 17.

The forum brought together acquisition wing and group commanders, as well as key staff, to talk about how the Air Force develops and maintains its warfighting capabilities.

Carlson said one of his goals is to get more technically qualified young people into Air Force acquisition positions.

"We need to recruit more people with technical degrees, such as mechanical or aerospace engineers," the general said. "When I walk through a program office and ask the program manager a question, I want him or her to have the technical background to be able to answer me instead of finding someone else to answer my question."

"Right now, we're lacking people who are both technically and operationally astute," he said. "Ideally, I'd like to develop a pool of young officers who begin their Air Force careers in acquisition assignments. When they become captains, they're given an operational assignment to learn that aspect of the Air Force mission. Then, a few years later, they return to acquisition positions."

Another acquisition-related point made by Carlson was the shift in terms of who has a technological advantage.

"In years past, we had a technological advantage over other countries," he said. "We don't have that luxury anymore. Other countries, such as Germany and China, are on par with us. Today the world is the market for technology. The edge goes to whoever can develop, integrate, package, and produce that technology the fastest."

As the Air Force major command responsible for providing acquisition management services and logistics support necessary to keep Air Force weapon systems operational, AFMC plays a key role in providing that technological edge.

*Scaggs is with Air Force Materiel Command Public Affairs.*

### AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE (MARCH 3, 2006) DOD NEEDS MORE FLEXIBLE CIVILIAN WORKFORCE, OFFICIAL SAYS

Gerry J. Gilmore

**W**ASHINGTON—One day senior defense civilians could be performing jobs now only filled by generals or admirals, and rank-and-file civilians could be deployed overseas to free up military members for combat-related duties, a senior DoD civilian said here today.

"We need to be more deliberate in our thinking about the roles of each of those [positions] and where they are somewhat interchangeable," Patricia S. Bradshaw, deputy under secretary of defense for civilian personnel policy, said during an American Forces Press Service interview. A senior civilian personnel expert with 27 years of DoD and Navy service, Bradshaw worked in the corporate world for six years after she retired from the government in 1999. She came back to DoD to help its workforce become more capable and relevant in the post-Sept. 11 era. The Defense Department is looking to private-industry models to transform its management policies for senior-level and rank-and-file civilians so they can become a more capable and flexible workforce, Bradshaw said. For example, corporations rely on business executives with broad experience to oversee many kinds of enterprises, rather than tapping managers possessing expertise in narrow specialties, she said.

DoD also wants its civilians to learn new skills so they can be more flexible and available to be deployed anywhere in the world, Bradshaw said.

Military leaders need to be engaged in "managing the troops," Bradshaw said, rather than pulling duty that can be performed by civilian counterparts.

This brave new world of military-civilian interchangeability hasn't arrived yet, Bradshaw noted, because the



current culture is still immersed in old-style thinking. “We have not left our comfort zone,” Bradshaw acknowledged.

Today, “if you try to select someone who comes with an enterprise view of the world, who has experience in joint matters, the military will beat out the civilian (candidate) every time, because we haven’t been deliberate in that.” It’s time to fix that, Bradshaw said, “not only at the senior executive service level, but as we think about how we grow our people below the SES level and prepare them for those jobs.”

### AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE (MARCH 6, 2006) **DOD TO ENROLL 11,000 CIVILIANS INTO NEW PERSONNEL SYSTEM IN APRIL**

*Gerry J. Gilmore*

**W**ASHINGTON—The Defense Department is preparing to implement the first phase of its new pay-for-performance civilian personnel system in late April, a senior official said here March 3.

At that time, about 11,000 DoD civilians will be enrolled into the National Security Personnel System, Patricia S. Bradshaw, deputy under secretary of defense for civilian personnel policy said during an American Forces Press Service interview.

“It was always a passion for me that some day we would be able to do this,” said Bradshaw, who’d been familiar with pilot civilian pay-for-performance programs conducted at two Navy installations in California a decade ago.

A senior civilian personnel expert with 27 years of DoD and Navy service, Bradshaw worked in the corporate world for six years after she retired from the government in 1999. She recently came back to DoD help its workforce become more capable and relevant in the post-Sept. 11 era.

DoD and the Office of Personnel Management have partnered to create the NSPS, a personnel management process that eventually will apply to more than 650,000 DoD civilian employees.

The Navy’s civilian management pilot programs conducted at facilities at China Lake and San Diego proved to be forerunners of today’s NSPS, Bradshaw said. Those early programs “simplified the job descriptions so they could move people around more easily,” Bradshaw re-

called. “But at the end of the day, it was the pay-for-performance piece and the desired end-state of retaining your top performers” that stood out.

Under NSPS, “if you want to be a star performer, we’re going to differentiate and we’re going to pay you that way,” Bradshaw said. That “is the underpinning theme,” she said.

Bradshaw said the world has changed greatly since terrorists attacked the United States on Sept. 11, 2001. Those attacks influenced Congress to give DoD the authority it needed to change the way it pays and manages its civilian workforce, she said.

“The support we got for that on the Hill was as a result of the lessons learned from 9-11,” Bradshaw explained. The war against terrorism also prompted DoD to adopt “a system that allows us to move individuals quickly and have a more agile way of assigning people, and more specifically, figuring out what competencies they have,” she said.

One of the personnel management tenets contained within the 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review is developing a competency-based personnel management infrastructure on both the military and civilian sides of the house, she said.

Bradshaw said DoD’s old civilian personnel system hamstrung supervisors because its narrow job descriptions and associated paperwork worked against quickly assigning people to more urgent duties. “We really don’t know what other capabilities you have or competencies you bring to the table,” Bradshaw explained. “Maybe you were a contract specialist at one time.”

The NSPS brings the ability to catalog and identify employees’ skills so managers can access them quickly, Bradshaw said. This “allows us to make these movements and assignments in a much more agile way,” she said.

The ability to quickly move civilians where they are needed most—including overseas—is a key desired benefit of adopting NSPS, Bradshaw said. “Right now we are able to do this through volunteers,” she said. However, the war against terrorism brings everyone “a lot closer to the front lines” than during the Cold War.

“It causes us to think again how we deploy civilians,” Bradshaw said. “We are part of the total force.” DoD must be more deliberate in developing its senior civilians, she



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said, so they acquire a joint view of the military and a better understanding of how it accomplishes its missions. That kind of experience “can’t be gained by staying in your own organization—in your own stovepipe—year after year and then expecting to then leapfrog to a very senior position in the Department of Defense,” Bradshaw said.

Army Secretary Francis J. Harvey recently announced a new policy that calls for senior civilians to be moved around to gain more experience rather than staying at the same organization, Bradshaw said. “It just hasn’t happened in a very deliberate way in every Service,” she said.

In 2003, DoD began work to establish a new civilian personnel compensation and management process that rewards employees according to performance. Fifty-year-old civil service rules mostly tied employees’ raises to an individual’s length of service.

In February 2005, the American Federation of Government Employees and a dozen other labor unions filed a lawsuit against the Defense Department over the establishment of NSPS. U.S District Judge Emmet G. Sullivan ruled Feb. 27 that proposed NSPS provisions would not protect civilian employees’ ability to bargain collectively. DoD and OPM officials continue to work with the Department of Justice to determine the next steps relative to the ruling.

Meanwhile, the Department is moving forward with implementing the performance management, compensation and classification, staffing, and workforce shaping provisions of the new system, which is slated to occur in late April, according to a statement on the NSPS Web site.

### ARMY ACQUISITION SUPPORT CENTER (FEBRUARY 2006)

#### ACQUISITION, LOGISTICS AND TECHNOLOGY FUTURES OFFICE (ALT-FO)

In keeping with the assistant secretary of the Army (acquisition, logistics and technology) military deputy’s intent to integrate ALT doctrine and concepts into an overall coordinated combat service support strategy for the Army, the ALT-FO was stood up in November 2005 at the U.S. Combined Arms Support Command (CASCOM) on a provisional status. Meanwhile, the Acquisition Support Center (ASC) is developing Table of Distribution and Allowances (TDA) and correspond-

ing Military Acquisition Position List (MAPL) positions to formalize the establishment of the new organization.

The ALT-FO is working a number of important issues affecting the Army Acquisition Corps:

- **Base Stationing Plan.** While not the lead organization, the ALT-FO has been working very closely with the Army Materiel Command’s (AMC) Command Contracting, ASC, Army Field Support Command, and the Human Resource Command (HRC), to develop a base stationing plan for the modular contracting force design. This plan will enable HRC to start assigning contingency contracting officers to contracting teams and battalions.
- **Modular Force Logistics Concept (MFLC)/Field Manual 4-93.41, Army Field Support Brigade (AFSB).** The ALT-FO is collaborating with CASCOM and AMC in the development of the MFLC and finalizing the AFSB Field Manual Interim (FMI), 4-93.41. The importance of these two manuals can not be overstated. Together, they are intended to show new ways of conducting future operations using a modular force structure as a means to achieve desired capabilities.
- **Joint Contracting and Contractor Management (JCCM).** As the Army’s lead, the ALT-FO continues to work with the J-4 on the development of this new Joint Publication.

The point of contact is the ALT-FO director, Army Col. Jacques Azemar, [jacques.azemar@us.army.mil](mailto:jacques.azemar@us.army.mil).

### AIR FORCE MATERIEL COMMAND NEWS SERVICE (APRIL 3, 2006) AFMC CIVILIAN COURSE GAINS OTHER COMMANDS’ INTEREST

*Capt. Paul Baldwin, USAF*

**W**RIGHT-PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Ohio (AFPN)—Representatives from three commands plan to meet with Headquarters Air Force Materiel Command professional development staff here in May to discuss adapting the AFMC Orientation Course for their commands. Leadership from the three commands, Air Mobility Command, Air Education and Training Command, and Air Force Space Command, have expressed interest in developing a similar course for their civilian workforce.

While the course is significant to AFMC because its workforce is nearly 70 percent civilian, other commands recognize the benefits of giving their civilians the same opportunity through a similar course. The orientation course,



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which has five sections, covers basic Air Force heritage, customs, and courtesies.

“The purpose of the meeting is to develop a strategy and implementation plan to share and transfer the contents of the orientation course so that they can deliver the course to their employees,” said Sherre Collier, chief of leadership development in the AFMC Headquarters Personnel Directorate, which spearheaded the course’s development.

“We will also be developing a draft of a proposed Air Force policy for expansion Air Force-wide upon completion of the test to transfer the program to these three commands,” Collier said.

The course takes about eight hours to complete. Four of the five sections can be accomplished at a computer. The section about Air Force core values is taught in a classroom and is being added to many civilian orientation programs, AFMC officials said.

The course was introduced to AFMC civilians March 3. The idea for the course came from an emphasis by AFMC leadership on education and training for the civilian workforce. Air Force civilians were not receiving any Air Force background or history once they were hired. They simply processed into their units and began doing their jobs without any real knowledge about the organization that employed them, officials said.

“Our military colleagues have always had this experience in basic military training or commissioning sources, but our civilian hires were left on their own to learn as they went,” said Barbara Westgate, AFMC executive director. “Now our civilian workforce will have this same opportunity.”

Together, the five modules make up part one of the course, or Spiral 1. The modules are *Air Force heritage and today*; *AFMC heritage and today*; *Air Force customs and courtesies*; *Air Force core values*; and *Air Force core competencies*.

AFMC civilians are awarded the new Air Force civilian pin when they complete the first five modules of the course. The pin is about the size of a nickel, pewter in color, and is dominated by the Air Force symbol. It recognizes the pride and dedication in civil service and a commitment to civilian professional development, Collier said.

Testing and delivery of Spiral 2 is scheduled for October, Westgate said. Spiral 2 consists of an additional three modules: *force development*; *workforce health, safety, and security*; and *personnel administration*.

*Baldwin is with Air Force Materiel Command Public Affairs.*

### AIR FORCE MATERIEL COMMAND NEWS SERVICE (APRIL 7, 2006) ESC RAPID IMPROVEMENT EVENT SPEEDS UP HIRING PROCESS

Kevin Gilmartin

**H**ANSCOM AIR FORCE BASE, Mass. (AFPN)—Electronic Systems Center’s first Rapid Improvement Event cut the fat out of the civilian hiring process here, identifying a potential 58 percent reduction in the total time it takes to process a Request for Personnel Action, or RPA, and submit it to the Air Force Personnel Center.

In only three days, team members from ESC’s wings and functional organizations, along with representatives from ESC’s Directorate of Personnel and the Hanscom Civilian Personnel Office, stripped down the recruitment process and identified areas for elimination or improvement that can reduce the average total process time here from 40 to 45 days to only 10 to 20 days. Following its report to management and ESC senior leaders, the team is working to implement the identified improvements over the next three to six months.

“Our first Rapid Improvement Event was a great success, showing what people can accomplish when they focus on process improvement,” said Air Force Maj. Gen. Arthur Rooney, ESC vice commander, who served as the team’s sponsor. “The bottom-line benefits of what this team accomplished will be realized when managers fill civilian vacancies faster, avoiding wasteful downtime. I look forward to many more of these RIEs taking place across the center.”

Air Force Capt. Robert Enrico, a reservist who works as a Lean expert for Honeywell in his civilian job and also is a green belt in Six Sigma, served as the team’s facilitator. Lean and Six Sigma are two process improvement tools used in industry that are essential parts of Air Force Smart Ops 21, an Air Force-wide effort to identify and eliminate waste and inefficiencies.

“We only had three days for this Rapid Improvement Event, so we had to really focus our scope on what takes



place from when an RPA is initiated until it is sent forward to AFPC,” Enrico said. “We took a structured approach to the problem, first identifying our ‘as-is’ state, showing where we are now. We then determined what the ‘ideal state’ could be, and also identified a future state, that reflects how we are going to continue to improve.”

“The first day and a half, I thought we were never going to be able to Lean the process, but then we went from zero to 100 miles per hour,” said Michael Gotschall of ESC’s Plans and Programs Directorate.

The Daedalian Room of the Hanscom Club was a beehive of activity as the team mapped out a “value stream” for the current RPA process, filling countless easel pads with diagrams of “touch points” for the RPA as it flows through the current process.

The value-stream mapping clearly illustrated where the “hands off” state was during the process, which is often wasted time. The group determined that it currently takes from 40 to 45 days to coordinate a recruitment action through the current process at Hanscom; however, the “touch time” involved with processing an RPA without any waiting is from 15 to 16.5 hours.

The mapping also indicated an inefficient process with an RPA flowing back and forth among affected organizations—including wings, functional offices, civilian personnel, and ESC’s Personnel Directorate. Often times, these touch points are necessary to correct defects identified in the paperwork. In fact, the team estimated 80 percent of all RPAs submitted to Civilian Personnel are defective. Increased use of standard core documents, or position descriptions, will help reduce the need to send back an RPA.

“Every time there’s a touch point, it slows down the process and increases the chance for error,” said Donna Desimas of ESC’s Directorate of Personnel, “so our goal was to eliminate as many touch points as possible.”

In identifying the ideal state, the team recommended combining the wing and functional processes, and accomplishing them at the wing level. So, for a financial management vacancy in the Battle Management Systems Wing, for example, the wing will handle tasks such as calling AFPC, initiating the RPA, and discussing it with civilian personnel. The team also decided that, rather than having paperwork flowing among the Classification Branch of Civilian Personnel, the Manpower Office, and

the resource manager, representatives from those offices will meet and take care of all details relating to a specific RPA in one sitting. The future state of the civilian hiring processes in the next few years may feature integrated manpower and civilian classification processes, standard core documents for civilian positions, and classification of civilian positions done by AFPC.

Although exhausted by the pace, team members said they learned a lot and enjoyed their time participating in the Rapid Improvement Event.

“There are a lot of people out there with a lot of good ideas, and when you give them the opportunity to bring those ideas to the table, the organization benefits tremendously,” said Alicyn Cerulli of the Operations Support Systems Wing. She said the experience helped her learn different brainstorming and problem-solving techniques.

“This was really time well spent,” Cerulli said. “We all felt we could speak freely and help make a change for the better. If we can do even half of what we plan, it will be a huge improvement over the current civilian hiring process.”

“I’m proud of all these people and what they accomplished,” Rooney said. “They set a great example for all of us to follow as we continue to implement Smart Ops 21 across the center.”

*Gilmartin is with Electronic Systems Center Public Affairs.*

### **NSPS 101 PROVIDES OVERVIEW OF HUMAN RESOURCES SYSTEM**

**T**he National Security Personnel System (NSPS) Web site now hosts an online tutorial, *NSPS 101*, which provides an overview of the human resources elements of NSPS, covering such topics as conversion to NSPS, classification, compensation, performance management, staffing flexibilities, and workforce shaping. NSPS 101 is a Web-based course designed to address questions such as “What happens to me when my position is converted to NSPS?” to “How does the pay-for-performance system work?” NSPS 101 serves as a foundation for ongoing training in instructor-led courses that begin shortly before conversion into NSPS.

The course also includes a conversion calculator that identifies an employee’s career group, pay schedule, pay band, and estimate of within-grade increase buy-in. To take NSPS 101, go to <<http://www.cpmo.osd.mil/nsps/nsps101/nsps/index.htm>>.