



**MG William H. Russ, CECOM
Commanding General**

Reenergizing And Revitalizing . . .

2003 ARMY ACQUISITION WORKFORCE CONFERENCE

Cynthia D. Hermes

Introduction

"Reenergizing and Revitalizing the Army Acquisition and Technology Workforce (A&TWF)" was the theme of this year's Army Acquisition Workforce Conference, held Feb. 11-13, 2003, in Atlantic City, NJ. The event was co-sponsored by the Acquisition Support Center (ASC), Fort Belvoir, VA, and the U.S. Army Communications-Electronics Command (CECOM), Fort Monmouth, NJ. Edward G. Elgart, Acquisition Career Management Advocate (ACMA) and Director, CECOM Acquisition Center, hosted the conference; Kelly L. Terry, Director, Northeast Region, ASC, served as emcee and Janice Kurry, Acquisition Career Manager (ACM), Northeast Region, was chairperson.

CECOM Commanding General MG William H. Russ welcomed participants and urged them to take advantage of this great opportunity to address the many issues confronting today's Army acquisition community. He said that these are challenging times because the operational tempo is tremendous, the threat of terrorism is real, and many Armed Forces personnel (both military and civilian) are now deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. These personnel need the services that members of the acquisition workforce provide them, he said. Given the great challenges and the pressures that we face in today's environment, Russ said, it is imperative to maintain a vital, professional A&TWF, especially as we look to the future.

If the Army is to continue to provide cutting-edge technology and superlative services and systems to its warfighters, it is time to revitalize and reenergize the acquisition workforce. To achieve this, Russ emphasized that we must stay focused on supporting the goals of hiring, training, and sustaining superior personnel. In addition, he affirmed that we must develop a cadre of leaders to ensure that the skills, professionalism, and leadership of the acquisition workforce are honed. Further, Russ reminded attendees to remember that the correct measure of success is in the eye of the customer.

Remaining focused on the long term by creating a professional development strategy will ensure that workforce personnel move toward the future as leaders who will react flexibly, positively,

and knowledgeably when unusual situations arise. To accomplish this, we must develop job analysis techniques to help develop the right objective criteria for that broad, flexible leader. Because we have an aging workforce, managers must prepare for succession; however, current workforce members must participate in this succession plan. In addition, career responsibility must be placed on individuals.

Now is the time to set the stage, make the decisions, and do the right thing to ensure that the Army is ready for the future, Russ said. And it's time for acquisition professionals to seize the day and channel their skills and energies toward a more efficient operation to provide warfighters the equipment needed to perform their jobs, he added.

ASC Director and Deputy Director, Acquisition Career Management COL Mary Fuller thanked Russ and Elgart for co-sponsoring the conference and Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics Michael W. Wynne and Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology (ASAALT) Claude M. Bolton Jr. for attending. This is the most important conference she has ever hosted, she said, because it provides her the opportunity to touch the acquisition workforce.

According to Fuller, people must make a difference every day, whether personally or professionally. She challenged attendees to leave the workshop



**COL Mary
Fuller,
Director,
Acquisition
Support
Center**

reenergized to make a difference by doing the best job possible.

Fuller also suggested that attendees use the conference to network and discuss the tough issues facing the workforce. She said ASC must be made aware of problems in the field. Although ASC may not be able to immediately solve all the problems, it can at least identify them and put a process in place so they can be solved. The acquisition workforce exists to support the soldier, and she asked attendees to reflect on how they can contribute to the mission of those sent into harm's way. She urged all to stay connected to warfighters, understand their requirements, and fulfill those requirements as quickly as possible.

Featured Speaker

ASAALT Bolton presented the 2002 Acquisition Career Management Advocate of the Year Award to Philip Brandler, U.S. Army Soldier and Biological Chemical Command, Natick, MA. (See related article on Page 41.) Afterward, Bolton discussed how far the Army has come in its transformation, including the Stryker vehicle, Comanche helicopter, and the Future Combat Systems (FCS) programs. He said we must determine how to write requirements and tests for the systems that are the first increment of FCS, whose soldier as a system is the centerpiece.

He touched on a number of topics, including an overview of programs (Stryker and Objective Force and how to proceed), people (key to the Army's success), production (the Defense industrial base—ammunition plants and arsenals), and improvement (the Army Acquisition Workforce Campaign Plan and its objectives, business case analyses, acquisition and logistics excellence, and changes in the way that DOD does



Claude M. Bolton Jr., ASAALT

business). During a question and answer session, Bolton discussed the activities of the Program Manager (PM) Post Utilization Taskforce and the importance of building the civilian acquisition workforce and grooming individuals to become future leaders.

Keynote Speaker

Wynne discussed the importance of knowledge sharing and providing a common operating picture. For example, he said, ground soldiers and the pilot flying overhead must both be looking at the same picture—they can't be arguing over symbology. Shared knowledge is the backbone of what the Army is trying to accomplish.

The objective of the next war is to trade the enemy's high-value target

without presenting ours, said Wynne. Acquisition professionals must understand this because they are the buyers who ensure that warfighters have what they need. Wynne said that they would really like to empower program managers to "just say no" in terms of requirements. To accomplish this, horizontal communication must take place. For example, a one-star general should not be arguing with a four-star general about requirements. Communication should take place between a four-star general and the four-star general who oversees the one-star.

Wynne said that we must develop individuals capable of managing entire life cycles of systems. He said that transformation is about three things: leadership, systems, and business. In addition, there are actually two customers relative to systems: the warfighter and the logistician/maintainer. By increasing reliability, we make the warfighter our major customer.

The Army must transform the way it does business, Wynne said. For instance, the Defense Acquisition University (DAU) has transformed itself to a virtual university and partnered with universities across America. This allows people entering the workforce to take courses at 50 universities nationwide. Another example of transformed business is having credibly priced programs. The purpose of the change to the DOD 5000 series, he said, is to empower innovation in program managers and contract staff. We are creating incentives to restore systems engineering work because scientists and engineers must get connected. In conclusion, Wynne reminded attendees that they are the Army, and if it doesn't start with them, it doesn't start. He said to take possession of their product acquisition and, more importantly, take advantage of the flexibility the new DOD 5000 offers. Remember, he said, transformation is about leadership first. He then thanked attendees for providing the warfighters the best equipment that the world has ever seen and for the work that they do every day.

ASC Update

An Acquisition Support Center update was provided by Kevin Maisel, Chief of the ASC Career Management Plans, Policy, and Program Development (ACMP3) Division; LTC Edison L. Hammond, Chief of the ASC Force Structures Division; and LTC Peggy R.

Claude M. Bolton Jr. (left), ASAALT, presented the ACMA of the Year award to Philip Brandler, Director of the Natick Soldier Center, SBCCOM; along with COL Mary Fuller, Director, ASC.



Carson, U.S. Total Army Personnel Command's (PERSCOM's) Chief of the Acquisition Management Branch (AMB).

Maisel described ACMP3 initiatives such as human resource strategic planning, the U.S. Army Acquisition Workforce Campaign Plan, the Army Acquisition Qualification Course, the Uniformed Army Scientist Program, and Program Manager Post Utilization. He concluded with a discussion of the challenges ahead for the acquisition workforce.

Hammond outlined the Force Structures Division's mission to provide budget, manpower, and personnel support to program executive offices, acquisition commands, and the Army Contracting Agency. He also discussed the division's core functions such as managing acquisition positions and Army transformation, strategic planning, etc. The bottom line, Hammond said, is to provide customer support to get the right answers to assist the warfighter. ASC's future challenges include increased requirements with reduced assets, Army transformation realignment, Military Acquisition Position List (MAPL) review, and organizational development.

Carson discussed AMB's customer support mission, where AMB fits in the Army chain of command, its key acquisition relationships, and its functions relative to military and civilian personnel.

Luncheon Briefings

The first day's working lunch speaker was Richard K. Sylvester, Deputy Director, Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy for Acquisition Workforce and Career Management, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics (OUSD(ATL)). He primarily focused on promoting an innovative workforce. He said that the Army is determining which jobs are inherently governmental, and what is the content of those jobs. The Army is also trying to determine how to measure and increase performance. The Army's mission is to have the right people, with the right skills, at the right place, at the right time, and with the right pay. The key to achieving this, he said, is human capital strategic planning. What must the workforce of the future look like, and how are we going to get there? What kind of people and skills are needed in the future? Congress, the



Keynote speaker, Michael Wynne, PDUSD (AT&L)

General Accounting Office (GAO), and science boards are asking these questions. We must find a way to encourage people to do business and create a relationship with us. This will involve sending age-appropriate people to college career fairs and other recruiting events, getting involved with professional societies (i.e., Society of Logistics Engineers and the Project Management Institute), and reaching out to people in industry. We must have a new tagline (along the lines of "Army of One") that our civilian workforce can relate to and understand. We must also take advantage of 21st century technology to recruit and develop intern programs and apprenticeships.

One reason people leave a job is lack of growth or challenging opportunities, Sylvester said. It is necessary, therefore, to establish more Web-based training and learning centers and provide more interesting work, he added. In addition, personnel must be paid based on their work performance, not on their grade level. Paybanding is one practice identified to achieve this goal. He added that a central referral system is being developed to allow people to apply for positions in different geographic locations. Other initiatives include developing a journeyman-level position, creating a government-industry exchange program, and obtaining a better certification process with alternative accreditations. In concluding, he said that supervisors must make each job challenging so their personnel will want to stay.

Day Two

The second day's working luncheon was an open forum with the theme "Ask The ASC Director." Fuller answered a range of questions such as the status of a new AAC patch, ongoing efforts for placing civilians in PM positions, the wisdom of creating a facilities engineering career field, the impact of the third-wave initiative on the AAC, the possibility of creating an additional greening course, continuous learning points, and recruiting young people. More detailed information on the question-and-answer session is located on the ASC Web site at <http://asc.rdaisa.army.mil>.

Workshops

A separate pre-workshop meeting for ACMAs included charter presentations and a discussion on topics such as new career development initiatives, the assimilation process, the need for an A&TWF handbook, clarification of the ACMA role, continuous learning, and AAC membership. The names and organizations of the ACMAs who received charters were Leah Treppel, Program Executive Office (PEO), Simulation, Training, and Instrumentation; Harry Hallock, U.S. Army Tank-automotive and Armaments Command; Elizabeth Wise, PEO, Tactical Missiles; George "Jerry" Orlicki, White Sands Missile Range, NM; Steve Mapley, Operations Support Command; Duane Inoue, Army Contracting Pacific; Gregory Kee, PEO, Enterprise Information Systems; James Wymer, Yuma Proving Ground, AZ; and Beverly Stevens, Army Contracting Agency.

In addition, five select interactive workshops on major topics of interest within the Army acquisition community were conducted. Each workshop is highlighted below. Workshop briefings can be found online at <http://asc.rdaisa.army.mil>.

PM Post Utilization Taskforce. ASC's Kevin Maisel led a workshop focusing on the post utilization of civilian PMs. Civilian applicants are not faring well on PM selection boards. A DA Staff Sensing Session identified root causes for this, such as the lack of a meaningful civilian career model, misunderstanding of the board process among civilians, and quality of applicant Senior Rater Potential Evaluations (SRPEs) and Acquisition Career Record Briefs (ACRBs). Categories noted for action include leadership, career model, PM post utilization,

personnel policy and procedures, training, environment, incentives, and selection boards. Maisel discussed options to resolve the problem of providing follow-on positions at the conclusion of a PM tour. We must have a cultural change before we can successfully mix and match civilian and military counterparts, he said. In addition, the process must recognize and respect civilians in certain PM leadership positions. The AAC is the only area of the Army where military and civilian personnel compete for positions. Beginning in 2004, the Army plans to institute a post utilization policy ensuring that Senior Service College graduates are placed in assignments that are commensurate with their education.

Shaping The Future Workforce.

Peggy Mattei, Office of Acquisition Education, Training and Career Development, Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, OUSD(ATL), led this workshop, which primarily focused on human capital strategic planning. This planning is comprised of four separate processes: cultural shaping, organizational design, workforce planning, and performance planning. Because people are enablers of transformation, human capital strategic planning is a hot topic in DOD. Its purpose is to identify the types of programs, policies, and systems needed to ensure that the future workforce meets its strategic intent. GAO is pointing other agencies to DOD AT&L for lessons learned in human capital strategic planning. In conclusion, Mattei said that there is no proven method to follow in pursuing this initiative. Human capital strategic planning requires a huge cultural change that requires participation at every level.

ASC—Communicating Openly And Effectively. Larry McDonald, Vice President, BRTRC, opened this workshop, which identified methods of internal and external communication. Participants provided comments and suggestions relative to ASC's outreach activities. Issues discussed included recruitment, eye-catching acquisition logos or mottos, Web page design, mentorship, retention, and analyses of *Army AL&T* magazine and ASC's *The Army Acquisition, Logistics and Technology Workforce Newsletter*.

DAU/Acquisition, Education, Training And Experience Updates. Randy Williams, ASC Career Development Specialist was the facilitator of this work-

shop, which presented the required tools needed for each phase of career development including planning, execution, and tracking. He emphasized that you are the only one who manages your career. The ACMs can only assist you. He added that the Individual Development Plan is a tool to identify career goals over a 5-year period in the areas of education, training, and developmental experiences. He also talked about how the Army Training Requirements and Resources System (ATRRS) Internet Training Application System (AITAS) is used for the execution phase and ACRBs are used for the tracking phase of career development. Additional topics included continuous learning points and other acquisition education, training and experience opportunities.

Army Acquisition Workforce Campaign Plan. MAJ Marko Nikituk, ASC 51R Proponency Officer, facilitated this workshop to inform participants of the status of strategic objectives and initiatives for developing and sustaining the Army's acquisition workforce. The number one objective of the U.S. Army Acquisition Workforce Campaign Plan is to have a strengthened relationship with the warfighter. The complete campaign plan, with a detailed history and points of contact for individual initiatives, is available on the ASC Web site at <http://asc.rdaisa.army.mil/>.

DACM Address

Army Director of Acquisition Career Management (DACM) LTG John S. Caldwell Jr. was unable to attend the conference; however, COL Fuller spoke on his behalf. She said that Caldwell asked her to thank the workforce for the great job they do every day. Times are tough right now and Caldwell knows he's asking a lot of everyone. Because of his concern about the future of the acquisition workforce, Caldwell developed the idea of the Army Acquisition Campaign Plan and has remained very involved with it. It's an exciting time to be in the acquisition workforce because never before have we seen such a tremendous change—not only in the equipment that we build and field—but in the way we do business. Caldwell remains focused on getting closer to the warfighter. As acquisition career managers, we are responsible for getting people trained, educated, and experienced; but we can't lose sight of the warfighter. Caldwell



Richard K. Sylvester, Deputy Director, Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy for Acquisition Workforce and Career Management

feels that closer relationships between warfighters and acquisition professionals will make us a stronger Army, facilitate transformation to the Objective Force, and transition to whatever challenge is next. In closing, Fuller said that people are our most important resource. We must take care of that resource, be flexible, be ready to meet the next challenge, and be part of the solution.

Conference Wrap-Up

Fuller stated that this conference was the most successful one to date. She urged attendees to return to their commands and reflect on managing expectations, helping ASC set priorities to meet the immediate needs of individuals and the Army, becoming more flexible and changing with the times, and establishing and maintaining positive relationships with warfighters. The bottom line, Fuller said, is that we want everyone in the Department of the Army to be successful—there isn't one person who shouldn't have the opportunity to excel. Finally, she asked participants to be the ones who set the example and continue to be great spokespersons for the acquisition workforce.

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