Update: AAC Civilian PM and Post-Utilization Task Force

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This article updates one published in *Army AL&T's* November-December 2002 issue on the Army Acquisition Corps (AAC) Civilian program/project manager (PM) and post-utilization task force's (TF's) progress.

The initial article was written by Henry I. Jehan Jr. on behalf of Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology (ASAALT)/Army Acquisition Executive Claude M. Bolton Jr.; LTG John S. Caldwell Jr., Military Deputy to the ASAALT; and Acquisition Support Center (ASC) Director COL Mary Fuller. This article addresses the progress made since the last integrated process review in November 2002. New developments have been made, several initiatives have been closed or implemented and many more are near closure with estimated completion dates of late FY03 to early FY04.

Background

The overall TF mission was to conduct a thorough root-cause analysis on why civilian selection rates to PM positions were so low and why post-placement of successful civilian PMs in positions of greater responsibility was not institutionally recognized or practiced. In the initial assessment, 14 root-cause categories supported by 40 detailed root-cause issue statements were identified. The 14 root-cause categories identified by the TF include:

- Unclear and inconsistent mobility expectations and policy.
- Lack of financial incentives.
- No career path beyond GS-15 (or equivalent personnel demonstration broadband level) or O-6 level PM.
- Improper use of permanent assignments to temporary or term positions.
- Inadequate supervisory and pre-command training.
- No meaningful civilian career model.
- Lack of civilian understanding of the board process.
- Deficiencies in Senior Rater Potential Evaluations (SRPEs).
- Deficiencies in Acquisition Career Record Briefs (ACRBs).
- Inadequate and inconsistent administration of benefits and entitlements.
- Inadequate peer socialization and leadership recognition.
- Inadequate cross-functional communication with ASAALT.
- Lack of acquisition requirements and accountability.
- Inadequate leadership commitment and follow-through.

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These root-cause categories were subsequently reduced to the following 10 solution categories: road to Senior Executive Service (SES)/civilian career model; personnel action execution and management policy; benefits counseling, administration and environment; board selection process; training initiatives; DA policy; ASC and U.S. Total Army Personnel Command Acquisition Management Branch (AMB) policy and procedures and leadership. Effective post-utilization of civilian PMs is the essence of the above-listed solutions. If new policies help the Acquisition, Logistics and Technology Workforce (AL&TWF) retain successful civilian PMs instead of losing them to industry at high attrition rates, then the TF will be deemed successful, but only time will tell.

Progress

As a direct result of this TF's findings, the entire AL&TWF will derive numerous benefits. Some of the most promising initiatives include:

- A new PM benefits, entitlements and procedures handbook condensing reference material for PMs.
- An updated, more functional ACRB.
- A revised civilian SRPE form, mirroring the military Officer Evaluation Report, allowing civilian senior raters to better identify top PM talent.
- Greater acquisition SES participation on DA selection boards.
- Significant improvements in sponsorship for incoming military and civilian personnel through the implementation of new policies.
- Creating temporary positions and assignment options for departing successful PMs.
- Providing senior leaders the option to designate civilian PMs as key and essential personnel.
- A revised AAC mobility agreement that more clearly explains the three types of mobility opportunities available to civilian AAC members and applicants to various selection boards.
- Improved and simplified selection board instructions.
- Improved linkage between the AMB and ASC Web sites for information retrieval.

Pending Issues

Although numerous issues have been resolved, we are still challenged with a few others central to TF success. These include the PM end-of-tour Priority Placement Program (PPP), how to handle PPP exemption requests for Command Select List PMs and perhaps most importantly, the family implications surrounding the Army spousal PPP. As we continue to develop solutions, we anticipate more civilians competing for difficult PM positions. Furthermore, as the TF enters its final execution phase, the AL&TWF can expect to realize relatively near-term benefits.

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Logistics Management Proponency Office

Derek Sharpe

Never before has the civilian contribution to the Army mission been more crucial. As the Army transforms, so must our civilian logisticians as their supporting role keeps abreast of new technologies, a changing force structure, process improvements in logistics support and changing civilian demographics. Training and development are two tools used to ensure a ready and capable civilian workforce.

The Logistics Management Proponency Office (LogPro) provides training and development for current civilian logisticians; recruitment and training of interns; and career management for career programs 13, Supply Management, and 17, Materiel Maintenance Management. These two career programs have approximately 11,000 civilian logisticians at Army locations around the world.

LogPro provides a number of training vehicles for our civilians, centrally funded by the Army through the Army Civilian Training and Education System (ACTEDS). Training With Industry (TWI) and Training With Soldiers (TWS) are both exceptional programs. TWI provides the trainee experience with logistics-oriented private sector firms such as Boeing, FedEx and Sears. TWS provides a learning experience with our soldiers in the field using the products and logistics processes we design, influence and implement. With TWS, we get to know what our customers — soldiers — need and what we can do to improve our support to them.