



## From the Acquisition Support Center Director

As the Army continues to sustain, prepare, reset, and transform, the U.S. Army Acquisition Support Center (USAASC) continues to offer world-class professional development opportunities to ensure the Army has a well-trained, well-educated, and highly capable Acquisition, Logistics, and Technology (AL&T) Workforce. Our Soldiers rely on and deserve the very best protection, equipment, and weapon systems that our Nation can provide. Chief of Staff of the Army GEN George W. Casey Jr. said during Senate testimony, “America is in, and will be in for a decade or so, [a state of] persistent conflict.” Casey defines this term as a time of protracted confrontation among state, nonstate, and individuals who are increasingly willing to use violence to accomplish their political and ideological objectives. With that context as a backdrop, it is imperative that our AL&T Workforce continues to provide the best support to our warfighters as they continue to protect our Nation from those who would destroy us and our precious freedom.



### Human Capital Plan Update

The *2006 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) Section 112* requires an annual report to Congress summarizing DOD’s progress in implementing DOD’s Human Capital Strategic Plan (HCSP). This year’s DOD plan is currently under development and will identify DOD and component challenges relating to the recruitment of new personnel (especially for those positions requiring critical skills); retention and workforce development practices for existing personnel; competency management initiatives for many civilian occupational specialties; and workforce analysis trends and forecasting. At the time of this publication’s press, the final report should have been submitted. This information will be framed within the context of the global, national, and DOD strategic environment and will leverage solutions to help ensure the continued flow and management of vital DOD talent.

An appendix to the DOD HCSP will be devoted to DOD’s Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics (AT&L) Workforce and will summarize best practices, specific initiatives, and relevant accomplishments of DOD and the components applicable to the DOD AT&L Workforce. This appendix will

also identify ongoing and planned initiatives that will help recruit, retain, and develop the AT&L Workforce. We are excited that many of the identified Army AL&T Workforce initiatives will gain momentum since Congress created a new Defense Acquisition Workforce Development Fund (*2008 NDAA Section 852*) to support such recruitment, retention, and development activities for the DOD AT&L community. Stay tuned to the USAASC Web site (<http://asc.army.mil>) where we will announce and post a link to the new DOD HCSP and the AT&L appendix when published.

### Army Contracting Workforce Update

The Army is transitioning its contracting capability to an expeditionary force that will provide contracting support across the full spectrum of Army operations. The Secretary of the Army established an independent *Commission on Army Acquisition and Program Management in Expeditionary Operations*, also known as the *Gansler Commission*, to review the lessons learned in recent operations and provide forward-looking recommendations to ensure that future military operations achieve greater effectiveness and transparency. As the Army contracting workforce begins this transition, the Human Capital Plan for Contracting will be updated to reflect the necessary changes to ensure the proper development, structure, and recruiting efforts to support the workforce.

Over the next 4 years, the Army Acquisition Corps (AAC) is forecasting a growth of approximately 1,000 civilian contracting personnel (based on the 16 concept plans that have been submitted for staffing) and 500 military personnel to support issues brought forward in the *Gansler Commission Report*. Of the military requirements, 300 will fill modified table of organization and equipment positions and 200 will support the generating force. The increase in military force structure will allow for a true Army Force Generation cycle within our military contracting officers, provide additional capability through generating force development, and support the intent of the *Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act* through training and experience achievement.

Additionally, we are reviewing several initiatives to assist civilian recruiting and retention activities relative to the *Gansler Commission Report*:

- Using student loan repayment as a recruitment incentive.
- Obtaining rehired annuitant authority and funding for a cadre of rehire annuitants through FY15 to mentor, train, and develop entry- and mid-level civilians.
- Providing retention incentives to retain mid- and senior-level civilians.

- Providing relocation incentives and funds to cover permanent change of station costs.

### Acquisition Workforce Training

The Army has developed and published an Acquisition, Education, Training and Experience catalog. This catalog highlights training opportunities for the AL&T Workforce and offers members a balance of quality education, career broadening experiences, and leadership training. Civilian and military AL&T Workforce professionals can participate in learning activities to augment required minimum education, training, and experience standards established for acquisition career field certification purposes. The Army also provides acquisition tuition assistance by funding workforce members to achieve bachelor's and master's degrees during off-duty hours. Acquisition certification is based on a balance of education, training, and experience.

### Army Acquisition Excellence Awards Ceremony

There are some workforce members whose performance and contributions to the warfighter set them apart from their peers. These extraordinary people will be recognized for their achievements at the annual Army Acquisition Excellence Awards Ceremony on Sunday, Oct. 5, 2008, at the Marriott® Crystal Gateway Hotel in Arlington, VA. I invite all AL&T Workforce members to join us in "Celebrating Our Acquisition Stars" and recognizing the significant accomplishments and achievements of our research and development laboratories, life-cycle logistics and contracting communities, our project/product managers and acquisition directors, and other acquisition excellence contributors. For more information or to make reservations, contact Marti Giella at (703) 805-1095/DSN 655-1095 or e-mail [USAASC.events@us.army.mil](mailto:USAASC.events@us.army.mil).



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## Contracting Community Highlights



This issue's feature article highlights the Army Program Manager for Strategic Sourcing (SS) discussing the Army's use of SS initiatives to improve mission performance and stretch procurement dollars. The Army-led DOD Wireless Handheld Communications Services is one of the most successful ongoing SS efforts.

Another article features the Army Contracting Agency Intern Boot Camp's role in sustaining the acquisition workforce. Large turnover is expected in the acquisition workforce as baby boomers achieve retirement eligibility. These interns will fill those vacancies and are preparing for their new responsibilities.

The volunteer efforts of the U.S. Army Contracting Command, Europe (USACCE) are described in another article. USACCE generously shared its technical, legal, and acquisition talent to aid operations in the Kuwait Contracting Office while continuing to fulfill its own customers' requirements. This willingness to stretch the command's own resources to bolster another acquisition office is a testimony to USACCE's dedication to our shared vision — "Army Contracting: One Community Serving our Soldiers, Serving our Nation."

The 2008 Procuring Contracting Officer (PCO)/Intern Training Symposium was held in Atlanta, GA, in April. Both our PCOs and interns are preparing for new challenges as the Army Acquisition Corps responds to the *Gansler Report* recommendations. Our seasoned PCOs will become our new senior management team and our interns will assume PCO responsibilities. Both groups are focused on receiving the training and experiences needed to provide rapid acquisition support to our Soldiers. For more information about the conference, see the articles on Pages 46 and 48.

Thank you to all contributors for sharing their experiences and knowledge, and to our readers for their commitment to the contracting profession. We appreciate support from the field in providing material for publication, and we hope you are finding the submissions informative and interesting.

**Wimpy Pybus**

Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army  
(Procurement)