



From the Acquisition Support Center Director

This summer brings the retirement of U.S. Army Acquisition Support Center (USAASC) Deputy Director COL Brian C. Winters after more than 26 years of military service. Since he assumed the position in August 2007, his accomplishments, leadership, and the goals he set for this organization have brought a new standard for acquisition career development. I consider myself truly blessed to have had such a superb, efficient, and trustworthy officer as part of our team. Following in COL Winters' footsteps will be COL Bill Boruff. A recent U.S. Army War College graduate, COL Boruff has served in numerous acquisition positions since 1995. Most recently, he served as the Commander, Defense Contract Management Agency (DCMA), Combat Vehicles BAE, York, PA. While serving there, he deployed to Iraq as Commander, DCMA Northern Iraq, October 2007–July 2008. He brings essential knowledge and expertise to the job and our expectations for his success run high.



Acquisition Growth

Last year, the Secretary of Defense announced his intent to grow the defense acquisition workforce 15 percent by FY15. As part of the Secretary's growth strategy initiative, the Army acquisition workforce is projected to grow by approximately 4,000 personnel associated with the DOD initiative to rebalance the workforce through insourcing. The balance of the growth—1,885—is pursued through new government civilian hires to Army acquisition workforce roles. To ensure proper vetting within the Army acquisition community, the Army established an Acquisition Workforce Growth Task Force that has been actively planning and deploying initiatives that support the defense acquisition workforce growth strategy. Acquisition workforce size is a function of the force planning process that reflects deliberate enterprise decisions from balancing total mission needs and available resources, including budget. While the Army has significant efforts underway to increase the size and improve the quality of its acquisition workforce, we operate under the constraint that "quantity is important, but quality is paramount." Task Force efforts have been finalized and details have been vetted within the functional communities. The growth details by acquisition organization, functional expertise, and FY for hires will be added to the growth strategy. The path ahead will continue using the *Section 852* Defense Acquisition Workforce Development Fund to assist the process.

USAASC Human Resources (HR) Summit

The 2010 USAASC HR Summit, held March 23–25, 2010, at the Fort Belvoir, VA, Officers Club, was an HR forum with

both civilian and military representatives from activities within the Direct Reporting Unit (DRU). Topics included insourcing, delegations, teleworking, *Section 852* workforce growth, regionalization, the Defense Civilian Acquisition Workforce Demonstration Project, and other Army programs and policies concerning HR. The summit was very successful in meeting our outcomes of:

- Providing the latest information on HR issues.
- Creating an open discussion/working environment among the program executive offices and USAASC on numerous topics germane to their HR functions and operations.
- Sharing and discussing lessons learned about policies, programs, and issues directly affecting the activities within the DRU.

We look forward to more HR summits in the years to come.

Delegations of Civilian Personnel Authorities

The Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs is responsible for the delegation of various personnel authorities to Army Commands, Army Service Component Commands, DRUs, and the Administrative Assistant to the Secretary of the Army (AASA) with authority to redelegate through command channels to commanders of independent field activities. The AASA maintains the authority to redelegate the authorities to HQDA Principal Officials. Within the past year, the AASA has delegated the following authorities:

- Voluntary early retirement authority/voluntary separation incentive.
- Expedited hiring authority for acquisition positions.
- Recruitment, relocation, retention, and enhanced retention incentives.

The AASA is working on the delegation of approximately 60 additional authorities. For more information, contact Gareth McKimmie at (703) 805-1015/DSN 655-1015 or garet.mckimmie@us.army.mil.

Army Acquisition Center of Excellence (AACoE)

In January 2010, the establishment of the AACoE in Huntsville, AL, was announced by LTG N. Ross Thompson III, then-Principal Military Deputy to the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics, and Technology (AL&T). AACoE will consolidate Army institutional training, education, and career development courses for the AL&T Workforce in one centralized area, offering increased student interaction with senior military and civilian leaders. As part of this effort, the FA51 Intermediate Qualification Course (IQC), hosted by the Institute for Advanced Technology at the University of Texas-Austin, will move to Huntsville and integrate into an AACoE in continued partnership with the College of Professional and Continuing Education, Huntsville, and the Defense Acquisition University (DAU) South Region. The AACoE will improve the effectiveness of our leader development while increasing acquisition synergy and reducing costs. Recently, the course was expanded to include civilian Competitive

Development Group and noncommissioned officer acquisition workforce members. Graduation is essential for assuming positions of greater responsibility. The first FA51 IQC in Huntsville will begin in January 2011.

U.S. Army Acquisition Corps (AAC) Annual Awards Ceremony

There are some acquisition 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 AAC Annual Awards Ceremony on Sunday, Oct. 24, 2010. I invite all AL&T Workforce members to join us in recognizing the significant accomplishments and achievements of these acquisition excellence contributors. For more information, contact Marti Giella at (703) 645-7653 or usaasc.events@conus.army.mil.

Farewell to Retiring USAASC Professionals, DAU President

It is with bittersweet recognition and extreme gratitude that I say goodbye to three USAASC acquisition professionals: Wanda Meisner, Mary McHale, and Cynthia Hermes. Meisner served as the Chief, Force Structures and Manpower Division, and her accomplishments included supervising, coaching, and mentoring a team of government and contractor professionals in developing and presenting the annual Military Acquisition Position List review and the Principal Military Deputy Command Review. Since December 2006, McHale served as the Acquisition Proponency Branch Chief. Among other responsibilities, she analyzed and identified Army acquisition workforce competency, skills, size, structure, and grade distribution requirements. Hermes is retiring as the *Army AL&T Magazine* and *Army AL&T Online* Editor-in-Chief. She has worked on the magazine staff for 12 years and has contributed extensively to the magazine's continual success. Collectively, these three professionals retire after achieving more than 100 years of successful federal service! Their hard work and dedication in supporting the AL&T Workforce will be sorely missed, but their contributions will influence the way we do business for many years to come. I wish them a healthy and happy retirement.

In closing, DAU President Frank Anderson Jr. brings another retirement from the acquisition community this season. Anderson initiated and successfully led the most comprehensive reengineering of DAU defense acquisition workforce training since its establishment as the Defense Systems Management College in 1971. Under Anderson's tenure, DAU was elevated to an internationally recognized corporate university, winning numerous awards from various civilian and military academies. Anderson's leadership and his devotion to the DOD acquisition workforce set the standard for future acquisition career development leaders. I wish him well in all his future endeavors.

Craig A. Spisak

Director, U.S. Army Acquisition Support Center

Contracting Community Highlights



When one hears the term “acquisition reform,” his/her initial response may be to say or think, “not again, been there, done that—and we still don’t have it right.” Today, our approach to acquisition reform is holistic, encompassing which technologies we use, what weapon systems we

buy, funding stability, and the business operations that underlie the whole process. The President and Congress have provided the guidance and legislation to address areas that need reform and improved efficiency in meeting these major problems. We have all heard that the problems start with the process when we establish the requirements for new weapon systems. Specifically, many times we establish requirements that are at the far limit of the technological boundaries. We seek exotic and unproven solutions to warfighting needs, i.e., the bells and whistles that entice. Sometimes these can lead to breakthrough developments, but more often, the result is a disappointing initial performance followed by cost and schedule overruns to correct those performance failures. Then, we repeat the cycle several times before eventually delivering a weapon system late, over budget, and still not at the performance levels that we originally wanted.

To address the issue of “requirements creep,” we will create Configuration Steering Boards that were endorsed by the *FY09 National Defense Authorization Act (Weapon Systems Acquisition Reform Act of 2009)*. These boards provide a mechanism to preclude destabilizing requirement changes and match requirements with mature technology. Program managers will employ this forum to control requirement changes and seek moderation of requirements that become drivers of excess cost in system design.

Additionally, we will employ several initiatives to align profitability with performance. Most contract fee structures, e.g., incentive fees, will be tied to contractor performance. The use of award fee contracts will be restricted to those situations where more objective measures do not exist. We will also rigorously examine service contract strategies to ensure an alignment of fees earned and services provided, and eliminate the use of unpriced contractual actions, whenever possible. Finally, we will ensure that the use of multiyear contracts is limited to instances when real, substantial savings are accrued to the taxpayer.

Army acquisition and contracting are not easy, but enormously complex and large, undertakings. Acquisition reform is similarly