From the Acquisition Support Center Director

I would like to begin by welcoming and introducing our new U.S. Army Acquisition Support Center (USAASC) Deputy Director, COL Brian C. Winters. He joins us after serving as the Chief, Acquisition Management Branch (AMB), U.S. Army Human Resources Command, Alexandria, VA. His previous assignments include Product Manager (PM) Army Watercraft Systems; Project Manager Force Protection, Program Executive Office (PEO) Combat Support & Combat Service Support, Warren, MI; and Program Analyst for the Army Chief of Staff's Program Analysis and Evaluation Directorate at the Pentagon.

Traditionally, we have had an extremely close working relationship with AMB and, with COL Winters joining us, it will truly provide synergy to that partnership. We are very fortunate to have a superb officer like COL Winters on our team and our expectations for his success run high. He brings essential knowledge and expertise to the job and, together with the USAASC team, we will continue to provide optimal support as quickly as possible to our Soldiers as they gallantly fight the global war on terrorism (GWOT). COL Winters follows in the footsteps of COL Fred Mullins who is now PM Training Devices, PEO Simulation, Training and Instrumentation, Orlando, FL.

USAASC Regional Customer Support Offices (CSOs)

In accordance with the *Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA)*, the USAASC Regional CSO missions are to develop, implement and execute acquisition workforce policy and procedures. CSOs are responsible for acquisition career development and management, ensuring that the Army Acquisition, Logistics and Technology (AL&T) Workforce receives consistent, accurate and timely information regarding acquisition programs, education, training and competitive opportunities generated by the Army Acquisition Corps (AAC) and Director, Acquisition Career Managment (DACM). CSOs ensure consistency between *DAWIA* and Army objective policies and programs pertaining to managing military and civilian AAC members and AL&T Workforce position requirements, while increasing awareness and participation of senior leaders in acquisition career management initiatives. The CSO vision is to provide superior career development and career management assistance in total support of our ultimate customer — the warfighter — through enhancing AL&T Workforce quality by attracting qualified new people and improving the training and motivation of current workforce members.

With GWOT and USAASC's response to *Program Budget Decision 753*, significant resource cuts, including manpower, had to be absorbed throughout the organization. To minimize the direct effect on existing staff, USAASC accommodated this Table of Distribution and Allowances reduction through existing and known impending vacancies. Once those reductions were realized, it became paramount to restructure USAASC resourcing to respond to existing and increasing mission/workload resulting from our recent designation as a Direct Reporting Unit to the Assistant Secretary of the Army for AL&T. The Regional CSO construct responded by consolidating all remaining and staffed CSOs into two regional hubs:

- Eastern Region Headquarters (HQ), Fort Belvoir, VA, with CSOs at Fort Belvoir and Aberdeen, MD.
- Western Region HQ, Redstone Arsenal, AL, with CSOs at Huntsville, AL; White Sands, NM; and Warren, MI.

Ensuring that our customer support mission did not diminish because of the restructuring, many business practices were revisited using Lean Six Sigma principles. This resulted in significant automation enhancement development and deployment in FY07:

- *DAWIA certification process. DAWIA* certificates are now available electronically through the careerist's Acquisition Career Record Brief (ACRB) module. The application, review, notification and documentation process is now completely virtual via the Certification Management System (CMS) enhancement to the Civilian Acquisition Personnel & Position Management (CAPPMIS) database. An automated certification process for more than 1,000 Level 1 achievements in program management and acquisition logistics was piloted, thus negating the need for a paper-intensive application process. CMS will go live in the first quarter of FY08.
- *DAWIA AAC process. DAWIA* AAC certificates are now available electronically through the careerist's ACRB module. In FY08, a virtual process to automate the AAC application, review, notification and documentation process through a CAPPMIS enhancement will be deployed.
- *Enhancements to the Individual Development Plan system in CAPPMIS*. The awarding of continuous learning points and completed status documentation of all Defense Acquisition University (DAU) coursework is now automated.

This has significantly reduced the administrative burden on AL&T Workforce members as well as their supervisors.

- *Automated response systems.* Several of our CSOs have automated phone response systems with 24/7 response capability to our careerists seeking guidance on ACRB edits, certification and AAC application processes, as well as procedures for DAU training applications. We are in the process of expanding this capability throughout the AL&T Workforce. We are taking the automated response systems one step further in FY08, by developing a Web-enabled response system entitled "Ask An ACM," which will also provide 24/7 response capability via the USAASC Web site.

Interactive Customer Evaluation (ICE) Program

In an effort to extend our outreach to the AL&T Workforce and pursue continuous improvement, we are implementing the Defense Information Systems Agency-sponsored ICE program. ICE allows AL&T Workforce members to submit online comment cards to rate USAASC services and provide suggestions for improvement. By clicking the link, **http://ice.disa.mil/index.cfm?fa=card&service_provider_id=106027&site_id=336&service_category_id=14**, which will be made available on the USAASC Web portal and on all e-mail correspondence from USAASC personnel, you are taken directly to a feedback sheet. The default submission is anonymous, but you can add contact information if you want a direct response. I see this as an opportunity to enhance responsiveness to the workforce's needs and to enable USAASC to better achieve its mission. We welcome any comments, criticisms and, of course, any accolades.

Senior Rater Potential Evaluation (SRPE) Revamped

The SRPE provides a means for civilians to better understand their leadership strengths and weaknesses for developmental purposes and allows them to demonstrate their leadership potential when competing on selection boards. Unfortunately, until recently, SRPEs did not receive the same level of management attention that is routinely placed on the Officer Evaluation Report senior rater section, resulting in an unfavorable outcome for our competing civilians in best-qualified (BQ) situations.

As the SRPE is not a mandatory business practice for the entire AL&T Workforce, the resulting SRPE profiles for our civilian BQ competitors are often not mature. To address this anomaly, it is anticipated that the Army's DACM will revisit mandating the annual completion of a SRPE for those at the GS-13 and above levels (to include broadband equivalents). Please note: the SRPE does remain a requirement for all BQ opportunities including Project/Product Manager Boards, Competitive Development Group (CDG)/Army Acquisition Fellows (AAF) and Acquisition, Education, Training and Experience Boards.

With the introduction and existence of so many different civilian pay systems, including the Total Army Personnel Evaluation System, Acquisition Demonstration Project, the National Security Personnel System and the Laboratory Demonstration Projects, USAASC found that the execution of SRPEs became increasingly difficult for our senior raters, and created even smaller profile ranges. In response, USAASC modified the SRPE policy and procedures in July 2007, and created more equitable and sizable profile ranges for the civilian AL&T Workforce by consolidating like pay scales into single profile ranges.

I cannot emphasize enough the importance and benefit of the completion of annual SRPEs for the entire AL&T Workforce at the GS-13 and above levels. This practice will enable a healthy and historical profile supporting our civilian AL&T Workforce BQ applicants and aligning them with their military peers.

SRPE policy and guideline changes can be found at **http://asc.army.mil/docs/policy /SPRE_policy.pdf**.

For more information about SRPE, Regional CSOs and automated customer support enhancements, contact Kelly Terry at **kelly.terry@us.army.mil** or (732) 532-1406/(DSN) 992-1406.

Competitive Board Announcements — Call for Nominations

- FY09 Army Acquisition Director, Key Billet Positions — Closes Oct. 12, 2007
  https://www.hrc.army.mil/site/protect/Active/opfam51/FY09_Army_Acquisition_Director_Key_Billet.htm
- CDG/AAF — Closes Nov. 2, 2007
  http://asc.army.mil/docs/programs/cdg/CDG_AAF_YG08_Announcement_updated.pdf
- Acquisition Tuition Assistance Program — Closes Nov. 15, 2007
  http://asc.army.mil/career/programs/atap/atap_announce.cfm

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