



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

PROGRAM EXECUTIVE OFFICE
GROUND COMBAT SYSTEMS
6501 E. ELEVEN MILE ROAD
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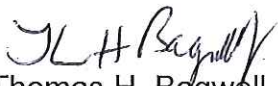
SFAE-GCS

28 July 2017

MEMORANDUM FOR Director, U.S. Army Acquisition Support Center, 9900 Belvoir Road, Building 201, Suite 101, Marti Giella, Fort Belvoir, VA 22060-5567

SUBJECT: Program Executive Office, Ground Combat Systems (PEO GCS)
Nomination of Colonel James W. Schirmer, Project Manager, Armored Fighting Vehicles, for the 2017 Army Acquisition Executive's (AAE) Excellence in Leadership Project Manager/Project Director Office Professional of the Year Award (06 Level)

1. I am proud to nominate Colonel James W. Schirmer for the 2017 Army Acquisition Executive's (AAE) Excellence in Leadership Project Manager/Project Director Office Professional of the Year Award (06 Level). COL Schirmer is responsible for the life cycle management, including cost, schedule and performance, of the Army's Armored Fighting Vehicles Team (AFV).
2. COL Schirmer successfully led one of the most challenging Acquisition portfolios. His calm and confident leadership successfully kick started the CSA's number one priority for the Army, the Mobile Protected Firepower (MPF) program, while simultaneously driving the Paladin/PIM program towards a Full Rate Production decision point, upgrading the Bradley Fighting Vehicle fleet and delivering the first combat vehicles in support of the Army's European Deterrence Initiative (EDI) –all on schedule and within budget.
3. COL Schirmer's leadership instills an expectation of success across the organization forming a team that is motivated, mission-focused and ready to tackle any challenge that may arise.
4. Without hesitation, I endorse COL Schirmer's credentials and strongly urge favorable consideration of this award nomination.
5. Point of contact for this nomination is Mr. Craig Koponen at craig.l.koponen.civ@mail.mil or 586-282-5257.


Thomas H. Bagwell, Jr.
Deputy Program Executive Officer,
Ground Combat Systems

2017 Army Acquisition Executive's (AAE) Excellence in Leadership Award

***PROJECT MANAGEMENT/PROJECT DIRECTOR
PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR (06 LEVEL)***

Nominating Organization:

MG David G. Bassett
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6501 East 11 Mile Road
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Nomination Submission POC:

Craig Koponen
HR Analyst, PEO-GCS-Human Capital
586-282-5257
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Name, Grade, and Position Title of Nominee(s):

James W. Schirmer
COL Project Manager, Armored Fighting Vehicles
james.w.schirmer.mil@mail.mil

Award Narrative

Specific Achievements:

Initiation of the Mobile Protected Firepower (MPF) Program - With the successful completion of the MPF AROC and MDD in Jun 16, the MPF program was launched. His team has conducted multiple engagements with Industry and Govt organizations to refine and adjust the program requirements set to fit a rapid NDI acquisition strategy. He has coordinated multiple engagements between Industry Leadership and the CSA and his staff to synchronize the Chief's intent for MPF with potential vendor understanding of the program and to shape the overall MPF Acquisition Strategy. He has tirelessly worked untold hours maintaining constant information flow throughout the Army's staff, ASA(ALT), FORSCOM, TRADOC leadership, and other stakeholders to ensure that this program is well grounded and thoroughly understood as it is poised to launch towards Milestone B in 1QtrFY18.

Property Accountability – Through COL Schirmer's clear direction and coaching PM AFV has established a property accountability framework that is likely to become the solution across the DOD. PM AFV hosted a meeting with APEO staff, ASA(ALT) Acquisition Logistics Policy Directorate (SAAL-LP), BAE and DCMA at which a recommended solution was presented to ASA(ALT) Acquisition Logistics Policy Directorate for inclusion in the upcoming Phase II Audit in June/July 2017. The proposed solution has significant merit as it would sufficiently reduce workload requirements while leveraging established processes/procedures in place by Industry and DCMA. ASA(ALT) Acquisition Logistics Policy Directorate identified it as a potential DoD solution for property accountability, non-fielded property and DPAS.

PIM IOT&E – The M109A7 IOT&E was prematurely ended in Nov16 due to toxic fumes concerns. COL Schirmer aggressively addressed these issues and provided guidance and support to the Self Propelled Howitzer System Team in laying down the root cause analysis and programmatic impacts. During accelerated comparison tests, the M284 legacy Canon breech components were implicated in these issues. Improved reliability program for these parts were quickly manufactured and tested with full qualification completed in July 2017 and will be used in the upcoming restart of IOTE. His innovative and critical thinking were instrumental in a quick efficient re-planning of the IOTE restart, FUE, and production acquisition strategy.

European Deterrence Initiative (EDI) - COL Schirmer has superbly managed the Project Management team's response to the Army's EDI efforts. His oversight, guidance, and motivation allowed the team to successfully meet all requirements in support the Army's EDI. Despite limited resources and schedule challenges and various other hurdles, combat vehicle platforms are being delivered to their destinations on time and within budget.

Value of contributions:

Effectively Execute Programs:

Given the breadth and complexity of COL Schirmer's assigned portfolio and the successful execution of those programs as noted in this document, it is clear that COL Schirmer's knowledge and tenacity have resulted in the organizations' ability to positively impact the Warfighter within the Armored Brigade Combat Team.

Strive to be Efficient with Limited Resources:

In response to programmatic challenges, financial constraints, and unexpected issues COL Schirmer has challenged his team to look at every issue as an opportunity to discover an innovative way to address the evolving acquisition strategies and develop more efficient methodologies to tackle each problem.

Internal/External Effective Communication:

COL Schirmer's critical reasoning skills and ability to clearly articulate complex acquisition concepts, strategies, and technical challenges in open discussions with stakeholders from various organizational backgrounds has allowed him to provide clarity to the senior Army leadership and bring consensus across the diverse realm of DoD components.

Developing the Acquisition Workforce:

COL Schirmer is dedicated to promoting competency management strategies, methodologies, and initiatives. He has championed the PEO's Competency Management Work Group initiative to have programs where vacancies are anticipated through forecasting and analysis; and active training, mentoring and coaching efforts generating pools of qualified candidates that are ready to step up.

Demonstration of leadership:

COL Schirmer effectively managed multiple ACAT I programs and a pre-MDAP program with efforts across every stage of the life cycle. Most significant were his efforts in guiding and mentoring the MPF team as they successfully initiated the CSA's number one priority for the Army, as noted previously in this document. In his free time, he also led the teams as they managed the M109A7 PIM ACAT ID program into LRIP, Bradley's three ACAT IC sized ECP efforts (specifically Bradley Track and Suspension ECP, Bradley A4 ECP (mobility), and Bradley A5 ECP (lethality); this along with a host of smaller critical operational enhancement programs such as the APS Characterization effort on Bradley to maximize on vehicle soldier protection and the MANPADS modification to enhance ADA capabilities within the ABCT. COL Schirmer also helped to manage a shrinking industrial base with multiple issues impacting his programs and the employment of U.S. citizens in multiple congressional districts. These issues generated significant levels of Congressional interest. He worked with second tier suppliers to assure the industrial base was capable of supporting the equipment produced in each of his product lines with emphasis on specialty metals, combat vehicle engineering, manufacturing processes/readiness, and vehicle electronics technologies.

Project Manager specific Criteria:

As the Project Manager, Armored Fighting Vehicle (AFV), COL Schirmer successfully led one of the most challenging Acquisition portfolios. His calm and confident leadership successfully kick started the CSA's number one priority for the Army, the Mobile Protected Firepower (MPF) program, while simultaneously resolving challenges with the initial Paladin/PIM Initial Operational Test and Evaluation process, that impact the Army's howitzer fleet and driving the Paladin/PIM program towards a Full Rate Production decision point; as well as delivering upgrades for the Bradley Fighting Vehicle fleet. He is responsible for cost, schedule, performance and life cycle management of 8 product lines. These include the Bradley Fighting Vehicle Systems (BFVS): M2A3 Infantry Fighting Vehicle (IFV), M3A3 Cavalry Fighting Vehicle (CFV), and Bradley Fire Support Team (BFIST); Self Propelled Howitzer Systems: M109A6 Paladin & Field Artillery Ammunition Supply Vehicle (FAASV), M109A7 and M992A3 Carrier Ammunition Tracked (CAT); Future Fighting Vehicle (FFV)/Next Generation Fighting Vehicle (NGCV); the new start Mobile Protected Firepower (MPF); the Chief of Staff's number one priority; and ongoing product improvement and survivability programs. He is responsible for effectively communicating program priorities, requirements and schedules with OSD, HQDA, ACOMs, TRADOC, other PEOs, PMs and our foreign and Industry partners.

Award Citation

COL Schirmer successfully led one of the most challenging Acquisition portfolios. His calm and confident leadership successfully kick started the CSA's number one priority for the Army, the Mobile Protected Firepower (MPF) program, while simultaneously driving the Paladin/PIM program towards a Full Rate Production decision point, upgrading the Bradley Fighting Vehicle fleet and delivering the first combat vehicles in support of the Army's European Deterrence Initiative (EDI) –all on schedule and within budget.