

DACM OFFICE SUPPORT FOR ARMY ACQUISITION WORKFORCE RECRUITING

This document outlines the Army Acquisition Workforce recruiting strategy and supporting lines of effort (LOE).

➔ Army Acquisition Workforce (AAW) Recruiting Strategy

- **Purpose:** This overarching and enduring recruitment strategy supports broad and targeted efforts to identify and recruit professional experts into the Army Acquisition Workforce. Two LOEs support this recruiting strategy: (1) Military AAW Recruiting Strategy; and (2) Civilian AAW Recruiting Support Strategy. (Please note that as part of each Line of Effort, separate civilian and military recruiting strategies will be developed that nest with this strategy.)
- **Strategy:** Implement deliberate and targeted recruiting efforts across the Army acquisition enterprise that are in line with both the Army People Strategy and the Army Modernization Strategy. Ensure a continuous understanding of areas of opportunity along with the targeted needs of the Army and the Army acquisition community.
- **Desired End State:** The Army Acquisition Workforce has the right people, in the right place, at the right time. This includes:
 - The best talent at each grade level/rank
 - Strong health of Functional Areas within Commands/Organizations
 - Retention of quality professionals and implementation of deliberate succession planning
- ➔ **LOE 1: Military Recruiting.** Attracting, identifying, and selecting high performing individuals to serve in the military component of the Army Acquisition Workforce is a critical aspect of the recruiting management lifecycle of the AAW. Develop and execute a targeted military recruiting strategy to engage and acquire outstanding talent for FA51 and Career Management Field (CMF) 51 based on needs of the AAW. Leverage data, expertise, and skills in the Army DACM Office to enable military recruiting at various points in the Soldier lifecycle. This line of effort may require establishing and maintaining relationships with recruiting and personnel organizations such as U.S. Army Cadet Command, United States Military Academy, and U.S. Army Human Resources Command (HRC) to enhance overall communication and collaboration, and to leverage existing Army enterprise-wide recruiting efforts.

- **Desired Outcome:** AAW military strength by basic branch aligns largely to the Army's composition while meeting specific targets (knowledge, skills, and behaviors (KSBs)); Military members are competitive for promotion and future assignments.

- ➔ **LOE 2: Civilian Recruiting.** Attracting, identifying, and selecting high performing individuals to serve in the Civilian component of the Army Acquisition Workforce is a critical aspect of the recruiting management lifecycle of the AAW. Develop and implement an effective and sustainable Civilian recruitment support strategy that leverages the strengths and influence of the DACM Office to complement and support the Civilian recruiting strategies of commands and organizations that have Army acquisition positions. Develop tools (e.g., quick reference guides, compensation calculators, etc.) and provide guidance to Army acquisition commands and organizations, along with tailorable solutions that allow each organization to meet their unique needs while also supporting the needs of the AAW. Such a toolkit may include a consolidated recruitment calendar, recommendations of use of Direct Hiring Authority (DHA) and best practices, leveraging organizational hiring events and the Defense College Acquisition Intern Program (DCAIP), and finally, incorporating more contemporary hiring practices. This line of effort will also require establishing and maintaining partnerships with recruiting and personnel organizations such as the Army Civilian Human Resources Agency (CHRA) to enhance overall communication and collaboration, and to leverage existing Army enterprise-wide recruiting efforts.

- **Desired Outcome:** The AAW includes a professional Civilian population that meets specific targets (KSBs).

- ➔ **Intent:** The Army Acquisition Workforce recruiting strategy implemented by the Army Director, Acquisition Career Management (DACM) Office:
 - Defines current state, establishes baseline(s) and identifies recruiting gaps and opportunities.
 - Synchronizes messaging and identifies opportunities for integration and collaboration across the Army acquisition enterprise.

- ➔ **Current State, Baselines and Gaps:** In 2022, the Army DACM Office AAW recruiting working group conducted a SWOT analysis (*see Figure 1*) and received past and current workforce data from the organization's Analysis and Planning Branch (*see Figures 2, 3 & 4*).

SWOT



Strengths

- The AAW provides an opportunity to serve the warfighter – meaningful work
- **Work/Life Balance (flexible work schedules)**
- **Competitive Pay**
- **One career with a wealth of opportunities around the world**
- Career Incentives (education / leadership programs and training)
- Job Security / Retirement Benefits

Weaknesses

- **Work/Life Balance (flexible work schedules)**
- **Competitive Pay**
- **Time to hire**
- Enterprise messaging/outreach
- Stove-piped efforts
- Lack of awareness/education about authorities and intern programs
- Lack of community-wide Career Coaching/Mentoring resources and guidance

Opportunities

- Early engagement to expand talent pool
 - Consider junior level opportunities (GS-5/7) and underrepresented populations
- Leverage Technology
- Outreach Campaign to increase awareness of Army acquisition; educate on federal careers and career ladders
- Prioritize hiring **talent** (both internal and external)
- Target STEM and at-risk Functional Areas
- Leverage stakeholders and key influencers to promote the AAW

Threats

- Pay and Flexible work schedules
- **Time to hire**
- Negative perception of existing federal hiring processes (pre-selection)
- Limited resources
- **Undesirable locations**



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Figure 1: AAW Recruiting SWOT Analysis

What Data Does (and Doesn't) Tell Us



- ❑ **We're recruiting more people earlier in their career.** We are recruiting more younger people than we're losing. Therefore, the workforce is becoming more balanced
 - ❑ Since FY17, "Joins" have exceeded "Losses" across all ages under age 55
 - ❑ The largest excesses among ages <30 years
 - ❑ AAW "Losses" have remained generally consistent since FY13
- ❑ **We see more attrition* among people who are not retirement eligible.** The majority of AAW losses are among those who are not-Retirement Eligible
 - ❑ In FY21 not-Retirement Eligible losses were 61% of total losses.
 - ❑ For ages under 35 years, Joins were more than twice Losses
- ❑ **In FY21 the Purchasing and Life Cycle Logistics career fields (pre-BtB) had the highest potential for excessive Retirement-eligible losses**
 - ❑ About 7,300 AAW employees (17% of AAW)
- ❑ **It's hard to determine why people move in and out of jobs;** Individual employee choices are inherently personal and hard to predict



*Attrition is defined as someone who has left the AAW

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Figure 2: What the AAW Data Does (and Doesn't) Tell Us

Additional Data



- **We see more attrition among people who are not retirement eligible.** The majority of AAW losses are among those who are not-Retirement Eligible
 - In FY21 not-Retirement Eligible losses were 61% of total losses.
 - The majority of these losses are at the GS 12 and 13 levels



Figure 3: Data on Not-Retirement Eligible Losses

Additional Data (cont.)



(Data below is specific to USAASC DRU (including PEOs) from a 2020 study)

Ideally, we have a system that allows junior personnel to progress through a career path to become senior leaders and managers. However, the snapshot data reveals potential impediments to such an idealized human resources system that may be additional causes for unintended and possibly inequitable outcomes.

As would be generally expected, data show that higher age, higher years of federal service, and higher educational achievement are all directly correlated with higher pay grade.

Note that there are many fewer GS-14 equivalent positions compared to GS-13 (4x as many GS-13 positions as GS-14). Therefore, there appears likely that a GS-14 “bottleneck” for “homegrown” talent to progress to GS-15.

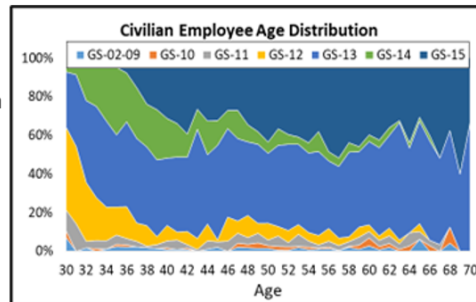


Figure 4: Additional Data Point on Civilian Employee Age Distribution by Grade

This research resulted in identification of four problem statements to be addressed in this AAW Recruiting Strategy:

1. Given that recruitment efforts across the Army Acquisition Workforce enterprise are stovepiped, how might **we improve cross-collaboration**, and share information and resources?
2. Given that it's hard to determine why people move in and out of jobs, how might we **inform and educate potential workforce professionals** about the wealth of opportunities in the AAW, along with the critical role of supporting the warfighter so that they choose to make Army acquisition their long-term career of choice?
3. Given that the Army competes for quality talent, how might we **leverage workplace flexibilities, authorities, technology and competitive pay** to recruit professionals who will gain meaningful experience, persist in the workforce and become experts?
4. (Retention-focused) Given that we see more attrition among people who are not retirement eligible, how might we **retain quality talent** so that we build and sustain a strong Army Acquisition Workforce now and into the future?

➔ **Messaging and Targeted Actions:** Integration and collaboration of strategic messages, engagements and targeted actions is critical to success of this AAW recruiting strategy.

- **Messaging.** A broad Army acquisition enterprise message should be incorporated into all relevant engagements, including in-person and virtual events as well as print and digital materials. (A list of sample messages can be found in Figure 5.)

Messaging



- The Army Acquisition Workforce cultivates innovation, designs the impossible and provides Soldiers with what they need to be successful.
- The Army needs Civilians and Military personnel who have education and experience in STEM and Digital fields to meet the technical requirements of the Army Acquisition mission. However, there are opportunities in Army acquisition for those with other areas of expertise. Having a range of skillsets within the workforce enables diversity of thought.
- There is so much opportunity with a career in Army acquisition. There's job stability and retirement benefits, but also that unique ability to support an important mission – supporting the Army and our warfighters.
- Did you know: The Army hires Civilians, too! Most of the Army Acquisition Workforce (~95%) is made up of Army Civilians.
- Working in Army acquisition means you can have direct experience developing, producing and sustaining the systems and equipment that revolutionize the way the Army fights.
- Join the ~32,000 Army Acquisition Workforce where there are opportunities in science and engineering to accounting, program managers and logistics in more than 20 commands/organizations across the globe.

Figure 5: AAW Recruiting Enterprise Messaging

- **Targeted Actions:** AAW recruitment efforts should be proactive and coordinated across the Army acquisition enterprise. Actions should support one or more of the problem statements and be leveraged for resource- and information sharing and cross-promotion.

Initial Targeted Actions by Problem Statement include:

Problem Statement 1: Given that recruitment efforts across the Army Acquisition Workforce enterprise are stovepiped, how might we **improve cross-collaboration**, and share information and resources?

- Provide consistent updates and opportunities to share information (AAW Recruiting Collaboration Forums; HCSP Council meetings; ACMA Summits; etc.)
- Continuous workforce assessments (quantitative and qualitative) via focus groups, data collection and sharing of information and best practices.
- Identify opportunities for cost-/resource-sharing; share information about quality applicants and hiring needs.

Problem Statement 2: Given that it's hard to determine why people move in and out of the acquisition workforce, how might we **inform and educate potential workforce professionals** about the wealth of opportunities in the AAW, along with the critical role of supporting the warfighter so that they choose to make Army acquisition their long-term career of choice?

- Implement an outreach campaign to potential candidates via stakeholder networks and key influencers.
- Capture and share the AAW employee experience (e.g., Faces of the Force profiles; speakers for events).
- Develop/Enhance Career Models to demonstrate the life-cycle of opportunities in the AAW.

Problem Statement 3: Given that the Army competes for quality talent, how might we **leverage workplace flexibilities, authorities, technology and competitive pay** to recruit professionals who will gain meaningful experience, persist in the workforce and become experts?

- Develop a resource toolkit that includes relevant recruiting and hiring policies and guidance.
- Identify and share career coaching and mentoring resources and guidance.
- Consolidate standardized processes and procedures for leveraging workplace flexibilities and other work/life balance initiatives.

Problem Statement 4: (Retention-focused) Given that we see more attrition among people who are not retirement eligible, how might we **retain quality talent** so that we build and sustain a strong Army Acquisition Workforce now and into the future?

- Identify opportunities to recruit from military population (Reserve component; transitioning service members) or those who have expressed a propensity to serve.
- Collect information and data from and on those choosing to stay or leave the AAW.
- Promote opportunities for reskilling/upskilling the workforce, along with career and leader development opportunities.

➤ **Assessment:** Identifying measures of success (performance and effectiveness) play a key role in shaping this recruiting strategy. While the SWOT analysis and other metrics were used to identify the initial Current State, Baseline and Gaps, metrics should continue to be utilized throughout the year to shape future iterations of this strategy (*see Figure 6*). It is recommended that metrics be tracked on a six-month and annual basis.



Figure 6: Establish Current State, Implement Targeted Actions and Capture Metrics, which reshape the Current State

It is important to note that, as noted in Figure 2, it is hard to determine why people move in and out of jobs. It may also be challenging to draw a direct parallel between the targeted actions outlined in this strategy to outcomes such as an increase in quality applicants and job placements. While, as part of this strategy, metrics will be reviewed on a consistent basis, it is also recommended that a longer assessment take place, such as in the next two and five years, to determine any significant changes in hiring behavior.

Overarching objectives are below. Each LOE (Civilian and Military) requires a targeted strategy that nests and works towards meeting these objectives. These targeted strategies will include specific Measures of Performance (MOP) and Measures of Effectiveness (MOE), demonstrating accomplishment of actions and changes in behavior.

- **Objective 1:** There is improved cross-collaboration across the Army Acquisition Workforce enterprise.
- **Objective 2:** Potential Army Acquisition Workforce professionals are aware of, and understand the wealth of opportunities in the AAW, along with the critical role of supporting the warfighter.
- **Objective 3:** Army Acquisition Workforce hiring officials and talent management professionals know, understand and leverage workplace flexibilities, authorities, technology and competitive pay to recruit professionals.
- **Objective 4:** (Retention-focused) Quality talent is retained, building and sustaining a strong Army Acquisition Workforce now and into the future.