



**Director, Acquisition Career Management Office**

# NEWS

*The Army DACM Office is responsible for talent management, career/leader development, Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act certification, policy, and advocating for the professionals who are members of the Army Acquisition Workforce.*

Personnel from PAE Agile Sustainment and Ammunition; Project Manager Maneuver Ammunition Systems; PAE Maneuver Ground, DEVCOM Armaments Center; U.S. Marine Corps; U.S. Navy, Maneuver Center of Excellence Maneuver Requirements Division; and Army Capability Manager ABCT witnessed a C-UAS demonstration featuring the M2A4 Bradley Fighting Vehicle at Yuma Proving Ground on Sept. 17, 2025. (Photo courtesy of Yuma Testing Center)



## EXTENSIONS TO CERTIFICATION GRACE PERIOD AND FIVE PRORATED CONTINUOUS LEARNING POINTS

As a result of the 43-day lapse of federal appropriations, a recently signed Army Director, Acquisition Career Management (DACM) Memorandum for Record (MFR) extends the certification grace period by 90 days for Army acquisition professionals whose certification was due during the first quarter of fiscal year 2026. Additionally, the memo prorates five Continuous Learning Points (CLPs) to all members of the Army Acquisition Workforce (AAW). The Army DACM Office updated the Career Acquisition Personnel and Position Management Information System records of those whose certification due dates occurred during the first quarter of fiscal year 2026, specifically, Oct. 1 – Dec. 31, 2025.

This MFR supports guidance from a Human Capital Initiatives (HCI) memorandum signed by Ms. Elizabeth Bryant, Director, HCI on Oct. 28. Army acquisition professionals are expected to meet

their Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA) statutory requirements, which include but are not limited to achieving certification, updating their individual development plan, attaining 80 CLPs every two years, completing a Senior Rater Potential Evaluation and completing the annual acquisition ethics training requirement. These standards are outlined in the fiscal year **2025 AAW Standards** [memo here](#).

### WHAT'S INSIDE:

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U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Luis Andujar, a Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems instructor with 1st Battalion, 166th Regiment - Regional Training Institute, Pennsylvania Army National Guard, lands a Skydio X2D SUAS during a training exercise Nov. 15, 2024, at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pa.

## FROM THE DACM: THE FOUR PILLARS OF ARMY ACQUISITION WORKFORCE REFORM

Rob Richardson Jr., Director, Acquisition Career Management (DACM)



The **Director of Acquisition Career Management (DACM)** Office mission is to recruit, train and retain an agile, adaptive and professional workforce with the acquisition acumen and critical thinking skills to accelerate delivery capability to Soldiers. We embrace change and we have a history of constant reform—so when big changes to the acquisition enterprise

and, in particular, the acquisition workforce, were announced in October 2025, it wasn't surprising.

As we move forward to incorporate these changes into the **Army Acquisition Workforce (AAW)**, there are four imperatives for us to follow: a bias for action, putting commercial solutions first, speed and being outcome-focused.

### IMPERATIVES OF REFORM

#### ***Maintain a bias for action.***

The acquisition enterprise in the past has been focused more on development—ensuring that the product or program is the best it can be before it is fielded. And while that can be beneficial, it can at times keep the workforce bogged down in the development process, instead of fielding capabilities that are needed right now. Therefore, our acquisition philosophy, our culture, needs to shift to an action-focused process. We need to always be looking for ways to innovate and accelerate delivery. The mindset needs to shift to entrepreneurial thinking, taking prudent risks and transparency in communication—understanding how risk affects your cost, schedule and

performance, and then being able to take those prudent, responsible risks to go faster, to get more capability and to work with nontraditional entities to buy down that risk and deliver capability.

Risk management should become a part of each acquisition professional's daily workflow. It should be first and foremost in your mind and adding steerage to your program, and not something that's briefed once a quarter as part of a program review.

#### ***Speed is king.***

Speed is imperative in the Army acquisition strategy. Secretary of War Pete Hegseth has emphasized that the force cannot wait—our adversaries are outpacing us on the battlefield. We need to get capabilities into the hands of Soldiers much faster. In the tortured triangle of cost, schedule and performance, the schedule is what really matters. We must create a mindset of speed in the AAW and provide the tools and training to achieve it—because when you go fast, you inherently take on risk. We also need leaders that support their workforce by underwriting the risk in order to enable this speed.

#### ***Focus on the outcome.***

Our job as an integral part of the Army modernization enterprise is to ensure that no American Soldier is ever in a fair fight, anywhere. We must continue to innovate so that Soldiers have greater range, better protection and better situational awareness than their adversaries.

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The outcome we're looking for is simple: the right kit in the hands of Soldiers at the right time. Perfection is the enemy of good enough. We need to develop capabilities with appropriate Soldier feedback and push out each new iteration quickly. We can't wait for perfect; if we wait, we're left wanting. We have to teach a mindset that favors outcome over process and we have to make that transition quickly.

#### **Put commercial solutions first.**

In the past, the workforce focused on long-term development of capabilities, like the **big five** of the 1980s—including the Abrams, the Bradley and the Patriot—but we don't have that kind of time anymore. We need to shift our mindset from development first to development last—as in adopt, adapt, develop. If we can't adopt a capability, adapt one. Development should generally be a last resort. Buying something off the shelf and fielding it immediately, with minimal modification, is the preferred option.

#### **THE PILLARS WORKING TOGETHER**

Much of the work we do is already aligned with those four pillars. Now, we need to focus on hammering home how to best achieve

those goals, through tools and training. Historically, many of the measurement tools in acquisition have been backward looking, which isn't particularly useful in managing a program. But implementing predictive modeling and artificial intelligence can help flag future obstacles, manage risk and generally assist our workforce in finding more effective and efficient solutions for the warfighter.

When I attended the **Data Driven Leadership Course** at Carnegie Mellon a couple of years ago, one of the speakers was the chief of data analytics for American Eagle. That company has dashboards and other predictive tools to help identify what fashion trends will be three years from now, so that stores will have the latest fashions in time for holiday shoppers. That's the kind of functionality we need in Army acquisition—predictive tech—to manage risks and accelerate delivery.

Read more of the **"Four Pillars of Acquisition Reform"** article [here](#).

## THE ARMY'S 2025 ACQUISITION REFORMS REVOLUTIONIZE PROCESSES TO EXPEDITE CUTTING-EDGE CAPABILITIES

On November 7, 2025, the Army launched its most ambitious **procurement overhaul** in decades—designed to slash bureaucracy, fast-track innovation and sharpen organizational agility. Central to this vision is the **Pathway for Innovation (PIT)**, a dedicated acquisition reform office anchoring this transformation and ensuring strategic alignment and operational impact.

By streamlining processes and consolidating oversight under newly empowered portfolio acquisition executives (PAEs), the reform strengthens unity across the Army enterprise—enabling the Army and its workforce to develop, test and field cutting-edge capabilities faster than ever before.

The six PAE organizations place a single leader in charge of every major aspect of their assigned capability

area—requirements, science and technology, contracting, acquisition, testing, programming, sustainment and international sales—to oversee and integrate disparate acquisition functions

across the enterprise; creating clear ownership, accountability and streamlined decision-making. Additionally, each PAE will have an embedded senior contracting official with the authority to award



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contracts quickly, eliminating bottlenecks and simplifying the process for industry.

This restructuring replaces current program executive offices (PEOs) with a structure that aligns programs under broader capability portfolios ensuring resources, priorities and outcomes are better synchronized across the Army's modernization efforts.

The new PAE construct includes:

#### Maneuver Air

(PEO Aviation, Rapid Capabilities and Critical Technologies Office (RCCTO)).

#### Maneuver Ground

(PEO Soldier, PEO Combat Support and Combat Service Support (CS&CSS), PEO Ground Combat Systems (GCS)).

#### Fires

(PEO GCS, PEO Missiles and Space (M&S), Joint Program Executive Office for Armaments and Ammunition (JPEO A&A), RCCTO).

#### Agile Sustainment and Ammo

(JPEO A&A).

#### Layered Protection and Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Defense Command and Control

(JPEO for Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Defense (CBRND), PEO Intelligence, Electronic Warfare and Sensors (IEW&S)).

#### Counter Command and Control

(PEO for Simulation, Training and Instrumentation (STRI), PEO IEW&S, PEO Command, Control, Communications and Network (C3N)).

"Under the current fragmented process, accountability is distributed across multiple organizations and functions, creating misalignment between critical stakeholders," said Brent Ingraham, assistant secretary of the Army for acquisition, logistics and technology (ASA (ALT)), and Army Acquisition Executive, in an Army release. "Aligning this reform with operational concepts better postures the Army to deliver capabilities our Soldiers need without delay."

**Continue reading here** – "Behind The Frontlines" article was authored by writer and editor Cheryl Marino.

## CONGRATS, GRADS!

### YEAR GROUP 2024 PARTICIPANTS GRADUATE FROM THE LEAD PROGRAM

On August 20, 2025, six Army Acquisition Workforce members graduated from the **Leadership Excellence and Acquisition Development (LEAD)** program. Sponsored by the U.S. Army Acquisition Support Center's (USAASC) Director, Acquisition Career Management (DACM) Office, LEAD is a 12-month leadership development program that offers selected participants expanded training, leadership and other career development opportunities to build skills to develop future Army acquisition program managers.

The graduates are:

**Joseph Neuman**, Army Contracting Command, Detroit Arsenal

**James Smith, Jr.**, Program Executive Office (PEO) Enterprise

**Melissa Pitts**, Capability Program Executive, Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Defense (CPE CBRND)

**Callie Bounds**, CPE CBRND

**Jessica Gregris**, Capability Program Executive Command, Control, Communications and Network (CPE C3N)

**Katrina Harris**, PEO Combat Support and Combat Service Support



Six Army Acquisition Workforce members graduated from the DACM's LEAD program in a ceremony held on August 20, 2025, at the Defense Acquisition University, Fort Belvoir, Virginia. From back left, Joseph Neumann, Army Contracting Command – Detroit Arsenal; James Smith, PEO Enterprise; Melissa Pitts, JPEO CBRND; Marty Zybura, deputy to the Deputy for Acquisition and Systems Management; Ronald R. Richardson Jr., Army DACM; and Vicky DeGuzman, chief of the Workforce Development and Engagement division. From front left, Katrina Harris, PEO Combat Support and Combat Service Support; Jessica Gregris, PEO Command, Control, Communications and Network; Callie Bounds, JPEO CBRND; and Kim Gibbons, LEAD program manager. (Photo by Rebecca Wright, USAASC)

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Held at the Defense Acquisition University located on Fort Belvoir, Virginia, the ceremony was hosted by Kim Gibbons, US-AASC program manager for LEAD. The Year Group 2024 graduates had a bit of a rare experience compared to previous program groups. **Previously, the LEAD program was 24-months in length.** Due to recent

government restructuring and the Army's emphasis on efficiency and faster capability delivery, this round of the program was compressed from the standard 24-months to 16 months. **The LEAD program has since condensed further to 12 months.**

**Read more here.**



## SPOTLIGHT ON SUCCESS

Meet **Staff Sgt. Summer McMahon**, proponent noncommissioned officer (NCO) with the **U.S. Army Acquisition Support Center (USAASC)**'s **DACM Office** at Ft. Belvoir, Virginia. McMahon's Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) is 51C (Contracting). This role involves guiding and supporting new and existing 51C NCOs, which takes skill, knowledge and special insight into the functional area which she serves. That's why, in a single year, Summer leveled up her own Contracting know-how by achieving six defense acquisition credentials and she's currently working on a seventh credential: "CCON 005 Contract Financing Credential".

Acquisition credentials provide the knowledge and associated skills to perform job-centric, niche and emerging functions in the acquisition environment. They enhance specific skill sets and improve your workplace performance. Whether you manage capability requirements, acquire services, systems or sustain capabilities, earning credentials can build your competence, confidence and value to you, your organization and the Warfighter.

For information about credentials: <https://www.dau.edu/credentials> Ensure you log in with your CAC to enroll in a credential through the DAU Virtual Campus at <https://dau.csod.com>.

Read Staff Sgt. McMahon's full Faces of the Force profile at <https://asc.army.mil/web/power-beyond-paperwork-staff-sgt-summer-l-mcmahon/>



## SPOTLIGHT ON SUCCESS

The Spotlight feature is your chance to highlight the interesting work you or your AAW teammates are doing in support of the warfighter. Don't be shy—tell us what you're working on. Fill out a nomination form and we'll help get the word out. Details are at: <https://asc.army.mil/web/submissions/>





## SPOTLIGHT ON SUCCESS

Meet **Steve Petrusevic**, a systems engineer working on the Combat Vehicle Program with **Program Executive Office for Ground Combat Systems (PEO GCS)** at Detroit Arsenal in Michigan. He holds a master's degree in systems engineering from Johns Hopkins University and a master's degree in business from Walsh College. Petrusevic went above and beyond his position's Defense Acquisition Workforce Initiative Act (DAWIA) requirements and achieved two certifications in 2022; Practitioner level in Engineering and Technical Management and Advanced level in Program Management.

**“The most important lesson I’ve learned over the course of my career is the value of adaptability. Early in my career, I faced a situation where a project’s requirements changed drastically midway through development. Initially, I struggled to adjust, but I quickly realized that being flexible and open to change was essential to success”.**

In this **“Embrace Uncertainty”** Faces of the Force profile, Petrusevic shares his impressions and lessons learned he picked up over the course of his career, particularly when encountering change and pressure on the job.

Petrusevic is a shining example of continuously improving his professional expertise. For example, his current developmental assignment to Siemens Corporation was made possible by his participation in the Public-Private Talent Exchange (PPTE) Digital Engineering program. Already he understands how he'll be applying newly gained industry knowledge and expertise to acquisition life cycle programs.

PPTE provides selected acquisition workforce employees the opportunity to complete a professional assignment with industry by serving for six months with a private sector organization. PPTE promotes increased communication



between government and industry, enables participants to gain a better understanding of industry's business operations and challenges and facilitates the sharing of innovative best practices. **Learn more about PPTE here.**



Contributor submissions for Behind The Frontlines are accepted on a rolling basis – submit your articles and photos here: <https://asc.army.mil/web/army-btf/>



# BEHIND THE FRONTLINES

Enabling the Warfighter

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