



UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-4000

PERSONNEL AND  
READINESS

MAY 1 2014

The Honorable Carl Levin  
Chairman  
Committee on Armed Services  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

This is the final response to Senate Report 113-44, page 132, accompanying S. 1197, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2014, requesting the Secretary of Defense to submit a report to the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives on the actions the Department is taking to correct the education and training challenges facing the TRICARE acquisition workforce. The report is enclosed.

Based upon the Department of Defense (DoD) Inspector General's (IG) report released on May 1, 2013, entitled, "TRICARE Management Activity Needs to Improve Oversight of Acquisition Workforce," several actions and activities have resulted. In summary, each of the findings made by the DoD IG is being or has been addressed by the Director, Acquisition Career Management, with cooperation from the Human Resources Division. Much work has been done, and a lot of work is yet to be completed in order to have a well-established Defense Health Agency acquisition workforce management program. This area remains a top priority of DoD's senior leadership. A similar letter is being sent to the Chairman of the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives. Thank you for your interest in ensuring that our acquisition workforce training and certification requirements are met thereby reducing the risk for fraud, waste, and abuse.

Sincerely,

  
Jessica L. Wright  
Acting

Enclosure:  
As stated

cc:  
The Honorable James M. Inhofe  
Ranking Member



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READINESS

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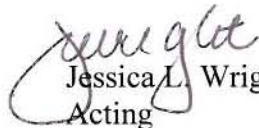
The Honorable Howard P. "Buck" McKeon  
Chairman  
Committee on Armed Services  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

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Sincerely,

  
Jessica L. Wright  
Acting

Enclosure:  
As stated

cc:  
The Honorable Adam Smith  
Ranking Member

# Report to Congress



## Education and Training of the Acquisition Workforce of the TRICARE Management Activity

March 2014 Report to Congress

Senate Armed Services Committee Report 113-44, S. 1197, accompanying the  
National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2014

The estimated cost of report or study for the Department of Defense is approximately \$2,830 for the 2014 Fiscal Year. This includes \$510 in expenses and \$2,320 in DoD labor.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

This Report is in response to Senate Armed Services Committee Report 113-44, S. 1197, accompanying the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year (FY) 2014, page 132, which requested the Secretary of Defense to submit a report to the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives on the actions the Department is taking to correct the education and training challenges facing the TRICARE, now Defense Health Agency (DHA), acquisition workforce. Based upon the Department of Defense (DoD) Inspector General (IG) report released on May 1, 2013, entitled “TRICARE Management Activity Needs to Improve Oversight of Acquisition Workforce,” the committee noted that in the DoD IG’s view, the deficiencies identified in the report placed the DHA at “increased risk for fraud, waste, and abuse.” As such, the committee expressed concern about the DoD IG findings and noted that with the significant number of high-value contracts awarded by the DHA, DoD should ensure that the DHA’s acquisition workforce management process meets workforce training and certification requirements.

## **BACKGROUND**

In 1990, Congress enacted the Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA), 10 United States Code Chapter 87, to improve the effectiveness of the civilian and military acquisition workforce through enhanced education, training, and career development. DAWIA requires DoD to establish career paths for its employees.

The Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics (USD(AT&L)) manages the Defense Acquisition Workforce and defense-wide acquisition workforce policy and programs.

The DHA Component Acquisition Executive (CAE) is responsible for all acquisition functions at DHA. The CAE develops and maintains an acquisition career management program to ensure the development of a competent, professional acquisition workforce that supports DHA’s mission. The CAE identifies DHA’s Defense Acquisition Workforce positions and implements a budget strategy that reflects the acquisition workforce’s developmental needs and DHA’s organizational structure. Additionally, the CAE assesses the current skills of this acquisition workforce; identifies short and long-term needs; and establishes plans, including recruitment and retention strategies, for obtaining the resources and skills that the acquisition workforce needs to meet DHA’s future mission requirements.

Under the cognizance of the CAE, the Director, Acquisition Career Management (DACM) is responsible for ensuring that the DHA Acquisition Career Management Program and DHA’s acquisition workforce meet statutory requirements. Specifically, the DACM manages the identification and development of the acquisition workforce, including identifying staffing needs, training requirements, and other workforce development strategies.

In DoD, DAWIA certification is a means of determining whether personnel are properly trained and qualified for a specific job. The DAWIA certification process includes confirmation that acquisition workforce basic or core competencies have been obtained, including functional

competencies tailored to specific career fields. The basic, core, and functional competencies include the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to facilitate business decisions that help DoD deliver goods and services to the warfighter. Consequently, agencies expect a person in a defense acquisition workforce position to possess the DAWIA competencies to perform in his or her current assignment.

The Defense Acquisition Workforce is composed of 13 specific career fields and three subset career paths: Auditing (career field); Business (career field) – Cost Estimating (career path); Business – Financial Management (career path); Contracting (career field); Engineering (career field); Facilities Engineering (career field); Industrial and/or Contract Property Management (career field); Information Technology (acquisition) (career field); Life Cycle Logistics (career field); Production, Quality & Manufacturing (career field); Program Management (career field); Program Management – International Acquisition (career path); Purchasing (career field); Science and Technology Manager (career field); and Test and Evaluation (career field) . In addition to military, civilian personnel from various occupational series fill these career field/positions. To meet position certification requirements, DHA uses the certification and assignment specific training provided by the Defense Acquisition University (DAU) and established by the USD(AT&L) through Functional Leaders. Functional Leaders lead joint teams of component subject matter experts to develop Career Field Certification Standards for three levels: Level I (Basic or Entry), Level II (Intermediate), and Level III (Advanced). In addition to certification standards, the Functional Leaders also establish recommended career path development information. This information is published by DAU annually in the DAU catalog. To achieve certification, acquisition workforce personnel must meet core acquisition training, functional training, education, and experience standards before applying for certification through their respective DoD Component processes.

## **PROGRESS TO DATE**

The following are actions, in chronological order that have been completed to address the DoD IG findings:

- In January 2013, the DACM responsibility was realigned from the Acquisition Management and Support (AM&S) directorate to the CAE and put under the day-to-day management of the Deputy CAE who serves as the DACM. The Deputy CAE is dual certified at Level III in the AT&L career fields of Program Management and Test & Evaluation and is scheduled to complete in May 2014 the education requirements necessary for certification at Level III in Information Technology.
- From February 2013 to the DHA DACM present, provided individual assistance to DHA acquisition workforce members, helping them to apply for DAU courses to either complete their certification requirements or to meet the requisite 80 continuous learning points (CLPs) every 2 years.
- In May 2013, for inclusion in the official position description of each civilian acquisition position, a standard narrative was developed that clearly identifies the position as an defense acquisition workforce position and lists the associated AT&L workforce career

field, required certification level, Acquisition Corps membership requirement, and whether it is a CAP or KLP, along with any tenure agreement requirement. Included in the narrative is a statement establishing that failure to meet the certification requirements may result in an adverse action, to include removal from the position.

- From May through July 2013, the DACM reviewed each of more than 230 general schedule (GS) and Senior Executive Service (SES) position descriptions (PDs) identified as part of the organization's acquisition workforce. Revisions were identified to those PDs which were to remain part of the acquisition workforce and tagged those PDs which were to be removed from the acquisition workforce.
- From July through December 2013, in coordination with the Human Resources (HR) division, the DACM met with each office that had a GS or SES PD identified as part of the acquisition workforce. During these meetings, the needed PD revisions and those positions to be removed from the acquisition workforce were discussed. Interactions between HR and the offices continued, resulting in revised PDs.
- In October 2013, two government civilian employees with prior experience in assisting with the management and development of the acquisition workforce were realigned from the AM&S directorate to the DACM.
- In November 2013, the Director, DHA, delegated CAE responsibilities to a member of the SES who is certified at Level III in the acquisition Program Management career field and has no other command responsibilities.
- From November 2013 through January 2014, HR division provided more than 120 revised PDs to the DACM for recertification as part of the defense acquisition workforce.

The completion of the above actions establishes the foundation for the being able to manage the DHA acquisition workforce and to identify and monitor the status of achieving the requisite training and certification by individuals filling those positions.

## **FUTURE ACTIONS**

- Complete recertification of PDs as part of the defense acquisition workforce. This action is taking about 3 months longer than expected due to some PDs requiring extensive revisions, ensuring consistency of the standard narrative insertion, and ensuring consistency of duties and factors across similar positions.
- Complete identification of all Contracting Officer's Representatives (CORs). Although not formally members of the defense acquisition workforce, CORs are being identified across the organization and captured in a simple worksheet that allows for easy monitoring and tracking of their training prior to an individual being designated a COR for any contract. A process is being finalized that will provide more definitive evidence of COR training completion.

- Complete educating the DHA acquisition workforce on the individual's as well as the supervisor's responsibilities in acquiring the required certification and CLPs. The use of an individual development plan is being made mandatory, which establishes an agreement between the individual and supervisor about training needed to meet the certification or continuous learning requirements.
- Notify each individual of any deficiencies in meeting certification or continuous learning requirements. Waivers, if appropriate, will be accomplished for those individuals who are found to already be in their current position for more than 24 months, thereby allowing them to complete the certification required of the position before another 24 months elapse. In addition, in some cases where a waiver is not appropriate or cannot be created for those individuals who have not achieved the certification level required by the PD, removal of the individual may be the only course of action.
- Publish the quality assurance procedures for a recurring review of PDs and monitoring achievement of training and certification requirements.
- Review the more than 300 PDs of personnel, identified by other DoD organizations as part of the defense acquisition workforce, that have been or are being transferred into the DHA subsequent to October 1, 2013.
- Review positions within the Office of the Chief Information Officer that currently do not incorporate acquisition workforce requirements to determine if the associated PDs should be modified to require that incumbents obtain certification in the IT acquisition career field.
- Continuous interaction and coordination with DAU to ensure availability of training seats for high-demand courses. This will enable the DHA acquisition workforce to meet acquisition training and certification requirements.

## CONCLUSION

The Senate Armed Services Committee Report 113-44, S. 1197, accompanying the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2014, page 132, requested the Secretary of Defense to submit a report to the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and the House of Representatives on the actions the Department is taking to correct the education and training challenges facing the TRICARE, now DHA, acquisition workforce. As noted in this report, under the cognizance of an SES civilian as the full-time CAE, the DACM is employing rigor and emphasis not seen before in the organization to ensure the DHA acquisition workforce is, first, being appropriately identified and validated and, second, closely monitored to ensure personnel receive the career development and training needed to meet position certification requirements for their assigned acquisition duties.