

Army Acquisition Corps

1. Introduction

a. *Purpose.* The Army Acquisition Corps is responsible for equipping and sustaining the world's most capable, powerful, and respected Army. Our first responsibility is to the Soldier who protects and preserves our Nation. We strive to meet the needs of the Soldier throughout the full spectrum of operations by incorporating technical solutions to respond to the rapidly evolving threat environment. We ensure the delivery of quality capabilities, providing the right product or service to the right place, at the right time to ensure the Army is equipped for the 21st century. Our next responsibility is to our Partners—Army, joint, industry, international, and academia. We work with these partners to develop, acquire, deliver, sustain, and safely dispose of weapons systems and provide contracting services to our Soldiers in all military operations. We work closely with our partners to continually improve Army capabilities and ensure their interoperability. Our final responsibility is to the American public. We must be good stewards of the taxpayers' dollars and work to continuously achieve the highest levels of effectiveness and efficiency in our business decisions while maintaining strict adherence to acquisition ethics policies, regulations, and laws. The Army acquisition workforce consists of commissioned officers, noncommissioned officers, and Department of the Army civilians.

b. *Proponent information.* The proponent for the AC, ARNG, and the USAR acquisition workforce is the U.S. Army Acquisition Support Center (<https://asc.army.mil>). While each officer is his or her own best career manager, FA 51 officers are strongly encouraged to establish and maintain dialogue with the proponent for professional development information as well as for opportunities that impact the Army Acquisition Corps. Officers are also encouraged to maintain a dialogue with their respective assignment officers. Maintaining an open dialogue optimizes the opportunities for enhanced professional development training, education, and experience.

c. *Functions.* Unique functions performed by the Army acquisition workforce are based in statute, regulation, and policy and cannot be performed by non-acquisition personnel. The applicable statute on is contained in the Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA), consisting of 10 USC Chapter 87 and further referenced in the DODI 5000 series. FA 51 officers effectively and efficiently develop, acquire, field, test and evaluate, sustain and safely dispose of materiel by leveraging domestic, organic, commercial and foreign technologies, and capabilities to meet the Army's current and future mission requirements.

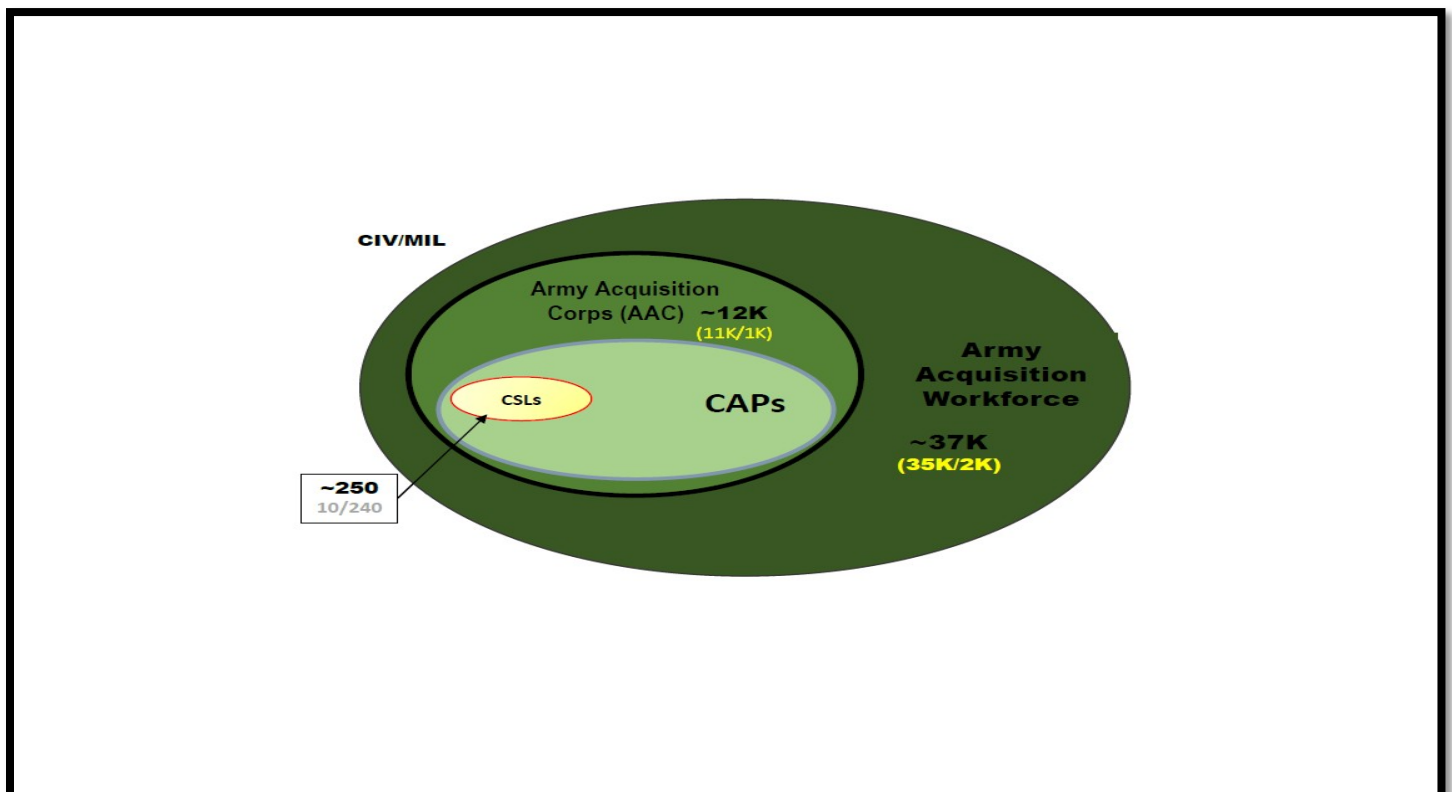
d. *Career specialization.* FA 51 officers are functional experts and are therefore required to develop expertise in at least one Area of Concentration (AOC). AOCs for acquisition officers are aligned with the DoD Acquisition Career Fields established by the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics (USD (AT&L)). For acquisition officers, Program Management (AOC A) and Contracting (AOC C) are the two primary AOCs in which officers should pursue education, training and experience that will lead to professional certification. Focusing on one of these two AOCs will provide the Army with the expertise needed to develop, acquire, deliver, and sustain the systems and services needed for our 21st century professional Army. FA 51 officers' ultimate goal is to achieve DAWIA Level III certification in their primary AOC before promotion to lieutenant colonel. In some cases, based on the officer desires and/or needs of the Army, an officer may have the opportunity to seek broadening assignments and training in the AOC that is not their primary AOC upon achieving at least Level II certification in their primary AOC. While Program Management and Contracting are the two primary AOCs, acquisition officers serving as experimental test pilots will also receive training, education, and experience in the Test and Evaluation Acquisition Career Field (ACF) (AOC T). Certification must be obtained in accordance with current DOD certification guidelines.

(1) Program Management (AOC A) assignments focus on the management of materiel systems or services across all phases of life-cycle management. In accordance with Acquisition Reform Initiatives, the goal for AOC A officers is to gain a wide range of experiences leading up to their Colonel/O-6 Centralized Selection List (CSL) PM assignment, including experience in science and technology, test and evaluation, and contracting as their career timelines allow. Officers will coordinate with their assignment officer to ensure future assignments offer opportunities to gain experience in these functionalities. To gain a deeper understanding of warfighter needs and requirements, Army acquisition officers are required to be assigned for a minimum of 12 months in an operational assignment (e.g., division and below, Worldwide Individual Augmentation System tasker, TRADOC or ATEC). The life-cycle includes planning and refining the initial requirements, development, and maturation of technology through a disciplined engineering process, producing and deploying a materiel capability, supporting a fielded capability in the operational force, and disposal. A system may include but is not limited to weapon systems, individual equipment, aircraft and vehicle platforms, IT, and command and control capabilities.

A service may include but is not limited to portfolios related to installation, knowledge management, medical, and logistics. FA 51 officers assigned to AOC A positions may perform program management, IT, test and evaluation, systems planning research, development, and engineering—science and technology management related work. AOC A’s responsibilities include the government’s management of program cost, schedule, performance, risk, and test and evaluation. Other AOC A responsibilities include managing supply chains, and science and technology projects. Officers coordinate with warfighters and TRADOC capability managers (the warfighter’s representative) to assist in determining requirements. Throughout the life-cycle, AOC A officers manage the efforts of the government and our industry partners. A position normally includes assignments in a Program Executive Office (PEO) which is the government organization responsible for managing Army systems. Other AOC A positions include test and evaluation activities with the task of ensuring material and technology-based solutions adequately address operational effectiveness, suitability, and safety criteria. Management of IT programs is unique in their cost, schedule and performance due to rapid changes in science and technology. Program management of IT based solutions is oftentimes knowledge management of the collaboration between laboratories, academia, and Soldiers.

(2) Contracting (AOC C) assignments focus on theater support contracting, contract administration services, and providing procurement advice and assistance during large scale combat operations in a multi-domain environment. The goal for AOC C officers is to gain a wide range of experiences leading up to their Colonel/O-6 Centralized Selection List (CSL) Command/Key Billet. FA 51 officers assigned to AOC C may lead contracting detachments, provide contracting support for installations, military construction, and weapon systems procurement. Officers coordinate the appropriate contracting action with the supported warfighter or program manager to address requiring activity needs. These officers are responsible for making determinations on contract awards and supporting the development of acquisition plans and instructions. Assignments with a contracting focus may include contracting support to the warfighter, assisting contract support planning and integration at all levels of Army and joint operations, systems and service contracting in major contracting centers. Outside of Army Contracting Command (ACC), other AOC C positions are located within the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Defense Contract Management Agency (DCMA) and Defense Logistics Agency (DLA). Duties may include determining best contract types and agreements, negotiating contract terms and conditions; obligating funds; awarding contracts; leading post-award actions; monitoring performance and production; providing contract surveillance; performing risk analysis; and advising warfighters, program managers, and industry.

Figure 1. Military Acquisition Workforce within the Army Acquisition Corps



2. Officer characteristics required

a. *Characteristics required of all officers.* All officers are expected to possess the basic characteristics that will enable them to develop into agile and adaptive leaders for the 21st century. These leaders must be proficient in their core competencies and broad enough to operate across all military operations. They must be able to inform and influence activities with joint, interagency, and multinational partners. All of these attributes must be balanced with cultural awareness and grounded in the Army Values and Warrior Ethos. Further explanation of these characteristics can be referenced in ADP 3-0. The U.S. Army Acquisition Support Center is the proponent for the following Army Skill Identifiers (SIs) (detailed descriptions contained in DA Pam 611-21):

- (1) 4M - Acquisition Corps Candidate.
- (2) 4Z - Acquisition Corps Member.

b. *Unique knowledge and skills of an Acquisition Corps officer.* The work performed by FA 51 officers requires in-depth knowledge and synergy of acquisition, business, technology, and military operations which cannot be duplicated by other branches or FAs. FA 51 Officers must be able to synthesize a wealth of information in the complex world of material and services procurement, determine what is occurring or about to occur, communicate (both written and verbally) those events, and make sound, logical decisions. In addition, FA 51 officers are extremely articulate, inspirational leaders who listen skillfully, communicate tactfully, and establish excellent rapport with customers because they understand the customers' requirements. Acquisition officers oversee and manage contracts and programs worth billions of dollars, and supervise the technical development efforts and purchases which satisfy warfighter requirements in the rapidly changing operational environment. FA 51 officers of all grades operate at the tactical, operational, and strategic levels with joint, interagency, and multinational partners. An understanding of military operations is critical. The ability to lead a diverse workforce that includes military, civilians, other services, elements of the federal government, civilian industry, and other nations is paramount. FA 51 officers must find and exploit opportunities to quickly provide mature materiel capabilities or services that satisfy warfighter needs while conducting themselves beyond reproach.

3. Officer accessions

a. *Active Component officer accession process.* HRC executes two primary methods of accession into the U.S. Army Acquisition Corps. Ideally, officers are accessed into FA 51 through a semi-annual VTIP board in their 6th or 7th year of service. Select officers are also accessed through the Experimental Test Pilot Program selection process. Critical to accession as a FA 51 officer is demonstrated, successful leadership performance in the appropriate key developmental position in the grade of captain as outlined in the officer's basic branch of this DA PAM. Officers interested in the Army Acquisition Corps are strongly encouraged to read current military personnel (MILPER) messages to ensure sufficient time is allocated to prepare for upcoming accession processes.

b. *U.S. Army Reserve acquisition officer accessions.* HRC executes USAR FA 51 accessions for AGR/IMA/TPU officers. AGR officers may also request accession through the VTIP but they may not participate in the Experimental Test Pilot Program. TPU/IMA officers may not participate in VTIP or the Experimental Test Pilot Program.

c. *Army National Guard acquisition officer accessions.* The ARNG FA 51 officers are managed by State AGs in coordination with the ARNG Acquisition Career Management Office and the ARNG Human Capital Management Office. Newly accessed officers will normally complete their current tour in their basic branch prior to being trained and assigned to their first acquisition assignment.

4. Officer development

a. There are three domains of leader development: Institutional training and education, assignments, and self-development. These domains define and engage a continuous cycle of education, training, selection, experience, assessment, feedback, reinforcement, and evaluation which shapes officer development throughout career progression. Officers should balance assignments to gain a breadth and depth of operational and broadening experience across a variety of organizations and environments. The 21st century requires flexible and adaptable officers with a broad experience base gained by executing critical functions in different organizational cultures and practices.

(1) *Active Component career and assignments management.* AC FA 51 officers are centrally managed by the Acquisition Management Branch within the Force Sustainment Division, Officer Personnel Management Directorate, HRC. The Acquisition Management Branch provides career development through the management of schooling and assignment opportunities for FA 51 officers.

(2) *U.S. Army Reserve career and assignments management.* USAR FA 51 officers are centrally managed by the Acquisition Management Branch at HRC. The HRC Acquisition Management Branch manages FA 51 assignments for USAR officers regardless of basic branch affiliation.

(3) *Army National Guard career and assignments management.* ARNG Title 10 FA 51 officers are managed by ARNG Human Capital Management Office and the ARNG Acquisition Career Management Office. ARNG Title 32 officers are managed by the state AGs.

b. *Officer development model.* The foundation of FA 51 officer professional development is the experience, education, and training required to obtain DAWIA certification. All acquisition officers can expect to have ample opportunities to serve in diverse assignments and receive the training required to attain DAWIA certification. Professional military schooling, acquisition of unique training, and experience, as well as a strong performance over time help officers to be competitive for subsequent positions with increasing responsibilities and challenges.

(1) *Certification.* Officers are required to obtain a professional certification in accordance with the DAWIA, Public Law 101–510, 10 USC Chapter 87, and other DOD directives and instructions. Certification levels are assigned to each acquisition position: Level I (captain); Level II (major); Level III (lieutenant colonel/colonel). The different levels of certification build upon acquisition skills and competencies gained at each level which include education, training, and experience against established criteria. Certification levels are reflected on the officer's official DA Form 4037. Information on current certification requirements can be located in the DAU catalog at <http://icatalog.dau.mil>.

(2) *Professional/self-development requirements.* The tool used to track and maintain self-development requirements is an Individual Development Plan (IDP). An IDP is a five-year living document between an officer and his/her rater that outlines specific objectives and training that an officer will accomplish during an assignment. Officers at all ranks are required to complete 80 Continuous Learning Points (CLPs) every 2 years to maintain their proficiency and professional development. IDP, CLP, and training certification tools can be accessed at <https://rda.altess.army.mil/camp>. Selection to advanced civilian schooling or Training with Industry for active component officers is contingent upon the needs of the Army, the officer's promotion potential, their potential for academic success, and their career timeline. Eligible officers pursuing off-duty undergraduate or graduate civilian education courses may apply for tuition assistance under the provisions of AR 621–5. Acquisition officers should also dedicate time to professional reading and maintain currency with industry trends and new technologies.

(3) *Acquisition Corps Membership.* At the time of accession, commissioned officers are designated as FA 51 officers and become acquisition workforce candidates. Designation as an Acquisition Corps member occurs when specific training, education, and experience milestones are met. Acquisition Corps membership shall be made in accordance with criteria and procedures established by the Secretary of Defense. Only officers who meet all of the following requirements may be considered for Acquisition Corps membership:

(a) Have received a baccalaureate degree at an accredited educational institution authorized to grant baccalaureate degrees.

(b) The officer must be in the grade of major or above and have at least 4 years of experience in an acquisition position in DOD.

(c) The officer must be a minimum of DAWIA Level II certified in at least one AOC.

(4) *Critical acquisition positions, key leadership positions (KLPs), and CSL:* Per 10 USC Chapter 87, Section 1733, a critical acquisition position may only be filled by an Acquisition Corps member.

(a) *Critical acquisition positions (CAP).* The Army Acquisition Executive designates critical acquisition positions based on the criticality of the position to the acquisition program, effort, or function supported. All military acquisition positions in the grade of lieutenant colonel and higher are designated as critical acquisition positions and officers assigned to such positions must be Acquisition Corps members upon entering the position. Except for KLPs, officers must be level III certified in the acquisition career field designated for the position within 24 months of assignment or possess an approved waiver. In addition, CAPs are assigned the position code (POSCO) of "Z." The "Z" position code indicates that the position can be filled by acquisition

officers with either a predominantly program management (AOC A) or contracting (AOC C) background at the grade of lieutenant colonel and above. The statutory tenure for all critical acquisition positions is 3 years; however, Project Managers of ACAT 1 programs will have a 4-year statutory tenure.

(b) *Centralized Selection List (CSL)*. An HQDA board centrally selects a limited number of high performing officers and civilians for CSL key billets. The CSL process identifies the most critical organizations that require centrally selected leaders to meet their leadership and management needs. This process selects the best-qualified officers, with the right skill and experiences, to lead Army professionals, prepare for the full spectrum of military operations, and manage the Army's resources. The Army's Centralized Command/Key Billet Selection System designates all the Army's CSL positions into one of two categories: CSL Command or CSL Key Billet. All Army Acquisition Corps CSL positions are designated as Key Billets and include project manager, product manager, contracting brigade commander, contracting battalion commander, and acquisition director (both at the colonel and lieutenant colonel level).

(5) All officer positions are developmental. Developmental positions expose an acquisition officer to a full spectrum of experiences either outside of or inside their primary AOC which allows the officer to develop and enhance acquisition skills and become technically proficient throughout their acquisition career. There are two categories of assignments, operational and broadening. Most assignments for AC, USAR, and ARNG FA 51 officers will be between 24–48 months. OCONUS assignments may require shorter tour lengths. The goal is to expose officers to multiple acquisition experiences to grow agile and adaptive leaders who are prepared to lead highly complex, multifunctional organizations and provide acquisition expertise throughout the full range of military operations.

(a) *Operational assignments* provide an officer the opportunity to use, hone, and build on what they learned through the formal education process as well as experience gained through on-the-job training. Operational assignments develop the officer's core competencies and are directly related to the officer's acquisition career field. Operational assignments normally exist at the tactical and operational levels. There are three types of operational assignments:

(1) *Foundational assignments* are non-key developmental assignments in the Army Contracting Command (ACC) that are unique to the contracting AOC and build a solid foundation of contracting knowledge. Officers assigned to foundational assignments will be assigned increasingly complex tasks exposing them to acquisition procedures, mission analysis, and tactical and operational planning. Officers will normally serve 18-24 months in their foundational assignment. If, while assigned to a foundational position, an officer deploys in support of an overseas contingency operation for at least 9 months, and the deployment extends the duration of their foundational assignment to 30-36 months, the officer will receive KD completion credit.

- (a) Operations Officer
- (b) Contracting Support Officer
- (c) Support Operations Officer (SPO)
- (d) Contracting/Procurement Officer

(2) *A Key Developmental (KD) position* is deemed fundamental to the development of an officer's primary AOC competencies or deemed critical by the senior Army acquisition leadership to provide experience across the Army's core acquisition mission. FA 51 Officers should expect to serve in only one KD assignment, with a small percentage serving in two KD assignments. AOC A KD assignments are for 18-24 months, with a small percentage serving beyond 24 months. Assignment to an AOC C KD position requires the successful completion of a foundational assignment. AOC C KD assignments are for 12 months, with a small percentage serving beyond 12 months. FA 51 Officers serving in AOC C KD positions from 1 October 2020 to 30 October 2021 will receive KD completion credit upon serving 12 months in an AOC C position coded as KD under Army Contracting Command's legacy construct. The KD assignments are:

- (a) Assistant Program Manager (APM) (Program Executive Office or Missile Defense Agency)
- (b) Operations Officer In Charge (OIC) (ACC)
- (c) Contracting Support (OIC) (ACC)
- (d) Executive Officer (ACC)
- (e) Support Operations (OIC) (ACC)
- (f) Detachment Commander (ACC)

(3) *Centralized Selection List – Key Billet (CSL-KB)* is a duty assignment at the lieutenant or colonel rank (or civilian equivalent) requiring specific, highly developed skills and experience, that is deemed so critical to a unit's mission that an individual is selected for assignment by Headquarters Department of the Army. Officers selected for CSL-KB must complete all prescribed Pre-Command Courses (PCC) and complete CSL position statutory requirements. Examples of CSL-KB assignments are:

- (a) Product/Project Manager
- (b) Contracting Battalion/Brigade Commander
- (c) Acquisition Director

(b) *Broadening assignments* develop an officer's capability to see, work, learn and contribute outside

one's perspective or individual level of understanding for the betterment of both the individual officer and the institution. Broadening opportunities may vary in scope, responsibility, and developmental outcomes and typically fall in one of four major categories: functional/institutional, academia and civilian enterprise, joint or multinational, and interagency or intergovernmental. There are also nominative positions within the broadening domain that will be filled through the applicable nomination process. Broadening opportunities provide exposure to experiences inside and outside of Army organizations, characterized by different organizational cultures and practices. Broadening opportunities can be found within many organizations to include but are not limited to: HQDA, OSD, Joint Staff, Program Executive Offices, Army Test Evaluation Command, Army Contracting Command, Training and Doctrine Command, Defense Agencies, United States Corps of Engineers, Special Mission Units and service in a cross-component billet. Acquisition broadening assignments can be categorized as:

(1) *High Value Position (HVP)*. Deemed as highly mission critical and require an officer who has completed their O6 CSL. Examples of HVP positions include but are not limited to:

- (a) Military Assistant to Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition, Technology & Logistics)
- (b) Military Assistant to Under Secretary of the Army
- (c) ASA(ALT) Chief of Staff
- (d) Program Executive Officer Chief of Staff
- (e) Army Contracting Command Chief of Staff
- (f) Executive Officer to ASA(ALT) Principal Official

(2) *Functional Broadening*. An assignment that provides a developmental opportunity directly related to an officer's primary AOC. Examples include but are not limited to:

- (a) Test and Evaluation (T&E) Officer
- (b) Science and Technology Advisor
- (c) Assistant TRADOC Capabilities Manager (TCM)
- (d) Acquisition Officer
- (e) Support Operations Officer (CUOPS / FUOPS)
- (f) ACC Staff Officer
- (g) Research and Development Contracting Officer
- (h) Experimental Test Pilot
- (i) Worldwide Individual Augmentation (WIAS) Tasking
- (j) Assistant / Service Portfolio Manager

(3) *Institutional Broadening*. An assignment that provides a developmental opportunity that may or may not directly relate to an officer's AOC but increases the officer's understanding of how the Army operates as an institution. Examples include but are not limited to:

- (a) Department of the Army Systems Coordinator (DASC)
- (b) ASA(ALT) Action Officer
- (c) HQDA G-Staff Action Officer
- (d) Office of the Chief Legislative Liaison Officer
- (e) Office of the Inspector General Investigation Officer

(4) *Academia and civilian enterprise*. An assignment with industry or within a community of students, scholars, and instructors at institutes of higher learning where an officer can gain new perspectives and knowledge, skills, and abilities not generally obtained from organic experiences, training, or education. Examples include Advanced Civil Schooling (ACS) and Training with Industry (TWI). All AC FA 51 officers may apply for the opportunity to participate in the ACS or TWI programs. Selection is contingent upon the needs of the Army, the officers' promotion potential, their potential for academic success, and their career timeline.

(5) *Joint or multinational Broadening*. An assignment with significant interaction with other Services, OSD, Defense agencies, or partner nation military organizations at the operational and strategic level. Examples include but are not limited to assignments at:

- (a) OSD or Joint Staff
- (b) Defense Contract Management Agency
- (c) Missile Defense Agency
- (d) Defense Logistics Agency
- (e) Defense Information Systems Agency
- (f) National Reconnaissance Office
- (g) Unified Combatant Commands

(6) *Interagency or intergovernmental Broadening*. An assignment or experience at U.S. Government agencies outside DoD or with partner nation governmental agencies. Examples are assignments at: Office of Defense Cooperation, North Atlantic Treaty Organization and Office of the Program Manager, Saudi Arabian National Guard.

(7) *Joint qualification*. The Joint Qualification System acknowledges both designated joint billets as well as experience-based joint duty assignments in contributing to the development of joint qualified officers.

These assignments with the necessary JPME culminate with an officer being identified as a fully Joint Qualified Officer and the receipt of the 3L SI. Additional information can be found in DODI 1300.19.

(8) *Mentorship*. Mentorship is a powerful tool that can help build competence, leadership skills, self-awareness, and morale. FA 51 officers are strongly encouraged to pursue mentorship opportunities at all levels. Senior acquisition officers should actively serve as mentors to junior acquisition officers, to offer their perspective on what it takes to succeed in the Army Acquisition Corps and pass on their knowledge and experience. It will be critical for key leaders to support mentoring efforts publicly. Military leaders must take care to avoid micromanaging mentors and requiring participation in formal mentoring programs. When developing formal mentoring programs, planners should consider vetting mentors and deliberately select those with demonstrated efficacy in other interpersonal relationships. Some of these key interpersonal skills are communication ability, empathy, listening, and emotional intelligence. These skills will help to ensure greater success in the mentor role. Supervising and mentoring junior leaders is an integral component of an effective professional development program, while on-the-job experience will fulfill some of the requisites for acquiring tactical and technical proficiency. Leaders must establish a sound process for subordinate development that furnishes the guidelines and establish the parameters for arming and infusing our subordinates with honed leadership capabilities. Using this knowledge, junior officers as mentees can advance their confidence, skills, and capabilities and grow as leaders.

c. *Captain/Major development*. In route to their first acquisition assignment, all acquisition officers are required to attend the Army Acquisition Professional Course (AAPC). AAPC is a nine-week course at the Army Acquisition Center of Excellence (AACoE), located in Huntsville, AL. The completion of AAPC ensures that FA 51 officers have met the training requirements needed for Level II certification in Program Management and Level I certification in Contracting before they report to their first acquisition assignment.

(1) All FA 51 officers with a primary AOC of C will return to AACoE either during or after their first assignment to complete the Army Acquisition Intermediate Contracting Course (AICC). Upon completion of the AICC, they will have the training requirements needed to attain Level II certification in Contracting. USAR and ARNG officers may attend these courses (in lieu of DAU courses) on a space-available basis and in coordination with their career manager.

(2) Upon graduation from AAPC, newly trained captains and majors will be assigned to a position designed to develop their functional understanding in either program management or contracting. FA 51 officers assigned to an AOC of A can expect their first assignment to be a KD position. FA 51 officers that are also Experimental Test Pilots will complete their KD assignment after their first test pilot assignment. ARNG officers assigned to an AOC of A can expect their first assignment to be an Assistant Portfolio Manager or an Assistant Program Manager. The APM assignment will serve as their KD assignment. FA 51 officers assigned to an AOC of C can expect their first assignment to be a foundational assignment. Upon completion of the foundational assignment, FA 51 officers will complete their KD assignment. Upon completion of a KD assignment, FA 51 (A or C) officers will either be assigned to a broadening assignment or a second KD assignment based on the needs of the Army.

(3) To be competitive for promotion to lieutenant colonel, officers should achieve Military Education Level (MEL) 4, which for most officers includes satellite Intermediate Level Education (ILE) and the acquisition Intermediate Qualification Course (IQC) at the AACoE. More information can be found at: <https://asc.army.mil>. An additional Army Acquisition Corps goal is for FA 51 officers to obtain a master's degree in an acquisition related discipline. Officers must complete or have completed the minimum number of business hours required for Acquisition Corps membership and any specific requirement for specific certification prior to selection to lieutenant colonel.

(4) Careful planning and attention to an individual's qualifications and expertise are essential in facilitating an officer's growth to a high-level of technical proficiency. A KD assignment with multiple broadening opportunities in a single AOC best achieves this goal and facilitates Level III certification prior to promotion to lieutenant colonel. In some cases, based on officer desires and/or needs of the Army, an officer may have the opportunity to seek broadening assignments and training in the AOC that is not their primary AOC upon achieving at least Level II certification in their primary AOC. Specific broadening opportunities for AOC A officers in science and technology, test and evaluation, and contracting to develop competencies needed for successful CSL commands.

d. *Lieutenant Colonel development*. The career development goal for a lieutenant colonel is to leverage acquired acquisition skills in CSL and other critical acquisition positions. Selection to a CSL position represents the pinnacle of service at the lieutenant colonel level and successful performance in a CSL position serves as an indicator of the potential for promotion to colonel and selection to attend SSC. Officers who do not serve in a CSL position will continue to serve an essential role in the success of the Acquisition Corps by providing leadership in critical acquisition position billets. All lieutenant colonels should progressively seek

challenging CSL and non-CSL positions to include: product manager, contracting battalion commander, acquisition director, product director, Joint and HQDA staff positions, and other key positions. FA 51 officers compete for Senior Service College (SSC) (MEL 1) along with other branches/FAs. SSC is the highest level military educational program available to prepare officers for the positions of greatest responsibility in the DOD.

e. *Colonel development.* The career development goal for a colonel is to serve in a FA 51 CSL Key Billet as project manager, contracting support brigade commander, or acquisition director to develop the knowledge, skills, and abilities to influence acquisition outcomes at the strategic level. Colonels completing a CSL assignment are assigned to senior leadership positions with significant and strategic importance to the future of the Army and DOD.

