



Federal Aviation
Administration

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Business

NextGen
Career Portal
Employee

Engineering and Research

Development

Destination FAA

FAA Policy

Program and Program Managers

Acquisition
Certification Program
Certification

ACQUISITION WORKFORCE STRATEGY

2016

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS	1
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	2
1. FAA'S ACQUISITION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (AMS)	5
2. ACQUISITION WORKFORCE PLANNING PROCESS	7
3. FAA'S ACQUISITION WORKFORCE	9
4. CURRENT SITUATION: BUSINESS DRIVERS AND CHALLENGES	14
5. ACQUISITION WORKFORCE STRATEGIES	17
6. FUTURE WORKFORCE REQUIREMENTS	22
APPENDIX: FAA ACQUISITION PROFESSION PROFILES	26

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Acquisition Workforce Strategy provides FAA's annual update to its blueprint for building and sustaining a high-performing acquisition workforce. The purpose and focus of the Acquisition Workforce Strategy is to ensure FAA has a stable cadre of federal employees and maintains core in-house capabilities necessary to successfully manage FAA's acquisition objectives. While recognizing the contribution and role of our contractors, this Strategy focuses on the federal workforce only.

FAA's approximately 1,800 acquisition professionals are essential to acquiring the technologies, services and systems that enable the nation to continue to benefit from safe, efficient air travel and a healthy aviation industry. While the acquisition workforce represents only 4 percent of the more than 45,000 FAA employees, these professionals manage acquisition programs with total life cycle investment in the tens of billions of dollars. The critical role these professionals play in securing an improved National Airspace System (NAS) for the best value makes their development, hiring and retention of critical importance.

The workforce staffing estimates provided in this Strategy are used to guide acquisition workforce development planning. The estimates indicate a projected need for an additional 170 acquisition professionals through 2021, an increase of 9 percent over today's workforce. Section 6 of this Strategy provides additional information about the projected workforce requirements through FY 2021 and Section 5 describes the strategies FAA has put in place to address staffing and development needs.

FAA made considerable progress in the development of its acquisition workforce in 2016. Since publication of the 2015 Acquisition Workforce Strategy, the agency has:

- Completed a review of the Acquisition Management System, *AMS 2016*, to ensure it supports current and anticipated acquisition needs and practices as identified by internal and external stakeholders. Enhancements resulting from that review are explained in a new online video, *AMS 2016*.
- Completed a major update to the [Acquisition Professions Portal](#) to improve both design and content. The Portal is the primary source of acquisition development and certification information for FAA's acquisition workforce.
- Developed an Acquisition Fundamentals training and development curriculum for acquisition workforce members. This curriculum is designed for those professionals who do not have mandatory certification requirements, to provide each acquisition professional with a basic, common understanding of core FAA acquisition knowledge and practices.

- Met its FY 2016 goals of:
 - Certifying at least 93 percent of Contracting Officers/Specialists.
 - Ensuring that at least 90 percent of program managers on FAA's largest and most complex projects have attained or maintained certification requirements in accordance with FAA policy.
 - Ensuring that at least 75 percent of qualifying Real Estate Contracting Officers/Specialists complete legal real estate training and 70 percent of qualifying professionals complete space project management training.
 - Increasing by 5 percent from the FY 2015 baseline the number of FAA Contracting Officer's Representatives that attain certification.
- Migrated certification application processing to the Federal Acquisition Institute's (FAI) training application system (FAITAS) to increase processing efficiency and reduce FAA costs. Over 4,100 FAA employees are now registered in FAITAS, allowing them to register for no-cost FAI courses and apply for certification.
- Published an acquisition leadership development guide to help acquisition professionals across all professions build and enhance their leadership knowledge and skills.
- Enhanced certification program requirements to meet evolving workforce needs and to align with Federal Acquisition Institute (FAI) program changes.
- Developed or updated key acquisition training courses, including:
 - *Acquisition Hot Topics*, a new curriculum of short courses that addresses important or time-sensitive acquisition issues. Courses delivered in 2016 included: *Developing the Independent Government Cost Estimate (IGCE)*; *10 Things Every COR Should Know*; *Financial Basics for the Acquisition Workforce*; and, *Federal Acquisition Institute Training Application System (FAITAS)*.
 - *Program / Project Management Capstone Level II and III* courses for program / project managers seeking certification at either Level II or III. These new courses provide culminating experiences to prepare certification candidates for the unique challenges of managing FAA acquisition programs / projects.
 - *FAA National Airspace System (NAS) Enterprise Architecture (EA)*, which combines two instructor-led classroom courses into one online course. This new three-hour online course provides an overview for acquisition professionals to better understand how FAA's enterprise architecture supports NAS operations and provides benefit to the agency.
 - *Introduction to Acquisition Workforce Development*, an online video explaining the process and tools available to acquisition workforce members to take charge of their own learning and development.

- Certified over 400 Contracting Officer's Representatives (CORs) supporting all contracts, for a total of over 1,900 certified CORs.
- Provided over 185 acquisition-related training events on more than 35 courses for over 4,600 students.
- Provided regular reporting on acquisition workforce metrics to the Acquisition Workforce Council to support resource decision-making across FAA's acquisition organizations.

FAA embraces acquisition workforce development because the agency recognizes the need to have the highest caliber acquisition professionals to fulfill its mission. The expertise and performance of the acquisition workforce has a direct impact on the safety of air transportation and, ultimately, U.S. economic growth.

1. FAA's ACQUISITION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (AMS)

The Acquisition Management System (AMS) establishes policy and guidance for all aspects of lifecycle acquisition management at FAA. Acquisition professionals rely on the AMS every day as they conceptualize, plan, execute and oversee the development and implementation of the FAA's mission systems, services and technologies. It is important that FAA acquisition professionals understand and apply the AMS and its unique capabilities and flexibilities.

The AMS defines how FAA manages its resources – money, people and assets – to fulfill its mission. The objectives of the policy are to increase the quality, reduce the time, manage the risk and minimize the cost of delivering safe and secure services to the aviation community and flying public. Acquisition management policy promotes these objectives through partnership among service providers and customers to ensure FAA plans, programs and budgets address priority aviation needs.

The FAA developed the Acquisition Management System in response to Section 348 of Public Law 104-50. The AMS supersedes the Major Acquisition Policies and Procedures of the Department of Transportation and all other acquisition and procurement statutes and regulations, including the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR). AMS policy takes precedence over all other FAA policy dealing with any aspect of lifecycle acquisition management and related disciplines. The AMS serves as FAA's Capital Planning and Investment Control process.

The FAA's Senior Investment Review Board, the Joint Resources Council (JRC), oversees FAA's NAS investment portfolio as expressed in FAA's NAS enterprise architecture, budget and individual service portfolios. The JRC evaluates the performance of investment programs and operational assets within each service against quantified baseline measures. Planned activities for new investment are discussed along with proposals to remove, replace or improve operational assets with declining performance that are no longer satisfying a service need or are nearing the end of their service life. The JRC aligns and coordinates investment activity across the lines of business through annual review and approval of the enterprise architecture and agency budget submissions to Congress.

Acquisition management policy is executed by means of the lifecycle management process, which is organized into a series of phases and decision points, as shown in Exhibit 1.1. The circular representation conveys the principles of seamless management and continuous improvement in service delivery over time. Application is flexible and may be tailored appropriately. A continuing dialog with and feedback from stakeholders (e.g., commercial air carriers, general aviation, air transport industry, state and local airport authorities) and users (air traffic and technical operations) is maintained throughout the process.

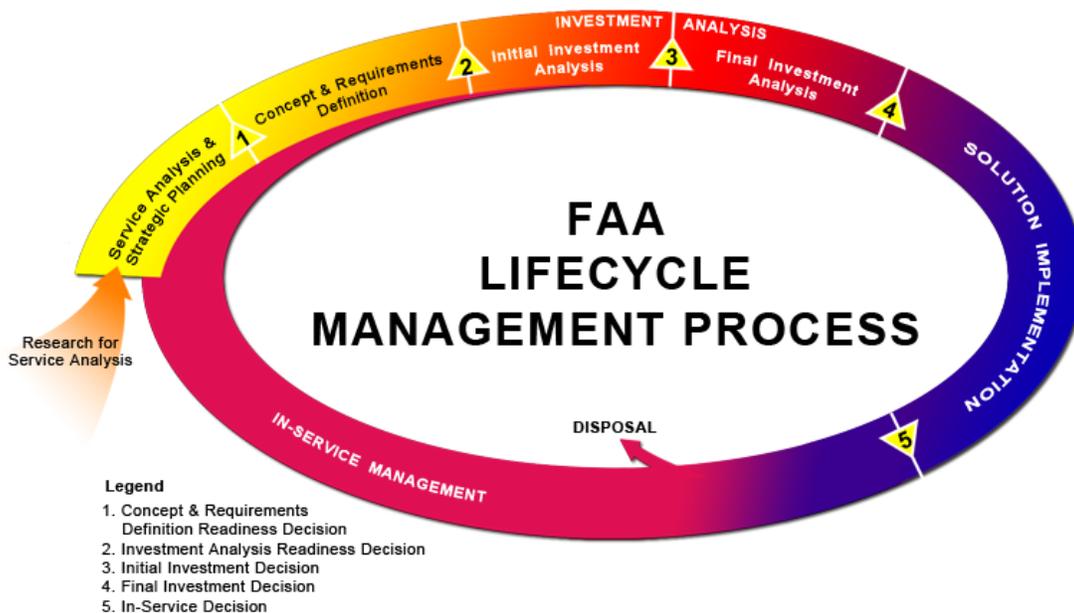


Exhibit 1.1
FAA Acquisition Management Lifecycle

The FAA completed a review of the AMS in 2016 to ensure that FAA’s acquisition policy and toolset is consistent with current and anticipated acquisition needs and practices. The AMS 2016 update helped make certain that the FAA is providing tools for a new way of doing business, meeting the challenges of a dynamic and evolving aviation industry, and ensuring the safety of the flying public. As a result of the AMS 2016 initiative, FAA has:

- Strengthened central oversight for FAA acquisitions.
- Provided new cost/price analysis policy and guidance that increases clarity.
- Added AMS policy and guidance identifying micro-purchase thresholds to speed up procurement requests.
- Updated CFO guidance and reviews for acquisitions.
- Strengthened and streamlined policy and guidance to advance lifecycle and procurement management practices.
- Enhanced functionality of the FAA Acquisition System Toolset (FAST) website.

FAST is the official record of AMS. As a ‘toolset,’ FAST contains AMS Policy (agency-wide, mandatory requirements) and AMS Guidance (information implementing or augmenting policy). The updated FAST can be found on the FAA website at <http://fast.faa.gov>.

2. ACQUISITION WORKFORCE PLANNING PROCESS

The FAA's Acquisition Workforce Council is comprised of acquisition executives from across the agency. The Council sets acquisition workforce-related strategies and oversees plan development and implementation. The Director of Acquisition Policy and Oversight chairs the Council. This position reports directly to the FAA Acquisition Executive.

The Council periodically reviews and refines long-term planning strategies and initiatives to reflect changes in scope, definition of the acquisition workforce and workload. The Council also considers the impact of known and anticipated budget availability on capital program schedules and hiring possibilities when refining its strategies and initiatives.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

FAA's Acquisition Workforce Council has established the following guiding principles for acquisition workforce planning:

Leverage Existing Programs and Best Practices from Across Government.

While FAA faces its own unique challenges and drivers, its overall acquisition workforce needs are similar to those of other federal agencies. FAA is leveraging government and industry acquisition workforce best practices and programs to reduce the time and cost of developing acquisition tools and strategies.

Staff and Shift Resources to Best Meet Needs.

As acquisition programs move through the phases of the acquisition life cycle, staffing needs change. FAA must staff according to these shifting needs. FAA is staffing with consideration for overall agency needs and priorities first, and individual programs and organizations second. The agency identifies the best fit for each position and looks internally and externally to close gaps.

Use an Appropriate Balance of Federal Employees and Contractors.

This Acquisition Workforce Strategy focuses on the staffing and development needs of the federal civilian workforce. FAA uses federal employees to provide consistent, long-term staffing and to maintain core in-house capabilities. The agency supplements its federal civilian workforce with a flexible level of contractors to meet staff and skill requirements that fluctuate over time.

Implement Innovative Workforce Strategies.

FAA is implementing aggressive strategies for recruitment, staffing, training and development, and retention. The agency is creating multiple paths for attracting and retaining acquisition workforce talent.

Update the Acquisition Workforce Strategy Annually and Consider It a Living Document.

FAA approaches its acquisition workforce planning as a continuous process, and this Strategy is treated as a “strategy in motion.” The Acquisition Workforce Council tracks progress against the strategies, and revises and updates those strategies as necessary to meet evolving needs and lessons learned from work-to-date.

PLANNING PROCESS

FAA’s acquisition workforce planning process is consistent with the Government Accountability Office’s (GAO) Principles for Effective Strategic Workforce Planning² and the Office of Personnel Management’s (OPM) Workforce Analysis Framework³.

The planning process is based on the high level of commitment and active engagement of senior management across the agency. The agency’s strategic plans serve as the basis for determining future workforce requirements. Workforce planning, however, is not a precise science.

The acquisition workforce, in particular, is challenging to count and track because it is role based, not job series based. Employees can move in and out of the acquisition workforce depending on their current role. For example, an engineer working on one of FAA’s NAS programs may move to a different organization that supports non-NAS programs, and would therefore no longer be included in the acquisition workforce.

Further, demand projections are complicated by the nature of the work, which is not easily measured in terms of numbers and transactions. Experience and skill levels are also factors that impact the number of people needed to support acquisition programs in the future. The Acquisition Workforce Council, working with the Office of Labor Analysis, developed staffing models to validate the expert judgment and experience of senior acquisition professionals related to future workforce staffing requirements. As the models mature, FAA will use them to supplement the projections provided by these senior acquisition professionals.

FAA’s approach is about engaging management, linking to the agency’s strategic direction, focusing on critical requirements, and treating the Strategy as a strategy in motion, to be refined on an ongoing basis and formally updated annually.

² “Key Principles for Effective Strategic Workforce Planning”, Government Accountability Office, GAO-04-39, December 11, 2003.

³ “Migration Planning Guidance Information Documents: Workforce Planning Best Practices”, Office of Personnel Management, October 7, 2011.

3. FAA'S ACQUISITION WORKFORCE

Acquisition professionals govern and manage the development, refresh and modernization of the FAA's mission systems, services and technologies. For the purposes of this Strategy, FAA's core acquisition workforce consists of:

- Employees in acquisition professions who directly and primarily support one or more NAS Capital Investment Plan⁴ (CIP) programs, from AMS' Service Analysis & Strategic Planning phase through the Solution Implementation phase. This includes Service Life Extension Programs (SLEP).
- Program and Project Managers who develop and manage FAA's Information Technology (IT) administrative and mission support systems.
- Contracting Officers/Specialists, Real Estate Contracting Officers/Specialists and Acquisition Attorneys for all procurements.

The acquisition workforce is comprised of federal employees working in 11 professions:

Leadership. Leadership professionals are the executives and senior managers providing overall direction and leadership for all acquisition programs and for acquisition governance.

Program / Project Managers. These professionals oversee the development and implementation of modernization efforts on Capital Improvement Plan programs and administrative and mission support systems, ensuring that the capabilities are delivered on time, on budget and to specification. Program / Project Managers have the complex tasks of engaging and balancing the needs of a wide-variety of internal and external stakeholders and of considering the impacts of their modernization programs on FAA's current operational environment.

Researchers and Engineers / Systems Engineers. These technical professionals manage engineering integration across the NAS, individual systems and acquisition programs to achieve a consistent and consolidated NAS design. Program engineers oversee the technical development of acquisition programs.

Financial Analysts. These analysts develop cost projections, recommend steps to mitigate financial risks and provide financial and investment analysis.

Contracting Officers / Specialists. These contracting professionals manage all processes and procedures involved in establishing and maintaining contractual relationships between FAA and its external suppliers.

⁴ The FAA Capital Investment Plan (CIP) is a five-year plan that describes the National Airspace System (NAS) modernization projects and lists the activities the FAA intends to accomplish during that period. The CIP contains both projects that modernize existing systems and projects that introduce new systems into the NAS.

Realty Specialists. Real Estate Contracting Officers/Specialists (RECO/S) are responsible for acquiring real estate, utilities and land.

Contracting Officer’s Representatives (CORs). CORs help resolve technical issues, give technical direction to the Contractor and interpret technical processes and procedures for the Contracting Officer. COR responsibilities are often an additional duty.

Integrated Logistics Support Specialists. Logisticians plan, establish and maintain an integrated logistics system to ensure that programs have access to parts and support services throughout their life cycle.

Test and Evaluation Specialists. Test and Evaluation specialists verify and validate that products meet specifications, satisfy requirements and are operationally suitable and effective.

Acquisition Attorneys. Acquisition attorneys provide legal advice regarding all aspects of contract formation and administration, and review FAA acquisition actions for legal sufficiency.

Specialized Support. Professionals in the specialized support category are typically NAS subject matter experts. They can include safety engineers, information systems specialists, air traffic specialists and training experts.

Profiles of each individual acquisition profession are provided in the Appendix to this Strategy.

OVERVIEW OF THE CURRENT WORKFORCE

The core acquisition workforce consists of approximately 1,800 federal employees. As explained in Sections 1 and 3 of this Strategy, the workforce provides acquisition support activities through 11 distinct professions:

- Leadership
- Program / Project Management
- Research and Engineering / Systems Engineering
- Business - Financial Management
- Contracting
- Realty Specialist
- Contracting Officer’s Representative (COR)
- Integrated Logistics Support
- Test and Evaluation
- Acquisition Law
- Specialized Support

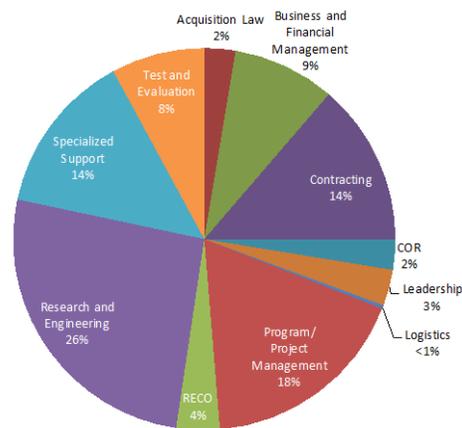


Exhibit 3.1
FAA Acquisition Workforce by Profession

While distinct in the roles that they play, these professions work closely together. Exhibit 3.1

provides a breakout of the acquisition workforce in each of the 11 professions. The data in the following exhibits was provided in the May reporting period (validated through the May 2016 Federal Personnel Payroll System, Pay Period 12).

At 26 percent, the Research and Engineering profession represents the largest percentage of federal employees in the acquisition workforce. Research and Engineering, Contracting, and Program / Project Management make up almost 60 percent of the total acquisition workforce, providing critical skills and capabilities required to procure, implement and manage the resources and technologies essential to FAA's acquisition programs.

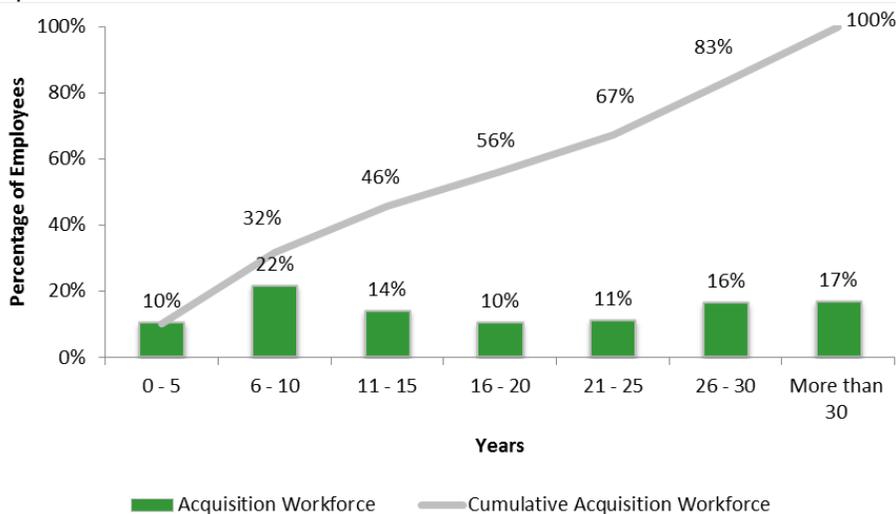
It is important to note that the engineers, Program / Project Managers, and CORs represented in the exhibit are only those that support FAA's NAS Capital Investment Plan (CIP) programs and its administrative and mission support systems. There are also CORs, for example, who support procurements other than these core acquisition programs and systems, such as facilities support contracts. While not included in this document, FAA does track and ensure that certification requirements are met by the full COR community. Similarly, the Logistics population includes only those Integrated Logistics Support Specialists who support NAS programs during acquisition; there are many logistics specialists who provide logistics support to in-service (non-CIP) programs and who are therefore not included in this Strategy.

YEARS OF EXPERIENCE

Exhibit 3.2 shows the distribution of years of federal service for all professionals in the acquisition workforce. The average FAA acquisition professional has 19 years of federal service. Almost 45 percent of the acquisition workforce has over 20 years of experience; 10 percent of the workforce has 5 or fewer years of federal service.

Exhibit 3.2

Acquisition Workforce Federal Service

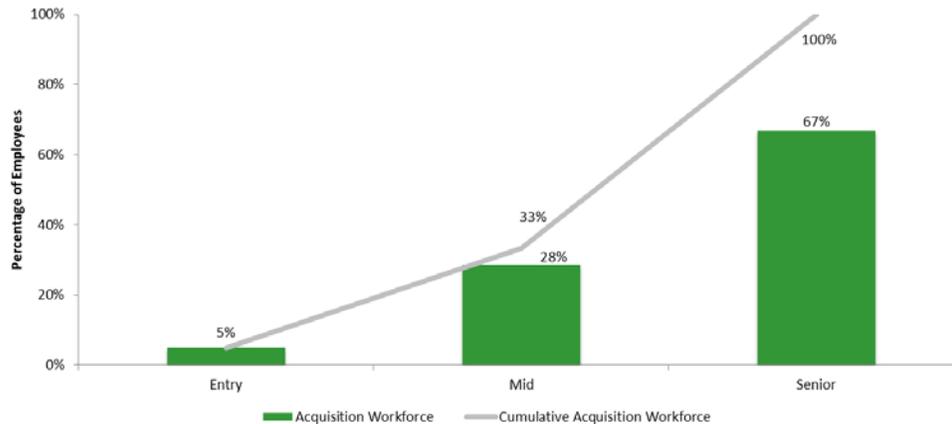


Acquisition Career Levels⁵

Consistent with an experienced workforce, the exhibit below shows that 67 percent of acquisition professionals are in the senior career level. Thirty-three percent of the workforce is below the senior level, with 5 percent at the entry level.

Exhibit 3.3

Acquisition Workforce Career Levels



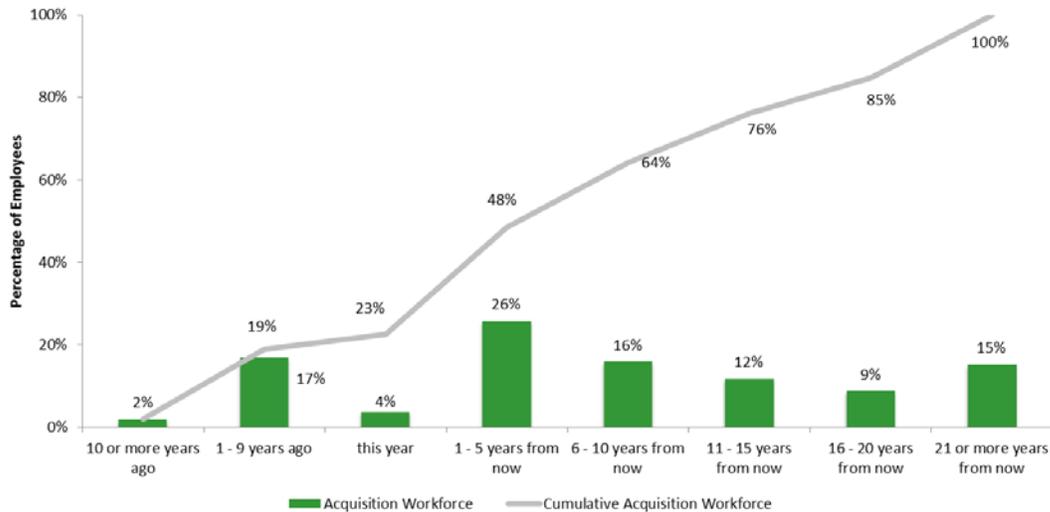
RETIREMENT ELIGIBILITY AND ATTRITION

Nineteen percent of the overall acquisition workforce, or approximately 340 professionals, have been eligible to retire for 1 or more years. These retirement-eligible professionals are spread across all of the professions. Twenty-three percent of the acquisition workforce, or approximately 410 professionals, are eligible for retirement this calendar year, and an additional 26 percent will become eligible over the next 5 years (Exhibit 3.4). Historical data shows that approximately 40 percent of retirement eligible employees take retirement within the first 5 years of eligibility.

⁵ The three career level categories are: Entry (Student through G Band and General Schedule equivalents); Mid (H Band, I Band, and General Schedule equivalents); Senior (J Band and higher, and General Schedule equivalents).

Exhibit 3.4

Acquisition Workforce Retirement Eligibility



Anticipated retirements are a concern across federal civilian government, not just for FAA’s acquisition workforce. According to a January 2014 Government Accountability Office (GAO) report, by September 2017 nearly 600,000 (31 percent) of on board staff will be eligible to retire.⁶ Twenty-six percent of FAA’s acquisition workforce will be eligible to retire at that time.

Not all employees take retirement at the time they become eligible, but retirement eligibility data is useful for understanding the potential future losses related to retirements as the acquisition workforce ages.

Actual attrition for the acquisition workforce between FY 2014 and FY 2015 increased by 1.8 percent.⁷ The percent of employees retiring decreased by 0.4 percent while the number of employees leaving for other reasons (i.e. deaths, resignations and terminations) increased by 2.2 percent.

Profiles for individual acquisition professions are provided in the Appendix, *FAA Acquisition Profession Profiles*.

⁶ “Federal Workforce: Recent Trends in Federal Civilian Employment and Compensation”, Government Accountability Office, January 2014, GAO-14-215.

⁷ See Exhibit 5.3, FY 2016 Acquisition Workforce Metrics.

4. CURRENT SITUATION: BUSINESS DRIVERS AND CHALLENGES

MODERNIZING AGING SYSTEMS

For over 50 years, the FAA has delivered the world's leading aviation system, setting an unparalleled standard for safety and efficiency that is emulated globally. While safely moving flights is FAA's number one priority, dealing with congestion and delays and improving efficiency and cost performance are also important considerations for managing the National Airspace System (NAS). Flight delays continue to impact passenger travel and future demand forecasts remain high. Though staffed by a capable, dedicated workforce, the current air traffic control system is not scalable or flexible enough to keep up with the anticipated future demand. FAA is currently implementing a broad technological response to this serious current and future challenge.

COMPLEX ACQUISITIONS

The FAA faces unprecedented acquisition challenges as it implements new systems to enhance and evolve the NAS. Today, FAA's acquisitions are more complex than ever and require new approaches and skills to integrate new capabilities into a system that must always be online and available for operational use. The FAA must ensure that the systems it delivers provide the reliability and capabilities needed in the NAS. The overarching business challenges affecting the acquisition community include:

- **Rapid Change.** Technology changes rapidly. In particular, the evolution of the NAS requires new and more integrated technology that will be refreshed more frequently than the legacy systems of the past. Today's integrated technologies and end-to-end solutions demand collaboration across projects and lines of business.
- **Number of Acquisitions.** FAA manages more than 150 NAS improvement programs identified in the Capital Investment Plan (CIP). Many of these programs are further organized into separate and distinct projects. The large number of current, on-going acquisitions supporting these programs requires a multi-disciplined workforce with deep skills.
- **Increased Complexity and Interdependence of Programs.** Programs are becoming more complex and interdependent. Today's programs require enhancements to multiple components of the NAS that are being developed in parallel by different functions and offices. The globalization of the aviation industry, including an increasing focus on international standards, adds another dimension of complexity. Integrated, complex solutions require knowledge of the entire airspace system, close collaboration, a coordinated approach to problem solving and constant communications.
- **Delivering Best Value.** Public programs must demonstrate the value and outcomes of their

work and link those outcomes to business and funding decisions. The FAA must make decisions based on a full understanding of the cost of providing benefits to the taxpayer and flying public.

- **Portfolio Management.** The ability to manage a portfolio of investments to achieve mission effectiveness is critical. The NAS Enterprise Architecture portrays the “as is” and “to be” state of FAA operational assets, along with roadmaps that lay out, over time, what investments will be made to achieve the end state configuration. The complex system-of-systems concepts and integration of new technologies is increasing the focus and requirements for portfolio management.
- **Investment Analysis.** A large influx of investment analysis efforts over the next five years will increase the need for business case and investment analysis expertise to determine the life cycle costs and economic benefits of interdependent programs and projects.

SCARCITY OF SKILLED ACQUISITION PROFESSIONALS

Hiring and developing acquisition professionals at FAA and across the federal government have not kept pace with the growth in the number and complexity of acquisitions. A combination of factors, including the increasing complexity of acquisition work and retirements, are creating competition for acquisition talent across government. The Federal Acquisition Institute (FAI) and the Government Accountability Office (GAO) have both reported on the shrinking pool of certified and experienced acquisition professionals.

Because most federal agencies face these same issues, FAA experiences stiff competition in the talent market as each agency struggles – and literally competes with one another – to maintain the skills and resources necessary to manage the taxpayers’ investment. To address this situation, FAA continues to seek qualified acquisition candidates and is maintaining a concerted focus on retaining and developing its existing talent. Finding qualified professionals – with the right skills and right experience – is proving to be difficult. This limitation leads to hiring less experienced staff who need time to develop their acquisition skills and higher workload for current employees.

RETIREMENTS AND ATTRITION

FAA’s acquisition professionals are highly seasoned, with many years of federal and FAA-specific experience. Collectively, their knowledge represents a valuable and critical asset to the agency in the highly complex, technical domain of the NAS. While technical and leadership skills can be developed over time through training and other developmental programs, acquisition professionals need hands-on experience with the NAS to fully understand how different technologies, systems and hardware sub-systems intersect and integrate. Additionally, FAA acquires system solutions under its unique acquisition system, the Acquisition Management System (AMS). Losing professionals skilled in the NAS and the AMS, with the possible loss of

almost 25 percent of the current workforce by 2020, could significantly impact FAA's ability to define, build and implement critical NAS systems in the most effective and efficient manner.

The FAA is experiencing attrition across acquisition workforce professions due to retirements and the loss of experienced employees to other federal agencies. Losing highly skilled and experienced professionals results in fewer highly qualified staff managing increasingly complex acquisitions, erodes morale and puts the agency at risk for increased costs, disruptions and delays. In addition to the immediate impacts of losing senior, experienced professionals, a thinning pipeline of talent can have long-term impacts on knowledge transfer and, ultimately, acquisition program performance.

Section 5, Acquisition Workforce Strategies, describes the strategies FAA has put in place to address these critical business drivers and challenges and the key accomplishments to-date.

5. Acquisition Workforce Strategies

The FAA has established foundational strategies and related initiatives for sustaining a high-performing acquisition workforce. These strategies and initiatives planned to support them are developed with consideration for the challenges described in the previous section. Accordingly, they recognize the need to improve FAA's hiring processes, but they emphasize the increasing importance of developing existing employees to meet future acquisition requirements.

Outlined in Exhibit 5.1, the strategies present FAA's plan for:

- Ensuring that hiring processes both support organizational needs and foster a positive initial impression on future employees.
- Building acquisition workforce capability through comprehensive development programs that provide opportunities for employees to build skills in professions that are both rewarding for them and important to FAA's future.
- Maintaining cross-agency commitment to this vital segment of the agency's workforce.

Acquisition Workforce Strategies	
1	Maintain core acquisition staffing levels
2	Continue to strengthen workforce capability
3	Sustain cross-agency focus on the acquisition workforce

Exhibit 5.1

High-Level Strategies

As we continue to evolve acquisition workforce planning, we will adhere to these over-arching strategies, tailoring each to meet the needs of the individual professions. We recognize the need to shift emphasis and add new initiatives over time based on updated analyses and lessons learned. Our emphasis is to retain and develop the existing workforce, along with assessing and filling our most critical positions.

STRATEGY OVERSIGHT AND IMPLEMENTATION

The Acquisition Workforce Council oversees the execution of this Strategy with support from the Acquisition Career Management group within the Office of Acquisitions and FAA's Office of

Human Resources Management. We continue to collaboratively define and implement the acquisition workforce strategies and initiatives.

Our strategies rest upon a common foundation to ensure that FAA's acquisition workforce has the capability to fulfill FAA's business goals and, ultimately, to meet cost, schedule and performance targets for modernizing the NAS. Each acquisition workforce profession contributes uniquely to meeting FAA's business goals and each fulfills a different role and responsibility required for acquisition success.

The competencies unique to each acquisition workforce profession guide every aspect of development for that profession, from recruiting and selecting acquisition professionals to join the FAA community, to training and developing those individuals, to certifying them in their respective professions. Competencies are used to guide the creation of tools and resources to help acquisition professionals be effective in their roles and to aid them in establishing long-term careers that are rewarding to them and important to FAA.

FAA communicates these competencies to ensure that the entire acquisition community understands what is necessary and required, and that the community is moving in the same direction to fulfill its mission of modernizing the NAS. The profession profiles described in the Appendix to this Strategy provide a full list of the competencies required for each profession.

STRATEGY 1.

Maintain core acquisition staffing levels.

FAA's ability to hire the most talented applicants depends upon its ability to attract those applicants in the first place. The needs and interests of prospective employees vary by profession and by the level of employee – entry, mid, and senior – FAA is attempting to attract. Developing effective recruiting strategies provides the best chance of attracting well-qualified candidates for specific vacancies.

FAA's recruitment strategies must be supported by an effective hiring process that quickly brings new talent onboard. While budget constraints impact the agency's ability to hire, we must be prepared to act quickly when opportunities to hire are presented. To ensure that we are prepared to take advantage of any hiring opportunities, the agency will continue to focus on improving its hiring process.

Filling the most critical staffing and skill gaps is a high priority for FAA to successfully design, develop, deploy and sustain NAS technologies and infrastructure. This strategy is particularly important given the current constrained and uncertain budget environment.

The Acquisition Workforce Council is working closely with the Office of Human Resources to:

- Enhance acquisition workforce hiring policies.
- Streamline the process for announcing internal and external positions.
- Identify pools of qualified candidates for consideration on multiple vacancies.
- Reduce the time to hire.

STRATEGY 2.

Continue to strengthen workforce capability.

To fully contribute to FAA's mission, acquisition professionals require in-depth knowledge of FAA's business, as well as strong technical and leadership skills. Toward a goal of more highly skilled professionals, FAA continues to strengthen the capabilities of its existing and future workforce through its on-going commitment to professional development and certification for acquisition employees.

FAA is improving its acquisition workforce training and development on a profession-by-profession basis. This approach allows FAA to target the needs of individual professions and be better positioned to increase the number and variety of developmental opportunities available to the entire acquisition workforce community. For example, FAA recently updated the Program / Project Management competency model to better align the competencies with the actual work being performed by the program management community. This further resulted in enhancements to specific courses in FAA's program / project management training curriculum; enhancements that also benefit IT program managers, Systems Engineers, and Test & Evaluation professionals. The Appendix to this Strategy, *FAA Acquisition Profession Profiles*, describes recent and planned activities for each profession.

STRATEGY 3.

Sustain cross-agency focus on the acquisition workforce.

The Acquisition Workforce Council provides a forum for acquisition workforce planning and improvement activities. Comprised of executives from acquisition organizations across the agency, the Council is uniquely positioned to advise, direct and focus resources to build and maintain an effective acquisition workforce. Together with acquisition workforce support organizations, like FAA's Acquisition Career Management, the Council guides acquisition workforce hiring, staffing and development decisions.

FAA will continue to improve its focus on the acquisition workforce to include additional communication within the workforce. This will help acquisition professionals better understand certification requirements, training curricula and other developmental opportunities.

METRICS

FAA has established the metrics listed in Exhibit 5.2 to help measure the success of the Acquisition Workforce Strategy. These metrics will be used to track and report progress over time.

Exhibit 5.2

FY 2016 Acquisition Workforce Metrics

Metric / Measure	FY 2016 Performance			
Actual On-Board ¹ Number of acquisition workforce employees.	1,795			
On-Board Staffing Against Prior Year Staffing Levels	Profession	FY 2015	FY 2016	Delta
	Program / Project Management	327	319	-8
	Research & Engineering	479	466	-13
	Test & Evaluation	143	142	-1
	Business/Financial Management	153	156	+3
	Contracting	262	247	-15
	COR	51	45	-6
	Acquisition Law	50	47	-3
	Leadership	55	55	0
	Logistics	5	5	0
	Specialized Support	229	247	+18
	Realty Specialist	73	66	-7
	Total	1,827	1,795	-32

Metric / Measure	FY 2016 Performance
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<p>Certified Staff by Profession</p> <p>Percentage certified against total of those whose positions require certification. Calculated as [Active Certifications] / [Number Requiring Certification].</p>	Position	% Certified
	Contracting Officers/Specialists	94%
	Program Managers ²	97%
	Contracting Officer's Representatives	65%
	Real Estate Contracting Officers	100%

Attrition Rate ³	Attrition Type	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Actual
<p>Percentage of acquisition workforce leaving the agency, by attrition type. Calculated as [Attrition Type] / [On-Board at Start of Year]</p>	Retired	3.1%	2.7%
	Other Loss	<u>1.5%</u>	<u>3.7%</u>
	Total	4.6%	6.4%

- 1) Based on May 2016 Federal Personnel Payroll System (FPPS) reporting. The delay is necessary to ensure all personnel changes have been identified through FPPS, the official FAA personnel system.
- 2) Program Managers on Acquisition Category (ACAT) programs 1 - 3 and OMB majors.
- 3) Based on FY 2015 acquisition workforce quarterly gains and losses reporting, derived from the Federal Personnel Payroll System (FPPS)

6. Future Workforce Requirements

FAA makes projections of future workforce requirements to help inform the development needs of the acquisition community. The FAA's senior acquisition managers and executives projected workforce requirements from FY 2016 through FY 2021 based on their understanding of current budget assumptions, acquisition program requirements (including program starts and stops), resource availability, and integrated capital program schedules. The Acquisition Workforce Council reviews the projections to ensure there is (1) consistency in planning assumptions across the entire acquisition community and (2) application of logical workflow and workload assumptions across the acquisition lifecycle.

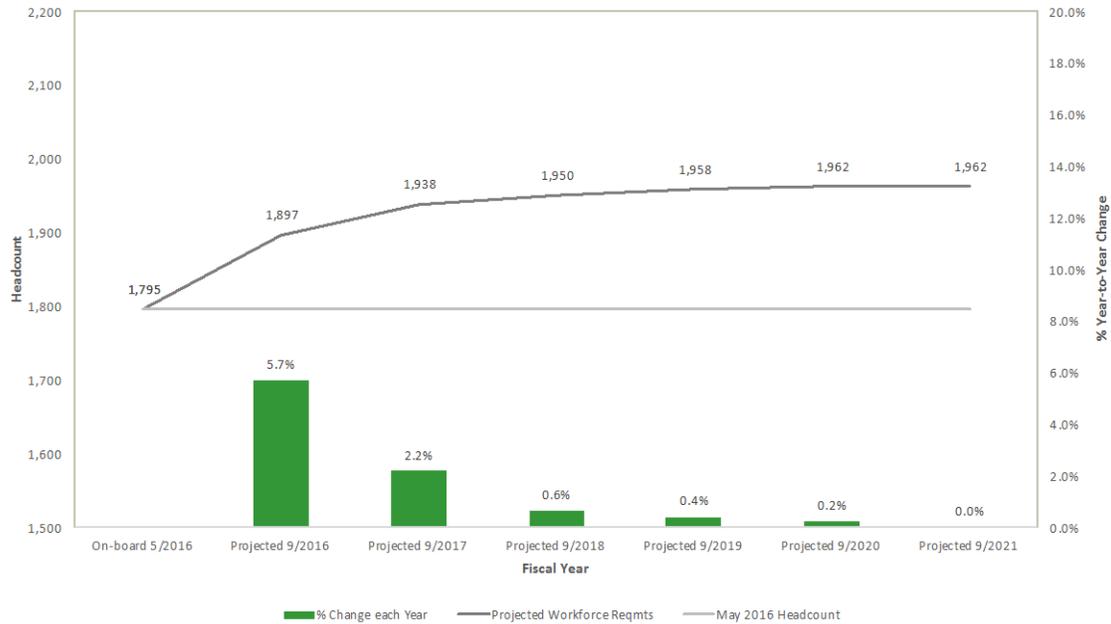
FAA confirms the reasonableness of the projections through a validation model developed with FAA's Office of Labor Analysis. The model estimates workforce requirements based on workload drivers related to the agency's NAS Capital Investment Plan (CIP) programs, which include the number, size, complexity and lifecycle phase of the programs. The validation model also recognizes that staffing in some elements of the acquisition community, particularly leadership, contracting, management and oversight, is not directly driven by the number or complexity of current and future CIP programs.

FAA does not expect actual future staffing needs to perfectly match the projections. FAA does expect that the agency can develop and implement plans to prepare and position the acquisition workforce for a reasonably expected future state. The estimated workforce staffing projections are not hiring targets; hiring targets and plans are the responsibility of the individual Lines of Business and Staff Offices in which acquisition professionals reside. Instead, the projections are high-level workload estimates that are used to guide, inform and communicate acquisition workforce development planning and decision-making.

As defined in this Strategy, the acquisition workforce in mid FY 2016 includes approximately 1,800 individuals across eleven acquisition professions. Exhibit 6.1 shows that the workforce requirement for acquisition personnel across all professions is projected to grow by an additional 6 percent in 2016, 2 percent in FY 2017, 1 percent in FY 2018 and then level off through 2021. By 2021, FAA expects to need 9 percent more acquisition professionals than are currently on-board.

Exhibit 6.1

Estimated Acquisition Workforce Requirements



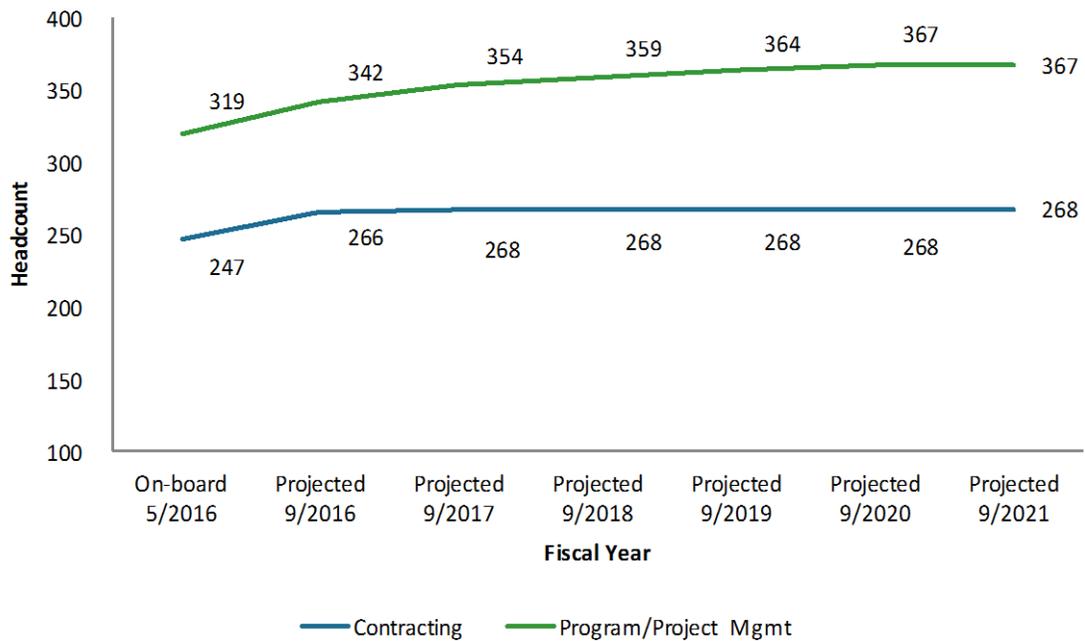
Two professions of greatest concern based on the size of their workforces, the importance to FAA’s acquisition programs, and the difficulty of finding qualified candidates are Contracting and Program / Project Management. Exhibit 6.2 shows the projected requirements for the Contracting and Program / Project Management professions through FY 2021.

The requirement for Contracting Officers/Specialists is expected to increase by an additional 8 percent through FY 2016, 1 percent in FY 2017, and then to stabilize through FY 2021. By 2021, FAA expects to need 9 percent more Contracting professionals than the 247 currently on-board.

Workforce requirements for the Program / Project Management profession are projected to increase by an additional 7 percent through FY 2016, 4 percent in FY 2017, 1 percent in FY 2018, FY 2019 and FY 2020, and then to stabilize in FY 2021. These projected workforce requirements are based on current workload projections as impacted by projected program budgets and implementation schedules. By FY 2021, FAA expects to need 15 percent more Program / Project Management professionals than the 319 currently on-board.

Exhibit 6.2

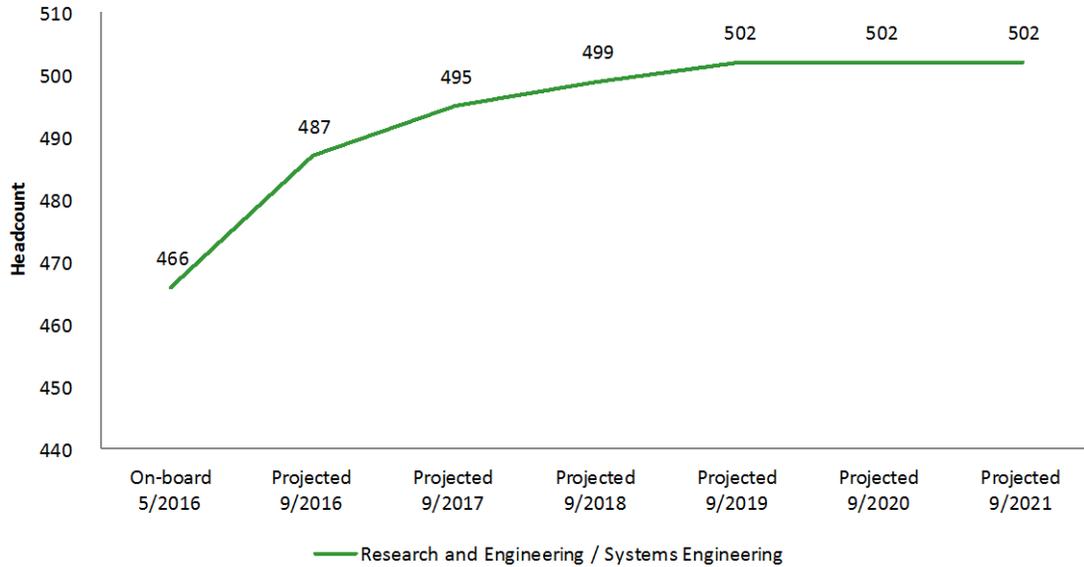
Estimated Acquisition Workforce Requirements for the Program / Project Management and Contracting Professions



The Research and Engineering profession is the largest in the acquisition workforce. Exhibit 6.3 shows the projected requirements for the Research and Engineering profession through FY 2021. The requirement for these professionals is expected to increase by an additional 5 percent through FY 2016, 2 percent in FY 2017, 1 percent in FY 2018, and then to stabilize through 2021. By 2021, FAA expects to need 8 percent more Research and Engineering professionals than the 466 currently on-board.

Exhibit 6.3

Estimated Acquisition Workforce Requirements for the Research and Engineering Profession



FAA’s Acquisition Workforce Strategies, described in Section 5 of this Strategy, are intended to provide the agency with the ability to meet the projected workforce requirements and to ensure that both new and current employees obtain and enhance the skills and experience to help FAA meets its acquisition needs and modernization goals. The Appendix to this Strategy describes each of the acquisition workforce professions in greater detail, including actions planned for FY 2017.

APPENDIX: FAA Acquisition Profession Profiles

The acquisition workforce is comprised of 11 distinct core professions:

- 1 Leadership
- 2 Program / Project Management
- 3 Research and Engineering / Systems Engineering
- 4 Test and Evaluation
- 5 Business - Financial Management
- 6 Contracting
- 7 Realty Specialist
- 8 Contracting Officer's Representative
- 9 Acquisition Law
- 10 Integrated Logistics Support Specialists
- 11 Specialized Support

Each profession is individually profiled in this section to provide a more complete overview and understanding of the specific profession. The profiles also provide, where appropriate, the unique challenges facing the individual profession, the actions taken in 2016 to develop the profession, and planned actions for ongoing development in FY 2017.

1 LEADERSHIP PROFILE

Definition

The Leadership profession includes executives and senior managers providing leadership for acquisition programs and acquisition governance. Acquisition program leaders typically have organizational responsibility for a group of programs.

Membership

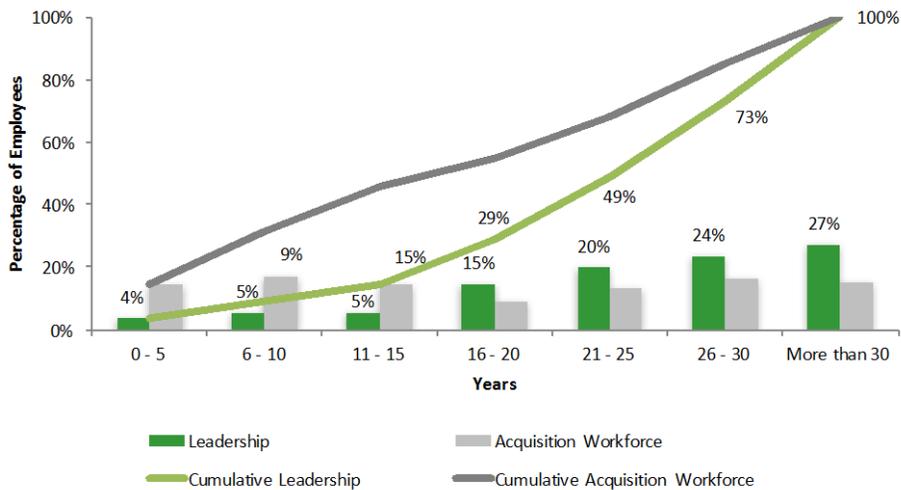
In 2016 there are 55 acquisition employees in FAA's acquisition Leadership profession, or approximately 3 percent of the overall acquisition workforce. These professionals are primarily located at FAA Headquarters in Washington, DC.

Years of Experience

Leadership professionals are highly experienced and have on average almost 24 years of federal service, 5 years more than the average FAA acquisition employee. As shown in Exhibit 1.1, 49 percent of Leadership professionals have been in federal service for 21 or more years. This reflects the seniority of the members in this profession.

Exhibit 1.1

Leadership Federal Service

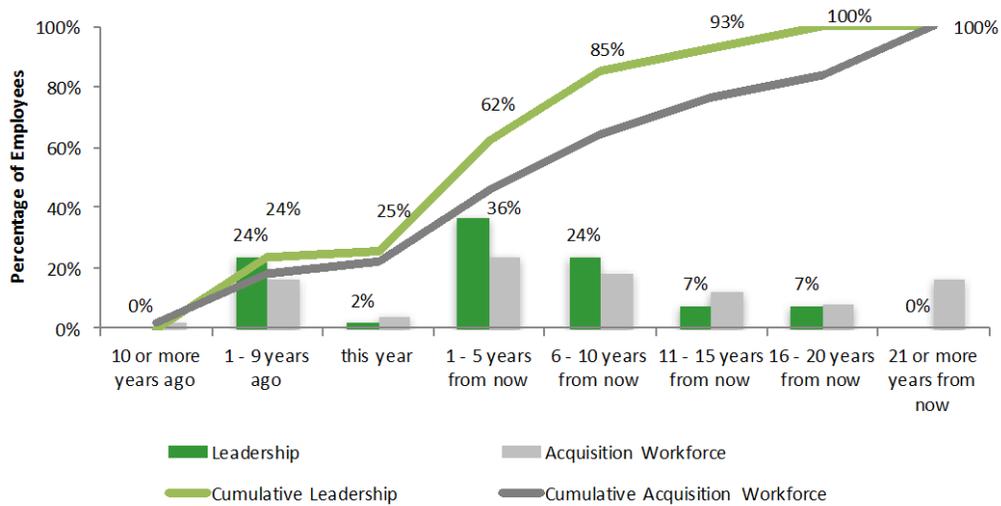


Retirement Eligibility

Exhibit 1.2 shows the retirement eligibility profile for the acquisition employees in the Leadership profession. The exhibit shows both annual and cumulative eligibility and compares it to the overall acquisition workforce. Consistent with longer federal service, employees in the Leadership profession are retirement eligible earlier than the average acquisition workforce employee; 85 percent of the Leadership profession is eligible to retire within 10 years, versus 64 percent of the overall workforce.

Exhibit 1.2

Leadership Retirement Eligibility



Typical Job Roles

- Senior Executives
- Directors
- Division Managers

Critical Competencies

The Leadership competencies are also integrated into the competency models of other professions as appropriate. The general leadership competencies are:

- Managing Organizational Performance
- Accountability and Measurement
- Problem Solving
- Business Acumen
- Customer Focus
- Building Teamwork and Collaboration
- Building a Model EEO Program
- Developing Talent
- Communications
- Building Alliances
- Interpersonal Relations and Influence
- Integrity and Honesty
- Vision
- Strategy Formulation
- Agility
- Innovation

Activities in 2016

- Completed a Leadership Development Guide to provide suggested development resources to acquisition workforce members. The guide contains information about leadership resources and programs across FAA and is appropriate to acquisition workforce members in all professions and at all career levels.
- Launched a series of leadership “hot topics” training events for all members of the acquisition workforce. These short, lunch time events provide basic leadership skills and knowledge across a broad range of leadership topics, including communication and negotiation.

Planned Activities for FY 2017

Activity	Deliverable	Planned Completion
Continue to build-out and enhance the leadership “hot topics” training event series	Expanded content	Quarterly

2 PROGRAM / PROJECT MANAGEMENT PROFILE

Definition

The Program / Project Management (P/PM) profession includes employees who have primary responsibility for the management and oversight of FAA acquisition programs and projects. This occupation supports the following phases in the acquisition life cycle: Research for Service Analysis, Service Analysis & Strategic Planning, Concept and Requirements Definition, Investment Analysis, and Solution Implementation. It involves establishing, tracking, managing, and reporting all aspects of Program / Project planning and execution, including budgeting, technical requirements, personnel, and user needs. Program / Project Managers have the complex tasks of engaging and balancing the needs of a wide-variety of internal and external stakeholders and of considering the impacts of their modernization programs on FAA's current operational environment. The profession does not include program support personnel.

Membership

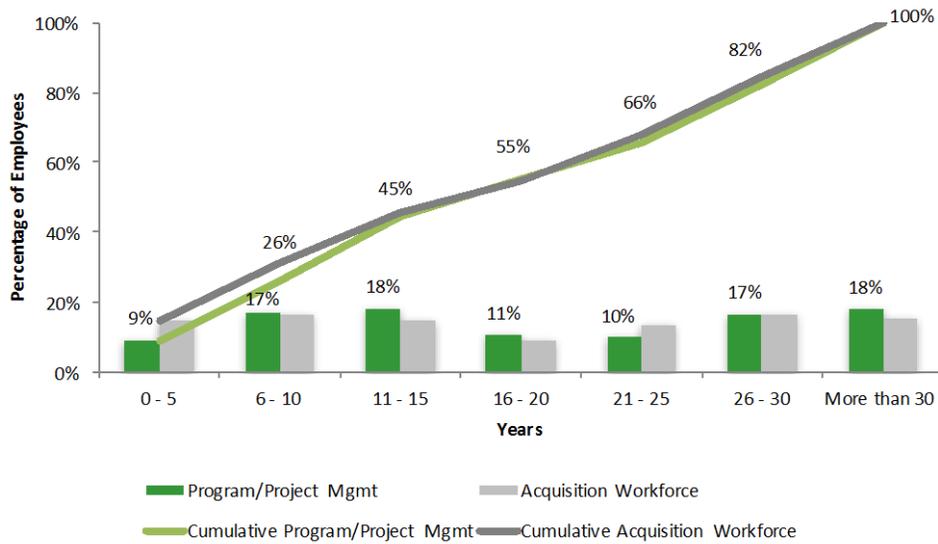
In 2016 there are 319 acquisition employees performing Program / Project Management duties, or approximately 18 percent of the overall acquisition workforce. Approximately 40 of these professionals are Program Managers on FAA's largest acquisition programs. These Program Managers are subject to FAA certification requirements described in this profile.

Years of Experience

The average federal service tenure of Program / Project Management professionals is 19 years, which is the average for the overall workforce. Exhibit 2.1 shows the distribution of years of federal service for these professionals. Over half of Program / Project Management professionals have been in federal service for 21 or more years.

Exhibit 2.1

Program / Project Management Federal Service

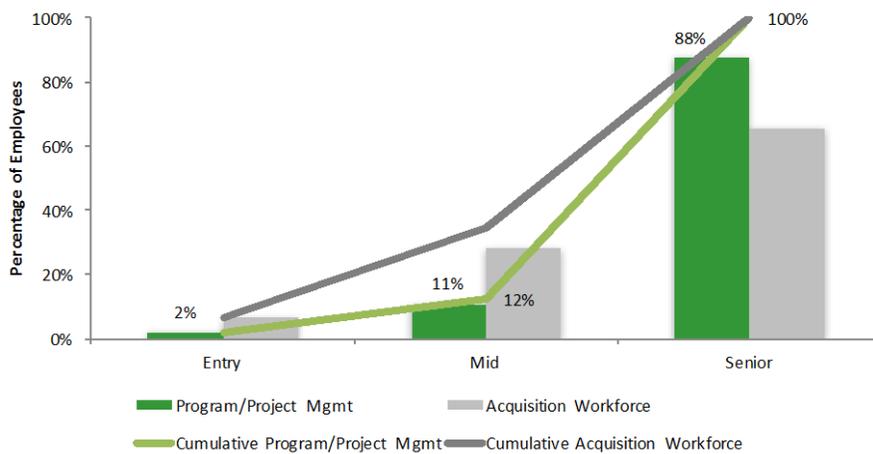


Career Levels¹²

Exhibit 2.2 shows the career level distribution for the Program / Project Management profession. Eighty-seven percent of the members of this profession are categorized as Senior, meaning that their pay bands are in the J Band and higher, and General Schedule equivalents. Program / Project managers are typically some of the most senior members of the acquisition workforce.

Exhibit 2.2

Program / Project Management Career Levels



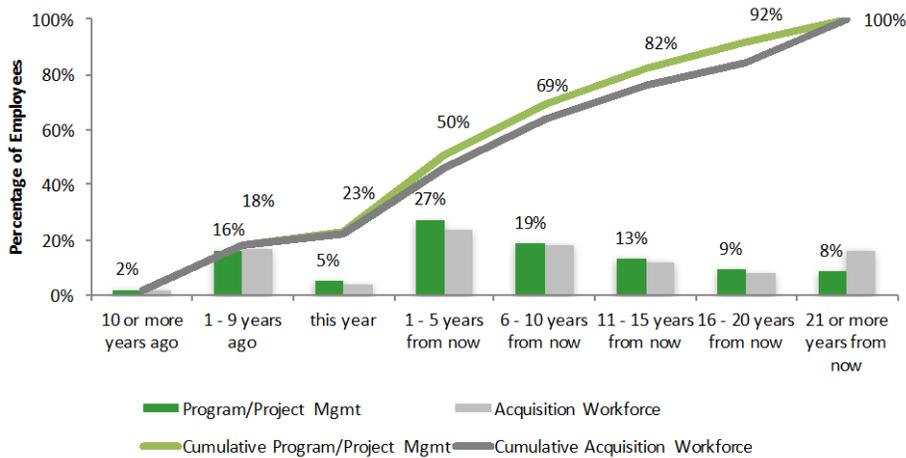
¹² The three career level categories are: Entry (Student through G Band and General Schedule equivalents); Mid (H Band, I Band, and General Schedule equivalents); Senior (J Band and higher, and General Schedule equivalents).

Retirement Eligibility

Exhibit 2.3 shows the retirement eligibility profile for the acquisition employees in the Program / Project Management profession. The exhibit shows both annual and cumulative eligibility and compares it to the overall acquisition workforce. Twenty-three percent of employees in the Program / Project Management profession are eligible for retirement by the end of this year, consistent with the average for the overall acquisition workforce.

Exhibit 2.3

Program / Project Management Retirement Eligibility



Typical job roles for acquisition employees in this profession include:

- Program Manager
- Project Manager
- Acquisition Manager
- Project Lead
- Portfolio Manager

Typical job series in this profession include:

- 340 – Program Management
- 800 series – Engineering Group
- 2186 – Aviation Technical Systems Specialist

Critical Competencies

FAA's Program / Project Manager competencies were validated in 2015 and enhanced with performance indicators at basic, intermediate, and advanced levels of performance. The competencies are:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p><u>Technical:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Contracting and Procurement• Financial Planning, Monitoring and Control• Lifecycle Logistics Management• Organizational Awareness• Program / Project Planning, Monitoring and Control• Requirements Development and Management• Risk Management | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information Management (IT P/PM) <p><u>Non-Technical:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Agility• Building Alliances• Communications• Customer and Stakeholder Management• Interpersonal Relations and Influence• Problem Solving and Decision-making• Teamwork and Collaboration |
|--|--|
- Systems Engineering

Certification

The Program / Project Management (P/PM) certification program supports certification of professionals at three distinct levels: Entry, Mid and Senior. These levels reflect the increasing responsibility and capability required of the Program Manager as programs become larger, more complex, and more highly integrated with other programs. FAA's policy requires Program Managers on FAA's largest, most complex acquisition programs to become certified within specific timeframes from the date of program assignment.

Certification requirements were updated in FY 2015. Certification requirements are met through a combination of factors, which include experience in the profession, completion of targeted training (both internal and external to FAA) and attainment of industry-recognized certification. All acquisition certifications are competency-based. Applicants must provide evidence of fulfillment of the competencies at the level for which they are applying.

To maintain FAA certification, individuals must continue to develop skills and capabilities as measured through continuous learning points. The Program / Project Management certification policy is available in FAA's Acquisition Management System (AMS) Policy Section 5.0, at http://fast.faa.gov/docs/acquisitionManagementPolicy/AcquisitionManagementPolicy_5.pdf .

Challenges

- The ability to manage a portfolio of investments to achieve mission effectiveness is critical. To meet evolving NAS program requirements, there is a significant need for technical and program integration across organizations, domains and agencies, and the ability to identify and manage interdependent program risk.
- Entry-level hiring is not effective because of the complexity of Program Management. Program Managers require years of experience and often are promoted from other career professions (e.g., Research and Engineering).
- Developing new Program Managers takes time. New in-house Program Managers are often promoted from other career professions, typically later in their careers. Identifying and developing these new candidates will require additional focus as experienced Program Managers retire and as budget constraints limit FAA's ability to hire externally.

Activities in 2016

- On track to meet the FY 2016 goal of 90 percent of PMs managing FAA's most complex acquisition programs meeting or maintaining certification requirements for their positions.
- Conducted multiple leadership and program management development forums:
 - Manager's Symposiums. Quarterly Manager training and program leadership forums.
 - Leadership Conversations. Bi-monthly informal roundtable discussions between Front Line Managers, Middle Managers and Senior PMO Leadership.
 - PMO Workshop: Stakeholder Engagement. Periodic brown bag lunch networking and development events.
 - Mission-Driven Workshops for program teams blending training with hands on expert help working on specific deliverables and milestones.
 - PPM Level II and III Capstones. Each course provides a culminating experience to prepare certification candidates for the unique challenges of managing FAA acquisition programs/projects.
- Enhanced Program / Project Management certification requirements to align with changes in the Federal Acquisition Institute's FAC-PM and FAC-IT PM certification programs.
- Continued to offer training and industry certification programs for Program / Project Management professionals.
- Continued to enhance the Program / Project Management community of practice web portal to provide guidance and tools to support career development, and provide links to certification requirements and applications.

Planned Activities for FY 2017

Activity	Deliverable	Planned Completion
Continue to build-out and enhance the P/PM community portal	Expanded content	Quarterly
Ensure employees meet the certification requirements for their position	Monthly metrics provided to the Acquisition Workforce Council	Monthly
Monitor Government-wide initiatives that could impact the certification requirements for P/PM. Impacts will be reviewed to determine if changes to FAA's contracting certification program are required	Status reports to the Acquisition Workforce Council, as needed	Quarterly
Outreach to improve and stimulate the developmental interests of the P/PM community	Increased volume of certifications	Semi Annually
Conduct next round of PMO manager and employee development discussions	Updated Employee Development Resource Card	4th Quarter

3 RESEARCH AND ENGINEERING / SYSTEMS ENGINEERING PROFILE

Definition

Research is the process of investigating and examining an issue or need from different perspectives that may lead to the development of a practical solution or approach. Engineering is the profession of applying scientific knowledge and using natural laws and physical resources to design and implement materials, structures, machines, devices, systems and processes that realize a desired objective and meet specified criteria. This profession focuses on Applied Research conducted to solve problems or answer specific questions in response to a stakeholder requirement.

As a combined community, Research and Engineering contains many professional sub-professions and roles. Systems Engineering, Software Engineering, Human Factors Engineering and Safety Engineering are highlighted here.

Systems Engineering. The field of Systems Engineering concentrates on the design and application of the whole system as distinct from its parts. At a National Airspace System (NAS) level, Systems Engineering cuts across individual systems and acquisition programs to achieve an integrated, consistent and consolidated NAS design. At a program level, Systems Engineering provides oversight of the systems development effort from initial requirements and specification development through implementation. Systems Engineering has two main purposes in FAA acquisitions. The first is to ensure that acquisitions are conducted from initial requirements to deployment and life cycle support in a consistent, repeatable, well-formulated manner. The second is to ensure that these acquisitions form an integrated whole. High quality individual pieces only make an improved NAS if their integration is specifically considered during acquisition. While policy, benefits and cost will ultimately determine what will be acquired, these all must be addressed in a context of cross-NAS implication and integration provided by NAS-level Systems Engineering.

Software Engineering. Software engineering is the application of a systematic, disciplined, quantifiable approach to the design, development, operation and maintenance of software, and the study of these approaches. It is the application of engineering to software.

Human Factors Engineering. Human Factors Engineering is an integral part of Systems Engineering and ensures that human-in-the-loop system performance objectives are met. The application of Human Factors Engineering during all phases of an acquisition program addresses the role of the human component in system design. One objective of Human Factors Engineering is to reduce the number and consequences of human errors that may result in incidents/accidents by aviation equipment users and maintainers. The application of Human

Factors Engineering can also increase productivity and improve overall NAS performance.

Safety Engineering. The field of Safety Engineering includes positions that require the performance of professional engineering work to eliminate or control hazardous conditions resulting from human error, equipment and machine operations, which may lead to injury to persons and damage to property. This work requires the application of: (a) advanced mathematical techniques; (b) professional engineering principles, methods and techniques; (c) safety related elements of the physical sciences, ergonomics, psychology and physiology; and (d) safety principles, standards, practices and analytical techniques.

Membership

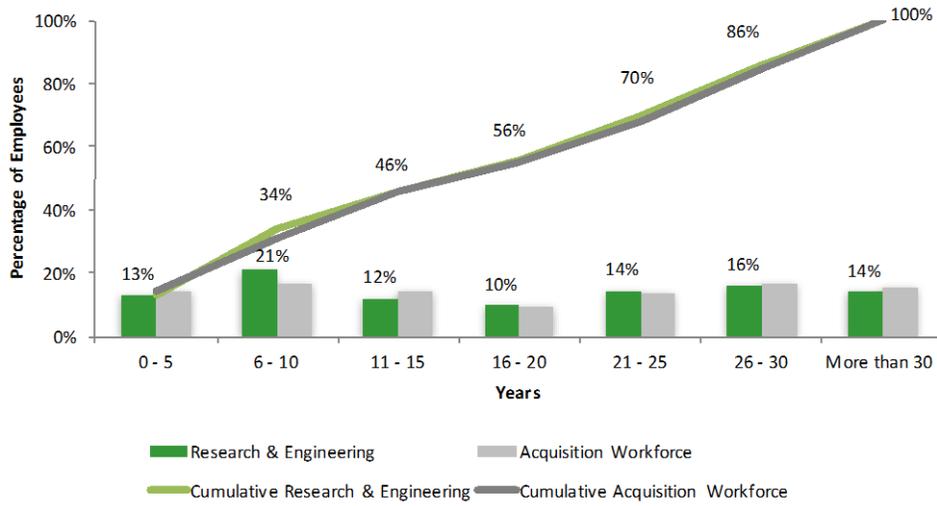
Research and Engineering is the largest profession in FAA's acquisition workforce. In 2016 there are 466 acquisition employees in FAA's acquisition Research and Engineering profession, or approximately 26 percent of the overall acquisition workforce. There are many more individuals who support FAA in research and engineering roles that are not part of the core acquisition workforce due to the nature of their work and the programs they support. These individuals represent the broader workforce from which talent may be developed or acquired to meet future acquisition workload needs.

Years of Experience

The average length of federal service for Research and Engineering professionals is 18 years, six years less than the overall acquisition workforce. As seen in Exhibit 3.1, the lower average years of service is largely due to the higher proportion of employees with 6 to 10 years of federal experience. This is consistent with FAA's strategy of hiring and developing employees to serve as Research and Engineering professionals.

Exhibit 3.1

Research and Engineering Federal Service

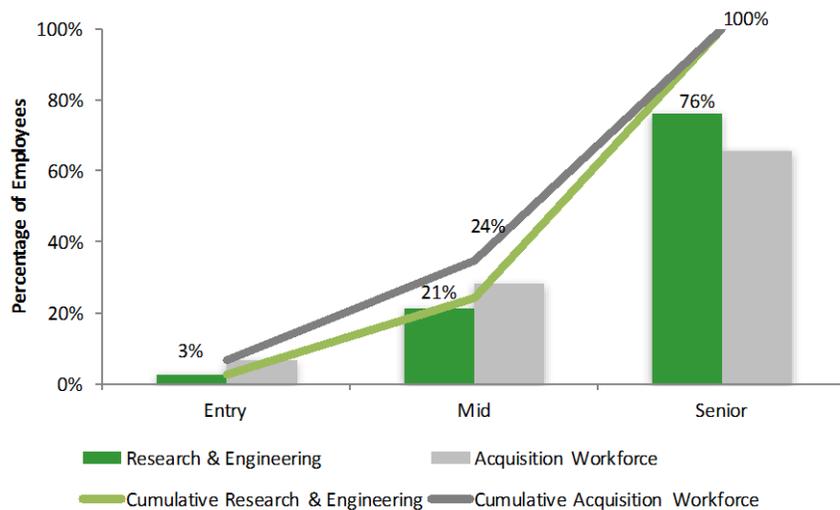


Career Levels¹³

Exhibit 3.2 shows the career level distribution for the Research and Engineering profession. Seventy-six percent of the members of this profession are categorized as Senior, meaning that their pay is in, or higher than, the J Band or its General Schedule equivalent.

Exhibit 3.2

Research and Engineering Career Levels



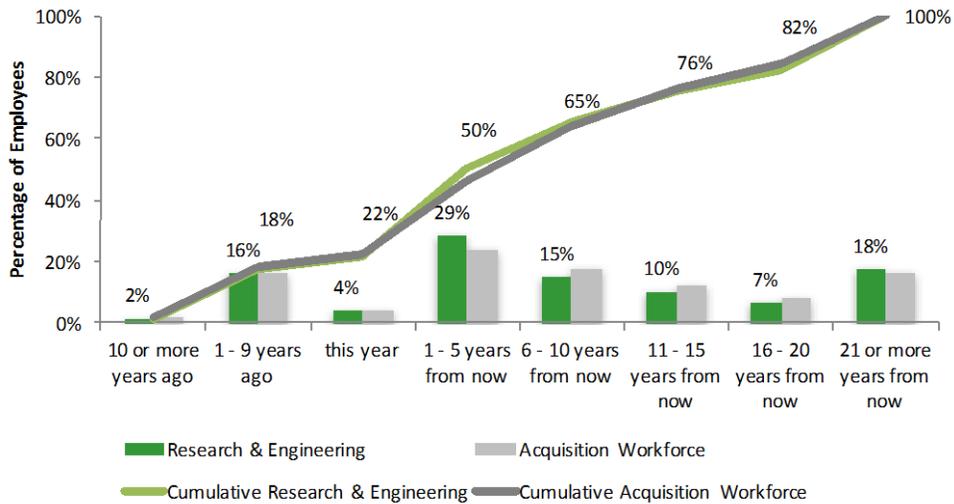
¹³ The three career level categories are: Entry (Student through G Band and General Schedule equivalents); Mid (H Band, I Band, and General Schedule equivalents); Senior (J Band and higher, and General Schedule equivalents).

Retirement Eligibility

Exhibit 3.3 shows the retirement eligibility profile for the acquisition employees in the Research and Engineering profession. The exhibit shows both annual and cumulative eligibility and compares it to the overall acquisition workforce. Research and Engineering professionals have a retirement eligibility profile similar to the overall acquisition workforce.

Exhibit 3.3

Research and Engineering Retirement Eligibility



Typical job roles for acquisition employees in this profession include:

- Operations Research Analyst
- Chief Systems Engineer
- Systems Engineer
- Software Engineer
- Human Factors Engineer/Specialist
- Systems Architect

Typical job series in this profession include:

- 800 series – Engineering Group
- 1300 series – Physical Science Group
- 1500 series – Mathematics and Statistics Group, including Computer Scientists

Critical Competencies

The following competencies were developed in collaboration with the Systems Engineering community and the Acquisition Workforce Council. The Systems Engineering competencies are:

Technical:

- Acquisition and Lifecycle Management
- Configuration Management
- Data Collection and Analysis
- FAA Operations and Strategic Alignment
- Interface Management
- Requirements Development and Management
- Risk Management
- Systems Integration
- Systems Thinking and Application

- Technical Assessment and Analysis of Alternatives
- Validation
- Verification

Non-Technical:

- Agility
- Communications
- Customer and Stakeholder Management
- Influence and Negotiation
- Problem Solving and Decision-making
- Project Management
- Teamwork and Collaboration

Certification

The Systems Engineering certification program supports certification of professionals at three distinct levels: Entry, Mid and Senior. These levels reflect the increasing responsibility and capability required of the Systems Engineer as programs become larger, more complex and more highly integrated with other programs. Certification as a Systems Engineer is not mandatory.

The Systems Engineering certification program was updated in FY 2016 to better align with industry systems engineering certification programs and streamline the certification process. Certification requirements are met through a combination of factors, which include experience in the profession, training (both internal and external to FAA), external certification requirements and external certification equivalencies. All acquisition certifications are competency-based.

To maintain FAA certification, individuals must continue to develop skills and capabilities as measured through continuous learning points.

The Systems Engineering certification policy is available in FAA's Acquisition Management System (AMS) Policy Section 5.0, at <http://fast.faa.gov/AcquisitionCareerManagement.cfm>.

Challenges

- Recruiting and hiring to meet the increased demand for all levels of Systems Engineers, and various engineering roles, is extremely competitive. Hiring continues to be difficult with current budget constraints.
- Hiring authority is often limited to backfills with junior engineers. FAA systems (e.g., communications, safety critical automation) are in themselves very complex and junior engineers don't have the hands on experience that gives them the expertise to do oversight of acquisition engineering that the senior engineers who came from the military or FAA's Technical Operations have.
- Engineers must understand the implications of working in an increasingly complex system of systems environment, while maintaining a systems view of their projects and products.
- Engineers must recognize that working in a complex, integrated technological environment requires even greater collaboration across organizational and domain boundaries to ensure seamless integration of systems and products.
- Increasing the membership in and use of discussion groups, such as the SE Forum, as knowledge and information sharing opportunities across the community. The Research and the Engineering communities must ensure that they maintain up-to-date technical and scientific knowledge in their specialty area.
- Supporting the career growth or evolution of members of the Test and Evaluation profession who are interested in developing Systems Engineering competencies.
- Future systems will require more systems thinking and systems integration than has been required for legacy systems. This will require both development of existing staff and hiring new staff with broader systems integration experience.

Activities in 2016

- Updated the Systems Engineering certification program to streamline requirements and the application process.
- Continued to communicate Systems Engineering training requirements to support achievement of the required competencies.
- Developed and offered additional Systems Engineering courses to build the required competencies.
- Offered industry certification programs for Systems Engineering professionals.
- Continued to enhance the Systems Engineering community of practice web portal to provide guidance and tools to support career development, and provide links to certification requirements and applications.

Planned Activities for FY 2017

Activity	Deliverable	Planned Completion
Build-out and enhance the Systems Engineering community portal	Expanded content	On-Going
Analyze, refine and enhance Systems Engineering curriculum	Robust curriculum	Annually
Outreach to improve and stimulate the developmental interests of the Systems Engineering community	Increased volume of certifications	On-Going
Develop a Research, Development, Test, and Evaluation Emerging Leader Program	Increased communication and collaboration among professions and a pipeline of potential future leaders	4 th Quarter

4 TEST AND EVALUATION PROFILE

Definition

Test and Evaluation (T&E) is the process associated with testing, analyzing and evaluating in order to verify and validate that products meet specifications, satisfy requirements and are operationally suitable and effective. T&E personnel require the knowledge of efficient and cost effective methods for planning, monitoring, conducting and evaluating tests of equipment and material. T&E personnel also need a thorough strategy to verify system or service performance through measurable methods and validate that the system or service will fulfill its intended purpose when placed in its intended environment. Developmental testing verifies that all specified technical and performance requirements have been met and that the system is fully integrated and stable, and that it has no adverse effect on the rest of the NAS. Operational testing validates that a new or modified system or service is operationally effective and suitable for use in the NAS and the NAS infrastructure is ready to accept the system.

Systematic and comprehensive T&E promotes the development of quality products by systematically checking for defects and deviations. T&E plays a critical role in all acquisition phases. T&E Planning and Support activities support the development of concepts, requirements, acquisition strategies, contract items, design and development. Quality T&E practices and reporting provide effective risk management and decision support for acquisition planning and milestones. The developmental and operational test phases of an acquisition program require design testing to a mature readiness level, component and system integration and operational validation.

Membership

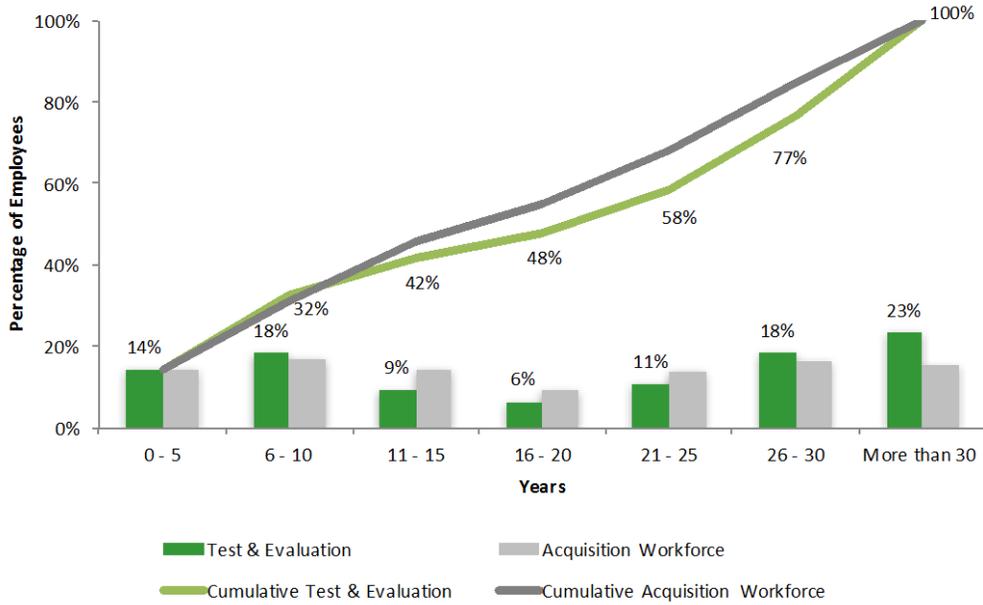
Individuals who work in the T&E career field are technical professionals who plan, perform and manage T&E tasks and team activities in support of acquisition programs. In 2016 there are approximately 142 acquisition employees in FAA who have primary responsibility for T&E, or approximately 8 percent of the overall acquisition workforce. The majority of these employees work at FAA's William J. Hughes Technical Center in Atlantic City. T&E is the Technical Center's primary mission; the Center is committed to providing a world-class laboratory dedicated to the T&E of critical NAS systems to maximize the quality of T&E products and services, promote effective T&E planning, reduce program risks, decrease program costs and reduce latent defects.

Years of Experience

The average length of time that T&E professionals have been in federal service is 20 years, slightly higher than the average acquisition employee (19 years). The distribution of tenure is shown in Exhibit 4.1.

Exhibit 4.1

Test and Evaluation Federal Service

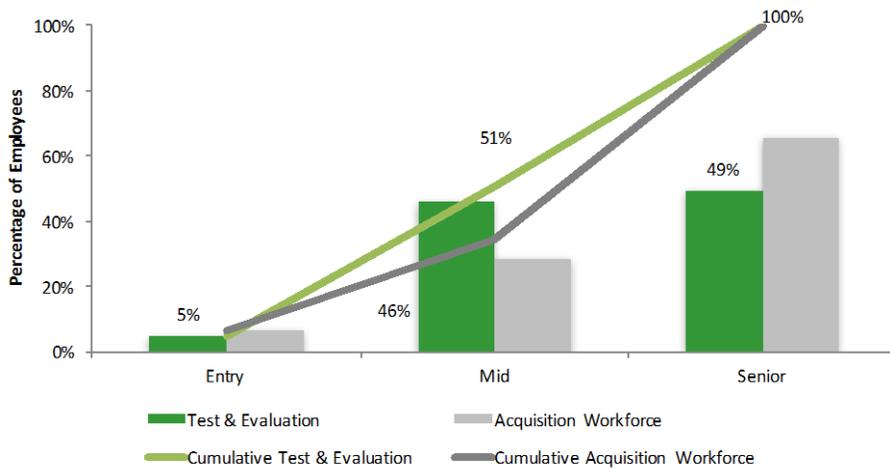


Career Levels¹⁴

Exhibit 4.2 shows the career level distribution for the Test & Evaluation profession. Employees in this profession work primarily in the Mid and Senior career levels, with almost half at the Senior level.

Exhibit 4.2

Test and Evaluation Career Levels



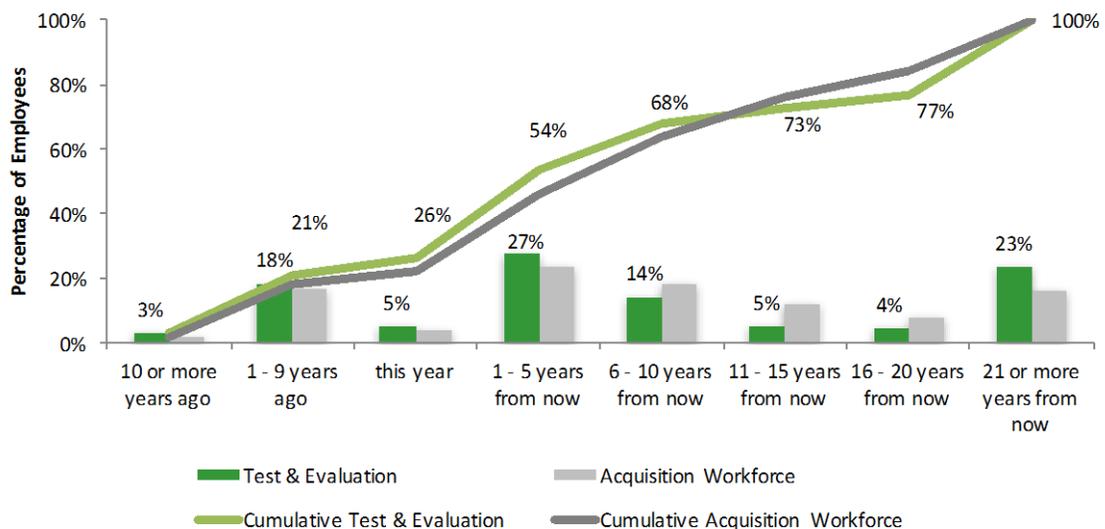
¹⁴ The three career level categories are: Entry (Student through G Band and General Schedule equivalents); Mid (H Band, I Band, and General Schedule equivalents); Senior (J Band and higher, and General Schedule equivalents).

Retirement Eligibility

Exhibit 4.3 shows the retirement eligibility profile for the acquisition employees in the T&E profession. The exhibit shows both annual and cumulative eligibility and compares it to the overall acquisition workforce. Twenty-six percent of current T&E employees will be eligible for retirement by the end of this year. Twenty-three percent will not become eligible for 21 or more years.

Exhibit 4.3

Test and Evaluation Retirement Eligibility



Typical job roles for acquisition employees in this profession include:

- Test Team Manager
- Test Director
- Test Lead
- Test Engineer
- Operations Research Analyst
- Experimental Designer
- Flight Test Engineer

Typical job series in this profession include:

- 334 - Computer Specialist
- 800 series – Engineering and Architecture Group
- 1500 series – Mathematics and Statistics Group, including Computer Scientists

Critical Competencies

The T&E competencies were validated in 2016. They consist of:

Technical:

- Acquisition and Contracts
- Data Collection, Analysis, and Reporting
- NAS Operations
- Requirements Management
- Risk Management
- Safety Management
- Systems Thinking and Application
- Technical Writing

- Test and Evaluation Standards Application
- Test Management
- Test Theory and Methods Application

Non-Technical:

- Agility
- Communications
- Customer and Stakeholder Management
- Interpersonal Relations and Influence
- Problem Solving and Decision-making
- Teamwork and Collaboration

Certification

The Test and Evaluation certification program supports certification of professionals at three distinct levels: Entry, Mid and Senior. These levels reflect the increasing responsibility and capability required of the Test and Evaluation specialist as programs become larger, more complex and more highly integrated with other programs. Certification as a Test and Evaluation specialist is not mandatory.

Certification requirements are met through a combination of factors, which include experience in the profession and training (both internal and external to FAA). All acquisition certifications are competency-based.

To maintain FAA certification, individuals must continue to develop skills and capabilities as measured through continuous learning points.

The Test and Evaluation certification policy is available in FAA's Acquisition Management System (AMS) Policy Section 5.0, at <http://fast.faa.gov/AcquisitionCareerManagement.cfm>.

Challenges

- Future systems will require more integrated testing.
- Maintaining an adequate workforce with the right expertise and skill mix.
- NAS capabilities are allocated across systems, requiring new ways to test requirements across systems, not just to a single system.

Activities in 2016

- Updated the Test and Evaluation Certification Program to streamline requirements and the application process.
- Continued to communicate Test and Evaluation training requirements to support achievement of the required competencies.
- Developed and offered additional Test and Evaluation courses to build the required competencies.
- Continued to enhance the Test & Evaluation community of practice web portal to provide guidance and tools to support career development, and provide links to certification requirements and applications.

Planned Activities for FY 2017

Activity	Deliverable	Planned Completion
Build-out and enhance the Test & Evaluation community portal	Refreshed content	On-Going
Analyze, refine and enhance Test & Evaluation curriculum	Robust curriculum	Annually
Outreach to improve and stimulate the developmental interests of the Test & Evaluation community	Increased volume of certifications	On-Going
Develop a Research, Development, Test, and Evaluation Emerging Leader Program	Increased communication and collaboration among professions and a pipeline of potential future leaders	4 th Quarter

5 BUSINESS - FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT PROFILE

Definition

Employees in this profession use their knowledge of financial systems and business processes to: develop, coordinate and integrate performance-based budgets; write informative justifications for budget requests; develop metrics; plan, manage, track, reconcile and report financial transactions; develop cost projections; develop recommendations to mitigate financial risks; and provide financial and investment analysis.

Membership

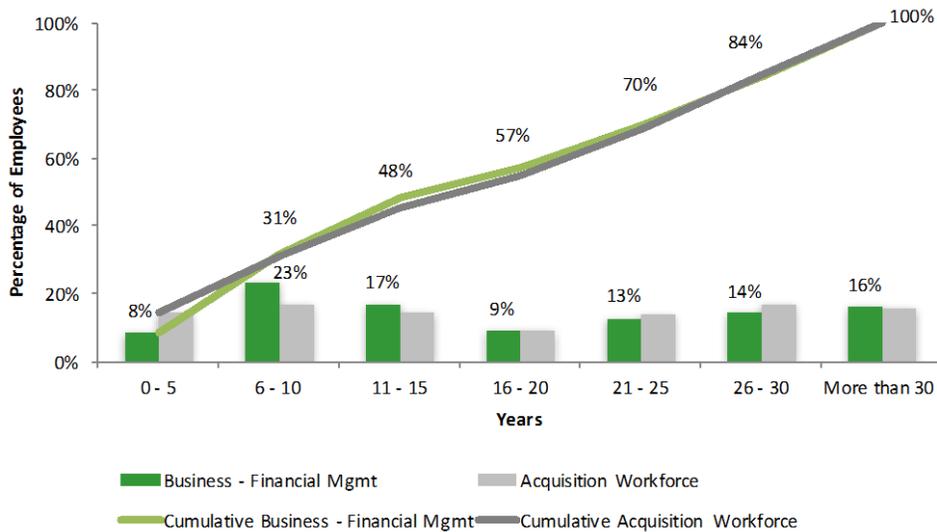
In 2016 there are 156 acquisition employees in the Business - Financial Management profession, or 9 percent of the overall acquisition workforce. Employees in this profession include personnel in program offices as well as personnel in FAA's Finance organization.

Years of Experience

The average tenure of Business - Financial Management professionals in federal service is 19 years. Eight percent of Business - Financial Management professionals have been in federal service for 5 or fewer years. The distribution of tenure is shown below in Exhibit 5.1.

Exhibit 5.1

Business - Financial Management Federal Service

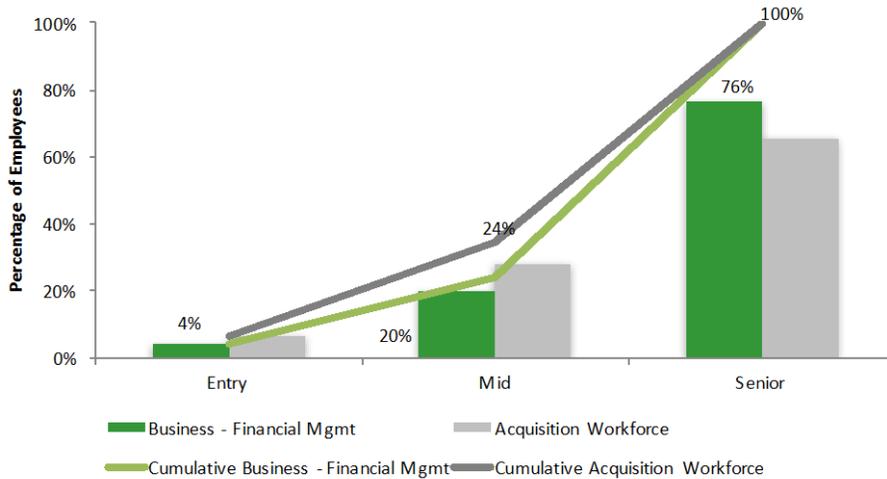


Career Levels¹⁵

Exhibit 5.2 shows the career level distribution for the Business - Financial Management profession. Seventy-six percent of Business - Financial Management professionals are at the Senior level.

Exhibit 5.2

Business - Financial Management Career Levels



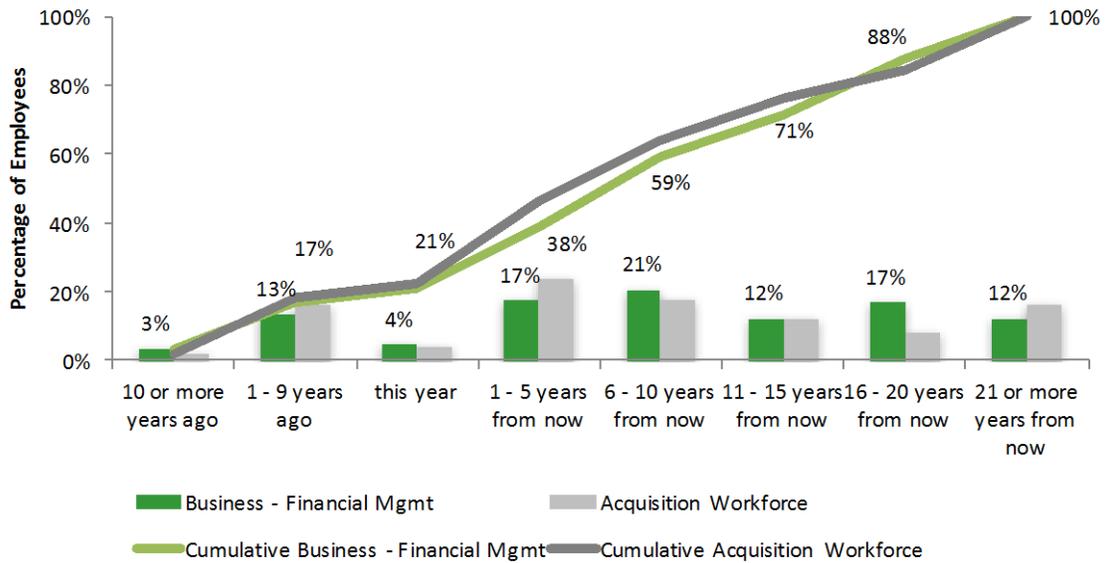
Retirement Eligibility

Exhibit 5.3 shows the retirement eligibility profile for the acquisition employees in the Business - Financial Management profession. The exhibit shows both annual and cumulative eligibility and compares it to the overall acquisition workforce. Approximately 21 percent of employees in this profession will be eligible for retirement by the end of this calendar year, 2 percent lower than for the overall acquisition workforce.

¹⁵ The three career level categories are: Entry (Student through G Band and General Schedule equivalents); Mid (H Band, I Band, and General Schedule equivalents); Senior (J Band and higher, and General Schedule equivalents).

Exhibit 5.3

Business - Financial Management Retirement Eligibility



Typical job roles for acquisition employees in this profession include:

- Cost Analyst/Estimator
- Business Manager
- Financial Analyst

Typical job series in this profession include:

- 500 series – Accounting and Budget Group
- 1500 series – Mathematics and Statistics Group

Critical Competencies

The table below lists requisite competencies for the Business - Financial Management profession. These competencies were validated in FY 2012 and enhanced with performance indicators at basic, intermediate and advanced levels of performance.

The Business – Financial Management competencies are:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <u>Technical:</u> | • Procurement |
| • Budget Development and Justification | <u>Non-Technical:</u> |
| • Budget Execution and Funds Control | • Agility |
| • Performance Measurement and Analysis | • Business Acumen |
| • Data Collection Analysis and Reporting | • Communications |
| • Internal Control, Audit and Review | • Customer and Stakeholder Management |
| • Planning and Forecasting | • Interpersonal Relations and Influence |
| | • Problem Solving and Decision Making |
| | • Teamwork and Collaboration |

Because of its importance to the profession, a competency model was developed specifically for Cost Estimating. The Cost Estimating competencies are:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <u>Technical:</u> | Procedures |
| • Acquisition and Contracts | <u>Non-Technical:</u> |
| • Data Collection and Analysis | • Agility |
| • Financial Analysis | • Customer Focus |
| • Financial Management | • Interpersonal Relations and Influence |
| • Investment Analysis Program and Portfolio Management | • Communication |
| • Systems Evaluation | • Teamwork/Collaboration |
| • FAA Organizational Policies and | |

Challenges

- Hiring, training and retaining personnel who can analyze and evaluate the efficacy of cost estimates to keep pace with the demands of FAA's complex, software-intensive programs.
- Keeping pace with the number of enterprise architecture decisions requiring analytical support.

Planned Activities for FY 2017

Activity	Deliverable	Planned Completion
Build-out and enhance the Business – Financial Management community portal	Refreshed content	On-Going
Continue to deliver and enhance the Cost Estimating curriculum	Training deliveries and enhancements	As required

6 CONTRACTING PROFILE

Definition

Contracting Officers/Specialists are responsible for the processes and procedures involved in establishing and maintaining contractual relationships. The Contracting Officer/Specialist has the specific and sole authority to bind the government by executing awards, exercising options or terminating contracts. FAA Contracting Officers/Specialists manage the award and administration of all contracts, purchase orders, agreements, and aviation research grants for the FAA.

Membership

In 2016 there are 247 acquisition employees performing Contracting duties. Contracting professionals make up approximately 14 percent of the acquisition workforce. This profession includes employees who are primarily responsible for awarding and administering contracts.

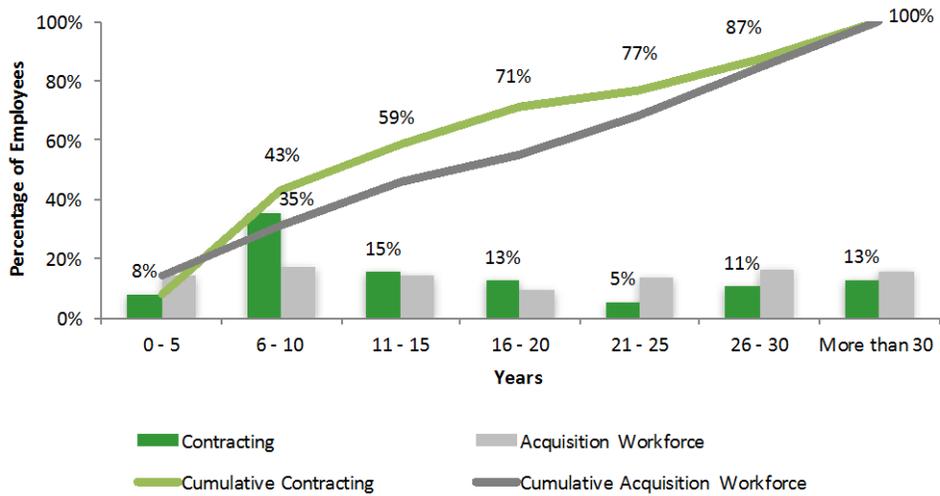
Years of Experience

The average tenure of Contracting professionals in federal service is approximately 16 years, three years less than the average acquisition workforce professional. The distribution of years of federal service is shown in Exhibit 6.1. As shown in the exhibit, Contracting professionals have higher representation than the overall acquisition workforce in the lower federal experience (0 - 10 years) range. With approximately 8 percent of its contracting employees having less than five years of experience, FAA has a lower percentage of less experienced employees than the government average (18 percent¹⁶).

¹⁶ "2016 Annual Review of Government Contracting", National Contract Management Association (NCMA) and Deltek.

Exhibit 6.1

Contracting Federal Service

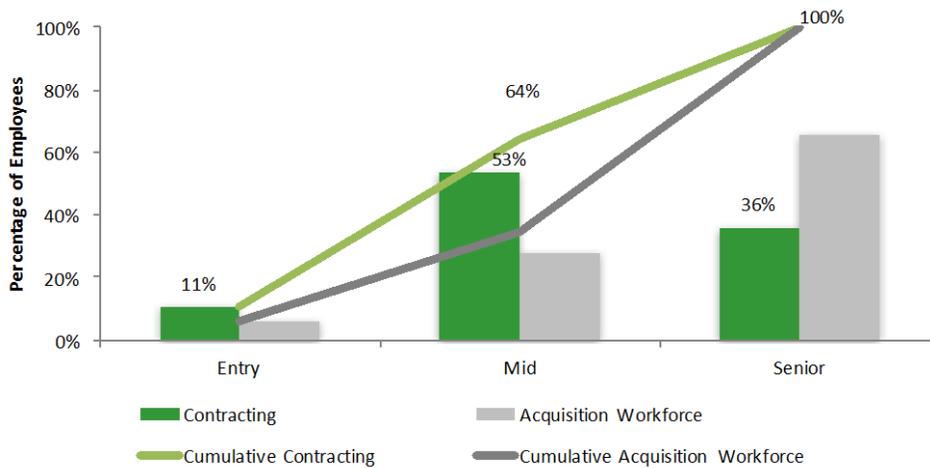


Career Levels¹⁷

Exhibit 6.2 shows the career level distribution for the Contracting profession. Employees in this profession are spread across all three career levels, with 53 percent at the Mid level.

Exhibit 6.2

Contracting Career Levels



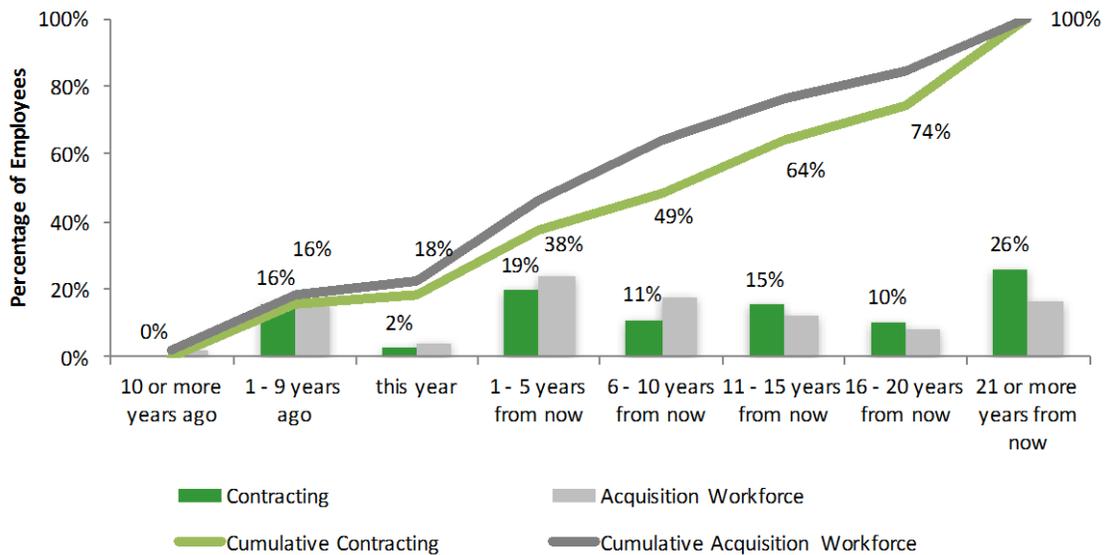
¹⁷ The three career level categories are: Entry (Student through G Band); Mid (H Band and I Band); Senior (J Band and higher).

Retirement Eligibility

Exhibit 6.3 shows the retirement eligibility profile for the acquisition employees in the contracting profession. The exhibit shows both annual and cumulative eligibility and compares it to the overall acquisition workforce. Eighteen percent of contracting professionals will be eligible to retire by the end of this calendar year, 5 percent less than the overall acquisition workforce.

Exhibit 6.3

Contracting Retirement Eligibility



Typical job roles for acquisition employees in this profession include:

- Contracting Officer
- Contracting Specialist

Typical job series in this profession include:

- 1102 – Contracting Officer/Specialist

Critical Competencies

The following competencies were developed in collaboration with the Contracting community and the Acquisition Workforce Council. The Contracting competencies are:

Technical:

Acquisition Phase: Acquisition Planning

- Acquisition Strategy Development
- Defining Contractual/ Business Relationships
- Defining Government Requirements in Commercial/Non-Commercial Terms
- Defining Requirements
- Managing Competition
- Market Research
- Performance Based Acquisition
- Procurement Planning
- Small Business and Preference Program Participation

Acquisition Phase: Contract Formation

- Contract Award
- Detailed Proposal Evaluation Skills
- Negotiation
- Proposal Analysis and Evaluation
- Solicitation of Offers

Acquisition Phase: Contract Administration/Management

- Financial Management
- Performance Management
- Requirements/ Contract Management
- Dispute Resolution, Termination, and Closeout

Non-Technical:

- Agility
- Business Acumen
- Communications
- Customer and Stakeholder Management
- Problem Solving and Decision Making
- Teamwork and Collaboration

Certification

The Contracting certification program supports certification of professionals at three distinct levels: Entry, Mid and Senior. These levels reflect the increasing responsibility and capability required of the Contracting Officer/Specialist as acquisitions become larger and more complex.

Certification requirements were updated in FY 2015. Certification requirements are met through a combination of factors, which include experience in the profession, training (both internal and external to FAA) and demonstrated proficiency in the Contracting competencies.

To maintain FAA certification, individuals must continue to develop skills and capabilities as measured through continuous learning points.

The Contracting Officer/Specialist certification policy is available in FAA's Acquisition Management System (AMS) Policy Section 5.0, at <http://fast.faa.gov/AcquisitionCareerManagement.cfm>.

Challenges

- Staffing and retention of contracting positions is difficult due to high demand across all of federal government.
- Ensuring that Contracting professionals continue to have access to appropriate continuous learning opportunities in an environment of limited budget and demanding workload.

Activities in 2016

- Enhanced Contracting certification requirements to align with changes in the Federal Acquisition Institute's FAC-C certification program.
- The Contracting organization assessed and adjusted how it organizes work and staffing to improve alignment with internal customers, centralize and leverage areas of expertise, and take advantage of geographic areas with strong candidate pools where there is successful experience recruiting highly capable talent.
- Improved recruitment and retention, including using Term Appointments to quickly fill Contracting Officer/Specialist positions with personnel who have extensive industry contracting experience.
- Provided training, industry certification, cross-agency development programs, and graduate level education for Contracting professionals.
- Continued to enhance the Contracting community of practice web portal to provide guidance and tools to support career development and to provide links to certification requirements and applications.
- Created a monthly Leadership Video Series for the Contracting community.
- Implemented an on-boarding program to provide direction and guidance to new hires on the certification and development process.
- Implemented a monthly Leadership Updates and Learning Session for all contracting personnel, led by the Director of Acquisition and Contracting.

Planned Activities for FY 2017

Activity	Deliverable	Planned Completion
<p>Monitor Government-wide initiatives that could impact the certification requirements for Contracting Officers/Specialists (1102 series). Impacts will be reviewed to determine if changes to FAA's contracting certification program are required</p>	<p>Status reports to the Acquisition Workforce Council, as needed</p>	<p>Monthly</p>
<p>Review and enhance curriculum</p>	<p>Robust curriculum</p>	<p>Annually</p>
<p>Ensure employees meet the certification requirements for their position, including formal recertification every 2 years</p>	<p>Monthly metrics provided to the Acquisition Workforce Council</p>	<p>Monthly</p>
<p>Increase offerings of creative ways to gain continuous learning opportunities</p>	<p>Leadership forums and activities</p>	<p>Quarterly</p>
<p>Build-out and enhance the Contracting community portal</p>	<p>Refreshed content</p>	<p>Quarterly</p>

7 REALTY SPECIALIST PROFILE

Definition

The Realty Specialist profession is comprised of Real Estate Contracting Officers/Specialists (RECO/S) who are responsible for real property transactions which include the following: 1) acquiring land, buildings, structures, and utilities; 2) management of all real property transactions while under contract including the management of the inventory of real property for the FAA; and 3) disposals of all real property (owned or leased) in the FAA. Furthermore the Real Estate Contracting Officer, acting on FAA's behalf, prepare and execute contractual agreements, land and space leases to support NAS operations, secure title to land or buildings through purchase or condemnation proceedings, and prepare documents to transfer ownership between the FAA and outside parties both public and private.

Membership

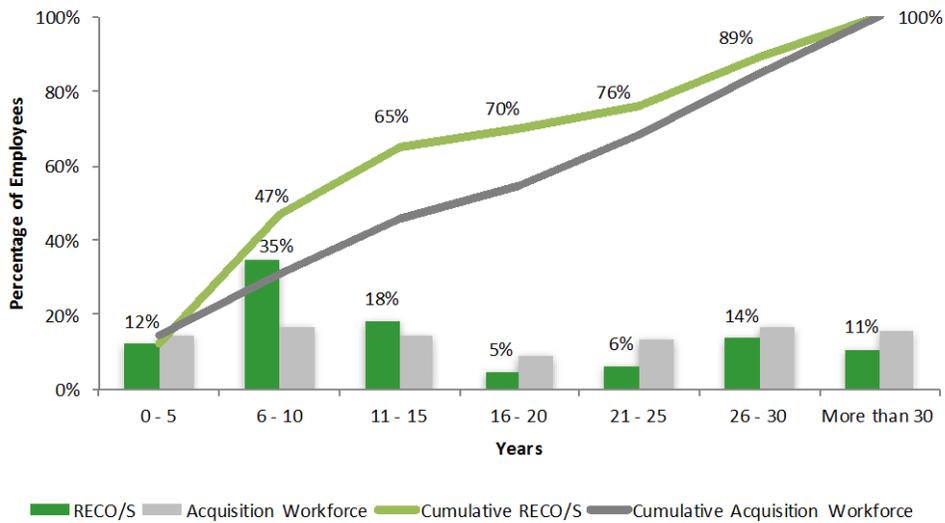
In 2016 there are 66 RECO/S professionals. These employees are geographically dispersed within the three service areas and headquarters, with the majority working in College Park, Georgia followed by Renton, Washington and Ft. Worth, Texas. Realty Specialist professionals make up approximately 4 percent of the acquisition workforce.

Years of Experience

The average tenure of RECO/S professionals in federal service is approximately 16 years, more than two years less than the overall workforce average. The distribution of years of federal service is shown below in Exhibit 7.1. As shown in the exhibit, RECO/S professionals have a higher representation than the overall acquisition workforce at the lower federal experience (0 - 10 years) range.

Exhibit 7.1

Realty Specialist Federal Service

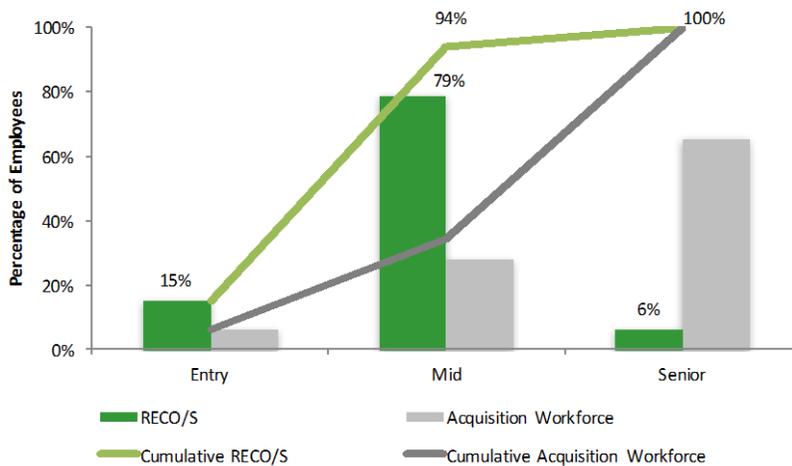


Career Levels¹⁸

Exhibit 7.2 shows the career level distribution for RECO/S professionals. Employees in this profession are primarily at the Entry and Mid levels.

Exhibit 7.2

Realty Specialist Career Levels



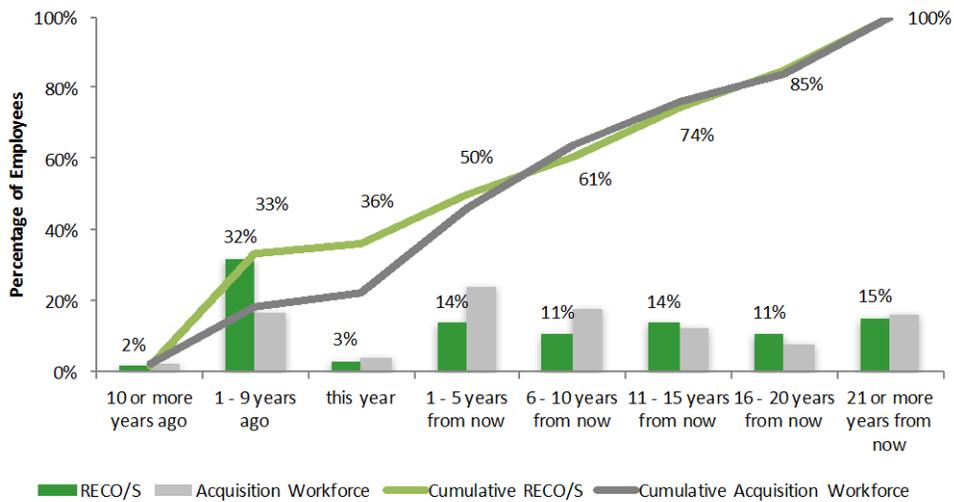
¹⁸ The three career level categories are: Entry (Student through G Band and General Schedule equivalents); Mid (H Band, I Band, and General Schedule equivalents); Senior (J Band and higher, and General Schedule equivalents).

Retirement Eligibility

Exhibit 7.3 shows the retirement eligibility profile for these acquisition employees. The exhibit shows both annual and cumulative eligibility and compares it to the overall acquisition workforce. Fifty percent of current RECO/S professionals will be eligible for retirement in 5 years, higher than the overall acquisition workforce.

Exhibit 7.3

Realty Specialist Retirement Eligibility



Typical job roles for acquisition employees in this profession include:

- Real Estate Contracting Officer/Specialist (RECO/S)

Typical job series in this profession include:

- 1170 series – Real Estate Contracting Officer/Specialist (RECO/S) and Real Estate Supervisors/Managers

Critical Competencies

The RECO/S competencies were updated in 2015. They consist of:

Technical:

- Requirements Development and Management
- Land Acquisition
- Space Acquisition
- Purchase
- Condemnation
- Contract and Property Management
- Disposal of Real Property
- Utilities Contracting
- Documentation and Quality Assurance
- Budget and Finance

- Negotiation
- Project Management

Non-Technical:

- Agility
- Communications
- Customer and Stakeholder Management
- Knowledge and Development
- Personal Accountability
- Problem Detection and Resolution
- Teamwork and Collaboration

Certification

The RECO/S certification program supports certification of professionals at three distinct levels: Entry, Mid, and Senior. These levels reflect the increasing responsibility and capability required of the Real Estate Contracting Officer/Specialist as real property acquisitions become larger and more complex.

Certification requirements are met through a combination of factors, which include experience in the profession, training (both internal and external to FAA) and demonstrated proficiency in the RECO/S competencies.

To maintain FAA certification, individuals must continue to develop skills and capabilities as measured through continuous learning points.

The RECO/S certification policy is available in FAA's Acquisition Management System (AMS) Policy Section 5.0, at <http://fast.faa.gov/AcquisitionCareerManagement.cfm>.

Challenges

- Developing RECO/S professionals to support FAA Real Property acquisition, management, and disposal takes a combination of detailed training tailored to the FAA as well as on-the-job developmental experiences.

- Continuing to grow and enhance the RECO training and development program by focusing on management engagement and understanding. Continue employee development to improve their Real Estate skills.
- The complexity of real property acquisitions requires competent, skilled, experienced RECO/S professionals. This is accomplished by increasing the importance of ensuring that they continue to develop their competencies and have access to appropriate continuous learning opportunities in an environment of limited budget and demanding workload.

Activities in 2016

- Successfully renewed RECO/S certifications after the first two year certification period.
- Redesigned and launched an online version of the FAA Basic Real Estate Course.
- Updated 100% of the materials for the RECO/S Space Project Management course.
- Updated the Legal Real Estate course which is deployed to all three service areas.
- Offered the following commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS) courses in all three service centers: 1.) Appropriations Law, 2.) Federal Real Property Lease Law, and 3.) Project Management.
- Continued to enhance career development tools, including the *RECO/S Career Planning, Development and Resource Guide*, the *Competency Experience Checklist* and the *Development Activities Guide* to support competency knowledge and skill development and evaluation.
- Continued to enhance the RECO/S community of practice web portal to provide guidance and tools to support career development, and provide links to certification requirements and applications.

Planned Initiatives for FY 2017

Initiative	Deliverable	Planned Completion
Offer the following COTs course: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental and Disposal Courses (Vendors to be identified) 	Offered Course	Various Quarters
RECO manager training on competencies and development tools	Webinar training	2nd Quarter

Initiative	Deliverable	Planned Completion
Update, maintain and train Realty Specialists on AMS Real Property Policy and Guidance	Updated AMS content In class	Various quarters
Provide Level III RECOs opportunities to take elective courses related to real property that are not included in the certified course list	Training courses	Ongoing
Enhance Real Property Quality Assurance (QA) Process	Trends Analysis, Metrics and Dashboard	1 st Quarter and ongoing
Continue to ensure employees meet the certification requirements for their position	Monthly metrics provided to the Acquisition Workforce Council	Monthly

8 CONTRACTING OFFICER'S REPRESENTATIVE (COR) PROFILE

Definition

Contracting Officer's Representatives (CORs) help resolve technical issues, give technical direction to the contractor and interpret technical processes and procedures for the Contracting Officer/Specialist. The functions include interpreting technical requirements, assisting with the acquisition strategy, assisting in the development of the statement of work, generating government cost estimates, assisting in the negotiation of costs or price of technical requirements, monitoring contractor performance, reviewing and accepting services, supplies and equipment, invoice reconciliation and recommending payments.

Membership

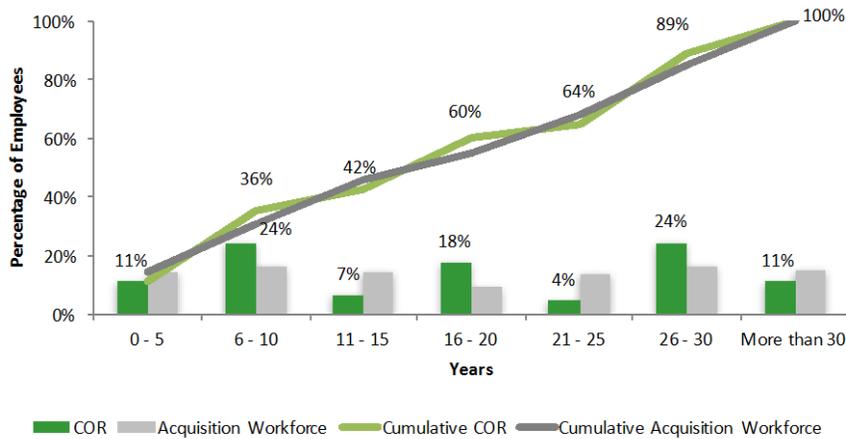
In 2016 there are 45 FAA employees performing COR duties as their primary responsibility on FAA's Capital Investment Plan (CIP) acquisition programs. These full-time CORs make up approximately four percent of the acquisition workforce membership. Over two thousand (2,000) employees across FAA's lines of business and staff offices perform COR responsibilities for other types of procurements in addition to the CORs providing full-time support to CIP acquisition programs. The number of employees performing COR duties changes constantly as contracts begin and end. CORs perform critical acquisition and technical functions, and Contracting Officers/Specialists rely on them to ensure that contracts are managed properly to meet mission needs. CORs are designated and authorized in writing by the Contracting Officer/Specialist to perform prescribed administrative and/or technical functions on a contract.

Years of Experience

The average tenure of COR professionals in federal service is 18 years. The distribution of tenure is shown in Exhibit 8.1.

Exhibit 8.1

COR Federal Service

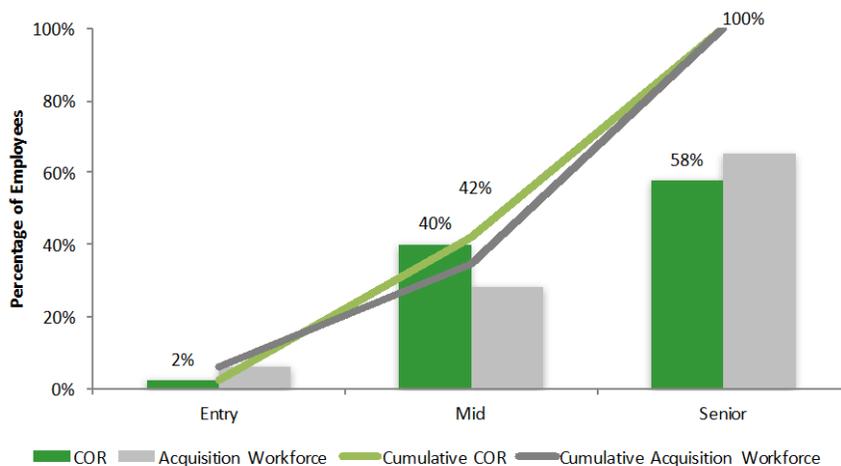


Career Levels²⁰

Exhibit 8.2 shows the career level distribution for the COR profession. Employees in this profession are spread primarily across the Mid and Senior career levels, with 58 percent at the Senior level.

Exhibit 8.2

COR Career Levels



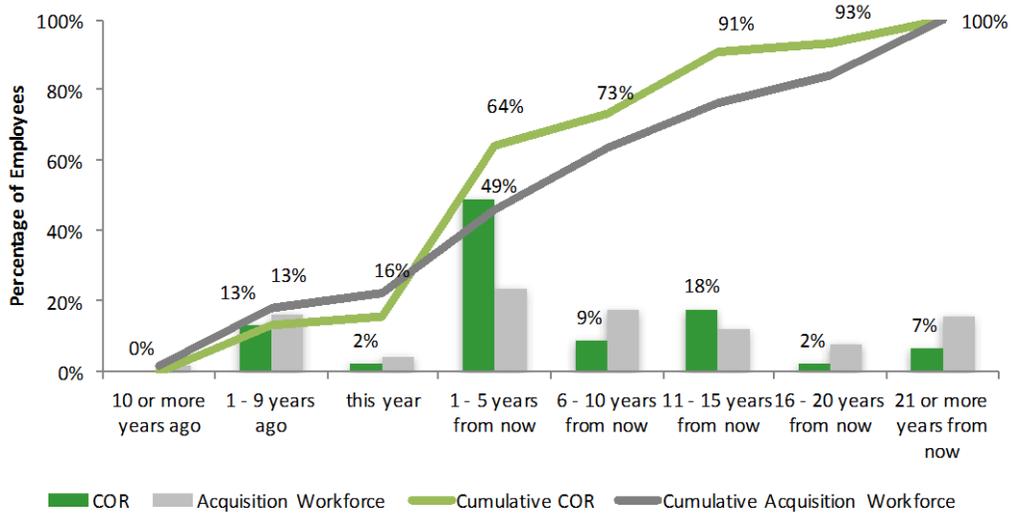
²⁰ The three career level categories are: Entry (Student through G Band and General Schedule equivalents); Mid (H Band, I Band, and General Schedule equivalents); Senior (J Band and higher, and General Schedule equivalents).

Retirement Eligibility

Exhibit 8.3 shows the retirement eligibility profile for the acquisition employees in the COR profession. The exhibit shows both annual and cumulative eligibility and compares it to the overall acquisition workforce. Sixteen percent of COR professionals are eligible to retire by the end of this year.

Exhibit 8.3

COR Retirement Eligibility



Critical Competencies

The COR competencies are:

Technical:

- Acquisition Planning
- Market Research (Understanding the Marketplace)
- Defining Government Requirements
- Effective Pre-Award Communication
- Proposal Evaluation
- Contract Negotiation
- Contract Administration Management
- Effective Inspection and Acceptance

- Contract Quality Assurance & Evaluation
- Contract Closeout
- Contract Reporting
- Business Acumen

Non-Technical:

- Agility
- Communications
- Customer and Stakeholder Management
- Problem Solving and Decision-making
- Teamwork and Collaboration

Certification

In FY 2012, FAA adopted COR certification changes proposed by the Federal Acquisition Institute. The COR certification program supports certification of professionals at three distinct levels based on the complexity of the specific contract or task order being supported by the COR. These levels reflect the increasing responsibility and capability required of the COR as contracts and task orders become more complex.

Certification requirements were updated in FY 2015. Certification requirements are met through a combination of factors, which include experience in the profession, training (both internal and external to FAA) and demonstrated proficiency in the contracting competencies.

To maintain FAA certification, individuals must continue to develop skills and capabilities as measured through continuous learning points.

The COR certification policy is available in FAA's Acquisition Management System (AMS) Policy Section 5.0, at <http://fast.faa.gov/AcquisitionCareerManagement.cfm>.

Challenges

- The complexity of acquisitions on large, integrated programs requires skilled, experienced CORs.
- CORs need a better understanding of contracting to ensure successful administration of contracts (including bounds of authority and accountability).
- Because the COR is usually a collateral role, identifying CORs and tracking compliance with training requirements can be challenging. COR lists must be revalidated on a continual basis for accuracy.

Activities in 2016

- Met the FY 2016 goal of increasing by 5%, from the FY 2015 baseline, the number of FAA CORs that attain COR certification.
- Enhanced COR certification requirements to align with changes in the Federal Acquisition Institute's FAC-COR certification program.
- Certified over 400 employees in the COR profession, for a total of over 1,900 certified FAA CORs.
- Continued to enhance the COR community of practice web portal to provide guidance and tools to support career development, and provide links to certification requirements and applications.

Planned Activities for FY 2017

Activity	Deliverable	Planned Completion
Continue to build-out and enhance the COR community portal	Refreshed content	Quarterly
Review and enhance curriculum	Robust curriculum	Annually
Ensure employees meet the certification requirements for their position	Monthly metrics provided to the Acquisition Workforce Council	Monthly
Monitor Government-wide initiatives that could impact the certification requirements for CORs. Impacts will be reviewed to determine if changes to FAA's contracting certification program are required	Status reports to the Acquisition Workforce Council, as needed	Monthly

9 ACQUISITION LAW PROFILE

Definition

Acquisition Law professionals provide legal advice regarding all aspects of contract formation and administration, including intellectual property, antitrust, bankruptcy, debarment, conflict of interest, real estate, mergers, security, export control, procurement integrity, property disposal and fiscal and socio-economic laws affecting acquisitions. Acquisition attorneys represent agency acquisition teams in the agency's internal dispute resolution process and also represent FAA with the Department of Justice in federal court litigation.

Membership

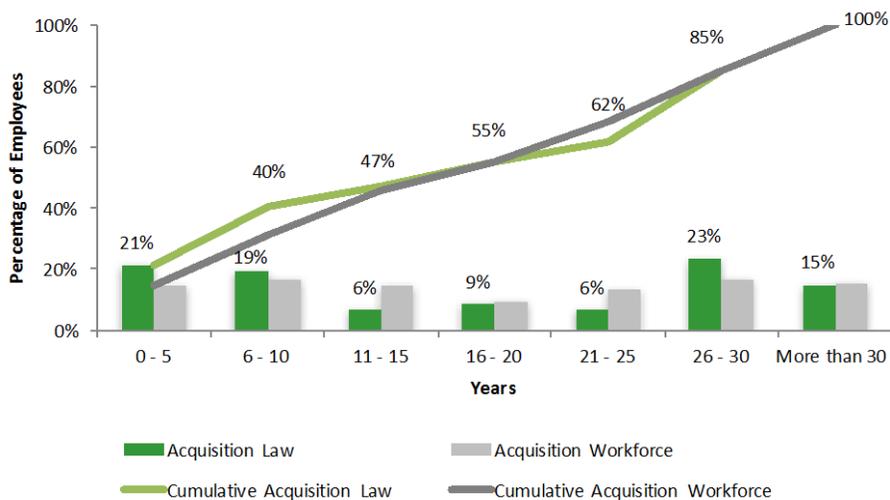
In 2016 there are 47 acquisition attorneys in this acquisition profession. At FAA headquarters, the work is dedicated; in the Service Centers and most regions, at least one person is recognized as an acquisition attorney, although he or she may perform additional duties. The Technical Center and the Aeronautical Center also have dedicated acquisition attorneys. Acquisition attorneys are distributed proportionately across the nine regions and Technical and Aeronautical Centers; almost one-half of acquisition attorneys are located at FAA's Washington, DC headquarters.

Years of Experience

The average tenure of Acquisition Law professionals in federal service is 17 years. The distribution of years of federal service is shown below in Exhibit 9.1. Twenty-one percent of Acquisition Law professionals have 5 or fewer years of federal service and almost half have less than 15 years of federal service. Acquisition attorneys tend to stay with programs and work a portfolio, which may change somewhat over time. On FAA acquisition programs, the relationship with the program office is very important.

Exhibit 9.1

Acquisition Law Federal Service

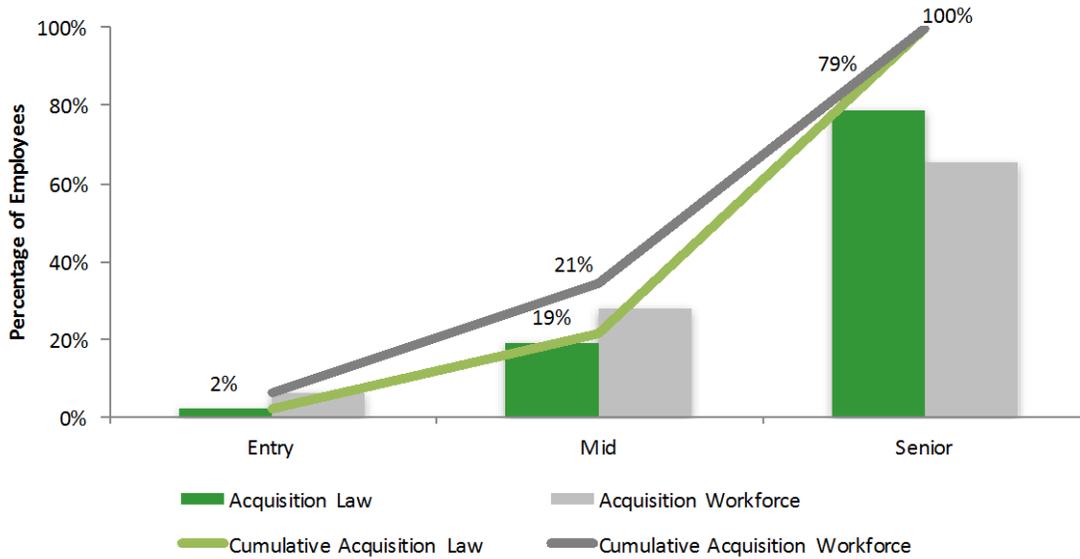


Career Levels²¹

Exhibit 9.2 shows the career level distribution for the Acquisition Law profession. Employees in this profession are predominantly experienced, higher-grade personnel, with 79 percent at the Senior level.

Exhibit 9.2

Acquisition Law Career Levels



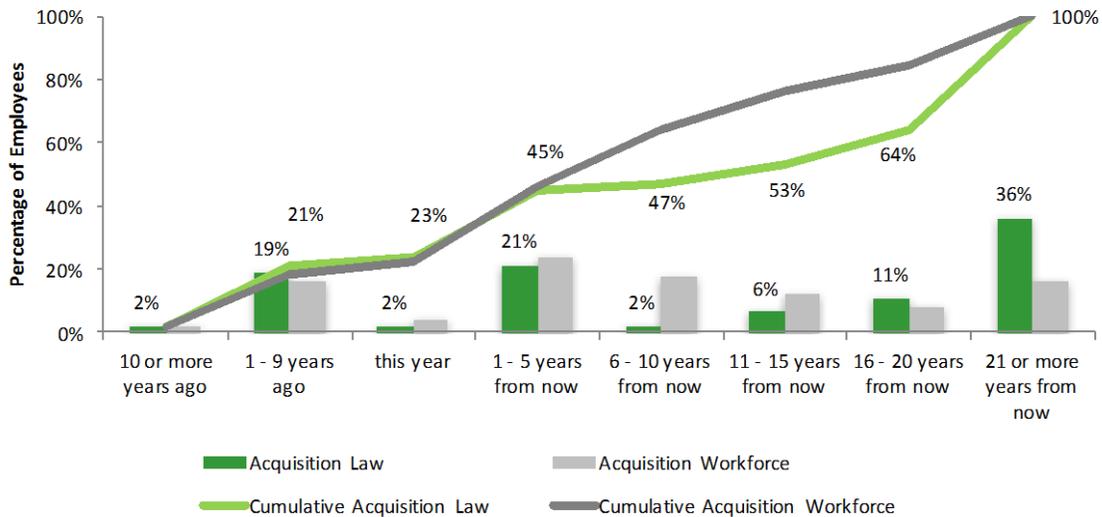
Retirement Eligibility

Exhibit 9.3 shows the retirement eligibility profile for the acquisition employees in the Acquisition Law profession. The exhibit shows both annual and cumulative eligibility and compares it to the overall acquisition workforce. Cumulatively, 23 percent of Acquisition Law professionals are eligible for retirement by the end of this calendar year, the same as the overall acquisition workforce.

²¹ The three career level categories are: Entry (Student through G Band and General Schedule equivalents); Mid (H Band, I Band, and General Schedule equivalents); Senior (J Band and higher, and General Schedule equivalents).

Exhibit 9.3

Acquisition Law Retirement Eligibility



Typical job roles for acquisition employees in this profession include:

- Acquisition Attorney

Typical job series in this profession include:

- 0905 – General Attorney

Critical Competencies

A competency model has not been developed for Acquisition Attorneys. FAA conducted a benchmarking study in 2010 and did not find any organization using a formal competency model for Acquisition Attorneys.

Acquisition Attorneys in the agency do not attend a formal, lockstep training program. However, there are courses that have been identified as valuable for new Acquisition Attorneys that include a mix of in-agency and out-of-agency training. Additional employee development may occur through internships, mentoring, and conference attendance. Some Acquisition Attorneys accept formal details on an acquisition program to gain additional experience from an agency perspective. Through the course of their careers, Acquisition Attorneys will be asked to teach classes to peers in their areas of expertise.

Challenges

- The complexity of acquisitions requires highly skilled Acquisition Attorneys.
- FAA values flexibility and innovation in acquisitions which requires Acquisition Attorneys to develop skills and experience not always needed in the standard federal environment.

10 INTEGRATED LOGISTICS SUPPORT SPECIALIST PROFILE

Definition

Integrated Logistics Support (ILS) is the profession that plans, establishes, and maintains an ILS system for the life cycle of FAA products and services. ILS works by planning for and managing the interdependencies among the nine Logistics elements: Maintenance Planning; Supply Support; Training, Training Support, and Personnel Skills; Computer Resources Support; Maintenance Support Facilities; Packaging, Handling, Storage, and Transportation; Technical Data; Direct Work Maintenance Staffing; and Support Equipment.

Membership

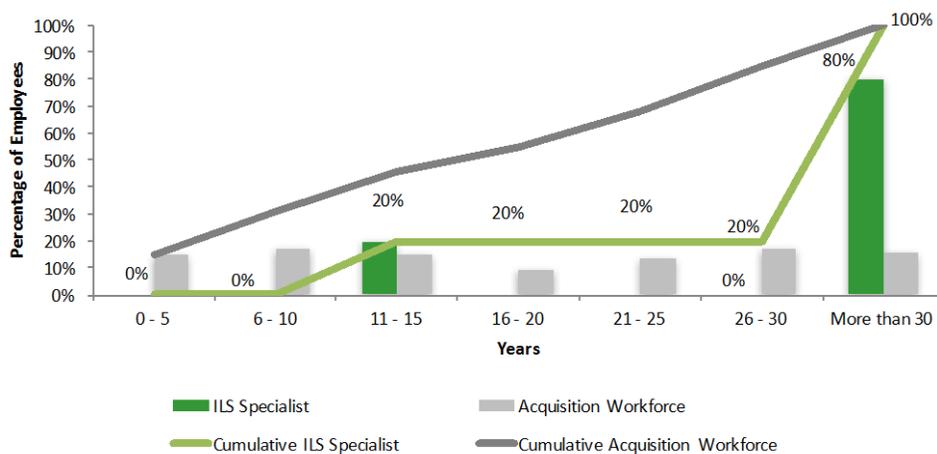
In 2016, 5 employees in FAA have primary responsibility for Integrated Logistics Support on acquisition programs. Logistics Specialists are responsible for supporting and advising Acquisition Program Managers or Service Team Leaders to ensure the successful integration of logistics support elements throughout the Acquisition Management System (AMS) life cycle. Some of these individuals are also responsible for working with requiring offices to develop contract specifications for projects to improve, expand, and extend the service life of existing programs.

Years of Experience

The average tenure of Logistics professionals in federal service is 28 years, which is 9 years more than the average acquisition employee. Eighty percent of Logisticians have 26 or more years of federal service. The distribution of years of federal service is shown below in Exhibit 10.1.

Exhibit 10.1

ILS Specialist Federal Service

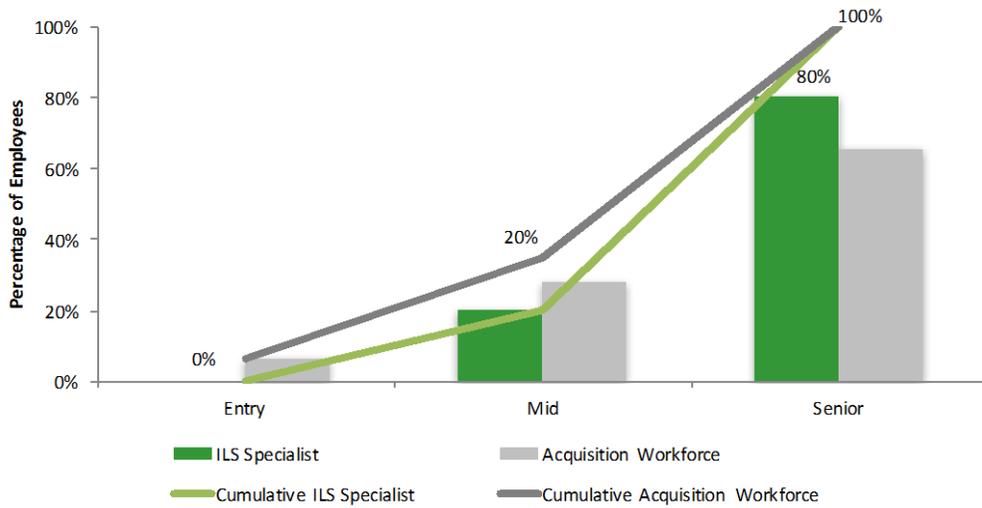


Career Levels²²

Exhibit 10.2 shows the career level distribution for the ILS profession. Eighty percent of employees in this profession are at the Senior level.

Exhibit 10.2

ILS Specialist Career Levels



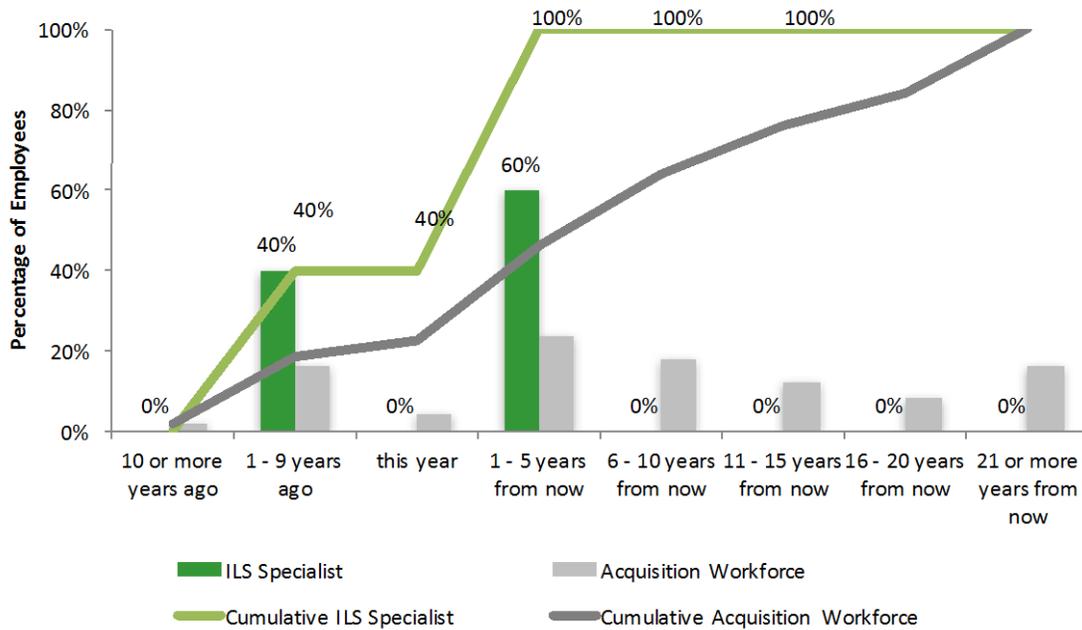
Retirement Eligibility

Exhibit 10.3 shows the retirement eligibility profile for the acquisition employees in the Logistics profession. The exhibit shows both annual and cumulative eligibility and compares it to the overall acquisition workforce. Forty percent of ILS professionals are eligible to retire this year versus 23 percent in the overall acquisition workforce; 100 percent are eligible to retire within 5 years.

²² The three career level categories are: Entry (Student through G Band and General Schedule equivalents); Mid (H Band, I Band, and General Schedule equivalents); Senior (J Band and higher, and General Schedule equivalents).

Exhibit 10.3

ILS Specialist Retirement Eligibility



Typical job roles for acquisition employees in this profession include:

- Logistics Element Specialist/Manager
- Integrated Logistics Support Specialist/Manager
- Logistics Management Specialist

Typical job series in this profession include:

- 346 – Logistics Management Specialist

Critical Competencies

The ILS critical competencies are:

Technical:

- Contracting and Acquisition
- Design for Supportability
- ILS Planning
- Product Support and Sustainment
- Project Management

Non-Technical:

- Agility
- Communications
- Customer and Stakeholder Management
- Problem Solving and Decision-making
- Teamwork and Collaboration

Certification

The Integrated Logistics Support certification program supports certification of professionals at three distinct levels: Entry, Mid and Senior. These levels reflect the increasing responsibility and capability required of the Integrated Logistics Specialist as programs become larger, more complex, and more highly integrated with other programs.

Certification requirements are met through a combination of factors, which include experience in the profession, training (both internal and external to FAA) and external certification equivalencies. All acquisition certifications are competency-based.

To maintain FAA certification, individuals must continue to develop skills and capabilities as measured through continuous learning points.

The Integrated Logistics Support certification policy is available in FAA's Acquisition Management System (AMS) Policy Section 5.0, at <http://fast.faa.gov/AcquisitionCareerManagement.cfm>.

Challenges

- Expanding Program / Project focus on Integrated Logistics Support during the initial phases of the AMS lifecycle to reduce the total cost of ownership.
- Expanding focus on cost savings measures for sustaining existing FAA projects, programs, facilities and services.
- Managing costs and risks associated with the lifecycle management of FAA projects, programs, facilities and services.
- Supporting the career growth or development of members of the Integrated Logistics Support profession.
- Developing junior level ILS professionals as more experienced professionals leave the workforce.

Activities in 2016

- Continued to build-out and enhance the ILS community portal to provide guidance and tools to support career development, and provide links to certification requirements and applications.
- Continued to ensure employees maintain certification requirements.
- Created a monthly Leadership Video Series for the ILS community.

Planned Activities for FY 2017

Activity	Deliverable	Planned Completion
Build-out and enhance the ILS community portal	Refreshed content	Quarterly
Review and enhance curriculum	Robust curriculum	Annually
Outreach to improve and stimulate the developmental interests of the ILS community	Increased volume of certifications	Semi-Annually
Monitor Government-wide initiatives that could impact the certification requirements for ILS. Impacts will be reviewed to determine if changes to FAA's contracting certification program are required	Status reports to the Acquisition Workforce Council, as needed	Monthly

11 SPECIALIZED SUPPORT PROFILE

Definition

Professionals in the specialized support profession are typically NAS or acquisition subject matter experts. They can include acquisition quality assurance officers, safety engineers, information system specialists, air traffic specialists, contract support specialists, and acquisition policy, development and training experts.

Membership

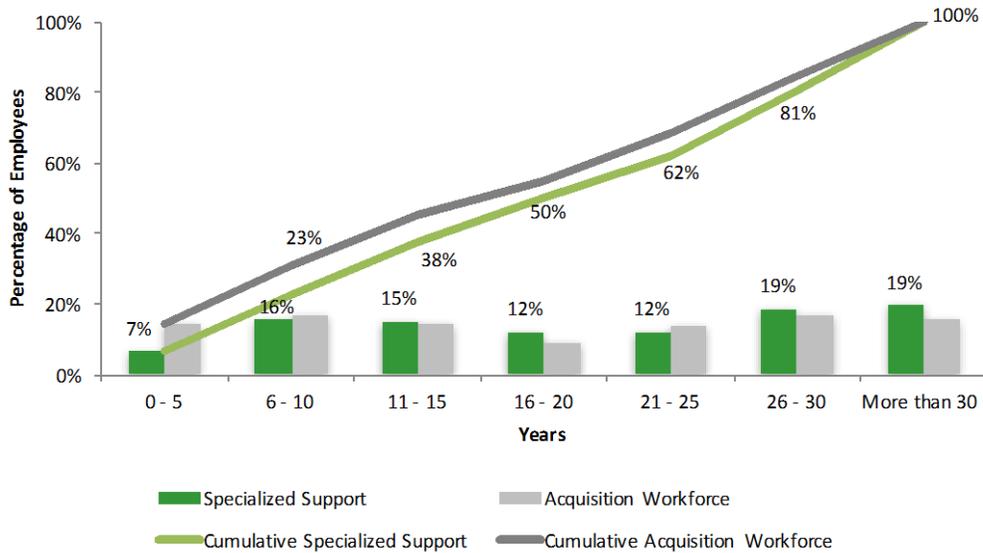
In 2016 there are 247 employees in the Specialized Support category of professionals supporting acquisition programs, or 14 percent of the acquisition workforce.

Years of Experience

The average tenure of Specialized Support professionals in federal service is 21 years, 2 years more than the average acquisition employee. Almost 62 percent of Specialized Support professionals have 21 or more years of federal service. The distribution of years of federal service is shown below in Exhibit 11.1.

Exhibit 11.1

Specialized Support Federal Service

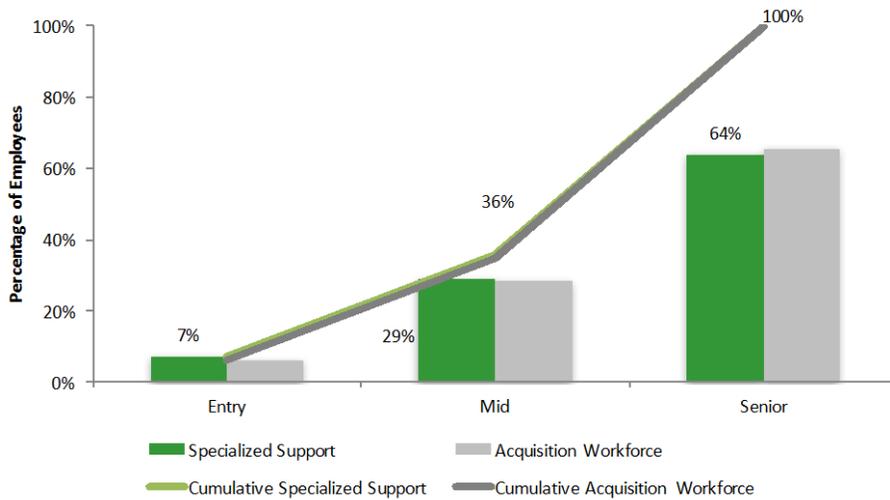


Career Levels²³

Exhibit 11.2 shows the career level distribution for the Specialized Support profession. Sixty-seven percent of employees in this profession are at the Senior level.

Exhibit 11.2

Specialized Support Career Levels



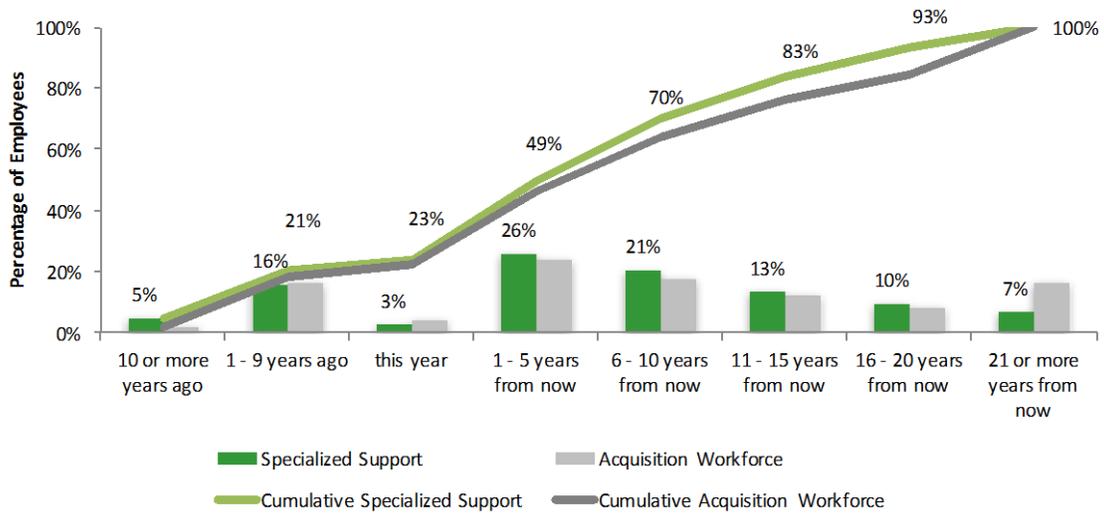
Retirement Eligibility

Exhibit 11.3 shows the retirement eligibility profile for the acquisition employees in the Specialized Support profession. The exhibit shows both annual and cumulative eligibility and compares it to the overall acquisition workforce. Cumulatively, 23 percent of Specialized Support professionals are eligible to retire by the end of this year, consistent with the overall acquisition workforce.

²³ The three career level categories are: Entry (Student through G Band and General Schedule equivalents); Mid (H Band, I Band, and General Schedule equivalents); Senior (J Band and higher, and General Schedule equivalents).

Exhibit 11.3

Specialized Support Retirement Eligibility



Critical Competencies

Specialized Support is not a candidate for a profession-specific competency model due to the varied nature of the work performed by individuals in this category.

Challenges

- Managing the potentially high attrition from this specialized, highly skilled NAS workforce.

For additional information about FAA's Acquisition Workforce Strategy, programs, and initiatives,
please contact:

Acquisition Career Management Group
Acquisitions and Business Services
Office of Finance and Management

Web:

https://employees.faa.gov/org/staffoffices/afn/acq_business/acquisition_policy/career_mgmt/