



ACQUISITION,  
TECHNOLOGY  
AND LOGISTICS

## THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

3010 DEFENSE PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-3010

NOV 08 2013

### MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS COMPONENT ACQUISITION EXECUTIVES DIRECTORS OF THE DEFENSE AGENCIES

SUBJECT: Key Leadership Positions and Qualification Criteria

References: (a) Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics memorandum, "Government Performance of Critical Acquisition Functions," August 25, 2010  
(b) Title 10, U.S.C., Section 139b

This memorandum provides expanded guidance on Key Leadership Positions (KLPs) and supersedes Reference (a). The Department will ensure selected positions assigned to each Major Defense Acquisition Programs (MDAP) and each Major Automated Information System (MAIS) (Acquisition Category (ACAT) I and IA) program are filled by properly qualified members of the Armed Forces or full-time employees of the Department of Defense (DoD). KLPs require a significant level of authority commensurate with the responsibility and accountability for acquisition program success. The Military Departments and Defense Agencies may designate a position as a KLP that meets specific criteria, including positions filled by O-5/O-6 military personnel, GS-14/15 (or equivalent) civilian personnel, or higher. KLPs currently include tenure obligations and require Defense Acquisition Corps Membership and Level III Certification.

All positions listed below will be designated as mandatory KLPs for ACAT I and IA programs and must be designated in the position category associated with the lead function. With exception of the Program Executive Officers, Deputy Program Executive Officers, and Senior Contracting Officials, the following KLPs should be dedicated to a single ACAT Program.

- Program Executive Officer/Deputy Program Executive Officer
- Senior Contracting Official
- Program Manager (PM) (Additionally, ACAT II)
- Deputy Program Manager (DPM)
- Chief Engineer/Lead Systems Engineer
- Product Support Manager (Program Lead Logistician)
- Chief Developmental Tester (See Reference (b))
- Program Lead, Business Financial Manager

The following lead positions on MDAP/MAIS programs are necessary when the function is required based on the phase or type of acquisition program. These lead positions may be associated exclusively with a single program or be shared across multiple programs:

- Program Lead, Contracting Officer
- Program Lead, Cost Estimator
- Program Lead, Production, Quality, and Manufacturing
- Program Lead, Information Technology

The selection of qualified personnel to fill KLPs is essential for the organization and the individuals filling these highly demanding positions. We cannot afford to add risk to our programs by placing unqualified or unprepared personnel into KLPs. To aid in evaluating and selecting the best qualified KLP candidates, five factors have been identified as requirements essential for selection and are summarized in Attachment 1. Additional functional specific requirements and preferences for KLPs are located at <http://icatalog.dau.mil/onlinecatalog/CareerLvl.aspx>. These requirements will be updated on an annual basis by the functional leader for the individual career field. Approved changes will be communicated by my office for Human Capital Initiatives (HCI).

**Education.** Supervisors should seek candidates with advanced or related college degrees relevant to their functional area to fill KLPs.

**Experience.** All KLP candidates must be Level III certified in their respective functional area prior to assignment. A minimum of 8 years of Acquisition experience or equivalent demonstrated proficiency as determined by the selection authority is required. However, for ACAT II Program Managers and ACAT I Deputy Program Managers, 6 years of Acquisition experience is required.

**Cross-functional competencies.** KLPs benefit from broad experience within the following cross-functional competencies: Executive Leadership, Program Execution, Technical Management, and Business Management. These cross-functional competencies are defined below:

Executive Leadership consists of demonstrated competencies in leading change, leading people, managing results, building coalitions, business acumen, and an enterprise-wide perspective. The DoD leader competency framework provides the governing model. Refer to DoD Instruction 1430.16, "Growing Civilian Leaders."

Program Execution is the leadership and management of a defense acquisition program covering every aspect of the acquisition process, such as integration, engineering, program control, test and evaluation, deployment, configuration management, production and manufacturing, quality assurance, and logistics support.

Technical Management is the organization, governance, and effective application of current technology, acquisition practices, design, and security considerations in building/acquiring and maintaining large complex systems.

**Business Management** is the oversight of controlling, leading, monitoring, organizing, and planning for the business success of a program. This includes achieving best value to the Government.

**Tenure.** Each assignment to a KLP shall be supported by a written tenure agreement based on the unique requirements of the program or effort to be performed, such as significant milestones, events, or efforts. KLP tenure agreements shall be between individuals and the Component Acquisition Executive (CAE). For PM/DPM positions of an MDAP/MAIS, the tenure period is 4 years and should begin approximately 6 months prior to a major milestone, and for non-major programs the tenure period is 3 years. All other KLPs require a 3-year tenure agreement. All KLP tenure agreements may be tailored by the CAE based on unique program requirements.

**Currency.** All workforce members assigned to KLP positions must be compliant with the AT&L continuous learning policy, which requires successful completion of 80 hours of continuous learning points (CLP) every 2 years. Within the 80-hour CLP requirement, all workforce members assigned to KLP positions must complete learning in specific areas as outlined in the currency row at Attachment 1.

KLP candidates are expected to meet all five requirements prior to assignment. To ensure appropriate oversight, CAEs shall establish a rigorous selection process that is promulgated by formal instruction. This shall be accomplished in accordance with the personnel certification procedures of their respective component.

In support of this initiative, my staff, working with the Services, will establish Joint KLP Qualification Boards, to be stood up in CY 2014, which will prescreen Defense Acquisition Workforce personnel to qualify a pool of candidates to fill these important positions. These Boards will function independently from normal promotion or command boards. They will simply identify individuals as prepared to fill mandatory KLPs based on their training, education, and experience. Initially Board qualification will be a discriminator in KLP selection, but over time it is expected to become necessary, with rare exceptions. Qualification will allow the DoD and Components' Acquisition leadership to create a pool of Level III certified personnel who are ready to fill KLPs as well as assist in Acquisition Workforce talent management and succession planning.

KLP Qualification Boards will:

1. Be chaired and governed by the OUSD(AT&L) functional leaders.
2. Be comprised of the acquisition functional leads from all Services, appropriate Agencies, and incumbent KLPs that are subject matter experts in that functional area.
3. Make selections from pre-screened submission packages from each Service, Defense Agencies, and OSD.
4. Convene annually, at a minimum.

5. All Boards will operate to Standard Operating Procedures. HCI will perform the role of Qualification Board "Monitor" to provide process oversight.
6. Announce convening date 90 days prior to date of board.
7. Report board results to OUSD(AT&L) via the OUSD(AT&L) Director, HCI, within 2 weeks of Board completion.
8. Standardize candidate nomination application package requirements.

The first KLP Qualification Boards will convene in early 2014. Each pre-screened candidate requires a Senior Executive Service/Flag Officer/General Officer endorsement prior to a candidate's consideration before the KLP Qualification Board. Incumbent KLPs are grandfathered from this requirement. Once qualified, qualification status remains in effect as long as the individual remains current in their respective career field.

All waivers for workforce members assigned to KLPs who lack statutory requirements shall be by exception only and approved by the CAE. The waiver authority for KLPs cannot be delegated. CAEs shall consider all waivers on a case-by-case basis.

KLP designations and requirements shall appear in job announcements; be descriptors in or amendments to Position Description documents; aid in candidate selection for KLPs; aid in career development planning and management; and provide structure and high standards to the most critical Acquisition Positions.

Effective immediately, the KLP requirements outlined in this memorandum apply to all workforce members filling future KLPs. By June 30, 2015, all workforce members including current incumbents of KLPs must meet the requirements described in this memorandum. I will periodically review KLP metrics at Defense Acquisition Workforce Senior Steering Board meetings.

The Services and Agencies shall report any critical gaps to the Director, HCI within six months from the date of this memorandum. DoD Instruction 5000.66 will be updated to include these KLP requirements.

My point of contact for this matter is the OUSD(AT&L) Director, HCI.



Frank Kendall

Attachment:  
As stated

**Attachment 1: Common Cross-Functional KLP Requirements**

Education	Level III Certification in respective functional area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bachelor's degree (required)</li> <li>• Relevant advanced degree (preferred)</li> <li>• Senior Service School (preferred)</li> </ul>						
Training								
Experience		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Candidate or incumbent be GS 14/15 - 05/06 or senior</li> <li>• 2 years as a functional mentor (10 hours per year)</li> <li>• Cross functional and Broadening assignments/rotations</li> <li>• Eight years of Acquisition experience, or equivalent demonstrated proficiency</li> </ul>						
Competencies		Fundamental	Leading Change	Leading People	Results Driven	Business Acumen	Building Coalitions	Enterprise-Wide Perspective
	Executive Leadership	Interpersonal Skills Written Communication Oral Communication Integrity/Honesty Continual Learning Public Service Motivation	Creativity/Innovation Analytical Thinking External Awareness Flexibility Resilience Strategic Thinking Vision	Conflict Management Leveraging Diversity Developing Others Team Building	Accountability Customer Service Decisiveness Entrepreneurship Technical Credibility Problem Solving	Financial Management Human Capital Management Technology Management Computer Literacy	Partnering Political Savvy Influencing/Negotiating	Joint Perspective Mission Orientation DoD Mission and Culture DoD Corporate Perspective National Defense Integration Global Perspective National Security Foundation Environment Strategy
	Program Execution	Program Scheduling; Risk Management and Mitigation; Program Health Metrics/Assessment/Reporting/Contractor Performance Assessment; Systems Perspective/Strategic Thinking; Requirements / Acquisition Planning; Sustainment Strategy Planning & Execution; Integration of Acquisition and Life Cycle Sustainment Requirements						
	Technical Management	Systems Engineering Design for Optimized Product Performance; Technical Acumen; Risk Identification and Management; Configuration Management; Technical Reviews and Audits (such as: SRR, SFR, PDR, CDR, SVR/FCA, PRR, PCA, and ISR) Logistics & Product Support; Support & Sustainment; Supportability Analysis; Product Support Planning; Technical or Product Data Management; Enterprise Architecture; Cyber Security; Agile IT development; Broad knowledge of IT Governing Policies and emerging technologies; T&E Strategy (TES) ; T&E Master Plan (TEMP); T&E Infrastructure; DT&E Assessments						
	Business Management	Contract Type/Structure; Intellectual Property; Source Selection; Protests; Contract Administration; E-Biz/Automated Tools; Life Cycle Sustainment Funding; Operating & Support (O&S) Cost Estimating-as identified in contracting input; Business Case Analysis; Budget Exhibits; Life Cycle Cost Estimating; Cost Consciousness						
Currency	Minimum total of 80 Continuous Learning Points for DAWIA two year cycle consisting of the following components: 1) At least 30 hours of Functional Specific training (Exception: Program Management Career Field requires 50 hours of functional specific training); 2) At least 10 hours of leadership/professional training; 3) At least 10 hours of cross-functional training (career field dependent)							