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DEFENSE ACQUISITION WORKFORCE

Better Identification, Development, and Oversight Needed for Personnel Involved in Acquiring Services

U.S. Government Accountability Office

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ACCOUNTABILITY ★ INTEGRITY ★ RELIABILITY

Why GAO Did This Study

In fiscal year 2010, more than half of the \$367 billion dollars the Department of Defense (DOD) spent on contracts was spent on services. Buying services is fundamentally different than buying weapon systems, yet most acquisition regulations, policies, processes, and training remain structured for acquiring weapon systems. Over the last decade, reports from GAO, DOD, and Congress have raised issues about services acquisitions and have also highlighted the importance of acquisition training.

GAO previously reported on the training provided to the acquisition workforce as defined by the Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA). This report addresses personnel working on services acquisitions who were outside the DAWIA acquisition workforce—termed non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities—and the extent to which (1) DOD knows the composition of this population, (2) this population is taking acquisition training, and (3) DOD has implemented past recommendations related to this population.

To complete this work, GAO reviewed a nongeneralizable sample of 29 service contracts, relevant policies, and recommendations from previous reports and met with key DOD officials.

What GAO Recommends

Among other things, GAO recommends that DOD establish criteria for identifying non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities and assess the critical skills needed to perform their role in the acquisition process. DOD concurred with the recommendations.

View [GAO-11-892](#) or key components. For more information, contact Belva Martin at (202) 512-4841 or martinb@gao.gov.

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What GAO Found

Non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities represented more than half of the 430 personnel involved in the 29 services acquisition contracts in this review. Several organizations have been tracking and managing the DAWIA workforce, but no DOD organization has systematically identified non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities, the competencies they need to conduct their acquisition duties, or been designated responsibility for overseeing this group. DOD is not required to identify these personnel and has not established a process to do so. Identifying this population is challenging, partly because, as DOD officials noted, it is a transient one that is dispersed across many DOD organizations. Additionally, these people come from a variety of career fields and are often involved in acquisitions as a secondary duty. DOD has taken action to identify part of this population and provide them training—requirements personnel for major weapon systems—but has not done this for all non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities.

Most non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities in GAO's sample received some acquisition training. The required training was varied and limited and applied largely to contracting officer's representatives (CORs) and not to other non-DAWIA personnel such as requirements officials, technical assistants, or multifunctional team members. For example, the Air Force required two Air Force-specific phases of training, while the Navy and Marine Corps policy did not specify what training was required. Demand for acquisition training courses by non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities has been increasing in the past few years at the Defense Acquisition University, but DOD has limited information to gauge the current and future demand for training this population in the long term or the effectiveness of the current training that is available. DOD has taken short-term actions to require training and provide resources for some non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities. For example, DOD recognized the importance of CORs in several memoranda requiring that they be properly trained and appointed before contract performance begins on services acquisitions.

DOD has made some progress in implementing the recommendations of reports from the Panel on Contracting Integrity and GAO that related to management and training of the COR—a portion of non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities. For example, for the four relevant GAO recommendations—which are related to training, assignment, and oversight of the CORs—DOD fully concurred with all of them, has fully implemented three, and is implementing a COR tracking system to address the remaining recommendation. The House Armed Services Committee and the Defense Science Board issued reports since 2009 that made recommendations that were relevant to this population but were made too recently for GAO to assess their implementation. For example, the House Armed Services Committee Panel on Defense Acquisition Reform report recommended DOD reform the services requirements process in order to address the different set of challenges services acquisitions pose compared to the procurement of goods.

Contents

Letter		1
	Background	4
	Limited Identification of Non-DAWIA Personnel with Acquisition-related Roles and Responsibilities	7
	Acquisition Training for Personnel with Acquisition-related Responsibilities Is Limited	12
	DOD Has Taken Some Steps to Address Previous Recommendations	20
	Conclusions	21
	Recommendations for Executive Action	22
	Agency Comments and Our Evaluation	23
Appendix I	Scope and Methodology	25
Appendix II	Summary of DOD Descriptions of Non-DAWIA Personnel with Acquisition-related Responsibilities	29
Appendix III	Acquisition Training Resources Used by Non-DAWIA Personnel with Acquisition-related Responsibilities Identified on 29 Services Acquisition Contracts	32
Appendix IV	Status of Selected Recommendations from 2007-2010 Panel on Contracting Integrity Reports	36
Appendix V	Selected GAO Recommendations Related to Non-DAWIA Personnel with Acquisition-related Responsibilities	39
Appendix VI	Comments from the Department of Defense	41

Tables

Table 1: Participation by Non-DAWIA Personnel in 11 Selected Web-based DAU Acquisition Training Courses	17
Table 2: Acquisition Training Resources Used by Non-DAWIA Personnel with Acquisition-related Responsibilities Identified on 29 Services Acquisition Contracts by Service and Agency	32
Table 3: Service and DLA Participation in DAU Acquisition Training for the 29 Selected Services Acquisition Contracts	33
Table 4: Status of Selected Panel on Contracting Integrity Recommendations from 2007-2010	37
Table 5: Status of Selected GAO Recommendations Related to Non-DAWIA Personnel with Acquisition-related Responsibilities	39

Figures

Figure 1: Types of Personnel That May Be Involved Across the Services Acquisition Life Cycle	5
Figure 2: Roles of Non-DAWIA Personnel with Acquisition-related Responsibilities on 29 Contracts Reviewed	9
Figure 3: Overlapping Roles and Responsibilities of DAWIA Personnel and Non-DAWIA Personnel in Support of Services Acquisitions	11
Figure 4: Training Taken by 218 Non-DAWIA Personnel with Acquisition-related Responsibilities on 29 Services Acquisition Contracts	14

Abbreviations

ACOR	Alternate/Assistant Contracting Officer's Representative
AFPEO/CM	Air Force Program Executive Office for Combat and Mission Support
COR	Contracting Officer's Representative
DACM	Director of Acquisition Career Management
DAU	Defense Acquisition University
DAWIA	Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act
DLA	Defense Logistics Agency
DOD	Department of Defense
DODIG	Department of Defense Inspector General
DPAP	Defense Procurement Acquisition Policy
FIPT	Functional Integrated Process Team
FPDS-NG	Federal Procurement Data System—Next Generation
GAO	Government Accountability Office
OFPP	Office of Federal Procurement Policy

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G A O

Accountability * Integrity * Reliability

United States Government Accountability Office
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September 28, 2011

Congressional Committees

In fiscal year 2010, more than half of the \$367 billion dollars the Department of Defense (DOD) spent on contracts were spent on acquiring or buying services. DOD services acquisitions can range from aircraft maintenance or operations support for a missile range to grass cutting, and many things in between. According to the Defense Science Board, buying services is fundamentally different than buying weapon systems because of the time it generally takes to move from the identification of a requirement to contract. For example, the time, discipline, and sophistication of a team developing a requirement for repetitive building maintenance would be considerably less than a team building the requirement for a weapon system such as a combat ship. Yet most acquisition regulations, laws, policies, processes, standards, training, education, and management structures remain largely structured for acquiring weapon systems instead of services. Over the last decade, our reports, as well as those from DOD and Congress, have raised issues related to services acquisitions, including challenges in identifying requirements and ineffective coordination between program and contracting officials. The reports have linked acquisition training, including training for the requirements community—which falls outside the acquisition community—to successful services acquisitions.

It takes a wide range of people to execute an acquisition from start to finish. The Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA) provides a formal definition of those people considered to be included in the acquisition workforce.¹ DAWIA established requirements for the

¹The Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act, Pub. L. No. 101-510, § 1201-1211 (1990). This act recognized acquisition as a multidisciplinary career field for DOD comprised of 11 functional areas—program management; systems planning research, development, engineering, and testing; procurement, including contracting; industrial property management; logistics; quality control and assurance; manufacturing and production; business, cost estimating and financial management, and auditing; education, training, and career development; construction; and joint development and production with other government agencies and foreign countries. Since the act was passed, DOD has expanded the original list of 11 functional areas to include facilities engineering. Three other career fields have been subdivided: cost estimating and financial management; systems planning research, development, engineering, and testing; and program management. There are now a total of 16 career fields/paths covered under DOD's implementation of DAWIA.

effective management of the acquisition workforce through standardized education, experience, and training. In October 2010, in response to a mandate in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010, we reported on training provided by the Defense Acquisition University (DAU) to the DAWIA-defined acquisition workforce.^{2,3} Still, there are personnel outside of DAWIA that DOD relies upon to help ensure successful, efficient services acquisitions. They have acquisition-related responsibilities, particularly as they relate to requirements setting, contractor oversight, and auditing for services acquisitions.⁴ This report supplements the 2010 report and is focused on non-DAWIA personnel involved with acquiring services. We assessed the extent to which (1) DOD knows the composition of the population of non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities, (2) non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities are taking acquisition training, and (3) selected recommendations related to non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities from previous DOD and GAO reviews have been implemented. We excluded contracts and personnel associated with services acquisitions in conflict environments or contingencies, as they are the subject of an ongoing review by GAO.

To determine the composition of non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities, we selected a nongeneralizable sample of 29 service contracts from the Federal Procurement Data System-Next Generation (FPDS-NG) that included each military service and the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA). The selected contracts were awarded and active in fiscal year 2009, were valued at more than \$1 million each, and did not include work performed in a contingency environment. Contracts that were related to major weapon systems acquisitions were also excluded. We focused our selection on services acquisitions and high-risk, cost-reimbursable contracts. We included at least two nonmajor acquisition commands from the Air Force, the Navy, the Army, and DLA.

² Pub. L. No. 111-84, § 1108 (b)(2) (2009).

³ GAO, *Defense Acquisition Workforce: DOD's Training Program Demonstrates Many Attributes of Effectiveness, but Improvement Is Needed*, [GAO-11-22](#) (Washington, D.C.: Oct. 28, 2010).

⁴ Contractor oversight personnel are known by many names, such as quality assurance evaluator, contracting officer's representative, or contracting officer's technical representative, but their duties are essentially the same. For the purposes of this report, we refer to these personnel generally as contracting officer's representatives (CORs).

For this sample of contracts, we asked DOD contracting and program officials associated with each contract to identify the personnel with roles and responsibilities related to that acquisition, including pre- and postaward responsibilities.

We also met with key DOD officials—service, agency, contracting, and quality assurance personnel coordinators—and reviewed relevant policies to understand the status of DOD’s efforts to identify non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities and track their training. We reviewed guidance to executive branch agencies that defines the acquisition workforce to help determine the roles and responsibilities of acquisition personnel, including those that may be outside of DOD’s DAWIA definition. However, we did not review executive agencies’ efforts to identify, develop, and train its acquisition workforce.

To identify the extent to which non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities are taking acquisition training, we asked DOD to identify all personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities for each contract in our sample. We relied on DOD officials to specify whether the personnel involved in each of the selected contracts were DAWIA personnel or non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities. We also asked each military service and DLA to specify any acquisition training the personnel they identified had received. We compared the reported data on training with training records and individual training certificates provided by commands, subcommands, centers, and DLA as well as DAU training records.

To determine the extent to which recommendations from previous reviews have been implemented, we identified previous reviews, assessed which recommendations were relevant to our population of non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities, and obtained documentation from agency officials on the status of DOD’s implementation of the selected recommendations.

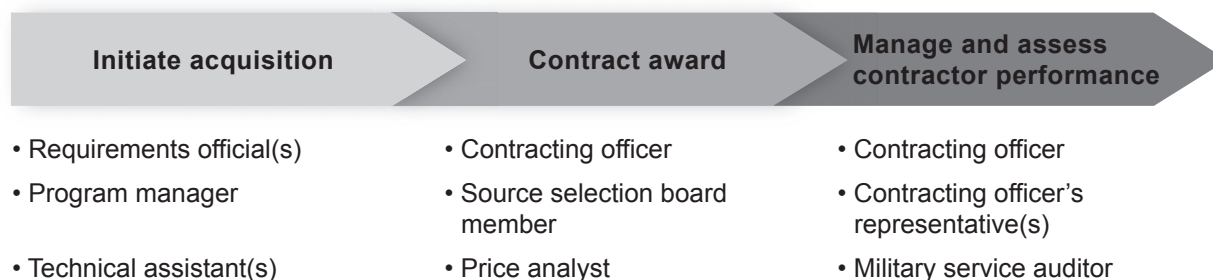
We conducted this performance audit from June 2010 to September 2011, in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. See appendix I for additional details on our objectives, scope, and methodology.

Background

Congress passed the Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA) in 1990 to address issues related to workforce quality, to formally establish the acquisition workforce, and to increase its professionalism by directing DOD to create certification requirements for the acquisition workforce. In response, DOD defined its acquisition workforce, which evolved into the 16 career fields and paths that currently exist. According to DAU officials, this definition is still evolving. For each of the career fields and paths that DOD established, there are minimum requirements for education, experience, and training under DAWIA. The DAWIA workforce numbered 133,103 at the end of fiscal year 2009 and 150,566 at the end of March 2011. In 2010, DOD developed a Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Strategy to establish a comprehensive acquisition workforce analysis and decision-making capability that is still ongoing. The workforce analysis is focused on the DAWIA workforce and does not cover non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities despite recognition of the important roles they play in acquiring services in the federal government.

The number of personnel and roles on services acquisitions can vary greatly. With the exception of DAWIA-certified contracting officers, who administer services acquisitions and are involved throughout the life cycle of a contract, other professionals do fall outside of DAWIA. A model of the services acquisition process is demonstrated in figure 1 below along with the roles of personnel who may be involved in the various stages throughout the life cycle of services acquisitions.

Figure 1: Types of Personnel That May Be Involved Across the Services Acquisition Life Cycle



Source: GAO analysis of DOD data and policy.

Our previous work has identified problems with requirements writing, which may be performed by non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities. For example, we previously found that poorly defined or changing requirements contributed to increased costs as well as services that did not meet the department's needs.⁵ Additionally, we noted problems with insufficient requirements provided by customers—non-DAWIA personnel—because of a lack of contracting knowledge. We reported in 2006 that contracting officials—DAWIA personnel—have difficulty preparing requirements documents such as a performance-based statement of work without sufficient planning and input from customers—generally non-DAWIA personnel—who are familiar with what needs to be accomplished.⁶ The same report also found that once requirements are developed, most transactions move very quickly into the business arrangement, which includes the contract award. Once a requirement has been validated and defined, it becomes necessary to develop an appropriate business arrangement to meet that need while protecting the government's interests. Without a sound requirement, the business arrangement defined in the contract could be relegated to buying the wrong service the right way. We have also reported that one agency experienced cost overruns, schedule delays, or did not otherwise meet performance expectations in several service contracts for major,

⁵ GAO, *Defense Acquisitions: Actions Needed to Ensure Value for Service Contracts*, [GAO-09-643T](#) (Washington, D.C.: Apr. 23, 2009).

⁶ GAO, *Defense Acquisitions: Tailored Approach Needed to Improve Service Acquisition Outcomes*, [GAO-07-20](#) (Washington, D.C.: Nov. 9, 2006).

complex investments that did not have well-defined requirements, a complete set of measurable performance standards, or both.⁷

The Office of Management and Budget's Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP) issued guidance in 2005 that built on previous efforts to improve the development of the acquisition workforce by defining the acquisition workforce more broadly than DOD's definition under DAWIA. The OFPP policy applies to all executive agencies, except those subject to DAWIA. OFPP's definition includes individuals who perform various acquisition functions to support accomplishing an agency's mission. At a minimum, the acquisition workforce of a civilian agency includes contracting specialists, contracting officers regardless of general schedule series, contracting officers' representatives or equivalent positions, program and project managers, positions in the purchasing series, and any significant acquisition positions identified by the agency. Members of the civilian acquisition workforce may also include:

- individuals substantially involved in defining, determining, and managing requirements;
- individuals involved in acquisition planning and strategy;
- individuals who participate in the contracting process (including soliciting, evaluating, and awarding of contracts);
- individuals who manage the process after the contract is awarded (including testing and evaluating; managing, monitoring, and evaluating performance on the contract; auditing; and administering the contract);
- individuals involved in property management;
- individuals who support the business processes of the above listed activities (e.g., General Counsel, finance, or other subject matter experts); and
- individuals who directly manage those involved in any of the above activities.

⁷ GAO, *Department of Homeland Security: Better Planning and Assessment Needed to Improve Outcomes for Complex Service Acquisitions*, [GAO-08-263](#) (Washington, D.C.: Apr. 22, 2008).

Limited Identification of Non-DAWIA Personnel with Acquisition-related Roles and Responsibilities

Non-DAWIA personnel are assigned responsibilities in critical phases of the acquisition process, but no DOD organization has systematically identified these personnel and the acquisition-related competencies they require or been designated the responsibility of overseeing this group—as has been done for the personnel who are members of the DAWIA workforce. In our sample of 29 service contracts, we determined that the number of non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities was substantial. Identifying non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities is challenging, but DOD is working to identify a portion of this population—requirements personnel for major weapon systems—and provide specific training.

Number of Non-DAWIA Personnel Serving on Sample Contracts Was Substantial

DOD identified 218 of the 430 personnel (51 percent) reported to us as involved in the 29 contracts in our sample as outside the DAWIA workforce. While the absolute number is large, their acquisition-related responsibilities are generally part-time, according to DOD officials. Nonetheless, their roles and responsibilities touched all three phases of the services acquisition life cycle and included personnel with such titles as program managers, CORs, requirement officials, auditors, and legal advisors. DAU has acknowledged that non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities may also include technical experts, financial managers, and others whose duties may affect or be affected by the acquisition process. According to senior DOD officials, DOD policy does not require tracking or training for these non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities, but they are assigned responsibilities in critical phases of the acquisition process—acquisition planning, contract solicitation and award, and contract administration.

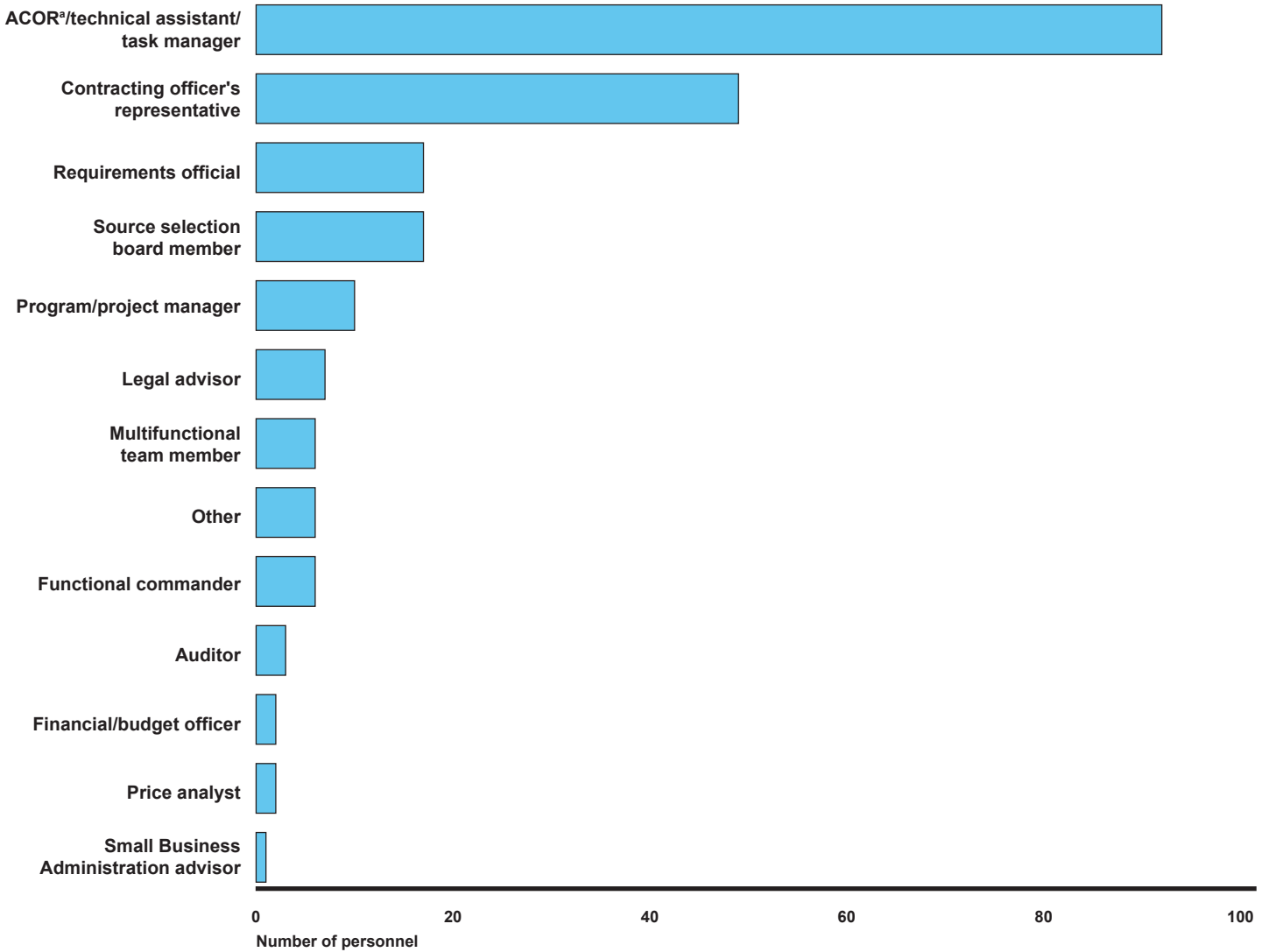
Decisions about the number and type of personnel involved in each individual contract are made at the discretion of the organization responsible for the contract and may vary widely from contract to contract depending on the type of acquisition and the service or command. For 23 of the 29 contracts we reviewed, DOD officials identified non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities working on the contract. The number of non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities reported in our sample ranged from 61 on one Navy contract to none on two different DLA contracts. For two similar Air Force contracts involving aircraft maintenance, one reported 21 non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities involved in the contract, and the other reported 3. According to an Air Force contracting officer, the number of CORs associated with a contract can vary depending on the experience and skills needed to monitor the work being performed by the

contractor. Additionally, variation among personnel identified on the contracts is also a result of personnel turnover, which may impact the overall number of non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities identified on a particular contract.

Based on our sample of 29 contracts, we identified 12 categories of personnel that have acquisition-related roles and responsibilities but are not part of the DAWIA workforce. Figure 2 shows the number of non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities in each of the 12 categories we identified based on DOD data, titles, and policy. See appendix II for a description of the 12 categories and acquisition-related responsibilities associated with them. In some cases, DOD reported personnel as serving in more than one role on the contract. For example, a COR was also reported as serving as a program manager—who is the principal technical expert usually most familiar with the requirements. In another example, a multifunctional team member—who plans and manages services acquisitions throughout the life of the requirement—was reported as also being the functional commander, who is the senior official of a requirements organization. Figure 2 below eliminates the multiple roles as we included the individual in a specific role identified in DOD’s guidebook, such as a COR, over a role within a group, such as a member of a multifunctional team. In addition, DOD identified personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities who had titles such as technical assistants, assistant CORs, and task managers who were not designated as the COR. This group along with CORs represented the vast majority of personnel on our 29 contracts.

Figure 2: Roles of Non-DAWIA Personnel with Acquisition-related Responsibilities on 29 Contracts Reviewed

Total personnel: 218



Source: GAO analysis of DOD data.

Note: ³Alternate/Assistant COR.

We were able to collect data on the non-DAWIA population from individual commands and contracting organizations on a contract-by-contract basis, but no organization within DOD is responsible for identifying, developing, and managing non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities—even though these personnel

represented over half the people reported as working on the service contracts we reviewed. DOD is not required to identify non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities, and senior officials stated that DOD has not established criteria or a process to do so across the department or among organizations in DOD that have a role in helping to manage issues focused on services acquisitions. For the DAWIA population, however, organizations within DOD—including DAU, the Directors of Acquisition Career Management (DACMs), and the Functional Integrated Process Teams (FIPTs)—have integrated tracking responsibilities that allow DOD to strategically manage this population.⁸ DAU officials explained that in keeping with their mission and priority, they focus their resources on DAWIA professionals.

Identification Is Challenging

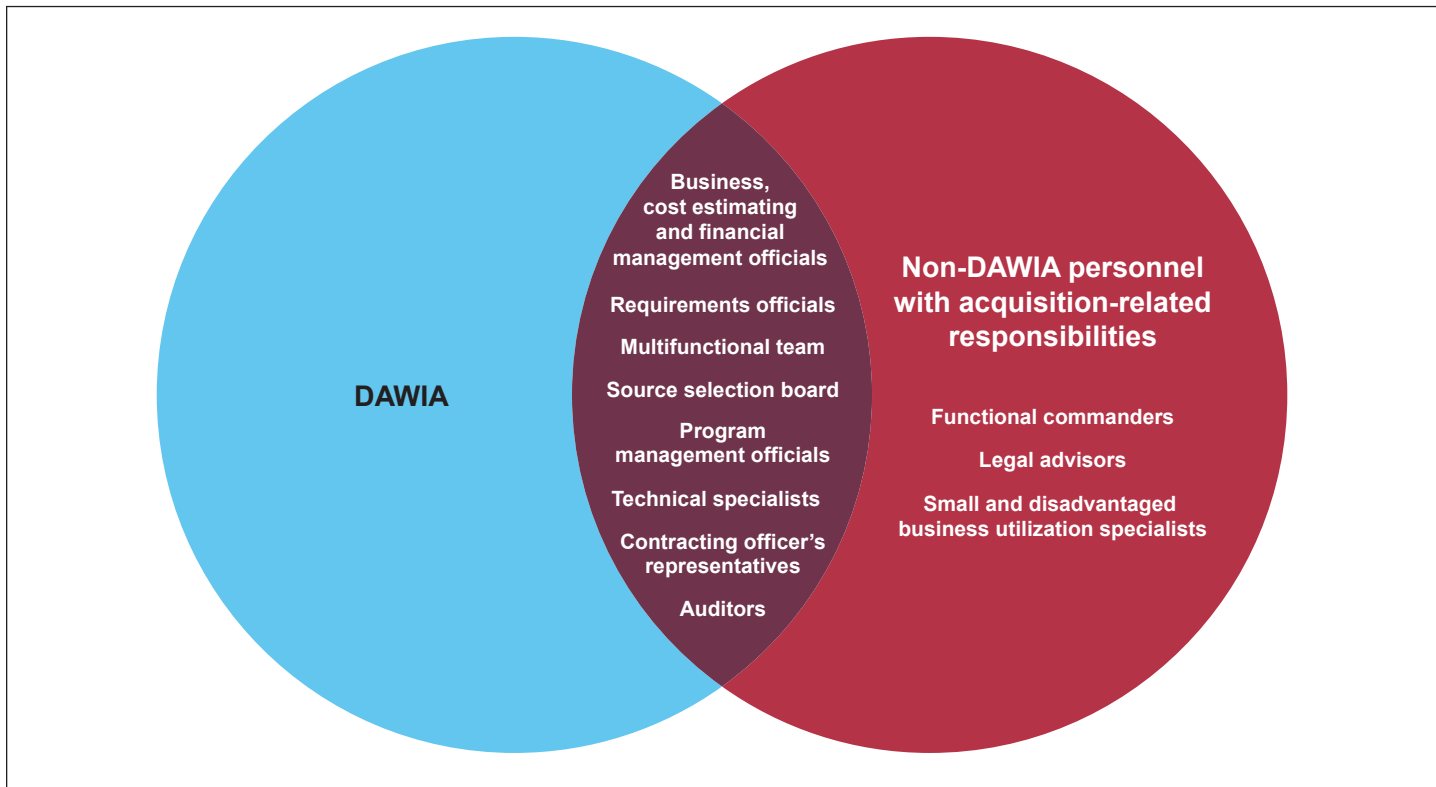
Officials across DOD, including senior officials at DAU, told us that identifying non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities is challenging, in part because these personnel are a transient population, they are dispersed throughout many organizations within DOD, they come from a variety of career fields, and they are often involved in services acquisitions as a secondary and not a primary duty. For example, frequent turnover of personnel assigned as CORs in some organizations makes identifying and tracking CORs challenging. In contrast to a DAWIA-certified contracting officer, who is a career acquisition professional involved in acquisition responsibilities as a full-time job, a technical expert from a requirements organization may be asked to participate in a particular acquisition or serve as the COR for a limited time. For example, one non-DAWIA Air Force official served as a technical subject matter expert who assisted in producing a literature review, writing the research proposal, conducting testing and evaluation, and consulting with contract personnel on a contract to conduct research on using muscle stimulation to help pilots fly with high gravitational forces. However, the official's primary duty was as Chief of the Capability Gap Analysis Program for his wing in the Air Force. On the same contract, another Air Force official's acquisition-related responsibilities were to act

⁸ According to DOD officials, the mission of each military service's DACM is to track personnel covered under DAWIA and identify demand for training. FIPTs were established for 14 different acquisition career fields for the DAWIA workforce. The FIPT lead advises DOD on DAWIA career development policies and procedures, including education, training, and experience requirements for civilian and military personnel in the acquisition workforce. They also, in conjunction with the DACMs, identify demand for training.

as the medical monitor to review the research proposal to help ensure the safety of the study participants. However, this official's primary duty in the Air Force was an active duty flight surgeon.

DOD officials stated that acquisition personnel may serve in both DAWIA and non-DAWIA positions at different points in their DOD careers, further complicating attempts to identify or track personnel. In the 29 contracts we reviewed, we found several examples of personnel serving in the same role with the same responsibilities—such as requirements definition, program management, and contractor oversight—some of whom were DAWIA personnel, while others were non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities. Figure 3 depicts our sample of DOD's acquisition workforce and the roles that overlap between the DAWIA workforce and non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities.

Figure 3: Overlapping Roles and Responsibilities of DAWIA Personnel and Non-DAWIA Personnel in Support of Services Acquisitions



Source: GAO analysis of DOD data.

A group of organizations within DOD led by DAU officials has begun identifying non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities for developing requirements in major defense acquisition programs and is requiring specific training for them to perform their role.⁹ DOD's focus is on personnel responsible for requirements for major weapon systems, and DOD has not undertaken a similar effort for all non-DAWIA personnel with roles and responsibilities on services acquisitions. As a part of the effort to identify the major weapon system personnel, DAU officials said DOD identified criteria to define the population—including non-DAWIA personnel—who would receive requirements management certification and training.

Acquisition Training for Personnel with Acquisition-related Responsibilities Is Limited

We found that most non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities on our 29 contracts received some acquisition training, even though DOD does not require or track acquisition training for 11 of the 12 roles of non-DAWIA personnel—the exception being for CORs. The required training was limited and varied, and the current training and education programs for acquisitions do not address services acquisitions. This is different than for DAWIA-certified personnel who have minimum requirements for education, experience, and training. DAU data suggest that demand for training has increased, but DOD has limited metrics to gauge the current size and future demand for training of the population in the long term or the effectiveness of current training that is available. In the short term, however, DOD has taken interim steps to require training and provide resources for some non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities.

Most Personnel Took Some Acquisition Training

Of the 218 non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities identified in our 29 selected contracts, 170 (78 percent) reported receiving some acquisition training during or before 2009. For 7 of the 12 roles of non-DAWIA personnel, half or more of the personnel identified in each group indicated they had taken some acquisition training. The amount of training varied significantly from contract to contract, depending on the organization responsible for the contract and the type of services acquisition. In some cases, the reported training could not be verified, and

⁹ The John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007, Pub. L. No. 109-364 § 801 (2006).

we did not assess the quality or effectiveness of any training as a component of our work. Included in the 218 non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities were 48 personnel who reported that they did not receive any acquisition training, such as:

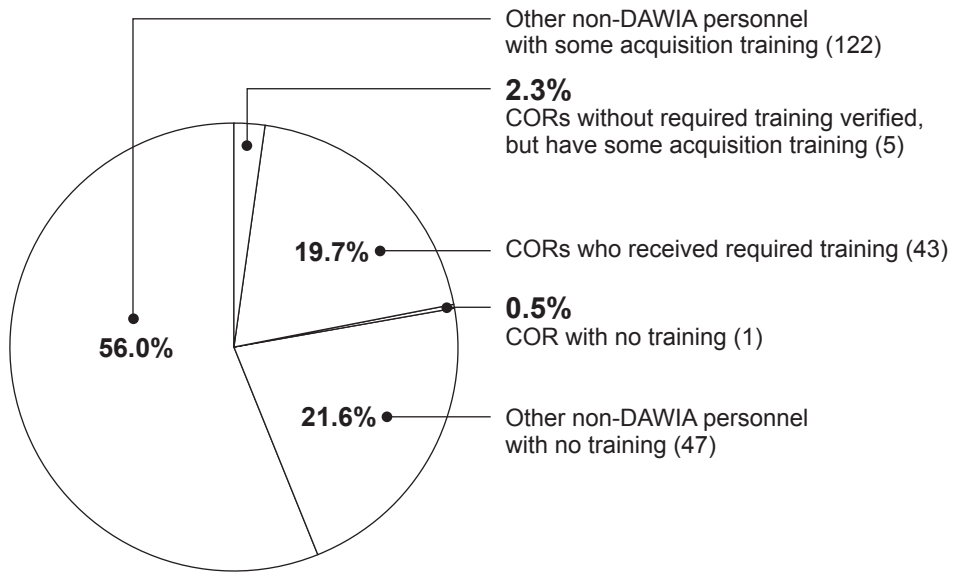
- 7 officials who were responsible for developing requirements documents;
- 3 functional commanders—senior requirements officials of an organization, such as the commanding officer for a missile range;¹⁰
- 1 COR; and
- 3 of 10 program managers.¹¹

See figure 4 below to see the extent to which non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities on the 29 contracts we reviewed took training.

¹⁰ For the majority of contracts in our sample, a functional commander was not included in the list of non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities reported to us by DOD.

¹¹ In some instances, there was more than one program manager reported per contract. In others, no program manager was reported on a contract. There is no requirement for a program manager on services contracts.

Figure 4: Training Taken by 218 Non-DAWIA Personnel with Acquisition-related Responsibilities on 29 Services Acquisition Contracts



Source: GAO analysis of DOD data.

For the only non-DAWIA group required to take acquisition training—CORs—DOD officials provided evidence that 43 of 49 CORs on the contracts completed training. For the remaining 6 CORs, the contracting organization could not provide evidence of training, but 5 of the 6 reported taking training. At the time the sampled contracts were awarded, DOD policy allowed the services and agencies to decide exactly what training should be required for CORs. For example, Air Force CORs were required to obtain two phases of training that were Air Force specific—including both standardized and contract-specific content—for services acquisitions. In contrast, Navy and Marine Corps policy required COR training; however, the policies did not identify specific training to meet this requirement. On the other hand, Army and DLA policy required that CORs take DAU’s Web-based training titled Contracting Officer’s Representative with a Mission Focus. Outside of the COR training, the acquisition training that is taken by non-DAWIA personnel is not standardized and some was based on the command, contract, or on the initiative of the personnel themselves. See appendix III for a list of acquisition training that non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities completed for the 29 service contracts we reviewed.

In five contracts from DLA, Army, and Navy, there were from 4 to 50 non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities for each contract who had essentially the same role as the COR. However, they had titles such as technical assistants, assistant CORs, and task managers. With the exception of the role of task managers, who had local requirements for training, the other roles did not require COR training or, in some cases, any other acquisition training.

DOD organizations we reviewed did not require acquisition training for senior leadership who were non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities, but some offered training. The Air Force developed optional 2-hour classroom modules to provide basic acquisition knowledge for senior leaders at the functional commander level. The Army recently developed a 1.5-day supplemental procurement course for senior civilian and military leaders to help them understand the Army's procurement system as well as the challenges and demands across the system. The Marine Corps provide a General Counsel briefing to senior leaders and installation commanders on contracting, but according to a Marine Corps official, senior leadership typically relies on their attorneys to support them in the acquisition process since they do not spend a lot of time doing acquisition-related duties.

Beyond the training reported for our 29 selected contracts, the services and DLA reported offering additional training that was available to non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities but not required. For example, one Air Force center held periodic training sessions designed for program managers and supervisors using in-house knowledge and expertise on different issues such as business process improvements, developing evaluation criteria, assembling standard requirements packages, and other topics. Officials told us they held other training to address problems or to inform staff of new policies. In the Army, one command offered five different training modules specific to the command that include topics such as an acquisition overview, market research, work breakdown structure and performance requirement summary, requirements document development, and developing quality assurance plans. DLA had a catalog of classroom acquisition courses, including best value source selection, a contracting overview, DLA simplified acquisition procedures, market research and statements of work, and performance-based services acquisition. The Marine Corps offer an optional Contracting 101 course quarterly for personnel who might have a requirement in the future that includes a focus on independent cost estimation.

The non-DAWIA audit community—composed of representatives from the DOD Inspector General (DODIG), the Air Force Audit Agency, the Army Audit Agency, and the Naval Audit Service—established an internal acquisition certification program for acquisition auditors within each of their organizations that audit weapon systems and other major acquisition programs. According to the DODIG and the services, the auditor training is tracked within each audit agency at the Level I, II, and III DAWIA certification equivalents. In addition, the Air Force and DODIG have a certification program for contracting auditors, who focus on specific contracting issues under their purview. According to data provided by the non-DAWIA audit community, for the 355 auditors responsible for acquisition and contracting, 129 certifications have been issued among the service audit agencies and DODIG.

DAU Data Indicate That Demand for Acquisition Training Has Increased

Based on the number of courses completed, DAU faces growing demand for training by non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities, despite few requirements for training. For 11 selected courses, many of which are recommended by DOD to improve requirements development, non-DAWIA training participation increased from fiscal year 2008 to 2010, as shown in table 1 below. According to DAU officials, DAU does not collect information on why personnel are seeking training or what roles and responsibilities they have on contracts to determine whether the individuals are working on major weapon systems, services acquisitions, or other types of contracts.

Table 1: Participation by Non-DAWIA Personnel in 11 Selected Web-based DAU Acquisition Training Courses

Course title	Number of Web-based training courses completed by non-DAWIA personnel in fiscal years 2008-10		
	2008	2009	2010
Fundamentals of Systems Acquisition Management (ACQ101)	9,245	10,007	10,191
Contracting for the rest of us (CLC011)	2,054	5,040	6,365
COR Mission with a Focus (CLC106)	12,787	20,807	28,033
Basic Math Tutorial (CLC024)	1,054	1,257	1,210
COR Overview (CLC012)	1,879	2,356	2,284
Performance Based Services Acquisition (CLC013)	1,706	2,138	3,205
Contracting Officer's Representative (CLC222)	0	0	227
Overview of Acquisition Ethics (CLM003)	13,018	24,027	36,886
Improved Statement of Work (CLM031)	333	1,199	1,405
Contracting Overview (CLM024)	1,813	4,022	5,438
Core Concepts for Requirements Management (RQM110)	376	750	786
Number of Web-based training courses completed by non-DAWIA personnel	44,265	71,603	96,030

Source: DAU data.

According to DAU records, two of the courses listed above—the Overview of Acquisition Ethics and the COR Mission with a Focus—accounted for over 75 percent of the increase in the number of Web-based acquisition-related training courses taken by non-DAWIA personnel from 2008-2010. The number of non-DAWIA personnel seeking acquisition training through DAU is expected to increase with the introduction of a contracting officer's representative course in June 2009 and the Web-based equivalent in August 2010, which is listed above in table 1.

Beyond the insight DAU course data provide, DOD has limited information on the demand for and the effectiveness of acquisition training for non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities. First, tracking acquisition training for non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities, if it is done at all, is typically conducted for COR training and auditors within organizations to which these personnel are assigned and is decentralized across the department. Second, DAU training participants' course evaluations through the middle of July 2011 rated COR courses positively in job impact and learning effectiveness, but according to a DAU official, these evaluations are completed before participants begin their COR duties, and DAU does not currently request feedback on the value of a course after the training

participants have begun their acquisition duties as CORs. DAU officials acknowledged that DAU does not have information to assess the effectiveness of COR training. They explained that COR training is intended to be an introduction to acquisition-related duties and that because DAU's mission is to focus on DAWIA professionals and its resources are limited, it does not collect more extensive feedback on COR courses for personnel that will not likely remain in the acquisition community because they are often involved in acquisitions as a secondary and not a primary duty.

Several DOD Initiatives Provide Training and Resources

DOD has taken short-term actions to assist non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities to be successful in the role of COR for services acquisitions. However, DOD has not identified a plan to develop the skills or competencies necessary for other non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities in other roles. In 2006, 2008, and 2010 DOD recognized the importance of some non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities in several memoranda requiring that CORs be properly trained and appointed before contract performance begins on a services acquisition to address weaknesses in this key function that the DODIG and we identified. In 2010, DOD developed a COR certification standard that defines minimum COR competencies, experience, and training, based on the complexity of the requirement and contract performance risk. A DOD Instruction, currently in draft form and undergoing review, will give more specificity to the COR certification policy but has not been formally issued and published. Once this training is implemented across DOD, it may only require training for approximately one-fourth of the personnel identified as CORs for the contracts we examined.

DOD and DAU officials stated that the training that is currently available through DAU is geared toward weapon systems acquisitions and that they do not have a curriculum developed for services acquisitions or for non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities, outside of CORs. Recently, DOD and DAU have undertaken initiatives to address training for requirements officials. For example, in 2009 DAU developed optional Service Acquisition Workshops to assist acquisition teams and guide them through the requirements writing process. According to DAU officials, key participants who should participate in the workshop include the program/project manager, contracting officer, and CORs. Both DAWIA and non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities from a specific services acquisition team participate in the

workshop, writing the requirements together and building consensus on their vision and goals for the acquisition.

To bridge the gaps in skills and abilities of non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities who do not have acquisition experience, several organizations across DOD have created a customer liaison capability to assist the requiring activity on services acquisitions in the absence of a program office to facilitate the interaction between the contracting organization and the requiring organization. For example, a Marine Corps contracting office official said they created a customer liaison group of four DAWIA personnel to assist non-DAWIA personnel with the acquisition process, including writing requirements. An Army command used the experience and skills of a former federal contracting officer to provide technical assistance to personnel developing requirements for services acquisitions, usually non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities. Within the Army Corp of Engineers, a project manager may be assigned to a contract to facilitate the relationship between the requirements and contracting organizations. DLA officials said that some organizations within DLA have an acquisition assistance office to assist in preparing the requirements package.

DOD has two other ongoing initiatives to track and train a portion of the non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities. First, DOD is developing a system to identify and manage CORs that will provide a repository for COR training certificates and monthly contractor surveillance reports. It will also give contracting personnel and requiring activities the means to track and manage COR assignments. The system is anticipated to provide DOD with insight into the size of the active and inactive COR population within DOD. The system is anticipated to be fully implemented during fiscal year 2012. Second, within the non-DAWIA auditing community in DOD, DOD officials said that the DODIG has led a working group, including DAU, to find spaces in a specific DAU course through fiscal year 2011 so the non-DAWIA auditors can get the equivalent training they need for certification based on their current curriculum. In the long term, the working group is also meeting to establish an auditor-specific curriculum at DAU for the non-DAWIA auditors to receive acquisition training to address their specific needs. However, according to the DODIG lead for the working group, long-term plans and funding to support this training initiative for non-DAWIA auditors are uncertain.

DOD Has Taken Some Steps to Address Previous Recommendations

DOD has made some progress in implementing the outstanding recommendations from the Panel on Contracting Integrity, our previous reports, and other reports that raised issues related to training for non-DAWIA personnel. For the Panel on Contracting Integrity (Panel), the recommendations that were relevant to non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities focused on managing, training, and certifying CORs. Based on the Panel's 2007, 2008, 2009, and 2010 reports with recommendations related to CORs and follow-up action by the Panel, we determined that DOD has fully implemented 3, partially implemented 7, and has not implemented 1 of the 11 recommendations. Specifically, in response to the Panel's recommendation that DOD develop a certification standard for CORs, DOD developed a certification program listing available training resources that meet the standard and defining a reasonable time-phased implementation plan for the standard. An example of one Panel recommendation that remains open is the recommendation to develop an implementation plan for the COR certification process. While DOD has issued a policy memorandum for the COR certification process, it has not yet issued the DOD Instruction that will implement the new certification standard policy. See appendix IV for more detailed information on the Panel recommendations and their implementation status.

Our previous work has focused on the roles, responsibilities, and training of the professional DAWIA acquisition workforce and how DOD manages services acquisitions. This is our first report providing insight on non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities on services acquisitions. Recommendations from previous reports that are related to our population have focused primarily on the role of CORs, which we demonstrate are only a portion of a larger group of non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities. DOD has also made progress addressing recommendations we made from 2005 to 2009. DOD concurred with the four relevant recommendations, has fully implemented three, and has taken action on the other.

- In December 2005, DOD issued a memorandum to address our recommendation that surveillance personnel—CORs—are properly trained and appointed before contract award.
- In December 2006, DOD issued a policy memorandum requiring DOD components to ensure that the contribution of CORs in assisting in the monitoring or administration of contracts is addressed in their performance reviews to address our recommendation that DOD develop practices to help ensure accountability for personnel carrying out surveillance responsibilities.

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- In October 2006, DOD issued an Acquisition Services Policy to address our recommendation that DOD's service contract review process and associated data collection provide management more visibility over contract surveillance.
 - Our November 2009 recommendation that the military departments review their procedures to ensure that properly trained surveillance personnel have been assigned prior to and throughout a contract's period of performance has not been implemented. Ongoing efforts to develop a certification system for all DOD CORs should address this recommendation.

See appendix V for a list of our recommendations and additional details on the status of implementation.

Finally, the House Armed Services Committee and the Defense Science Board recently issued reports including recommendations related to training for those who are responsible for requirements development for services acquisitions and non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities but the recommendations were made too recently for us to assess the status of implementation. For example, in March 2010, the House Armed Services Committee Panel on Defense Acquisition Reform Report reported that DOD was not ensuring that personnel with responsibilities for acquisition outcomes acquire the skills, training, and experience needed to properly write, award, and oversee performance of services acquisitions, which could pose a different set of challenges than those associated with the procurement of goods. The report recommended that the department reform the requirements process and establish a clear career path for civilians in the defense acquisition system. In March 2011, a Defense Science Board Task Force report advised that DOD should systematically improve training for personnel involved in services acquisitions and oversight.

Conclusions

Non-DAWIA personnel carry responsibilities that are essential to getting good outcomes from DOD's services acquisitions. They are involved in defining requirements, shaping the acquisition decision-making process, and overseeing services acquisitions. While identifying these individuals is challenging, without a clear understanding of this population, DOD does not have sufficient oversight or assurance that the right people with the right skills are involved in the critical phases of services acquisitions to ensure successful outcomes. Challenges in identifying non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities exist, in part, because the personnel are dispersed throughout the department, come from a

variety of career fields, and are often involved in acquisitions as a secondary duty. DOD's efforts to identify and provide acquisition training to CORs, a portion of non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities, is a good foundation for building a strategic and sustainable approach to develop the skills and competencies of other non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities.

This diverse population, because of its differences from DAWIA personnel, may require different ways to prepare its members for their unique roles and responsibilities in supporting the services acquisition process. Yet DOD does not have a deliberate approach to identifying non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities or ensuring they have the skill sets, resources, and tools they need. Apart from the new training for one of the non-DAWIA roles—the CORs—training for non-DAWIA personnel is limited. DOD does not have a way of knowing whether the training these people take is targeted to critical skills and competencies related to carrying out their acquisition responsibilities. Without a departmentwide focus and an organization within DOD with designated responsibility for the population of non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities—as the professional DAWIA workforce has to provide leadership on training, identification, and development of personnel—it is unclear whether these personnel have the training they need to help ensure that DOD obtains its desired acquisition outcomes. In the area of weapon systems, DOD has taken steps to assure that non-DAWIA personnel are getting needed acquisition training. Specifically, DOD has identified some requirements positions involved in major weapon systems that should receive additional training and built a curriculum designed for this group to obtain certification. This is one of perhaps several approaches to managing an amorphous and transient population within DOD.

Recommendations for Executive Action

To help ensure that training and development efforts for non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities are deliberate and contribute to successful services acquisitions—meaning DOD buys the right thing, the right way, while getting the desired outcomes—we recommend the Secretary of Defense take the following three actions:

- establish criteria and a time frame for identifying non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities, including requirements officials;

-
- assess what critical skills non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities might require to perform their role in the acquisition process and improve acquisition outcomes; and
 - designate an organization that has the responsibility to track DOD's progress in identifying, developing, and overseeing non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities to help ensure they have the skills necessary to perform their acquisition function.

Agency Comments and Our Evaluation

We provided a draft of this report to DOD for comment. In written comments, DOD agreed with our recommendations. DOD provided technical comments, which we incorporated into the report as appropriate. DOD's comments are reprinted in appendix VI.

We are sending copies of this report to interested congressional committees, the Secretary of Defense, and other interested parties. The report is also available at no charge on the GAO Web site at <http://www.gao.gov>.

If you or your staff have any questions about this report, please contact me at (202) 512-4841 or martinb@gao.gov. Contact points for our Offices of Congressional Relations and Public Affairs may be found on the last page of this report. Staff acknowledgements are listed in appendix VII.



Belva M. Martin
Director, Acquisition and Sourcing Management

List of Congressional Committees

The Honorable Carl Levin
Chairman
The Honorable John McCain
Ranking Member
Committee on Armed Services
United States Senate

The Honorable Daniel Inouye
Chairman
The Honorable Thad Cochran
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Defense
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate

The Honorable Howard P. McKeon
Chairman
The Honorable Adam Smith
Ranking Member
Committee on Armed Services
House of Representatives

The Honorable C.W. Bill Young
Chairman
The Honorable Norman D. Dicks
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Defense
Committee on Appropriations
House of Representatives

Appendix I: Scope and Methodology

The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010 included a provision requiring that GAO report on the Department of Defense's (DOD) training for its acquisition and audit workforce.¹ Our October 2010 report addressed training provided by the Defense Acquisition University (DAU) to the DAWIA workforce.² In addition to that report, we agreed to review training provided to non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities in a noncontingency environment. To accomplish this, we assessed the extent to which (1) DOD knows the composition of the population of non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities, (2) non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities are taking acquisition training, and (3) selected recommendations related to non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities from previous reviews have been implemented.

To determine the composition of non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities, we selected a nongeneralizable sample of contracts from the Federal Procurement Data System-Next Generation (FPDS-NG). We selected a total of 29 services acquisition contracts from the Air Force, the Army, the Navy, and DLA (10 contracts from the Air Force, 8 contracts from Army, 7 contracts from Navy, and 4 contracts from DLA) that were awarded and active in fiscal year 2009, each valued at over \$1 million, and focused on high-risk type contracts such as cost reimbursable contracts.³ Fiscal year 2009 was the most current year with complete data within FPDS-NG when our sample was selected. In addition, we selected services acquisition contracts that were awarded at nonmajor acquisition commands from the Air Force, the Navy/Marines, and the Army. We excluded contracts associated with major weapon systems and those that were for services provided in the contingency environments of Iraq and Afghanistan. We confirmed specific contract information from FPDS-NG with contracting officials who administered the 29 contracts selected. We also held interviews with contracting officials

¹ Pub. L. No. 111-84, § 1108 (b)(2) (2009).

² GAO, *Defense Acquisition Workforce: DOD's Training Program Demonstrates Many Attributes of Effectiveness, but Improvement Is Needed*, [GAO-11-22](#) (Washington, D.C.: Oct. 28, 2010).

³ We initially selected 33 contracts during the design phase of our work to understand the differences between how goods and services were acquired by DOD. Once we narrowed our scope to focus on service contracts in a noncontingency environment, we removed 3 contracts for goods and a fourth contract that was contingency-related.

and personnel involved in the contracts to verify the specific service being provided and to enhance specific details not provided in FPDS-NG such as where work was being conducted. Through these steps, we found FPDS-NG to be reliable for the purposes of this report.

For this sample of contracts, we asked DOD contracting and program officials associated with each contract to identify the personnel with roles and responsibilities related to that acquisition, including pre- and postaward responsibilities. We relied on DOD officials to specify whether the personnel involved in each of the selected contracts were DAWIA-certified, and thus a member of the DAWIA workforce, or were non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities. To gather more specific information from each organization responsible for the contracts in our selected sample, we also interviewed DOD officials, DAWIA contracting personnel, requirements officials, and other personnel who performed specific roles on the contracts from each of the services and DLA. We obtained information about the involvement of non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities in the selected contracts, the organizations' training policies when the contracts were awarded, and how the individual organizations each tracked training for CORs and other non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities. To help determine the roles and responsibilities of acquisition personnel, we reviewed guidance to executive branch agencies that defines the acquisition workforce, including those that may be outside of DOD's DAWIA definition. However, we did not review executive agencies' efforts to identify, develop, and train its acquisition workforce. To understand DOD's ability to define, identify, and track non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities, we interviewed officials from the Defense Acquisition University (DAU), Defense Procurement Acquisition Policy (DPAP), each of the services' Director of Acquisition Career Management (DACM) offices, the Air Force Program Executive Office for Combat and Mission Support (AFPEO/CM), the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Services, the Director for Services Acquisition for the Navy, the Functional Integrated Process Team for Program Management, the Department of Defense Inspector General (DODIG), the Naval Audit Service, the Army Audit Agency, and the Air Force Audit Agency.

To identify the extent to which non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities are taking acquisition training, we asked each service and DLA to report any acquisition training that non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities associated with our sample had taken and specific training auditors had taken from each

respective audit agency noted above. We also asked each audit agency for aggregate counts of the number of their non-DAWIA auditors who worked on contracting and acquisition who had received DAWIA-equivalent certification. In order to confirm training taken by the non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities for the contracts in our sample we requested DAU training records, training certificates, and locally maintained training records. To identify the demand for DAU acquisition training by non-DAWIA personnel over time, we requested data on 15 classroom and Web-based courses from DAU for fiscal years 2008 through 2010 that were identified from DOD policy documents as training for requirements officials or CORs. We made an effort to only include designated non-DAWIA personnel to establish the amount of training taken and additionally calculated the number of unique individuals by removing duplicate names to provide a more accurate number to the demand for training. However, we were not able to determine whether individuals worked on major weapon systems, services acquisitions, another type of contract, or did not work in acquisition at all. To identify the individual courses that non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities took and the sources for training on the 29 contracts, we compiled the training identified by DOD officials and cross-referenced individuals listed with DAU's training database. However, these data sources did not provide us enough information to completely verify the training individuals identified as non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities have taken. We did not assess the content or the effectiveness of the required or available training. Despite some of the limitations noted above, we found the data to be reliable for the purposes of this report. To understand DOD's ability to strategically plan for the training or development of non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities we interviewed officials from DAU, DPAP, and the services' DACMs. We also interviewed contracting and requirement officials with the Air Force, Army, Navy, and DLA to obtain acquisition training and evidence of completed training. We reviewed relevant legislation, acquisition policy, and service and agency-specific policies and guidance, such as the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010, the Federal Acquisition Regulation, and the Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement in order to understand any training requirement for non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities.

To identify the extent to which recommendations addressing non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities from previous reviews have been implemented, such as the Panel on Contracting Integrity (Panel), we reviewed 2007-2010 annual updates prepared by DOD to

address the Panel's recommendations. Specifically, we compared the recommended actions from the previous reports with each additional report and conducted a comparative analysis of the Panel's status of each recommendation with our own assessment. We provided our analysis to DPAP officials to review and provide additional information that we considered in making our final determination. We also reviewed past GAO reports that made recommendations on non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities from 2005-2009 and provided an update on the status of DOD's implementation or current work to implement past recommendations. We also reviewed more recently issued reports by the House Armed Services Committee Panel and the Defense Science Board that addressed issues impacting non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities and services acquisitions.

We conducted this performance audit from June 2010 to September 2011, in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

Appendix II: Summary of DOD Descriptions of Non-DAWIA Personnel with Acquisition-related Responsibilities

Based on the guidance and policies issued by DOD and the Air Force as well as from information collected on personnel reported in our sample, DOD's non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities are a substantial group of DOD civilians and military personnel who perform acquisition duties in their current positions or assignments and are not members of the DAWIA workforce. Following is a list of categories of roles, titles, and a description of the acquisition responsibilities for non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities.

1. **Alternate/assistant contracting officer's representative (ACOR)/technical assistant/task manager:** Serves as support to the COR in the administration of the contract but does not have the authority to provide any technical direction or clarification to the contractor.
2. **Contracting officer's representative (COR):** Serves as the onsite technical subject matter expert assessing contractor performance against contract performance standards and recording and reporting this information, including inspecting and accepting supplies and services. The COR represents and is nominated by the requiring organization and designated by the contracting officer. The personnel responsible for developing the requirements may or may not be assigned as the COR on services acquisitions. Regardless, DOD guidance states that the COR should be identified early in the acquisition cycle and included in preaward activities, such as requirements definition/acquisition planning and contract formation processes. In our selected contracts, CORs were sometimes DAWIA personnel, but the majority of them were not. In 17 of 29 contracts, there was more than one COR assigned.
3. **Requirements official:** Represents an organization with a need for a particular product or service. Requirements officials are responsible for technical requirements, for prescribing contract quality requirements, and for defining the requirement. According to agency officials, acquisition planning activities generally begin when the program office, along with requirements officials, identifies a need. The program office is primarily responsible for conducting market research, defining requirements in a document such as a statement of work, developing cost estimates, and developing a written acquisition plan, if required. In the 29 contracts we reviewed, there were non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities identified as requirements officials.

4. **Source selection board member:** Evaluates contract proposals against requirements and recommends contractors for award.
5. **Program/project manager:** Serves as the principal technical expert and is usually the most familiar with the requirement and best able to identify potential technical trade-offs and determine whether the requirement can be met by a commercial solution. In the absence of a program office or program/project manager, requirements officials from the customer organization serve in a similar role as the program/project manager. In contrast to major weapon programs, for services acquisitions, a program office is not usually established, so the contracting organization works directly with the requirements organization—which typically consists of non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities in our selected contracts. In our selected contracts, DOD does not require a program/project manager to be appointed for services acquisitions, and there is no requirement for those that are serving in this role for services acquisitions to be DAWIA personnel. Of the contracts in our sample, 13 reported having program/project managers and 16 did not. Some contracts had more than one person serving in a role similar to that of a program/project manager.
6. **Legal advisor:** Ensures that terms and conditions contemplated are consistent with the government’s legal rights, duties, and responsibilities. Reviews contracting documents and request for proposals for legal sufficiency and advises on acquisition strategies and contracts.
7. **Multifunctional team member:** Plans and manages services acquisitions throughout the life of the requirement. The functional experts on the team maintain knowledge and provide continuity and stability. The duties, expertise, and contributions of each team member are important to the success of a services acquisition. Of the 29 contracts we reviewed, 24 used multifunctional teams or the equivalent, and 5 did not.
8. **Functional commander:** Directs or commands the requirements organization responsible for the actual performance of a given service. Identifies mission-essential services and develops, implements, and assists in the execution of services acquisitions. Some responsibilities may include developing acquisition strategy and overseeing performance and monitoring the service throughout the life of the acquisition, including reviewing contractor performance documentation on a regular basis to ensure performance is

compatible with the contract and mission objectives. They are also responsible for assigning primary and alternate CORs and assigning functional experts to the multifunctional team. DOD officials in this role are generally non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities.

9. **Auditor:** Conducts acquisition and contract-related audits at any phase in the services acquisition life cycle. Non-DAWIA auditors include those in the Army Audit Agency, the Naval Audit Service, the Air Force Audit Agency, and the DOD Inspector General. In our selected contracts, non-DAWIA audit personnel do not have and are not required to receive DAWIA certification.
10. **Financial/budget officer:** Serves as an advisor for fiscal and budgetary issues.
11. **Price analyst:** Analyzes and evaluates financial and cost-based data for reasonableness, completeness, accuracy, and affordability at initiation or contract award phases of services acquisitions.
12. **Small Business Administration advisor:** Serves as the principal advisor and advocate for small business issues.

Appendix III: Acquisition Training Resources Used by Non-DAWIA Personnel with Acquisition-related Responsibilities Identified on 29 Services Acquisition Contracts

Table 2: Acquisition Training Resources Used by Non-DAWIA Personnel with Acquisition-related Responsibilities Identified on 29 Services Acquisition Contracts by Service and Agency

Service/Agency		
Air Force	Source	Training
10 Contracts	Air Force	Phase I & II COR Training
	Air Force	Phase III COR Training
	Air Force	Functional Commander Training
	Air Force	Source Selection/Ethics Training
	Air Force Institute of Technology	FAM 103 - Air Force Fundamentals of Acquisition Management
	Contractor	Source Selection
	Unspecified	Administration of Cost Contracts
	Unspecified	Acquisition Actions Course for Competitive Sourcing
Army	Source	Training
8 contracts	Air Force	Fiscal Law Tutorial
	Army/Mobile District	Contracting Overview
	Communication-Electronics Command (CECOM) Contracting Policy Office	COR Locality/Theater/Mission Specific Training
	Contractor	Fiscal Law
	Contractor	ACOR Training
	DOD	Government Contract Law
	DOD	CON106 - Construction Contract Pricing
	Unspecified	Appropriations Law
	Unspecified	Contracting Fundamental Course
	Unspecified	Wide Area Work Flow Training
	Unspecified	COR Training
	US Army Corps of Engineers	Administration of O&M Contracts
	US Army Corps of Engineers	Advanced Administration of O&M Contracts
	US Army Corps of Engineers	Estimating for Construction Modifications
	US Army Corps of Engineers	Operations Management
	US Army Corps of Engineers	Specification Writing for Construction Contracts
	US Army Corps of Engineers	Construction Contract Negotiation
	US Army Corps of Engineers	Operations Management Workshop
	US Army Logistics University	COR Course
	US Army Logistics Management College	Performance Work Statement
USDA Graduate School	Comprehensive COTR Workshop	

**Appendix III: Acquisition Training Resources
Used by Non-DAWIA Personnel with
Acquisition-related Responsibilities Identified
on 29 Services Acquisition Contracts**

Service/Agency		
Navy/Marines	Source	Training
7 contracts	Contractor	COR222 equivalent
	USDA Graduate School	Comprehensive COTR Workshop
	Unspecified	Service Acquisition Workshop
	Unspecified	Evaluating a Contractor's Performance
	Unspecified	Government Procurement Law
	Unspecified	Federal Acquisition Regulation Boot camp
	Unspecified	Task Manager Training
	Unspecified	On the Job Training
	Unspecified	COR Training
DLA	Source	Training
4 contracts	Army Judge Advocate General School	Contract Attorney's Course 5F-F10
	DLA	COR Training
	Unspecified	Quality Management System Training

Source: GAO analysis of DOD data.

Table 3: Service and DLA Participation in DAU Acquisition Training for the 29 Selected Services Acquisition Contracts

DAU course	Course description	Air Force	Army	Navy/Marines	DLA
ACQ101	Fundamentals of Systems Acquisition Management	√	√	√	
ACQ201A	Intermediate Systems Acquisition, Part A	√	√	√	
ACQ201B	Intermediate Systems Acquisition, Part B	√	√	√	
BCF103	Fundamentals of Business Financial Management				√
CLB007	Cost Analysis		√	√	
CLB009	Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Execution and Budget Exhibits				√
CLB016	Introduction to Earned Value Management				√
CLB020	Baseline Maintenance		√		
CLC004	Market Research	√	√		
CLC007	Contract Source Selection		√		
CLC011	Contracting for the rest of us		√	√	
CLC013	Performance-Based Services Acquisition		√	√	
CLC016	Implementing Price Based Acquisition		√		
CLC027	Buy American Act				√
CLC033	Contract Format and Structure for DOD e-Business Environment		√	√	
CLC046	Green Procurement				√
CLC047	Contract Negotiation Techniques		√		
CLC050	Contracting with Canada		√		

**Appendix III: Acquisition Training Resources
Used by Non-DAWIA Personnel with
Acquisition-related Responsibilities Identified
on 29 Services Acquisition Contracts**

DAU course	Course description	Air Force	Army	Navy/Marines	DLA
CLC060	Time and Materials Contracts		√		
CLC106	Contracting Officer's Representative with a Mission Focus	√	√	√	
CLC107	OPSEC Contract Requirements	√			
CLC114	Contingency Contracting Officer Refresher		√		
CLC125	Berry Amendment		√		
CLC206	Contracting Officer's Representative in a Contingency Environment		√		
CLC222	Contracting Officer's Representative Online Training	√			√
CLE001	Value Engineering			√	
CLE003	Technical Reviews	√		√	
CLE008	Six Sigma: Concepts and Processes			√	
CLE011	Modeling and Simulation for Systems Engineering	√		√	
CLE016	Outcome-Based Performance Measures			√	
CLE021	Technology Readiness Assessments			√	
CLE023	Modeling and Simulation for Test and Evaluation			√	
CLE025	Information Assurance for Acquisition Professionals			√	
CLE029	Testing In a Joint Environment			√	
CLE201	ISO 9000:2000			√	
CLG001	DOD Government Purchase Card	√	√		
CLG004	DOD Government Purchase Card Refresher Training	√	√	√	
CLG005	Purchase Card Online System	√			
CLL002	Defense Logistics Agency Support to the PM		√		
CLL006	Depot Maintenance Partnering		√		
CLL008	Designing for Supportability in DOD Systems		√	√	
CLL011	Performance-Based Logistics		√		
CLL020	Independent Logistics Assessments		√		
CLL034	SLAMIS		√		
CLM003	Overview of Acquisition Ethics	√	√	√	√
CLM014	IPT Management and Leadership			√	
CLM016	Cost Estimating			√	
CLM017	Risk Management	√		√	
CLM021	Introduction to Reducing Total Ownership Costs			√	
CLM024	Contracting Overview		√		
CLM029	Net-Ready Key Performance Parameter			√	
CLM031	Improved Statement of Work			√	
CLM032	Evolutionary Acquisition		√		
CLM038	Corrosion Prevention and Control Overview		√		
CLM039	Foundations of Government Property		√		

**Appendix III: Acquisition Training Resources
Used by Non-DAWIA Personnel with
Acquisition-related Responsibilities Identified
on 29 Services Acquisition Contracts**

DAU course	Course description	Air Force	Army	Navy/Marines	DLA
CLM041	Capabilities-Based Planning		√		
CLM049	Procurement Fraud Indicators				√
CLM200	Item-Unique Identification		√		
CON100	Shaping Smart Business Arrangements			√	
CON101	Basics of Contracting			√	
CON110	Mission-Support Planning	√		√	
CON111	Mission Strategy Execution	√		√	
CON112	Mission-Performance Assessment	√		√	
CON120	Mission-Focused Contracting			√	√
CON214	Business Decisions for Contracting			√	
CON215	Intermediate Contracting for Mission Support			√	
CON216	Legal Considerations in Contracting			√	
CON217	Cost Analysis and Negotiation Techniques			√	
CON218	Advanced Contracting for Mission Support			√	
CON234	Joint Contingency Contracting			√	
CON237	Simplified Acquisition Procedures		√		
FE201	Intermediate Facilities Engineering			√	
HBS224	Writing Skills			√	
IRM101	Basic Information Systems Acquisition	√		√	
LOG101	Acquisition Logistics Fundamentals	√	√	√	
LOG102	Fundamentals of System Sustainment Management	√	√	√	
PMT251	Program Management Tools Course, Part I	√			
PQM101	Production, Quality, and Manufacturing Fundamentals		√		
PQM201A	Intermediate Production, Quality & Manufacturing		√		
SAM101	Basic Software Acquisition Management			√	
SPS104	Report Writing		√		
SYS101	Fundamentals of Systems Planning, Research, Development, and Engineering	√		√	
SYS202	Intermediate Systems Planning, Research, Development, and Engineering, Part I	√		√	
SYS203	Intermediate Systems Planning, Research, Development, and Engineering, Part II	√		√	
TST101	Introduction to Acquisition Workforce Test and Evaluation		√	√	
TST102	Fundamentals of Test and Evaluation	√		√	

Source: GAO analysis of DOD data.

Appendix IV: Status of Selected Recommendations from 2007-2010 Panel on Contracting Integrity Reports

To determine the extent to which training recommendations from the Panel on Contracting Integrity (Panel) have been implemented, we examined whether DOD had implemented the Panel's recommendations in 2007, 2008, and 2009 by reviewing the 2007, 2008, 2009, and 2010 reports. To assess the implementation of the 2010 recommendations, DPAP provided information on the status of the recommendations. Specifically, we compared the recommended actions from the 2007 report with the reported action in the 2008 report. The same comparative analysis was conducted using the recommended actions from 2008, 2009, and 2010 reports. We differentiated between recommendations that specifically mention training from those that did not, as well as recommendations in which training was involved in the implementation of the recommendation. We analyzed the supporting documents to assess the status, and, based on our review, we assigned one of the following four status assessments to each of the recommendations:

1. Fully Implemented. The entire wording of the action item has been fulfilled.
2. Partially Implemented. Only a portion of the action has been implemented. When the wording of the action item had multiple parts, if one part or a portion of a part had been implemented (but not all parts), we categorized the action item as "partially implemented."
3. Not Implemented-Action Taken. No part of the action item has been implemented, but steps have been taken toward the completion of the action item. For example, if legislation had been introduced to address the action but had not been enacted into law, we categorized the action item as "not implemented-action taken."
4. Not Implemented-No Action. No part of the action item has been completed, and no action has been taken to address the action item. For example, if the action item called for changes in legislation but no legislation has even been proposed, we categorized the action item as "not implemented-no action."

**Appendix IV: Status of Selected
Recommendations from 2007-2010 Panel on
Contracting Integrity Reports**

Table 4: Status of Selected Panel on Contracting Integrity Recommendations from 2007-2010

	DOD reported actions	Panel assessment of implementation status	GAO assessment of implementation status
2010 Recommendations			
1	Publish DOD COR Handbook	The DOD-wide COR Handbook is currently in draft form and is being revised and updated.	Ongoing ^a Partially implemented
2	Develop guidance to institutionalize "Combating Trafficking in Persons" in quality assurance surveillance plans	DOD has drafted guidance in the form of a "Trafficking in Persons" pamphlet.	Ongoing ^a Partially implemented
3	Review and recommend changes to regulations to improve contract surveillance	On behalf of the Panel on Contracting Integrity, a working group focused on sufficient contracting surveillance is reviewing acquisition regulations and information to develop recommendations and changes to formalize the role of the COR and other officials executing contract surveillance.	Ongoing ^a Not implemented – action taken
2009 Recommendations			
4	Develop a DOD Instruction for COR standards and certification	The draft DOD Instruction was approved by the Panel's senior leaders, but as of July 2011, it had not been finalized and issued.	Ongoing Partially implemented
5	Develop a COR handbook	The DOD Contingency COR Handbook was formally published in August 2010 and as of July 2011, the DOD-wide COR Handbook is waiting for review and coordination before it will be finalized and published.	Ongoing Partially implemented
2008 Recommendations			
6	Develop a COR certification process	DOD issued a memorandum on March 29, 2010, entitled "DOD Standard for Certification of Contracting Officer's Representatives (COR) for Service Acquisitions" which identified a DOD COR certification standard by defining minimum COR competencies, experience, and training based on the complexity of the requirement and contract performance risk. DOD noted the memorandum is not a directive-type memo and the certification process will not be established until the DOD Instruction is published.	Ongoing Partially implemented

**Appendix IV: Status of Selected
Recommendations from 2007-2010 Panel on
Contracting Integrity Reports**

		DOD reported actions	Panel assessment of implementation status	GAO assessment of implementation status
7	Develop an implementation plan for the COR certification process	DOD reported that the action is ongoing and that the draft DOD Instruction constitutes the implementation of the certification program. DOD is in the process of editing and conducting formal Office of the Secretary of Defense coordination to finalize the DOD Instruction.	Ongoing	Partially implemented
8	Have DAU, with support from DOD components, evaluate current COR training (government and commercial)	DAU has taken actions to evaluate COR training and has developed new COR training courses. DAU has taken the lead on advising commercial offerors, as well as other government agencies, on course equivalency requirements.	Ongoing	Partially implemented
2007 Recommendations				
9	Develop certification standard for CORs	A DOD-wide certification program was developed, describing the process for COR certification, identifying the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders, listing available COR training resources that meet the standard, and defining a reasonable time-phased implementation plan for the standard.	Completed	Fully implemented
10	Mandate COR assignment prior to contract award	DOD issued an August 22, 2008, memorandum entitled "Monitoring Contract Performance in Contract Services" stating that CORs must be designated and trained prior to contract award.	Completed	Fully implemented
11	Process COR appointment through management; ensure performance reviews include COR performance	DOD issued an August 22, 2008, memo entitled "Monitoring Contract Performance in Contract Services" stating that supervisors address the performance of COR duties as part of their performance assessments for personnel serving as CORs.	Completed	Fully implemented

Source: GAO analysis and Panel on Contracting Integrity 2007, 2008, 2009, and 2010 reports.

^a These recommendations are carried forward and included in the Panel's 2011 Actions

Appendix V: Selected GAO Recommendations Related to Non-DAWIA Personnel with Acquisition-related Responsibilities

We identified previous recommendations involving CORs—identified as surveillance personnel in table 5 below—in reports from 2005-2009 as being relevant to the training or management of non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities. To determine the status of their implementation by DOD, we obtained and analyzed documentation from agency officials and assigned one of the following four status assessments to each of the recommendations:

1. Fully Implemented. The entire wording of the action item has been fulfilled.
2. Partially Implemented. Only a portion of the action has been implemented. When the wording of the action item had multiple parts, if one part or a portion of a part had been implemented (but not all parts), we categorized the action item as “partially implemented.”
3. Not Implemented-Action Taken. No part of the action item has been implemented, but steps have been taken toward the completion of the action item. For example, if legislation had been introduced to address the action but had not been enacted into law, we categorized the action item as “not implemented-action taken.”
4. Not Implemented-No Action. No part of the action item has been completed, and no action has been taken to address the action item. For example, if the action item called for changes in legislation but no legislation has even been proposed, we categorized the action item as “not implemented-no action.”

Table 5: Status of Selected GAO Recommendations Related to Non-DAWIA Personnel with Acquisition-related Responsibilities

	GAO recommendations	DOD reported actions	Implementation status
1	Ensure that the proper surveillance training of personnel and their assignment to service contracts occurs no later than the date of contract award ^a	DOD concurred with the recommendation and published guidance in December 2005 requiring contracting officers to designate, in writing, properly trained surveillance personnel before contract performance begins for DOD service contract actions awarded by a DOD component or by any other federal agency on behalf of DOD.	Fully implemented
2	Develop practices to help ensure accountability for personnel carrying out surveillance responsibilities ^a	DOD concurred with the recommendation and on December 6, 2006, the Director of the Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisitions, Technology & Logistics issued a memorandum that, among other things, requires DOD components to ensure that the contribution of surveillance personnel in assisting in the monitoring or administration of contracts is addressed as appropriate in the performance reviews of these individuals.	Fully implemented

**Appendix V: Selected GAO Recommendations
Related to Non-DAWIA Personnel with
Acquisition-related Responsibilities**

GAO recommendations	DOD reported actions	Implementation status
3 Ensure that DOD's service contract review process and associated data collection requirements provide information that will provide more management visibility over contract surveillance ^a	DOD concurred with the recommendation and implemented it when the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisitions, Technology & Logistics issued a new Acquisition of Services Policy on October 2, 2006.	Fully implemented
4 Direct the military departments to review their procedures to ensure that properly trained surveillance personnel have been assigned prior to and throughout a contract's period of performance ^b	DOD concurred with this recommendation. Ongoing efforts to develop a tracking and certification system for all DOD CORs should address this recommendation.	Not implemented-action taken

Source: GAO analysis.

^a GAO, *Contract Management: Opportunities to Improve Surveillance on Department of Defense Service Contracts*, [GAO-05-274](#) (Washington, D.C.: Mar. 17, 2005).

^b GAO, *Defense Acquisitions: Further Actions Needed to Address Weaknesses in DOD's Management of Professional and Management Support Contracts*, [GAO-10-39](#) (Washington, D.C.: Nov. 20, 2009).

Appendix VI: Comments from the Department of Defense



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

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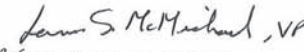
September 27, 2011

Ms. Belva Martin
Director, Acquisition and Sourcing Management
U.S. Government Accountability Office
441 G Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20548

Dear Ms. Martin:

This is the Department of Defense (DoD) response to the GAO draft report 11-892, "DEFENSE ACQUISITION WORKFORCE: Better Identification, Development and Oversight Needed for Personnel Involved in Acquiring Services," dated September 2011 (GAO Code 120930). We concur with the report recommendations, and have also provided technical comments.

Sincerely,


Katharina G. McFarland
President

Enclosure:
As stated

**GAO Draft Report Dated SEPTEMBER, 2011
GAO-11-892 (GAO CODE 120930)**

**“DEFENSE ACQUISITION WORKFORCE: BETTER IDENTIFICATION,
DEVELOPMENT AND OVERSIGHT NEEDED FOR PERSONNEL INVOLVED IN
ACQUIRING SERVICES”**

**DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE COMMENTS
TO THE GAO RECOMMENDATIONS**

RECOMMENDATION 1: The GAO recommends that the Secretary of Defense establish criteria and a timeframe for identifying non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities, including requirements officials. (See page 17/GAO Draft Report.)

DoD RESPONSE: Concur.

RECOMMENDATION 2: The GAO recommends that the Secretary of Defense assess what critical skills non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities might require to perform their role in the acquisition process and improve acquisition outcomes (See page 17/GAO Draft Report.)

DoD RESPONSE: Concur.

RECOMMENDATION 3: The GAO recommends that the Secretary of Defense designate an organization that has the responsibility to track DOD's progress in identifying, developing, and overseeing non-DAWIA personnel with acquisition-related responsibilities to help ensure they have the skills necessary to perform their acquisition function (See page 17/GAO Draft Report.)

DoD RESPONSE: Concur.

Appendix VII: GAO Contact and Staff Acknowledgments

GAO Contact

Belva Martin (202) 512-4841

Acknowledgments

In addition to the contact above, Penny Berrier, Assistant Director; Patrick Breiding; Heather Miller; John K. Needham; Keo Vongvanith; Morgan Delaney Ramaker; Roxanna Sun; Julia Kennon; and John Krump made key contributions to this report.

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