

Developing an Integrated, Agile, and High-Performing Future Workforce

The DoD Logistics Human Capital Strategy

Christopher Blodgett ■ Carol Conrad ■ Bill Kobren



The DoD logistics human capital strategy will set a new standard for competency-based workforce professional development and career management.

The Department of Defense logistics workforce, numbering approximately 1 million, exists to deliver agile, timely, precise, and cost-effective support to the warfighter, ensuring readiness and sustainability for those who support the armed forces across the spectrum of military operations. While its mission and purpose are constant, the logistics workforce faces a perpetually evolving strategic environment. As the world changes rapidly, profoundly, and in every dimension—social, economic, and political—the logistics workforce needs to continuously evolve and operate in a way that optimizes the human capital of the entire enterprise rather than individual parts.

The DoD logistics workforce is composed of four workforce categories: supply management, deployment/distribution/transportation, maintenance support, and life cycle logistics.

It is imperative that the logistics workforce align its human capital with transformed warfighting, modernized weapons systems, business rules, emerging enterprise management systems, and executive-level strategic goals. The community should also be grounded in teamwork and collaboration so that ultimately, all logisticians across the enterprise will view one another as partners and contributors willing to support each other in mission accomplishment.

The DoD Logistics Human Capital Strategy

The DoD Logistics Human Capital Strategy (HCS), located online at < <http://www.acq.osd.mil/log/sci/hcsp.htm> > , supports these goals and fulfills the requirements and objectives of the President's Management Agenda, the Quadrennial Defense Review, the *DoD Civilian Human Capital Strategic Plan*, and the *AT&L Human Capital Strategic Plan*. It has been developed to serve as a valuable resource for

Blodgett is a supply chain management consultant with IBM Global Business Services and has supported a number of defense logistics initiatives.

Conrad is a senior staff logistics management specialist in the Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Logistics and Materiel Readiness.

Kobren is director of the Logistics and Sustainment Center at the Defense Acquisition University.

the logistics human capital efforts of the military services, defense agencies, and combatant commands. It provides a clear vision that establishes the foundation for the future logistics workforce, culture, and human resources practices. According to James Hall, the assistant deputy under secretary of defense for logistics plans and studies, “Developing the right mix of competencies that enable logisticians to succeed in a joint operating environment requires coordination and collaboration among the Services, DLA [*Defense Logistics Agency*], TRANSCOM [*U.S. Transportation Command*], and the Joint Staff. The human capital strategy for logisticians assists in achieving this objective.”

Vision and Overview

The DoD Logistics HCS vision is an integrated, agile, and high-performing future workforce of multi-faceted, interchangeable logisticians that succeed in a joint operating environment. Six elements will contribute to success: logistics competencies and proficiencies; the logistics career roadmap; the logistics competency development framework (LCDF); education, training, and developmental assignments; the certificate/certification program; and the executive steering group (ESG).

The bedrock of the Logistics HCS vision is competency-based management of the DoD’s logistics workforce, manifest in the creation of a logistics career roadmap with a common lexicon and set of core logistics competencies and proficiencies. The LCDF will enable the roadmap to provide the future logistics workforce with the right mix of function-specific subject matter experts and multi-faceted enterprise logisticians.

Carla Lucchino, assistant deputy commandant for installations and logistics, U.S. Marine Corps, believes this initiative is exactly what her Service needs. “The DoD human capital strategy will quickly command the attention of senior USMC military and civilian leadership within the Marine Corps. With this strategy in hand, we will conduct our internal assessments on the career paths we need to implement to groom the next generation of senior civilian supervisors and technicians. The DoD human capital strat-

egy is the next big step in reaffirming senior leadership’s commitment to the work force of today and tomorrow.”

Historically, the logistics population was predominantly composed of personnel possessing a depth of knowledge in one specific area demonstrated by a narrow range of expertise within one function field; they are classified as “I” people. As careers progressed, some logisticians expanded their knowledge of logistics to include a second or third functional field; those with this expanded knowledge are known as “T” people, indicating they possess broader knowledge with depth in some, but not all, logistics fields. Multi-faceted logisticians with expertise in many segments and knowledge of the end-to-end logistics process are designated “E” people, with the E standing for enterprise logisticians. The E person goes beyond the I and the T people. The future logistics environment necessitates a DoD logistics workforce made up of all three types of people; however, the most significant growth in the coming years will be in both T- and E-type logisticians.

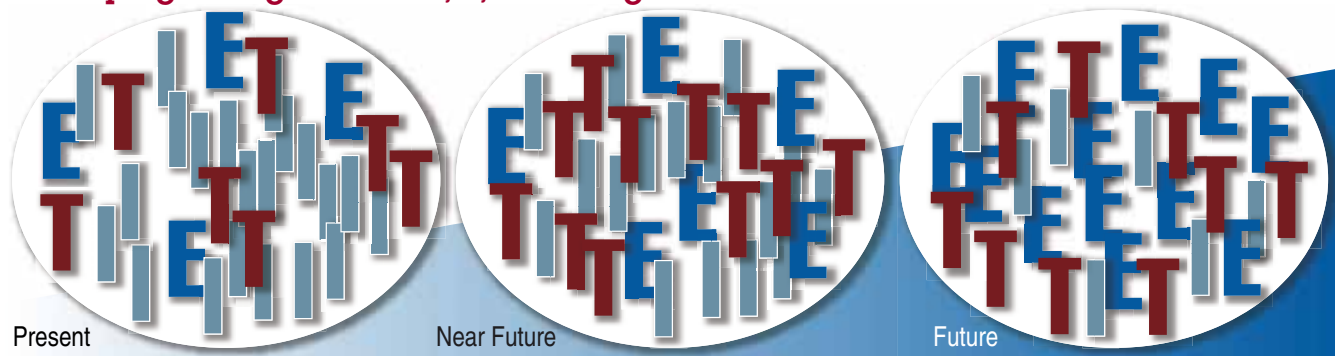
Logistics Competencies and Proficiencies

Populating the LCDF and developing logistics roadmaps involves identification, definition, and validation of technical competencies and proficiencies for the logistics workforce. The identification of logistics technical competencies implements a DoD logistics community common lexicon.

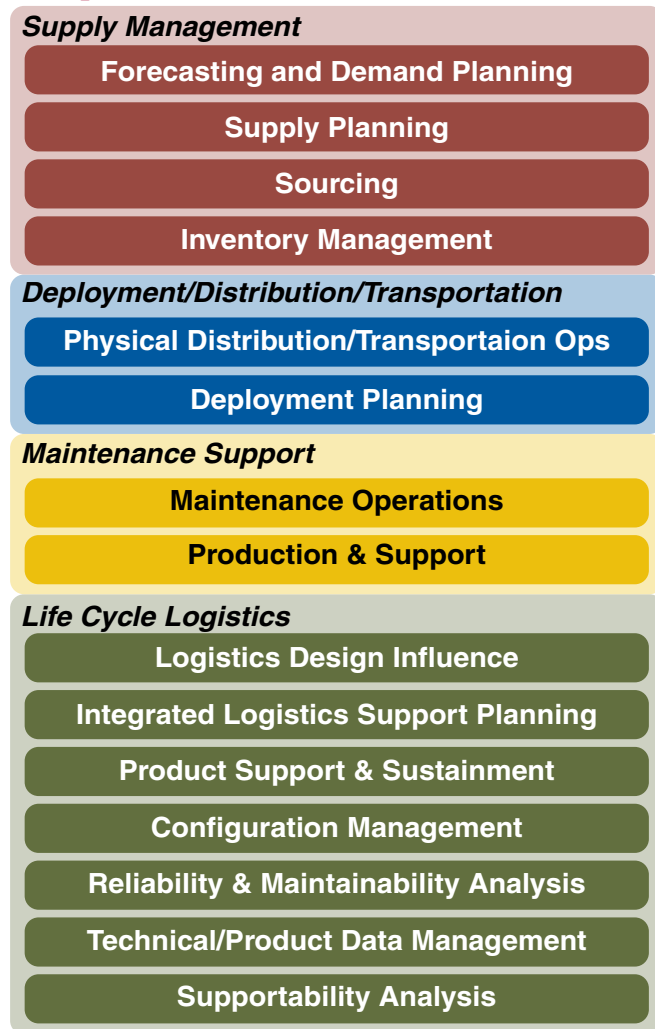
A **competency** is defined by the Office of Personnel Management as a measurable pattern of knowledge, skills, abilities, behaviors, and other characteristics that are needed to successfully perform work-related tasks. Competencies are developed, attained, and sustained through training, rotational and developmental assignments, experience (both professional and personal), education, and self development. Attainment of a certain level of competency is assessed based on demonstrated abilities to apply the competency in different situations and/or circumstances. Attainment is based not just on performance in a role over time, nor is it tied to grade or rank.

Three types of competencies have been identified and defined:

Developing the right mix of I, T, and E logisticians



Logistics Workforce Category Technical Competencies



- Workforce category technical competencies, of which there are 15, describe logistics work specific to each of the four identified workforce categories. Workforce category technical competencies are defined and assessed from level 1 to level 5, with level 1 reflecting an entry-level capability and level 5 reflecting enterprise-wide recognized subject matter expertise.
- Fundamental competencies, of which there are six, describe fundamental skills and abilities necessary for all logistics personnel, regardless of specific workforce category. Fundamental competencies are defined by OPM and assessed at three levels: foundation, experienced, and advanced.
- Leadership and management competencies, of which there are 25, describe skills and abilities required by logistics leaders and managers. Defined by OPM with input from DoD, these competencies are assessed at three levels: foundation, experienced, and advanced.

Proficiencies are the building blocks of competencies. To define the 15 technical competencies at five levels of capa-

bility, logistics subject matter experts identified hundreds of proficiencies. Each proficiency provides a description of the demonstration of attaining and sustaining a competency through increasing levels of relevant, timely, and applicable experiences. The proficiencies offer guidance as to the work, skills, knowledge, and abilities necessary to be competent across a career field. The proficiencies depict the growth of a competency across five levels.

Identification of competencies results in a common lexicon across the logistics workforce supporting the tenets of logistics workforce development. This enables more rapid and efficient ramp-up when teams from multiple Services, agencies, and/or combatant commands must be brought together in a joint environment. While individual experiences will differ, all staff will share a common understanding and will be able to communicate effectively when the boots hit the ground.

Career Roadmap

The DoD Logistics HCS provides a career roadmap for logisticians across the Services and agencies to progress from entry level to senior leader level. Five levels of logistics technical competencies, grouped into the four workforce categories, are arranged in a progression from individual focus to organizational focus. As logisticians advance through the five competency levels, some are expected to have an increasingly broad, enterprise-wide perspective as well as joint experience. The LCDF provides a clear framework for presentation of this information, allowing individuals to see where they are on the continuum and what is expected of them to demonstrate their progression to the next level. From this, individuals can proactively manage their professional development.

Logistics Career Development Framework

The LCDF is a structured management framework of processes, tools, and strategic guidance used to enable the education, training, and development of the logistics workforce. In short, the LCDF provides a repository for the developed competencies and provides the framework for career roadmaps so employees and leadership can manage and assess professional development. The LCDF facilitates professional development and enterprise-wide workforce management.

Career planning can be an overwhelming task. The LCDF and the career roadmaps will provide guidance as logisticians plan their careers within DoD. Together, the LCDF and career roadmaps will allow the logistician to see how far he/she has come, what is required in his/her current assignment, and what is necessary to succeed in the future. Rather than time in grade, an individual's progression involves the documentation of relevant training and education and demonstration of competencies. Staff can assume greater responsibility for career development by following the flexible roadmaps according to

their strengths, needs, and available positions. Moreover, by providing a clear basis and focus for coaching, the roadmaps provide leadership with a mechanism to more effectively act in the capacity of mentor.

The LCDF creates a single approach to logistics professional development across the Services, agencies, and combatant commands. It provides a tool for the planning and evaluation of professional development.

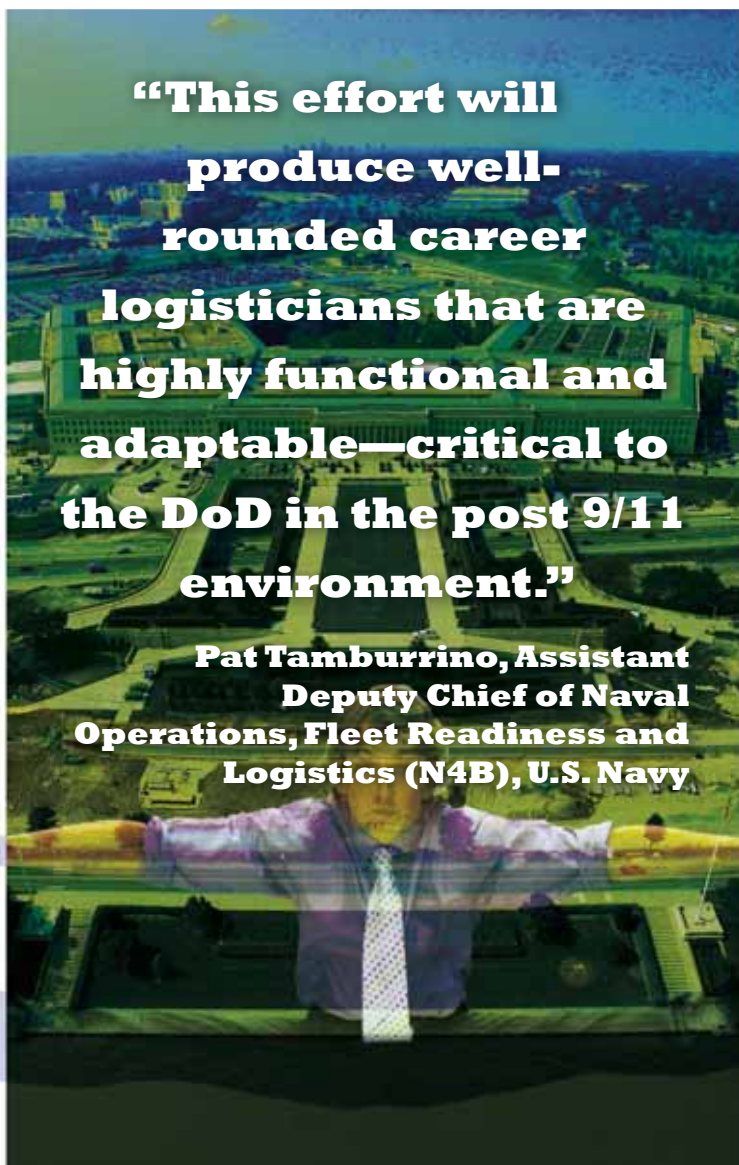
Education, Training, and Developmental Assignments

Development of enterprise logistician competencies is supported by education, training, and developmental assignments. Work has already begun to identify education and training necessary to support the creation of enterprise logisticians. This involves analysis

and reconciliation of existing resources within the Services, agencies, combatant commands, and academic and industry partners. Where redundancy exists, education and training resources can be combined or leveraged to increase efficiency and promote logistics integration across the enterprise. Where existing programs are insufficient to prepare for future needs, education and training must be developed and adequately resourced to ensure today's logistics workforce is given the tools necessary to succeed in the future.

Certificate/Certification Program

A DoD-specific certificate/certification program will support the LCDF by providing a program of recognition that defines levels of professionalism over the course of an individual's career. Certificate/certification is a step beyond the assessment process and carries an added degree of significance. Individuals who elect to pursue the certificate/certification process will need to meet the standards



“This effort will produce well-rounded career logisticians that are highly functional and adaptable—critical to the DoD in the post 9/11 environment.”

Pat Tamburrino, Assistant Deputy Chief of Naval Operations, Fleet Readiness and Logistics (N4B), U.S. Navy

established by DoD. The standards may include education levels, continuing education requirements, and developmental assignments.

Together, the Services and agencies will outline the requirements for certificate/certification levels; the process will leverage existing DoD certification models such as the life cycle logistics Core Plus construct, which was designed to advance the DoD acquisition, technology, and logistics competency management model by providing a roadmap for the development of acquisition workforce members beyond the minimum certification standards required for their position. The Defense Acquisition University (DAU) Catalog provides acquisition workforce members with a listing of the core certification standards by acquisition career field and

level, as well as Core Plus knowledge and skills that are delivered through coursework that targets functions or tasks directly related to specific types of job assignments. Core Plus also helps identify the right learning for the right people at the right time during their professional development. It does this by connecting workforce members not only to their career field and level, but also to their particular job assignment needs. Additionally, Core Plus identifies targeted training that relates to specific tasks in a given assignment type. As Core Plus matures, DAU anticipates such benefits as the development of more well-rounded acquisition core coursework; shorter functional courses required for certification; an increase in modular course content; an increase in courses targeted to workforce job assignments; and more flexibility, focus, and guidance in the construction of individual development plans. Use of targeted, competency-focused training constructs similar to the Core Plus framework for the broader DoD logistics workforce will be developed and communicated across



“The new DoD logistics human capital strategy will provide military logisticians with common processes, tools, and procedures to support the warfighter.”

Michael Aimone, Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff, Logistics, Installations and Mission Support, U.S. Air Force

the logistics workforce. Certificate/certification requirements for the broader logistics workforce will also require the workforce’s distinct process based on the LCDF assessment process.

Executive Steering Group

The ESG comprises senior leaders from the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Services, agencies, and combatant commands possessing logistics populations. The primary role of the ESG is to coordinate and provide guidance for the Logistics HCS. In this role, the ESG reviews and validates logistics competencies, advocates and supports human capital strategy-related change, addresses challenges and provides strategic direction, and sponsors and supports logistics subject matter expert participation.

Implications for the AT&L Life Cycle Logistics Workforce

The life cycle logistics workforce, numbering approximately 12,600 at the end of fiscal year 2007, is a subset of the larger DoD logistics workforce. Like the other three primary workforce categories—supply management, deployment/distribution/transportation, and maintenance support—specific life cycle logistics technical competencies and proficiencies have been identified as part of this broader Logistics HCS development.

Defined as the ability to plan, develop, implement, and manage comprehensive, affordable, and effective systems-support strategies, LCL encompasses the entire system’s life cycle, including acquisition (design, develop, test, produce, and deploy); sustainment (operations and support); and disposal. Life cycle logisticians who meet required Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA) certification requirements for training, education, and experience are expected to be capable of translating warfighter performance requirements into tailored, affordable, and effective product support spanning a system’s entire life cycle.

The Logistics HCS identifies the competencies and proficiencies required to achieve that performance outcome. The seven top-level life cycle logistics technical competencies identified in the human capital strategy are logistics design influence, integrated logistics support planning, product support and sustainment, configuration management, reliability and maintainability analysis, technical/product data management, and supportability analysis. Identification of these technical competencies will result not only in continued improvement and refinement of the learning assets and DAWIA certification training provided by the DAU but will ultimately enhance the quality of the support provided by, and the expertise of, the life cycle logistics workforce. The Logistics HCS will also help facilitate continued integration of personnel, competencies, and expertise of the life cycle logisticians with the broader DoD logistics community,

ultimately providing even greater quality support to the warfighter.

DAU has already undertaken an initiative to aggressively ensure these competencies and proficiencies are incorporated into existing courseware, allowing the latest, most current requirements to be captured in the Core Plus framework. The learning assets identified in the Core Plus career field certification and Core Plus development guides outlined in Appendix B of the DAU Catalog (including Web-based continuous learning modules and training courses, in addition to extensive learning materials on the Logistics community of practice) will be reviewed and updated in the coming months as a result of this comprehensive DoD Logistics HCS development effort. This will ensure the logistics workforce in general, and the life cycle logistics workforce in particular, have access to the most current and relevant learning resources to meet the rigors of the rapidly evolving logistics environment.

The Road Ahead

The DoD Logistics HCS will set a new standard for competency-based workforce professional development and career management. It is not only intended to provide a clear, easily understood, and comprehensive career roadmap for DoD logisticians, but the cutting-edge LCDF will streamline professional development, facilitate enterprise-wide workforce management, establish a common lexicon, and synergistically link the logistics workforce as never before.

The DoD has made significant progress towards realizing the human capital strategy vision. Logistics workforce categories, competencies, and proficiencies have been defined, and work has begun to identify supporting education, training, and developmental assignments. Going forward, the human capital strategy charts an ambitious course for implementation of the LCDF and the well-defined career path roadmaps for the future's I-, T-,



Important Links

DoD Logistics Human Capital Strategy

www.acq.osd.mil/log/sci/hcsp.htm

Acquisition Community Connection

<https://acc.dau.mil/>

DAU Catalog

www.dau.mil/catalog/

Logistics Community of Practice

<https://acc.dau.mil/log>

Training courses

<http://training.dau.mil/>

Web-based continuous learning modules

<http://clc.dau.mil/>

and E-type logisticians. Key next steps include identifying consistent criteria and a standard process for assessing a logistician's competency levels and overall professional development; publication of career path roadmaps for I-, T-, and E-type logisticians; and development of a pilot implementation to support future activation of the LCDF. The ultimate outcome of this far-reaching initiative, of course, is a robust, integrated, agile, and high-performing future workforce of multi-faceted, interchangeable DoD logisticians who are capable of succeeding in a joint operating environment.

The authors welcome comments and questions and can be contacted at carol.conrad@osd.mil, cblodgett@us.ibm.com, and bill.kobren@dau.mil.