

*Department of Agriculture (USDA)*  
**FY 2014 Acquisition Human Capital Plan (AHCP)**  
Due March 31st, 2014

Agency Point of Contact for this AHCP

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**AHCP Template**

**Overview:**

Recruiting, hiring, and retaining an agile and high-quality Federal acquisition workforce is essential to the efficiency, effectiveness, and stewardship of agency program objectives, outcomes, and results. Accordingly, the purpose of the annual acquisition human capital planning process is to provide for the strategic management of the acquisition workforce. Successful acquisition workforce related planning and implementation activities require close partnerships between the Chief Acquisition Officer (CAO) and Chief Human Capital Officer (CHCO) organizations. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) emphasized the importance of these partnerships in an October 2012 memorandum to CAOs, stating that, “CAOs should work with the agency’s CHCO and principal program managers to develop and implement the annual Acquisition Human Capital Plan<sup>1</sup>.” Acquisition Career Managers (ACMs) are strongly encouraged to establish this interoffice collaboration to ensure that the agency’s acquisition workforce strategies are aligned with and inform the human capital planning and budget processes. In a September 2013 memorandum, OMB detailed its strategies for obtaining increased efficiencies in the training, development and management of the acquisition workforce<sup>2</sup>.

**Instructions:**

The AHCP template was designed with input from the Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP), Federal Acquisition Institute (FAI), and ACMs. It is standardized to enable government-wide analysis. It is important that you do not modify this template. Instructional boxes are provided throughout the template, and all response fields have been marked with a grey text box. The template has also been pre-populated to the extent possible using information from your agency’s FY13 AHCP and other FAI sources. You should begin by verifying the accuracy of the pre-populated information. Pre-populated data is highlighted in light yellow.

Please submit your completed FY 2014 AHCPs electronically to Benedict Eng ([benedict.eng@gsa.gov](mailto:benedict.eng@gsa.gov)) with copy to Joanie Newhart ([Joan.F.Newhart@omb.eop.gov](mailto:Joan.F.Newhart@omb.eop.gov)) no later than March 31, 2014.

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<sup>1</sup> The October 2012 OFPP memo can be accessed [here](#).

<sup>2</sup> The September 2013 OFPP memo can be accessed [here](#).

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**SECTION I. Strategic Alignment of Acquisition with Agency Mission**

**Instructions:** The President’s March 4, 2009 Memorandum on Government Contracting<sup>3</sup> identified acquisition workforce development as a pillar for strengthened agency acquisition practices and improved government performance. Successful acquisition outcomes are a direct result of having the right personnel develop, manage, and oversee agency acquisitions in accordance with sound acquisition management principles. The annual AHCP is a means to strengthen the agency’s acquisition workforce to improve acquisition outcomes.

For successful acquisition human capital planning, agencies must consider, among other things, specific mission objectives, high-priority performance goals and the variety and complexity of agency acquisitions. Further, agencies are encouraged to review GAO and IG reports or other information to identify areas of focus.

Please begin by answering the questions below related to your agency’s mission and the management of your agency’s acquisition workforce in FY13, as well as your goals for managing the acquisition workforce in the future. Data from your FY13 template has been pre-populated and is highlighted in light yellow. Review and modify pre-populated data, as appropriate. Changes do not need to be identified or tracked.

1. What is your agency’s mission?

USDA provides leadership on food, agriculture, natural resources, and related issues based on sound public policy, the best available science, and efficient management.

2. Please describe your agency’s significant accomplishments in managing and strengthening the acquisition workforce in FY13.

USDA made great strides in managing the Acquisition Workforce during FY13.

- Approximately 1500 new certifications were issued as part of the Federal Acquisition Certification programs for Contracting, Contracting Officer Representatives, and Program/Project Managers. Furthermore, the agency reached a new high with 92% of GS-1102’s being certified!
- Continued growth in the use of the Federal Acquisition Training Application System (FAITAS) helped to better manage certifications, training, and continuous learning. USDA had over 10,000 registrants by the end of FY13.
- During the year 10,395 course completions were generated through FAITAS. Those included courses completed at various institutions to include DAU and FAI. Also there were a variety of informal courses, seminars, webinars, mentoring programs, etc. that occurred across the department.
- A program was implemented for selected program officials to shadow Contracting Officers and complete level 1 contracting courses. This helped forge a stronger understanding of acquisitions and bolster relationships across acquisition teams.

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<sup>3</sup> The President’s 2009 Memorandum on Government Contracting can be accessed [here](#).

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- USDA had numerous GS-1102's participate in a Trainee Program where all participants earned varying levels of FAC-C certification and completed on-the-job training, special projects, and developmental detail assignments.
- Risk was reduced and the quality of contract-related documents and processes were enhanced through reoccurring meetings held for questions, open dialogue, and development/ distribution of policies, templates, tutorials, and guidance.
- Through efforts to right-size and realign acquisition-related functions, improvements occurred in workflow, customer service, oversight, management, and overall performance.

#### 3. What are the most critical challenges in managing your agency's acquisition workforce?

Insufficient low, or no, cost training options for workforce members not located in the Washington DC area. Also, it is often challenging for workforce members located in the Washington DC area to reserve available slots due to high demand.

Budget uncertainty, limited funding for recruitment or retention bonuses, cumbersome hiring procedures, and hiring complaints all make it challenging to maintain and hire appropriate staffing and skill levels.

Management of CORs can be difficult due to the large volume and their widely dispersed locations (organizationally and geographically).

#### 4. What are your agency's goals for managing and strengthening the acquisition workforce through FY16?

- Fill future vacancies with upward mobility positions allowing for more advancement in the workforce and longer retention of critical knowledge and skills.
- Maximize process efficiencies, standardization, and strategic sourcing to spur productivity and limit risk.
- Increasingly leverage FAITAS for tracking and management of training, certification, and identification of USDA's acquisition workforce. Work with FAI to explore the possibility and capabilities needed for certified COR's being designated to serve on contracting actions, through FAITAS.
- Increase opportunities for free Agency-led Webinars/training (Such as Small Business/AbilityOne, BioPreferred, Integrated Acquisition System, etc.) that may be used to mitigate the impact of reduced training budgets while assisting in completion of continuous learning requirements.
- Improve communication of acquisition-related policies to program offices and non-1102 Contracting Officers.
- Implement performance standards for CORs where feasible and appropriate.
- Continuously encourage innovation and creativity in meeting customer needs and in maintaining a top-notch workplace.

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**SECTION II. Acquisition Overview**

**A. Agency Acquisition Profile Information**

**Instructions:** Please complete *Table 1: Agency Acquisition Profile Information* below based on FY13 FPDS data. Table 1 has been pre-populated with previously reported FY12 FPDS data to allow for historical comparisons of acquisition profile information. Please provide the number of open contracts (including delivery and task orders) for FY13.

If you'd prefer, complete the information in Table 1 for all agency subcomponents (e.g., bureau, service, unit, node, etc.) in a separate document and submit it along with this plan. Be sure to provide only the agency-wide sum of your agency's subcomponents in Table 1. Optional space has been provided to comment on your agency's data, as needed.

**Table 1: Agency Acquisition Profile Information**

	<b>FY12 FPDS Data</b>	<b>FY13 FPDS Data</b>
<b>1. Total Dollar Amount of Obligations</b>	<b>\$5,119,714,260.83</b>	<b>\$4,764,251,510.00</b>
<b>a. Services<sup>4</sup></b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>36%</b>
<b>b. Supplies</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>64%</b>
<b>2. Number of Contract Actions (include all actions)</b>	<b>73,151</b>	<b>66,195</b>
<b>3. Number of Open Contracts (including delivery and task orders)</b>	<b>42,232</b>	<b>43,012</b>

i. **Optional:** Use the space below if you would like to provide additional information regarding responses in Table 1.

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<sup>4</sup> Calculation note: The total dollar amount of "Service" obligations includes research and development.

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### B. Acquisition Workforce Data

**Instructions:** Complete *Table 2: Acquisition Workforce Data by Functional Area* for FY12 through FY15. If you'd prefer, complete the information in Table 2 for all agency subcomponents (e.g., bureau, service, unit, node, etc.) in a separate document and submit it along with this plan. Be sure to provide only the agency-wide sum of your agency's subcomponents in Table 2. Please keep in mind the following when completing Table 2:

- Use data from the end of the Fiscal Year to fill in Table 2 (e.g., September 30, 2013 for FY13);
- Projected FY13 workforce data reported in last year's AHCP have been pre-populated to allow you to view the accuracy of your projection techniques;
- Include the number of interns in your count of employees;
- Enter "0" if you do not have any interns in a functional area; and
- If you use an alternate calculation for any of the data below, please indicate the calculation method used in the optional space for comment provided after the table.

**Table 2: Acquisition Workforce Data by Functional Area**

	1102s				
	FY12	FY13		FY14	FY15
		Projected	Actual <sup>5</sup>		
<b>1. Number of 1102 Employees</b>	619	610	606	605	600
<b>2. Percent of Workforce Certified</b>	90%	90%	92%	93%	94%
<b>3. Number in an Intern Program<sup>6</sup></b>	16	15	26	30	34
<b>4. Attrition Rate (# of attritions during FY13 ÷ # on-board at start of FY13)</b>	10%	10%	9%	8%	7%
<b>5. Number of Retirement Eligible Employees</b>	191	188	141	100	75

	Contracting Officers Outside of the 1102 Series				
	FY12	FY13		FY14	FY15
		Projected	Actual		
<b>1. Number of Employees</b>	581	590	482	480	480
<b>2. Percent of Workforce Certified</b>	14%	17%	21%	25%	30%

<sup>5</sup> FY13 Actual numbers are from Fedscope.opm.gov.

<sup>6</sup> Can be either a formal intern program or an informal intern program as determined by the ACM, and should include Presidential Management Fellows (PMFs) performing acquisition functions

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	CORs				
	FY12	FY13		FY14	FY15
		Projected	Actual		
<b>1. Number of Employees</b>	3,281	3,381	4,467	4,500	4,600
<b>2. Percent of Workforce Certified</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
<b>3. Number in a Formal Intern Program</b>	0	0	0	0	0

	P/PMs				
	FY12	FY13		FY14	FY15
		Projected	Actual		
<b>1. Number of Employees</b>	339	346	339	353	366
<b>2. Percent of Workforce Certified</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
<b>3. Number in a Formal Intern Program</b>	0	0	0	0	0

i. What sources (e.g., data management systems, contacts within your agency) did you use to gather the workforce profile information reported above? Be detailed in your response.

**A combination of the following sources were used:**

- **Federal Acquisition Training Application System (FAITAS) reports were run for certification data and most Contracting Officer data.**
- **Fedscope and Human Resources data was used for GS-1102 information.**

ii. **Optional:** Use the space below if you would like to provide additional information regarding responses in Table 2 above.

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**iii. Specialized IT Acquisition Cadres: How are you supporting the timely and effective acquisition of information technology?**

- **USDA is currently working diligently to develop personnel assigned to IT acquisition, including cross-functional training of acquisition, information technology, and program personnel. During FY13 this initiative was formally established via a partnership between the Acquisition Career Manager and a leading IT Program Manager for the Chief Information Officer’s Governance and Strategic Investments. This partnership addressed filling critical training gaps and bolstering the FAC-P/PM program at USDA, particularly for major acquisitions. Through this partnership the OCIO now has an enhanced role and remains a key stakeholder in the development of innovative approaches to improve acquisition of information technology.**
  
- **USDA is exploring more innovative approaches to improving IT acquisitions. As overall IT operations become more efficient and higher-performing, acquisition of IT will also be improved. There is also an ongoing USDA working group to identify candidates for consolidation and/ or shared services, and IT acquisitions are a critical part of the discussions.**
  
- **The following are a few metrics under consideration to determine improvement in IT acquisition.**
  - **Budget**
    - Ratio of IT spend to total budget
    - Ratio of DME and O&M spend
  - **Human Capital**
    - Ratio of federal workers to contractors
  - **Help Desk**
    - Cost per end user
    - Cost per ticket
  - **Storage Services**
    - Storage growth rates
    - Network storage costs
  - **Desktop Services**
    - Annual cost per end user
  - **Messaging**
    - Cost per email user
    - Cost per email box
  - **Mobility**
    - Number of devices per user
    - Cost per user

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**Instructions:** If applicable, please complete *Table 3: Acquisition Workforce Data – Other Federal Acquisition Certification (FAC) Areas* below for each additional acquisition functional area in your agency that requires a certification (e.g., logistics, test and evaluations).

FY13 data that you reported on other acquisition certification functional areas in your agency have been pre-populated in the top table(s). Use the bottom table to report on a new acquisition functional area; copy, paste and complete the table as needed for each additional acquisition functional area. Select the appropriate functional area from the drop-down.

**Table 3: Acquisition Workforce Data– Other Acquisition Certification Functional Areas**

	Acquisition Certification Functional Area: Click Here and Select From Drop-Down		
	FY13	FY14	FY15
<b>1. Number of Employees</b>	N/A	<i>projected</i>	<i>projected</i>
<b>2. Percent of Workforce Certified</b>	%	<i>projected%</i>	<i>projected%</i>
<b>3. Number in a Formal Intern Program</b>		<i>projected</i>	<i>projected</i>

i. What sources (*e.g.*, data management systems, contacts within your agency) did you use to gather the workforce profile data reported above? Be detailed in your response.

N/A

ii. **Optional:** Use the space below if you would like to provide additional information regarding responses in Table 3.

N/A

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**C. Strengthening the Role of the Acquisition Career Manager**

**Instructions:** The *Acquisition Workforce Development Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2010-2014*<sup>7</sup> identified “Strengthening the Acquisition Career Manager (ACM) Role” as critical for improving the identification and development of human capital planning activities associated with the acquisition workforce. In support of this objective, please confirm/elaborate on the role of the ACM in your agency below. Data on the ACM position in your agency have been pre-populated using your FY13 AHCP.

1. The position of ACM is a **Full-Time Position**
2. Does your agency have one ACM to manage all certification programs, or multiple ACMs?  
**ACM manages all certification programs.**
  - 2a. If multiple, please describe: **We do have ACM Designees who, as a collateral duty, assist within their designated mission area.**
3. The ACM works in the following office: **Office of Procurement and Property Management where the SPE is the Director.**
4. The ACM reports directly to the following position: **Chief, Procurement Policy Division**
5. There are **0** full-time staff and **0** part-time staff directly supporting the ACM and the Agency’s Acquisition workforce programs.
6. There are ACMs in the agency sub-components (e.g., bureaus, services, units, nodes): **Yes**
  - 6a. If yes, please indicate the number of agency sub-component ACMs: **11**
7. The Acquisition training program is managed by the: **Other - Please Specify: This is a shared role between the ACM and the mission areas.**

i. **Plans for Strengthening the Role of the ACM:** Is your agency planning to strengthen the role of the ACM? If so, please provide details of how the role is being strengthened. Also, please provide feedback on how OFPP can assist in strengthening the ACM within your agency.

**Not at this time.**

ii. **Optional:** Use the space below if you would like to provide additional information regarding responses to the questions above.

N/A

<sup>7</sup> The Acquisition Workforce Development Strategic Plan can be accessed [here](#).

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### D. Agency Acquisition Workforce Competency Profile

**Instructions: OFPP and FAI will provide agencies with a summary of their competency proficiency strengths and areas for improvement in mid-February.**

It is recommended that your agency's competency data be taken into consideration when identifying and evaluating potential human capital initiatives. For more information on the AWCS, please visit [FAI's competency survey website](#).

#### Table 4a: Acquisition Workforce Competency Proficiency Profile: Contracting Professionals

Confirm or update the five strongest technical competency proficiencies for Contracting Professionals at your agency.

1. Determination of how best to satisfy customer requirements (3.78)
2. Competition (3.72)
3. Contract Award (3.66)
4. Solicitation of Offers (3.56)
5. E-Business and Automated Tools (3.55)

Confirm or update the five weakest technical competency proficiencies for Contracting Professionals at your agency.

1. Protests (3.03)
2. Cost and/or Price Analysis (3.14)
3. Negotiation (3.32)
4. Source Selection (3.40)
5. Proposal Evaluation (Contracting by Negotiation) (3.47)

#### Table 4b: Acquisition Workforce Competency Proficiency Profile: CORs

Confirm or update the five strongest technical competency proficiencies for CORs at your agency.

1. Effective Inspection and Acceptance (3.14)
2. Contract Quality Assurance and Evaluation (2.96)
3. Contract Reporting (2.94)
4. Contract Administration Management (2.82)
5. Business Acumen and Communication Skill Sets (2.78)

Confirm or update the five weakest technical competency proficiencies for CORs at your agency.

1. Acquisition Planning (2.14)
2. Market Research (2.22)
3. Contract Negotiation (2.29)
4. Effective Pre-Award Communication (2.31)
5. Defining Government Requirements (2.55)

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**Table 4c: Acquisition Workforce Competency Proficiency Profile: P/PMs**

Confirm or update the four strongest technical competency proficiencies for P/PMs at your agency.

1. Leadership (3.49)
2. Test and Evaluation (2.90)
3. Requirements Development and Management Processes (2.90)
4. Systems Engineering (2.81)

Confirm or update the three weakest technical competency proficiencies for P/PMs at your agency.

1. Life Cycle Logistics (2.40)
2. Contracting (2.66)
3. Business, Cost and Financial Management (2.77)

- i. Are your agency's 2014 AWCS results, which have been pre-populated in this section, consistent with your understanding of the proficiency strengths and opportunities for growth of your agency's acquisition workforce? Why or why not?

The 2014 AWCS results listed above are fairly consistent with USDA's understanding of acquisition-related proficiency strengths and opportunities for growth. They are in agreement with feedback we receive as well as results obtained from our internal reviews.

USDA also understands that 80% of USDA's AWCS respondents (compared to 44% federal-wide) were grades GS-12 and below. Furthermore 17% of USDA respondents were GS-13 and above, while the federal average was 52%. This adds insight into why some of the competency ratings at USDA were slightly lower than the federal average, because on average, USDA's respondents held a lower grade.

- ii. What steps are you taking to incorporate your agency's 2014 AWCS results into the design and management of acquisition related human capital programs and initiatives?

There are various steps completed to incorporate USDA's 2014 AWCS results, the following are a few highlights:

- The results of the AWCS are communicated to each contracting activity so that they are aware of their strengths and opportunities for growth.
- As needed, internal training is developed and conducted.
- AWCS results are used to assist in guiding decisions for external training needed.
- Where applicable, discussions for policy or guidance updates are completed.
- Internal reviews may be conducted to learn more about some of the specific AWCS results.

### SECTION III. Acquisition Human Capital Initiatives

#### A. FY12 Human Capital Programs and Initiatives

**Instructions:** OFPP and FAI are dedicated to collaborating with agencies to promote the development of an agile and quality government-wide acquisition workforce. Accordingly, OFPP and FAI are interested in learning more about the progress your agency made in FY13 in managing the acquisition-related programs and initiatives that you reported on in your previous AHCP. This information will be used to help promote cross-agency collaboration and identify

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areas where systematic, government-wide support for programs and initiatives can be provided.

Previously reported acquisition-related human capital programs and initiatives for your agency have been pre-populated in [Appendix A: Human Capital Programs and Initiatives – Status Update](#) of this template. **Use the pre-populated tables in Appendix A to describe the progress made by the ACM or Acquisition Office in managing the acquisition-related human capital programs and initiatives (excluding training courses) reported in last year’s AHCP.**

As a reminder, human capital programs and initiatives are classified around [the Office of Personnel Management’s \(OPM’s\) Human Capital Assessment and Accountability Framework \(HCAAF\) model](#). HCAAF has 3 broad categories under which your agency’s human capital programs/initiatives can be classified:

1. Leadership and Knowledge Management
  - Workforce and Succession Planning
  - On-boarding
  - Coaching
  - Mentoring
  - Individual Development Planning and Career Path Management
  - Knowledge and Best Practice Sharing
2. Results-Oriented Performance Culture
  - Awards, Incentives and/or Recognition Program
  - Performance Management
  - Diversity and Inclusion
3. Talent Management
  - Recruitment and Outreach
  - Hiring
  - Intern Programs

*Note: You are not expected to have an initiative for each category and/or sub-category – only those that relate to current programs and initiatives.*

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### B. Agency Recruitment and Retention Incentives

**Instructions:** Please use the drop-down options in *Table 5: Effectiveness of Recruitment and Retention Incentives* to indicate how helpful the following recruitment and retention incentives have been for managing the acquisition workforce as a whole at your agency over the course of FY13. Space is provided to provide one “other” example of effective recruitment and retention initiatives at your agency; if you’d like to provide more than one additional example, please use the optional space provided below Table 5.

**Table 5: Effectiveness of Recruitment and Retention Incentives**

Incentive	FY13		Comments
	Frequency of Use	Usefulness	
<b>Recruitment Incentives</b> <i>Please Specify: Signing Bonus</i>	Rarely	Somewhat Helpful	
<b>Relocation Incentives</b>	Rarely	Somewhat Helpful	
<b>Student Loan Repayment</b>	Rarely	Somewhat Helpful	
<b>Tuition Assistance</b>	Rarely	Very Helpful	
<b>Performance Awards</b>	Somewhat Frequently	Very Helpful	
<b>Special Pay Incentive</b>	Rarely	Somewhat Helpful	
<b>Telework</b>	Somewhat Frequently	Very Helpful	
<b>Alternative Work Schedule</b> <i>Please specify: 4-10hr days, 5-4-9, etc.</i>	Frequently	Very Helpful	
<b>Other</b> <i>Please Specify: Retention Bonus</i>	Rarely	Somewhat Helpful	

i. **Future Agency Focus:** Does your agency plan to focus on any of these incentives in the future? If so, please provide information on the incentive and how your agency plans to utilize it in the future.

**Incentives such as telework and flexible work schedules are increasingly leveraged to help combat limitations from reduced budgets.**

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ii. **Optional:** Use the space below if you would like to provide additional information regarding responses in Table 5.

N/A

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**SECTION IV. Acquisition Human Capital Initiatives Action Planning**

**A. Action Planning**

**Instructions:** Use *Table 6: Action Planning Template* on the following page to plan for the key acquisition-related human capital programs and initiatives (excluding training courses) (1) to be implemented by the ACM or Acquisition Office in FY14, (2) for which new resources were requested in the FY15 President’s Budget, and (3) which are anticipated for FY16. Copy, paste, and complete the Action Planning Template, as needed, for each key acquisition-related human capital program and initiative to be implemented by the ACM or Acquisition Office.

To maximize the benefit of the action planning process, collaborate with key agency stakeholders, including the Chief Human Capital Officer (CHCO), Chief Acquisition Officer (CAO), Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and other acquisition professionals. You will be asked to provide a status update on these initiatives in next year’s AHCP.

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Table 6: Action Planning Template

Planning		
<b>HCAAF Category: Talent Management</b>		
<b>HCAAF Sub-Category: Intern Programs</b>		
<b>Program/Initiative Title: Intern Program</b>		
<b>Brief Description of Purpose: Attract highly talented acquisition professionals early in their career, that they may grow and develop to become USDA's next generation of acquisition leaders.</b>		
<b>What is need prompted the development of the initiative, and how was this need identified? Cite specific quantitative and qualitative data.</b> The need was identified from acquisition workforce succession planning. Almost 25% of USDA's GS-1102 population is retirement eligible.		
<b>What resources are required to develop and implement this initiative?</b> Increased funding and an additional FTE to support the program.		
<b>Who needs to be involved in obtaining the resources?</b> Acquisition leaders across USDA.		
<b>What is the timeline for obtaining the necessary resources?</b> Obtaining the resources may be delayed due to tightening budgets.		
<b>Initiative Manager/Primary POC (Within Agency): ACM</b>		
Implementation		
FY14 Implementation Steps	Accountable Representative(s)	Timeline for Completion
1. Identify talent pool.	HR/ACM	3 months
2. Recruitment/ hiring process	HR/ACM	6 months
3. Execute comprehensive onboarding plan.	ACM/HCADs	7 months
4. Train/ Mentor	HCADs/Supervisors	Ongoing
5. Evaluate interns and the programs	ACM/HCADs	Ongoing
Evaluation		
Intended Outcome(s)	Evaluation Strategy (i.e., Metrics and Collection Methods)	
USDA identifies, onboards, and develops the next generation of acquisition leaders within USDA.	Certifications, Performance Evaluations, Internal Reviews, etc.	

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### Additional Human Capital Programs and Initiatives

i. **Additional Human Capital Programs and Initiatives:** What Government-wide acquisition-related human capital program and initiatives (excluding training courses) would you like FAI to consider implementing?

- Convening a forum for Acquisition Users to ask questions or have discussions regarding current issues, emerging opportunities, etc. A similar forum for General Counsel (legal) issues would be helpful as well. These types of forums would also foster interaction among Agencies and enhance networking opportunities.
- Assistance with recruiting, developing position descriptions, retention, etc.
- Standardize warrant levels and requirements (similar to the standardized certifications).
- An Intern program led and funded by FAI where Interns would be available for Agencies to hire upon an Intern's completion of the program.
- A formal program to educate and develop Small Business Specialists. They are critical in assisting Agencies in meeting socio-economic goals so an increased investment in them would be beneficial.
- An Executive Coaching / Leadership program
- Development of a streamlined method of identifying and tracking the COR's designated to serve on contracting actions.

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### Appendix A: Human Capital Programs and Initiatives – Status Update

**Instructions:** Please use the pre-populated tables in *Appendix A: Human Capital Programs and Initiatives – Status Update* to describe the progress made by the ACM or Acquisition Office in managing the acquisition-related human capital programs and initiatives (excluding training courses) reported in last year’s AHCP. **It is critical that you reference your FY13 AHCP for additional, previously reported information that can assist you as you complete this section.**

To assist you in completing this section, the tables below are pre-populated with the programs/initiatives that you reported in last year’s AHCP. Pre-populated programs/initiatives include:

- Data from *Section III B.* of the FY13 template on the programs/initiatives you managed in FY12 and FY13; and
- Data from *Section IV A.* of the FY13 template on programs/initiatives that you projected for FY14.

If your agency managed acquisition-related human capital programs or initiatives (excluding training courses) in FY13 that are not pre-populated in Appendix A, please copy/paste the template below and complete it for each previously unreported program/initiative. Begin by categorizing each previously unreported HC program/initiative using the [Office of Personnel Management’s \(OPM’s\) Human Capital Assessment and Accountability Framework \(HCAAF\)](#), which provides a consistent, comprehensive structure for human capital management across the Federal Government.

**Under the Government Performance and Results Modernization Act of 2010 ([GPRA Modernization Act](#)), agencies must report on their priority goals for improving the performance and management of various entities, which may include goals related to the procurement and acquisition workforce. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that you collaborate with the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer (CHCO), Chief Acquisition Officer (CAO), and Senior Procurement Executive (SPE) when completing Appendix A, especially if the program contributes to, or is aligned with, your agency’s priority goals. This will ensure that the template appropriately facilitates the human capital reporting and tracking process on a regular and recurring basis.**

## ACQUISITION HUMAN CAPITAL PLAN (AHCP) TEMPLATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Planning

**HCAAF Category: Talent Management**

**HCAAF Sub-Category: Intern Programs**

**Program/Initiative Title: Intern Program**

**Brief Description of Purpose: Attract highly talented acquisition professionals in their early career, that they may grow and develop to become USDA's next generation of acquisition leaders.**

**Describe the steps that were taken to manage this program/initiative in FY13:**

**Sub-agencies within USDA managed 26 acquisition interns during FY13.**

**Has the program met its intended objectives?**

**This is a work in progress as we hope to obtain additional resources to continue to manage and/or expand the program.**

**If yes, how did you know it has met the intended objectives? Cite specific quantitative and qualitative data.**

**N/A**

**Initiative Manager/Primary POC (Within Agency): ACM**

### FY14 Next Steps

FY14 Next Steps	Accountable Representative(s)	Timeline for Completion
1. Identify talent pool.	HR/ACM	3 months
2. Recruitment / hiring process.	HR/ACM	6 months
3. Execute comprehensive onboarding plan.	ACM/HCADs	7 months
4. Train / Mentor	HCADs/Supervisors	Ongoing
5. Evaluate interns and the program.	ACM/HCADs	Ongoing

### Evaluation

Intended Outcome(s)	Evaluation Strategy (i.e., Metrics and Collection Methods)
USDA identifies, onboards, and develops the next generation of acquisition leaders within USDA.	Certifications, Performance Evaluations, Internal Reviews, etc.

## ACQUISITION HUMAN CAPITAL PLAN (AHCP) TEMPLATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Planning

**HCAAF Category:** Leadership and Knowledge Management

**HCAAF Sub-Category:** Individual Development Planning and Career Path Management

**Program/Initiative Title:** Strengthening Administrative Services

**Brief Description of Purpose:** This initiative was developed to enhance the ability of USDA Acquisition Workforce members to serve their customers more effectively and efficiently.

**Describe the steps that were taken to manage this program/initiative in FY13:**

Several tasks were completed during FY13 in support of this initiative. An online shared space and an Acquisition Council was created for Acquisition Policy personnel across USDA to share leading procurement-related practices, guidance, and templates. Also, on ongoing collaboration was forged between Acquisition leaders and IT leaders to better manage Programs/Projects. Finally, there was an increase in internal reviews which provided key insight into procurement strengths and growth opportunities.

**Has the program met its intended objectives?**

Yes.

**If yes, how did you know it has met the intended objectives? Cite specific quantitative and qualitative data.**

A Sub-community was created on USDA's shared USDA Connect site where 23 USDA Acquisition policy chiefs and other policy professionals were granted access to strengthen acquisitions. A Program/Project Management expert from USDA's OCIO attended monthly meetings to promote collaboration and entrench integration between program and procurement personnel/ processes. Departmental reviews of some of the contracting activities were completed and outcomes were reported to the Departmental Procurement Policy Chief.

**Initiative Manager/Primary POC (Within Agency):** SPE

### FY14 Next Steps

FY14 Next Steps	Accountable Representative(s)	Timeline for Completion
1. Procurement Policy Chief's will continue to meet as well as leverage the shared space to promote leading practices.	Policy Chiefs, ACM	Ongoing
2. Collaboration will continue to enhance the Program/Project Manager function and outcomes at USDA.	OCIO, SPE, ACM	Ongoing

### Evaluation

Intended Outcome(s)	Evaluation Strategy (i.e., Metrics and Collection Methods)
Increased quality and savings, enhanced customer service, and reduced risk.	Acquisition Workforce Competency Survey
	Certification Rates

## ACQUISITION HUMAN CAPITAL PLAN (AHCP) TEMPLATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Planning		
<b>HCAAF Category: Talent Management</b>		
<b>HCAAF Sub-Category: Hiring</b>		
<b>Program/Initiative Title: Direct Hire Authority</b>		
<b>Brief Description of Purpose: Maximize options for hiring talented Acquisition Workforce professionals.</b>		
Describe the steps that were taken to manage this program/initiative in FY13:		
Has the program met its intended objectives?		
If yes, how did you know it has met the intended objectives? Cite specific quantitative and qualitative data.		
<b>Initiative Manager/Primary POC (Within Agency): ACM/ HR Policy</b>		
FY14 Next Steps		
FY14 Next Steps	Accountable Representative(s)	Timeline for Completion
1. This initiative is currently on hold unless authority to use returns.	N/A	N/A
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
Evaluation		
Intended Outcome(s)	Evaluation Strategy (i.e., Metrics and Collection Methods)	
Improved, more efficient, and inclusive hiring practices. Onboarding of highly talented acquisition professionals, early in their career, that may grow and develop to become USDA's next generation of acquisition leaders.	Hiring Rates	

# ACQUISITION HUMAN CAPITAL PLAN (AHCP) TEMPLATE

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Appendix B: Acquisition-Specific Training Costs

**Instructions:** Significant emphasis continues to be placed on analyzing acquisition training cost data at a federal-wide level to more strategically manage acquisition training dollars. In its March 2013 report titled, *Federal Agencies Obtain Training to Meet Requirements, but have Limited Insight into Costs and Benefits of Training Investment*<sup>8</sup>, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) noted, “The training cost data that agencies collect is not comparable and agencies have limited information on the benefits of their acquisition workforce training investments.” GAO went on to recommend that, “OFPP help ensure that agencies collect and report comparable cost data by providing further guidance on the cost data agencies are to report annually.” OFPP reinforced the importance of better leveraging training dollars in their September 2013 memo titled, *Increasing Efficiencies in the Training, Development, and Management of the Acquisition Workforce*<sup>9</sup>, stating that OFPP and FAI must, “focus on increasing efficiencies in acquisition certification and continuous learning training and development to optimize Federal dollars and resources.”

Accordingly, to improve the tracking and analysis of training development cost data at the federal-wide level, please complete the *Appendix B: Acquisition-Specific Training Costs* Excel Workbook provided along with this template. When completing the spreadsheet:

- Include all agency-specific acquisition-related course offerings in the workbook. Courses may be offered as part of a Federal Acquisition Certification (FAC) Program or as part of an additional acquisition functional area in your agency that requires a certification;
- Complete Columns B-I and Column S for all agency-specific acquisition training offerings;
- Provide training procurement cost data (Columns J-N) only for course offerings that were developed either in total, or in part, by a vendor. Agencies do not need to estimate the development costs for courses exclusively developed using internal agency staff labor;
- Provide FY13 training delivery costs (Columns O-R) only for course offerings that were delivered in total, or in part, by a vendor. Agencies do not need to estimate delivery costs for courses exclusively developed using internal agency staff labor.

Additional guidance for completing the spreadsheet is provided below, as well as in the workbook.

**NOTE: It is critical that you do not modify the spreadsheet template and follow all instructions when completing Appendix B so that OFPP and FAI can aggregate training costs at the government-wide level.**

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<sup>8</sup> The March 2013 GAO Report can be accessed [here](#).

<sup>9</sup> The September 2013 OFPP memo can be accessed [here](#).

## ACQUISITION HUMAN CAPITAL PLAN (AHCP) TEMPLATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

To assist you in completing the *Appendix B: Acquisition-Specific Training Costs* spreadsheet, additional guidance for completing each column is provided below:

**Column B “Course Title:”** Include all agency-specific acquisition-related course offerings in a separate row in the workbook. Courses may be offered as part of a Federal Acquisition Certification (FAC) Program or as part of an additional acquisition functional area in your agency.

**Column C “Training Delivery Type:”** Select the training delivery type from the drop-down menu. Drop-down options are defined below and are consistent with the Office of Personnel Management’s (OPM’s) training delivery type definitions<sup>10</sup>:

- *Traditional Classroom (no technology):* Individual or multiple person led, face-to-face training;
- *Technology Based:* Methods mainly using technology, which may include tutorials embedded in software, CD ROM products, Web-based courses, and interactive media; and
- *Blended:* Training that requires two or more methods of delivery that must be completed in order to satisfy the educational requirements.

**Column D “Target Participants:”** Select the training’s target audience from the drop-down menu. An “Other” option is provided to capture participants in a functional area outside of the three FAC program areas.

**Column E “Training Duration in Days:”** Enter the training duration in days. Partial training days should be recorded as a decimal (e.g., a half day of training = 0.5). Enter the numerical value only; do not enter any text into this field (e.g., “hours”).

**Column F “Number of CLPs Awarded:”** Enter the number of CLPs awarded for completing the training. Enter the numerical value only; do not enter any text into this field.

**Column G “Seats Per Class:”** Enter the number of seats per class. May not be applicable if course is exclusively technology based.

**Column H “FY 2013 Offerings Per Year:”** Enter the number of course offerings in FY 2013. May not be applicable if course is exclusively technology based.

**Column I “FY 2013 Participants:”** Enter the number of participants that completed the course in FY 2013, including courses that are exclusively technology based.

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<sup>10</sup>“Training Delivery Type” options and definitions are pulled from OPM’s Standard Form-182. The SF-182 is the government-wide training form used to request, approve, and certify completion of training courses and other learning events.

## **ACQUISITION HUMAN CAPITAL PLAN (AHCP) TEMPLATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

**Column J “Course Development Type:”** Select the training development type from the drop-down menu. Drop-down options are defined below:

- *Vendor Developed* - if course was developed on a contract with the government;
- *Government Developed* - if a course was developed by the Government;
- *Hybrid* - if course was developed by a commercial vendor and the government;  
and
- *N/A* - If the course was a COTS product purchased from a commercial vendor.

**Column K “Fiscal Year of Procurement/Development:”** Enter the Fiscal Year in which the course was procured from the vendor (if purchased) or the development of course content was completed (if developed). If course material has been updated since the initial purchase/completion date, enter the Fiscal Year in which the course material was last updated.

**Column L “Award Amount:”** Enter the contract award for course development. Only include the content development costs; do not include associated training costs (e.g., conference space, materials). This information is not required if the course is “government developed.”

**Column M “Vendor – Development:”** Enter the vendor that developed the course. This information is not required if the course is “government developed.”

**Column N “FY 2013 Course Maintenance Costs (If Applicable):”** Enter the amount paid to update course content in FY 2013 if a vendor performed the course updates. This information is not required if the course is “government developed.”

**Column O “FY 2013 Vendor Training Delivery Cost:”** If the course was delivered by a vendor in FY 2013, enter the total delivery cost for all offerings in FY 2013. Only include the cost for vendor delivery; supporting costs (e.g., travel, facilities, course materials) should not be included in this column. Leave this cell blank if the course was delivered by an agency staff member(s).

**Column P “FY 2013 Training Materials Costs:”** If the course was delivered by a vendor in FY 2013, enter the total cost associated with facilities and training materials for all offerings in FY 2013. Leave this cell blank if the course was delivered by an agency staff member(s).

**Column Q “FY 2013 Indirect Vendor Cost:”** If the course was delivered by a vendor in FY 2013, enter the total cost associated with vendor travel and lodging for FY 2013 for this course. Leave this cell blank if the course was delivered by an agency staff member(s).

**Column R “Vendor – Delivery:”** Enter the vendor that delivered the course in FY 2013. Enter multiple vendors, if applicable.

**ACQUISITION HUMAN CAPITAL PLAN (AHCP) TEMPLATE  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

**Column S “Course Evaluations:”** Indicate whether your agency is collecting and analyzing participant evaluation data for this course as a way to help assess training effectiveness.

**ACQUISITION HUMAN CAPITAL PLAN (AHCP) TEMPLATE  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

**Appendix C: *Increasing Efficiencies in the Training, Development, and Management of the Acquisition Workforce* – OFPP Memorandum Progress Update**

**Instructions:** In September 2013, OFPP issued a memorandum entitled, “*Increasing Efficiencies in the Training, Development, and Management of the Acquisition Workforce*” which requires civilian agency Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Act agencies to increase the use of FAITAS to promote more effective acquisition workforce management strategies. OFPP outlined several FAITAS implementation milestones for agencies, including:

1. Collect individual acquisition workforce user profiles;
2. Manage Federal Acquisition Certifications (FACs); and
3. Register acquisition workforce members for agency-provided acquisition training.

Please provide an update on your agency’s efforts to achieve the FAITAS implementation milestones outlined in OFPP’s memo.

**Milestone 1: Collect individual acquisition workforce user profiles by January 1, 2014.**

*Per the OFPP memo, “No later than January 1, 2014, each civilian agency shall have, at a minimum, accurate and complete records in FAITAS for the following:*

- *Positions in the general schedule contracting series (GS-1102) and non-DOD uniformed personnel in comparable positions;*
- *Contracting Officers regardless of general schedule series with authority to obligate funds above the micro-purchase threshold;*
- *Project/Program Managers (P/PMs); and*
- *Contracting Officer’s Representatives (CORs).”*

- 1a. Did your agency achieve the January 1, 2014 milestone for each of the populations below:
- i. Positions in the general schedule contracting series (GS-1102) and non-DOD uniformed personnel in comparable positions: **Yes**
  - ii. Contracting Officers regardless of general schedule series with authority to obligate funds above the micro-purchase threshold: **Yes**
  - iii. Project/Program Managers (P/PMs): **Yes**
  - iv. Contracting Officer’s Representatives (CORs): **Yes**

- i. If you answered “no” to any questions in 1a, please describe your agency’s efforts to achieve this milestone and your anticipated completion date.

N/A

## ACQUISITION HUMAN CAPITAL PLAN (AHCP) TEMPLATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Milestone 2: Manage Federal Acquisition Certifications (FACs)

*Per the OFPP memo,*

- *Acquisition workforce members shall use FAITAS to apply for certification as soon as possible, but no later than April 1, 2014.*
- *Workforce members shall also maintain currency by using the FAITAS Continuous Learning Module to track continuous learning points as soon as possible, but no later than June 1, 2014.*

2a. Does your agency anticipate achieving the April 1, 2014 milestone? **Yes**

2b. Does your agency anticipate achieving the June 1, 2014 milestone? **Yes**

- |  |
|--|
| i. Describe the progress your agency has made to use FAITAS to apply for certification. If you answered “no” to question 2a, include the date you anticipate achieving this milestone. |
|--|

<b>All certifications are managed through FAITAS.</b>
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- |  |
|--|
| i. Describe the progress your agency has made to use the FAITAS Continuous Learning Module to track CLPs. If you answered “no” to question 2b, include the date you anticipate achieving this milestone. |
|--|

<b>All Continuous Learning for certified personnel is tracked through FAITAS.</b>
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### Milestone 3: Register acquisition workforce members for agency-provided acquisition training by October 1, 2014

*Per the OFPP memo, “all civilian agencies shall use FAITAS as their training registration system for agency-provided acquisition training as soon as possible, but no later than October 1, 2014.”*

3a. Does your agency anticipate achieving the October 1, 2014 milestone? **Yes**

- |   |
|---|
| i. Describe the progress your agency has made to achieve this milestone. If you answered “no” to question 3a, include the date you anticipate achieving this milestone. |
|---|

<b>Our Agency works with the FAITAS Change Advisory Board to understand how internal training may be integrated into FAITAS.</b>
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