

For: State and County Offices

Acquisition Workforce (AW) Personnel Maintenance Training

Approved by: Deputy Administrator, Management



1 Overview

A Background

AW personnel are contracting officers, head of contracting activity designees (HCAD's), and GS-1102/GS-1105 employees. The following documents require AW personnel maintenance training every 2 years:

- Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP), Policy Letter 97-01
- USDA Departmental Regulation 5001-1.

USDA has been working towards implementing an AW competency-based training program that promotes procurement professionalism since the issuance of OFPP, Policy Letter 92-3. Through the aggressive implementation of national level workforce training, FSA's AW competency level has steadily improved. However, the practice of continually sponsoring national level Simplified Acquisition Procedure training to FSA's workforce is not:

- in compliance with DR5001-1 because the burden to satisfy the biennial maintenance training requirement established in DR5001-1 rests on the designated employee

Note: DR5001-1 states in paragraph 13, "We do not recommend repeatedly taking the same course or equivalent courses to meet established training requirements."

- the best use of government funds as it is costly and produces a lesser return on investment (ROI) than alternative online training options.

B Action

Effective immediately, FSA's practice of sponsoring national level training to contracting officers and other AW employees for the purpose of satisfying the biennial training requirement established in DR5001-1 is suspended.

Disposal Date	Distribution
January 1, 2006	State Offices; State Offices relay to County Offices

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1 Overview (Continued)

C Purpose

This notice:

- explains the biennial AW personnel maintenance training requirement
- identifies alternative sources of online training available to contracting officers and other AW personnel
- provides guidance for employees and supervisors
- establishes contracting officer updates as an additional source of relevant AW information
- provides contact information.

2 Biennial AW Personnel Training Requirements

A DR5001-1 Requirements

DR5001-1 specifies mandatory core-training curriculums that AW personnel must satisfy. At a minimum, contracting officers and GS-1102/GS-1105 employees **must** complete a Simplified Acquisition Procedure course. Additionally, AW personnel are responsible for satisfying the biennial maintenance training requirement established in DR5001-1.

AW personnel shall obtain at least 40 hours of continuing education or training every 2 years. Employees working as COR's must obtain 16 hours of training every 2 years. Failure to meet the maintenance requirements may result in the termination of a contracting officer warrant or an inability to meet the GS-1102 qualification standard.

B Maintenance Training Dates and Sources

Maintenance training dates are computed on a calendar year basis. Each maintenance period will begin January 1 of odd calendar years and end on December 31 of the following year. The maintenance training period date shall not change while employed with FSA.

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2 Biennial AW Personnel Training Requirement (Continued)

B Maintenance Training Dates and Sources (Continued)

Maintenance training may include the study of new requirements, procedures caused by changes in law, regulations, policy, reviews, or business research. In addition to attending Government-wide training facilities, maintenance training may also include nonmandatory classroom training, seminars, conferences, satellite downlinks, online courses, agency-sponsored training, management/executive seminars, professional association-related projects, participation in seminars, and any other training that enhances present acquisition job skills. To ensure acceptability outside of USDA, AW personnel are encouraged to take Defense Acquisition University (DAU) equivalent courses when available.

3 Online Training

A Alternative Training Opportunities

When completing the biennial maintenance training requirement, FSA AW personnel is encouraged to consider the numerous continuous learning modules and other no-cost online training opportunities provided by government sources, such as DAU, GSA, and Federal Acquisition Institute (FAI).

B Alternative Sources of Online Training

The following provides specific alternative source web sites and information:

- DAU offers more than 80 continuous learning modules in addition to other online training courses

Note: Many of the modules can be used for biennial maintenance training. To access the modules, the user shall login to the DAU virtual campus at **www.dau.gov**. The user must complete an application to gain access, and then click the following:

- “Continuous Learning”
- “Registration for Continuous Learning Modules”
- “Non DoD, Federal Government civilian employee”
- “Continue to NONDOD” tab
- yellow cloud titled “For DAU Continuous Learning courses Click Here,” for application instructions and access to continuous learning modules and other DAU web-based courses.

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3 Online Training (Continued)

B Alternative Sources of Online Training (Continued)

- GSA offers an online course titled “Using GSA Schedules (customers)”

Note: This course is comprised of 9 lessons and takes approximately 16 hours to complete. It provides AW personnel information on when and how to use GSA schedules and is based upon applicable Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) and GSA Acquisition Regulation (GSAR). Upon successful completion of the post-test, students will be issued a certificate signifying course completion. Registration is required before access is granted. Register at https://fsstraining.gsa.gov/kc/Securelogin/login.asp?kc_ident=kc0001login. Click on “Register” and then complete the tour.

- FAI is an online tool to support AW personnel in the performance of daily duties and tasks.

Note: FAI has been offering online training modules and seminars since 1997. A few modules/seminars offered are Contracting Orientation, Market Research for Acquisition Officers, and Negotiations. FAI COR training courses do **not** satisfy the biennial training requirement for contracting officers. Register for FAI online courses at www.fai.gov. Click on “FAI Online University” and then “Register”. After completing the registration, take the tour.

4 Training Completion

A AW Personnel Notification of Completion Responsibilities

AW personnel **must** satisfy the training requirements established in DR5001-1. Employees **must** notify FSA AW Coordinator (AWC) by e-mail when training is completed. Provide the following information in the e-mail:

- training title
- completion date
- total time used to complete training.

B AW Personnel Training Reporting Requirements

Personnel **must** track and report actual time spent completing training. Unlike formal classroom training where a set number of hours are established for each course, the actual time needed to complete online training will vary for each individual.

Workforce acquisition personnel should ensure that maintenance training is reflected in their Individual Development Plan (IDP). Employees entering the GS-1102 series and GS-1105 employees preparing for Level IC warrant authority and should develop and continually review their IDP with their supervisor (DR5001-1, Appendix H).

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4 Training Completion (Continued)

C AW Supervisor Responsibilities

When online training is approved, the AW supervisor should allow sufficient time for AW personnel to complete the training.

Note: It is suggested that flexiplace be considered for AW personnel that meet the criteria during the time they are completing online training.

5 Contracting Officer Updates and Contacts

A Contracting Officer Updates

The MSD, Acquisition Management Branch, Planning and Oversight Section will issue Contracting Officer Updates (Updates) periodically. The purpose of Updates is to provide a summary of current procurement information to AW personnel. Updates often identify sources of free online acquisition training that count toward the biennial maintenance training requirement. Whenever possible, a comprehensive reporting may be obtained by following links referred to in the summary.

To receive training credits, AW personnel should:

- read Updates
- notify AWC by e-mail that they have read Updates.

Note: AW personnel will be credited with a minimum of 15 minutes of maintenance training credit. The credit will count toward the fulfillment of the maintenance training requirement.

AW personnel are encouraged to:

- share Updates with employees in their work area
- inform AWC of employees who were overlooked in the distribution of Updates
- forward suggestions for topics or questions by e-mail to AWC.

B Contacts

If there are any questions about this notice, contact Dennis McCraw at either of the following:

- Dennis.McCraw@wdc.usda.gov
- 202-205-8961.