

AFGE FIREFIGHTERS COUNCIL

Serving Federal Firefighters through Knowledge and Strength



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FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES PERSONNEL PART OF FOCUS GROUP IN PHASE II OF DOD'S IMPLEMENTATION OF ITS ENTERPRISE COMPETENCY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The Department of Defense is required to submit an annual Human Capital Management Report (HCMR) to the Office of Personnel Management. The purpose of the report is to help both DoD and OPM to assess how well DoD's human capital programs and operations contribute to organizational performance and mission accomplishment.

As stated in the Executive Summary of the 2010 HCMR, guidance for DoD's human capital management is contained in the DoD Strategic Management Plan (SMP) and the DoD Civilian Human Capital Strategic Plan (CHCSP). One of the five goals set forth in the SMP includes "...shaping and maintaining a mission-ready civilian workforce." DOD's 2010 HCMR identifies 5 specific initiatives that it has targeted as being toward enhancement of the human resources delivery and systems support aspects of this goal and therefore, they have been selected as a focus area for FY 2010 and beyond.

One of these initiatives, an "Automated HR tool in support of Competency Management" is of interest to those in the GS-081 series. This is for the reason that the GS-081 occupational series has been identified as a mission critical occupation (MCO). Such identification is one that has often been sought because it goes hand-in-hand with the concept that GS-081 positions are ones where the duties are inherently-governmental and should, therefore, only be performed by federal employees.

The Report indicates that DoD intends, amongst other things, to establish and implement an Enterprise Competency Management System (ECMS) and it provides the following background for this initiative:

"To comply with requirements of the FY 2010 NDAA, DoD is developing an Enterprise solution for competency management capabilities (capturing competencies, determining gaps, etc.). The ECR and ECMS will be part of the DCPDS, Oracle Self-Service tools. These tools will provide enhancements to the system of record for over 800,000 self-service (MyBiz and MyWorkplace) users and added functionality and accessibility to DoD civilians and their

managers. As the Department's Enterprise-wide HR system of record, there are good business reasons for the use of DCPDS for competency management self-service:

- ★ Employee and position data is stored for most DoD civilian employees;
- ★ DoD owns 800,000+ Oracle Self-Service licenses;
- ★ 400,000+ DoD employees have used Self-Service;
- ★ Competency update capability uses Oracle's 'out-of-the box' capabilities with few modifications; and
- ★ DCPDS is IA and 508 compliant.

"In addition, the following business case has been made for Enterprise-wide automated competency management:

- ★ Anticipated increase in the use of competencies in the recruitment process;
- ★ New missions require an assessment of competencies needed for those missions;
- ★ Competency analysis will identify classification standards in need of update;
- ★ Competency analyses become the basis for employee career roadmaps, which also support talent management, succession planning, and improve employee engagement; and
- ★ Provides capability for an OSD expertise locator."

The Report goes on to indicate that implementation of the ECMS will be undertaken in three phases as follows:

“ ★ Phase I – FY 2011, Q1 and Q2

- Pilot one set of validated, cross-cutting Enterprise Competencies.
- Test process of loading competencies into tool, employee/supervisor assessment functionality, and gap assessment for workforce planning.
- The Competency Focus will be Leadership.

★ Phase II – FY 2011, Q3 and Q4

- Use validated Enterprise & Component Competencies.
- Test process of reaching consensus on additional common Enterprise-Wide Competencies and report competency gaps.
- The Competency Focus will be six MCOs.

★ Phase III – FY 2012

- Use validated Enterprise, Component, & Cross-Cutting Competencies.

- Expand competency database, integrate career roadmaps, and transition to a more robust tool supporting workforce planning and talent management.”

You will note that the Competency Focus in Phase II is on six MCO's. The GS-081 series has been identified as one of those six and the first meetings with both supervisory and non-supervisory incumbents in GS-081 positions will be held the week of Jan. 31st, 2011. Background papers for the meetings indicate that participants “...should be highly knowledgeable about the requirements of the position, as well as the skills and competencies necessary for successful performance in carrying out the duties of the position.”

Those who attend the meetings “...will be asked to review and revise draft lists of job tasks and competencies that are important for employees in the position at various levels (i.e. all non-supervisory performance levels)...” In addition, they “...will be asked to help draft new tasks and competencies as needed. The end product will be a concise, well-written and complete list of tasks and competencies to define the position. These tasks and competencies will be included in a survey to be administered to all incumbents and supervisors of the position to develop a clear picture of the tasks performed and competencies required for success in the job.” “Competency” is defined as “...an (observable) measurable pattern of knowledge, abilities, skills, and other characteristics that individuals need in order to successfully perform their work.”

As with any new undertaking, concerns are being raised about this endeavor. The AFGE Firefighter Council was briefed last September on this undertaking and recognized it as part of the overall effort by DOD and other agencies to improve and streamline their HR management processes. For example, the trend toward shifting away from long resumes specifying knowledge, skills and abilities is long overdue but before that can be eliminated, other processes must be tested and implemented. Further, without knowing what “competencies” its personnel actually possess, it would be impossible for any agency to know what it could achieve with existing personnel in e.g. a time of national emergency and what it must be able to provide in the way of human capital.

The end result of this initiative will in all likelihood be a number of proposals that could include hiring reforms, training programs, new career paths, revision of qualifications for employment and/or any of a number of recommendations that could directly impact firefighters. For this reason, the AFGE Firefighter Council will closely monitor all recommendations made as a result of this initiative.