FORT BELVOIR CIVILIAN PERSONEL ADVISORY CENTER

The CPAC Informer

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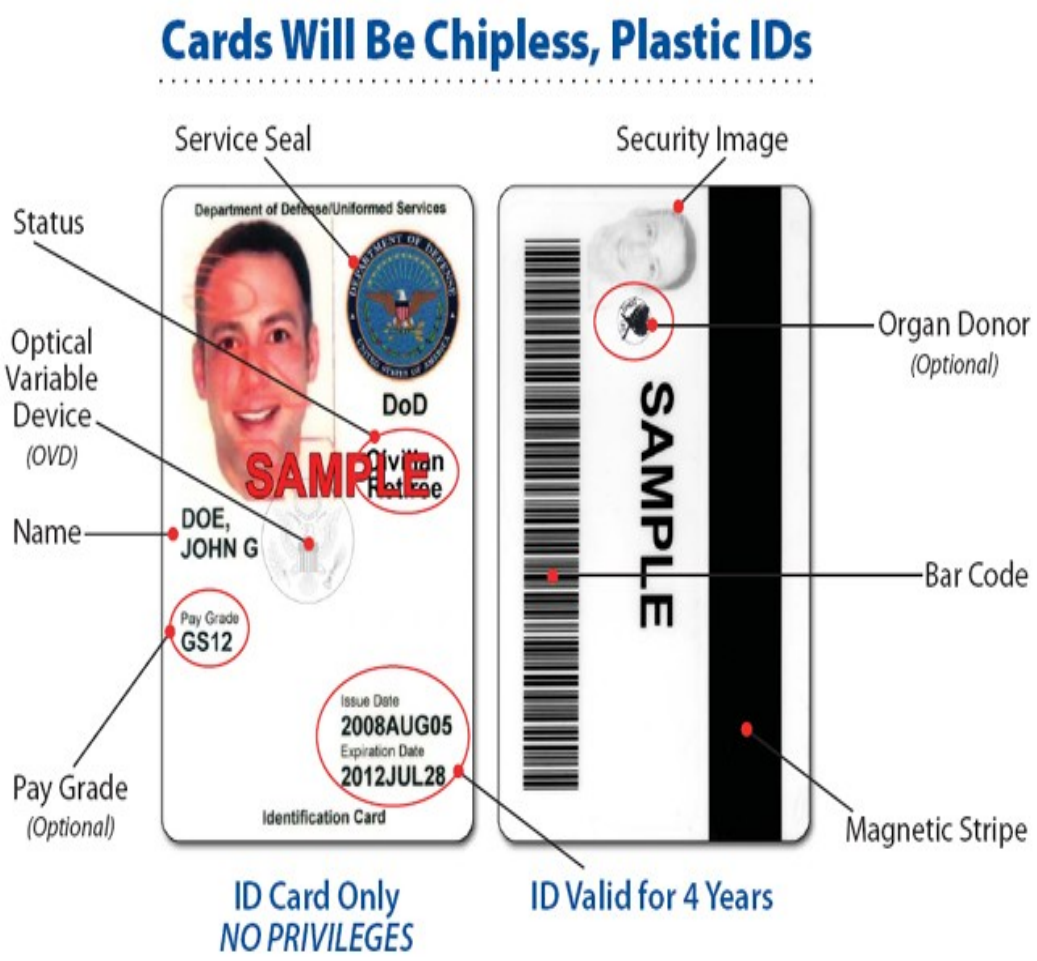
DoD Civilian Retiree ID Card

The Department of Defense has authorized retired DoD civilian employees an identification card. This card is a trusted credential used to establish identity and affiliation with the Department of Defense and will provide retired DoD civilians with a uniform DoD identification card that can be easily recognized at any DoD base or facility within the United States and its territories or possessions. Those eligible for the card are civilians who retire from any DoD Service Component or Agency.



DoD CIVILIAN RETIREE ID CARD—**FAQS**

What is the purpose of the card?
Since many retired DoD Civilians have no way of identifying their association with the Department of Defense, this card provides them with a trusted credential to establish their identity and affiliation. Some, but not all, military installations allow retired civilians access to MWR facilities with proper identification.

Who is eligible to receive the card?
Civilians who have retired from any DoD Service Component or Agency. Civilian retirees from other Federal agencies are not eligible.

When can I get this card?
When you are in receipt of your DoD retirement pay and you have received your Retirement SF 50 (Notification of Personnel Action).

Where can I go to get the card?
The Fort Belvoir ID card section which is located in Building 213, Room #108, on 20th Street. Operating hours are from 0730 – 1630 M-F (doors close at 1530). Waiting periods vary from 30 minutes to an hour or more. Appointments may be made by calling (703) 805-5578.

What do I need to bring with me?
a. ID - You must bring in two (2) forms of identification. One must be a federal, state or local government agency- issued **picture** ID. The other ID may be an unexpired U.S .Passport, a U.S. Social Security card, or your original or certified copy of a Birth Certificate issued by a state, county, municipal authority or outlying possession of the United States bearing an official seal. These are the most common acceptable forms to verify your identification. For other acceptable documents, please call the Fort Belvoir ID card section on (703) 805-5578 or review the Employment Eligibility Verification, I-9 Form, at http://www.uscis.gov/files/form/I-9_IFR_02-02-09.pdf.

b. Proof of pay grade – You must bring your Retirement SF 50, Notification of Personnel Action.

Does the card expire?
Yes, but it is renewable every four (4) years.

If I already have a retired card from my DoD Service Component or Agency, do I need this card?
No, it does not convey any additional privileges.

Is this card optional?
Yes, this is an optional card that can be issued for civilian retirees that use post facilities.

Who may I contact if my retirement record does not show in DEERS?

You may contact the Civilian Benefits Information Line by email at benefits@cpms.osd.mil or by phone at (703) 696-6301.

Significant Changes to Thrift Savings Plan

President Obama signed H.R. 1256 into law on June 22, 2009, which included the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) Enhancement Act of 2009. The Act provides significant changes that will positively impact TSP participants. The major changes under the Act include the elimination of waiting periods for Federal employees covered under the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) and equivalent Federal retirement systems; this Act will also include employees who are converted into FERS. Before the new law, FERS hires and certain rehires had to complete a waiting period before becoming eligible to receive the 1% Agency Automatic Contributions (ACCs) and the Agency Matching Contributions (AMCs). Under the new law, all new FERS employees hired on or after July 5, 2009 are immediately eligible for TSP AACs and AMCs. Additionally, currently employed FERS employees in a pending or waiting period status will begin to receive ACCs and AMCs effective on July 5, 2009. TSP participants should note: The Act does not create a retroactive entitlement, which means employees are only eligible for the new entitlement beginning July 5, 2009, which is the first full pay period after the law was changed. Additional information about the changes will be posted on the www.tsp.gov website in the near future.

Submitted by Latasha Ferguson/Ft Belvoir CPAC

Other changes:

- **Employee Contributions** — There are no longer any percentage limits on employee contributions to the TSP. TSP contributions are limited only by the restrictions imposed by the Internal Revenue Code.
- **Elective Deferral Limit (I.R.C. Section 402(g))** — The elective deferral limit for 2009 is $16,500. The limit for 2008 was $15,500. See Fact Sheet "Annual Limit on Elective Deferrals."
- **I.R.C. Section 415(c) Limit** — The limit for 2009 is $49,000. The limit for 2008 was $46,000.
- **Catch-Up Contributions** — The limit on catch-up contributions for 2009 is $5,500. The limit for 2008 was $5,000. If you are at least age 50 (or will become age 50 during the calendar year) and if you have made or will make the maximum amount of employee contributions for the calendar year (e.g., $16,500 in 2009), you may also make catch-up contributions to your TSP account. See the Fact Sheet "Catch-Up Contributions."
- **Participant statements** are online at www.tsp.gov under “account access” .
- **Loan interest rate** for new loans is 3.250%.
- **Civilian TSP participants who are members of the Ready Reserve** — If you are a civilian TSP participant with an outstanding TSP loan and are placed in nonpay status to perform military service, make sure your agency provides the TSP with documentation to certify your status and suspend loan payments. The Internal Revenue Code allows the TSP to suspend loan payments for all participants placed in nonpay status for up to one year of nonpay. However, participants placed in nonpay status to perform military service for more than one year are authorized suspension of loan payments for the entire period of military service.

OWCP SUBJECT OF THE MONTH: PERMANENT INPAIRMENT RATING REVISED

On May 1, 2009, the Department of Labor began utilizing the Sixth Edition of the AMA Guides to the Evaluation of Permanent Impairment. This Edition substantially revises the evaluation methods used in previous Editions. These new methods emphasize diagnosis over functional assessment. This could result in a lower impairment rating for a condition such as carpal tunnel syndrome. In the past, the AMA Guides emphasized functional assessment, where impairment ratings could be based on loss of strength, loss of range-of-motion, or loss of sensation. Under the Sixth Edition, most ratings will consider only the diagnosis with the most impact on the rated body region, i.e. digits/hand, wrist, elbow and shoulder are the regions defined for the upper extremity. The diagnosis-based impairment is then adjusted up or down according to functional history, physical examination, and clinical studies. These three factors are then integrated to determine severity grade within the impairment class. The 6th Edition has five classes of impairment severity which permit the rating of the patient ranging from no impairment to very severe. A diagnosis-based grid will be used for each organ system and chapter.

Worker's Compensation POC: Cisy Newman, 703-704-3023

MISUSE OF GOVERNMENT VEHICLES

The Crone Corner

If you are thinking about misusing a government vehicle or authorizing the misuse of a government vehicle, I strongly caution you to think again.

Paragraph 1-6(a) of Army Regulation 58-1, *Management, Acquisition, and Use of Motor Vehicles,* states the following: "Any [civilian] officer or employee of the Government who willfully uses or authorizes the use of any U.S. Government-owned or Government-leased passenger motor vehicle (except for official purposes as authorized by 31 U.S.C. Section 1344), or otherwise violates section 1344, shall be suspended from duty, without compensation, for not less than 1 month, and shall be suspended for a longer period or summarily removed from office if circumstances warrant (31 U.S.C. 1349(b)).

If you take a look at the Army Table of Penalties, the penalty for a first offense of willfully using or authorizing the use of a government passenger motor vehicle or aircraft for other than official purposes is a 30 day suspension to removal. And because at least a 1-month suspension is mandated by statute, even for a first offense, a deciding official hearing such a case has no authority to mitigate the penalty to anything less than the 30 day suspension.

Bottom line, if you misuse or authorize the misuse of a government vehicle, plan on a minimum of 30 days off work without pay.

NSPS Close-out & Early Annual Appraisals

With the summer upon us and many supervisors and employees moving to different installations and different positions, it is important to remember the importance of Closeout Assessments and Early Annual Recommended Ratings. When the employee or rating official movement occurs more than 90 days from the end of the NSPS rating cycle (30 September), the supervisor must complete a Closeout Assessment for the employee. When the employee or rating official movement occurs within 90 days before the end of the rating cycle, the supervisor must prepare an Early Annual Recommended Rating. The process for the Early Annual Recommended Rating is the same as if the employee had remained in place through the end of the rating cycle. It is very important that the Early Annual Recommended Rating be completed when required because it is the rating that will go before the appropriate pay pool and will be the basis for the employee's performance payout. The failure of a supervisor to complete either the Closeout Assessment or Early Annual Recommended Rating, as appropriate, will hinder the proper assessment of an employee's performance, and may be the basis for performance based or disciplinary action being taken against the responsible (or irresponsible) supervisor. For a Quick Reference Guide for Interim Reviews, Closeout Assessments, and Early Annual Recommended Ratings, click on the following link: http://cpol.army.mil/library/general/nsps/pm.html; scroll down to the "Assessments" heading and the guide is the first link under that heading. If you have questions concerning Closeout Assessments or Early Annual Recommended Ratings, you may contact your

$$$$ GS TO NSPS CALCULATOR $$$$

The Civilian Personnel Management Service has developed a conversion calculator to assist employees in determining their NSPS career group, pay schedule, pay band, and estimated within-grade increase (WGI) buy-in. This calculator is intended to help you understand the NSPS conversion process, and is not intended to result in official conversion information. The calculator has been updated based on 2009 NSPS pay tables, announced by DoD in January 2009. Your official conversion information, including your WGI buy-in amount, will be communicated to you at the time of conversion. There are some conversion scenarios (mix of occupational series, grade, and responsibilities) that require management decisions. The pro-rated WGI buy-in is not applicable to employees whose performance has been determined to be below an acceptable level. If you have any questions, please consult your servicing LMER Specialist. You can access the calculator at: www.cpms.osd.mil/nsps/conversion/index.html

Strengthening Organizational Effectiveness Through TEAMWORK

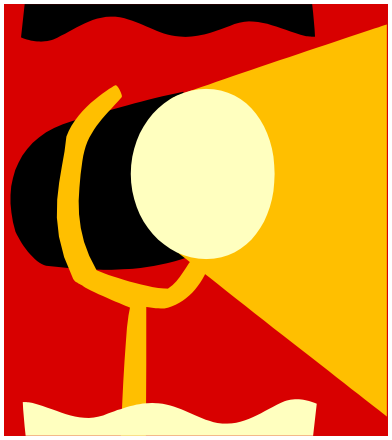
A Collaborative Effort by the NAF Human Resources Team: Ft Belvoir, VA

It's a rare organization in which teamwork is not viewed as adequate and an even rarer one in which teamwork could not be improved upon. With concerted effort, employees within an organization can substantially improve the extent to which various groups communicate, cooperate, and collaborate. Retaining a high level of teamwork, however, requires constant attention and effort by each individual employee involved. This constitutes a universal and sometimes fundamental management challenge.

In leadership workshops, people have consistently and dramatically demonstrated their tendency to develop loyalties to subgroups rather than to the organization-or group-as a whole. One study that we looked over revealed that in a leadership workshop conducted several years ago for forty prospective supervisors, the participants were divided into five groups of eight members each with members from the different represented offices spread among the groups. Each group was allowed twenty minutes to develop five recommendations for improving organizational teamwork. Then each group was given a felt pen in a different color in order to outline, in the different colors, the five suggestions for improvement.

Following the reports, the suggestions were discussed. This was followed by a show of hands vote on which had been the best set of recommendations. Each group received exactly eight votes – everyone in the room voted for his or her own group. Nobody in the workshop opted to look at the big picture by stating, that all of the reports looked good and wondered why they had to select ONLY ONE of the sets as best. And, nobody risked being seen as a group defector by voting for a group other than his or her own.
In setting up these groups, which inessence constituted five new work units, sub-group loyalties developed to a sufficient degree that a " we-they" attitude and syndrome was present in everyone in just the twenty minutes devoted to the exercise. It is no surprise, therefore, that such attitudes are exhibited among people who work together for many years in organizational sub-groups – sections – departments – or larger divisions. It's not that subgroup loyalties are bad in and of themselves. Loyalties develop because people enjoy and even need the feeling of belonging. Most of us appreciate and even seek the comfort of feeling and knowing that we are part of a larger group. It is comforting to know that our associates-fellow team members- not only accept us but also care about us and can – in all ways – be counted on to help in times of need.

Accordingly, we must recognize that subgroup loyalties evolve and that they are an inherent fact of life. The leader's challenge is to recognize this fact, accept it for what it is, but more importantly, work at keeping each individual aware of the overall needs of the larger organization and activity. Or said another way, it is the team leader's responsibility and job to make sure that the subgroup involvements do not get in the way of the larger organization's overall success and mission accomplishment. The effective team leader must work constantly to cultivate the individual's commitment to the work unit by demonstrating that the REAL TEAM to which the individual employee belongs is more than just his or her unit, section, department, or division.



SPOTLIGHT ON:

FORT AP HILL GARRISON—

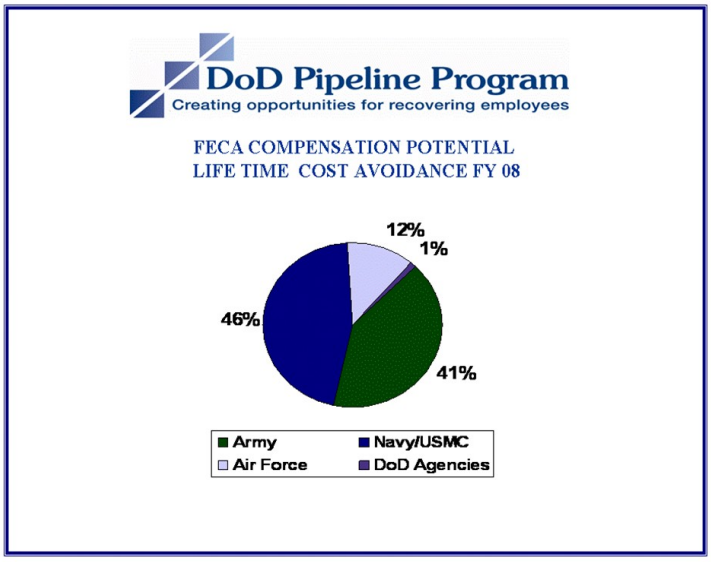
DIRECTORATE PLANS, TRAINING, MOBILITY

Mr. Larry L. Rodgers sustained an on-the-job injury on July 19, 1986. Mr. Rodgers was a former federal employee with the Fort Belvoir Fire Department. Mr. Rodgers has partially recovered and accepted a position with the U.S. Army Garrison, Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobility & Security, Training Division, at Fort A.P. Hill, Virginia on May 11, 2009 through the DoD Pipeline Reemployment Program**.**

The DoD Pipeline Program provides DoD organizations with over hire authority and civilian pay authority necessary to reemploy partially recovered employees suffering from job-related injuries and illnesses. The Pipeline supports the President's Safety, Health and Return-to-Employment (SHARE) initiative by assisting each DoD installation to reduce lost days resulting from injuries. **This job offer resulted in a lifetime cost avoidance savings totaling $291,427.50 to the agency.**

The Fort Belvoir Labor Management Employee Relations Division applauds the Fort AP Hill Garrison for it's efforts in support of the DoD Pipeline Reemployment Program and for creating opportunities for recovering employees. To date more than 607 injured workers have returned to work DoD wide; at a savings of more than $437 million.

These are the kinds of success stories possible, happening nearly everyday, through the Pipeline Program. Please contact Ms. Cisy Newman at the Fort Belvoir CPAC at 703-704-3023 for assistance in creating successes like this one!



Mr. Greg Celesky, Director of DPTMS (left) and Mr. Larry Rodgers (right)

DEPOSIT SERVICE

What Is Deposit Service? Although you may be covered under the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) or the Federal Employees' Retirement System (FERS) now, you may have previous periods of Federal civilian employment during which no retirement contributions were withheld from your pay. Those periods of service are called deposit service or non-deduction service. Since retirement contributions were not withheld from your pay, the Government was not able to save and invest your retirement contributions over the years to help pay for the benefits you will receive when you are eligible to retire.

If you have deposit service or non-deduction service, you may have the option of making a payment (a **deposit**) to the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to fully cover the period of service. If you pay the deposit, you will receive full credit towards retirement for the period of service.

Note: You cannot make a deposit for FERS non-deduction service performed on and *after* January 1, 1989. FERS deposit service on and *after* January 1, 1989 does not count towards retirement. You cannot make a payment to receive credit. FERS deposits are only allowed for service performed before January 1, 1989.

How To Determine If You Have Deposit Service? If your work history includes non-permanent service under an appointment excluded from retirement coverage, you will have deposit service.

Appointments excluded from CSRS include:

- Temporary appointments (limited to 1 year or less);
- Temporary appointments pending establishment of a register (TAPER);
- Term appointments;
- Indefinite appointments; and
- Intermittent appointments (unless you are also on a career or career conditional appointment).

Appointments excluded from FERS include:

- Temporary appointments (limited to 1 year or less); and
- Intermittent appointments (unless you are also on a career or career conditional appointment).

Should I Buy Back My Temporary Time? It depends. The benefits of buying back your temporary time (or making a deposit) is determined by which retirement system you are covered by and when the actual service was performed.

What Retirement System Am I In? You can find out which system you are in (or were in) by looking at block #30 on your SF 50, Notification of Personnel Action. If you have questions about your service history and retirement coverage, you should contact your servicing CPAC Specialist.

Can Deposit Service Affect My Retirement Benefits? Yes. If you do not pay a deposit to cover the period of deposit service, it will affect your retirement. An **unpaid deposit** may affect when you are eligible to retire and how much money you receive in **annuity payments**.

An annuity payment is your monthly retirement benefit. Annuity payments start when you retire and are paid for the rest of your life. If you pay the deposit, you will receive full retirement credit for the period of deposit service.

CSRS or FERS? The rules that determine the effect of an unpaid deposit are different depending upon when the service was performed and whether the service would be creditable under CSRS or FERS.

CSRS Deposit Service
Retirement Contributions Not Withheld

Deposit Service Before 10-1-1982	Deposit Paid	**FULL CREDIT** Service Counts for Eligibility and for Annuity Computations
	Deposit Not Paid	**CREDIT with REDUCTION** Service counts for Eligibility and for Annuity Computations BUT annual annuity is REDUCED by 10% of Deposit Due
Deposit Service On/After 10-1-1982	Deposit Paid	**FULL CREDIT** Service Counts for Eligibility and for Annuity Computations
	Deposit Not Paid	**PARTIAL CREDIT** Service counts for Eligibility, BUT Not for Annuity Computations

FERS Deposit Service
Retirement Contributions Not Withheld

Deposit Service Before 1-1-1989	Deposit Paid	**FULL CREDIT** Service Counts for Eligibility and for Annuity Computations
	Deposit Not Paid	**NO CREDIT** Service DOES NOT Count for Eligibility and for Annuity Computations
Deposit Service On/After 10-1-1982	Deposit Paid	**FULL CREDIT** Service Counts for Eligibility and for Annuity Computations
	Deposit Not Paid	**PARTIAL CREDIT** Service counts for Eligibility, BUT Not for Annuity Computations

How Much Will The Deposit Cost? The amount of your deposit is based on a percentage of the salary you earned during the period of deposit or non-deduction service, plus interest.

For further information you may log onto www.abc.army.mil/retirements/CSRSDepositService.htm or www.abc.army.mil/retirements/FERSDepositService.htm or contact a Benefits Counselor through the ABC-C telephone system, at 1-877-276-9268 or for the hearing impaired, 1-877-276-9833 for TDD.

Submitted by Milicent Price and Dedra Allen/ Ft Belvoir CPAC

OFFERINGS FROM THE CPAC TRAINING GURU

THE COMPUTER/ELECTRONIC ACCOMODATIONS PROGRAM (CAP)

"*CAP provides free assistive technology and services to Federal employees with disabilities, wounded service members, Federal Managers, supervisors, and IT professionals, increasing employment opportunities and access to the information technology environment….*"

If you have a disability and are employed by a component of the Department of Defense, or one of the Federal agencies that has a partnership with CAP you are eligible for CAP services. CAP provides:

- Assistive technology to increase access to the computer and telecommunications environment
- Individualized needs assessments
- Installation, integration and training
- Disability education and awareness

To learn more about CAP, visit www.tricare.osd.mil/cap

CAP TECHNOLOGY EVALUATION CENTER

In order to support the CAP mission, the CAPTEC was developed as a demonstration and assessment facility. Located at the Pentagon, CAPTEC contains computer workstations equipped with a wide variety of equipment designed to accommodate persons with disabilities. People seeking solutions to accessibility challenges can visit CAPTEC to see the assistive technology, compare different solutions, and ensure that the equipment will be compatible with their current computer and/or telecommunications environment. For those unable to visit CPATEC in person, needs assessments technology demonstrations can be conducted via Video Teleconference (VTC). For more information, you should visit their website at www.tricare.osd.mil/cap/acc_solcaptec_appointments.cfm.

ARMY E-LEARNING STATE-OF-THE ART COMPUTER BASED TRAINING AVAILABLE FREE TO THE ARMY WORKFORCE

SkillSoft is an international producer and distributor of interactive server-based training solutions. The company offers thousands of hours of programming covering application development, system administration, office systems, business skills, interpersonal skills, etc. The system also hosts the Rosetta Stone foreign language content provided by Rosetta Stone Ltd.

At ***no cost*** to the individual or their organization, all Army civilian employees are authorized to access over 1,500 Information Technology, Business Skills and Interpersonal Skills courses from any location, around the world. All you have to do to use Army e-learning is get an AKO account and complete your registration. This is a great way to meet your personal training and educational goals.

COLLEGE CREDIT?

Twenty-eight Army e-learning courses have been approved for college credit by the American Council on Education (ACE). Log onto AKO>Self Service>My education>Army e-learning to find documents describing the procedures for receiving ACE credit.

ACADEMIC PARTNERSHIPS

The e-learning program has direct relationships with specific schools that have agreed to accept SkillSoft courses for credit purposes.

CERTIFICATIONS SUPPORTED

Skillsoft provides instructional content to ***prepare*** individuals for over 100 certification exams - ***the actual certification exam needs to be taken via approved testing facilities.*** Log onto: *AKO>Self Service>My education>Army e-learning*

HRD POC—Steve Crandall at 704-704-3005