

## **SEC. 824. ACQUISITION WORKFORCE QUALIFICATIONS.**

(a) QUALIFICATIONS- Section 1724 of title 10, United States Code, is amended--

(1) in subsection (a)--

(A) by striking the matter preceding paragraph (1) and inserting the following:

`(a) CONTRACTING OFFICERS- The Secretary of Defense shall require that, in order to qualify to serve in an acquisition position as a contracting officer with authority to award or administer contracts for amounts above the simplified acquisition threshold referred to in section 2304(g) of this title, an employee of the Department of Defense or member of the armed forces (other than the Coast Guard) must, except as provided in subsections (c) and (d)--';

(B) in paragraph (1)--

(i) by striking `mandatory'; and

(ii) by striking `at the grade level' and all that follows and inserting `(A) in the case of an employee, serving in the position within the grade of the General Schedule in which the employee is serving, and

(B) in the case of a member of the armed forces, in the member's grade;'; and

(C) in paragraph (3)(A), by inserting a comma after `business';

(2) by striking subsection (b) and inserting the following new subsection:

`(b) GS-1102 SERIES POSITIONS AND SIMILAR MILITARY POSITIONS- (1) The Secretary of Defense shall require that in order to qualify to serve in a position in the Department of Defense that is in the GS-1102 occupational series an employee or potential employee of the Department of Defense meet the requirements set forth in paragraph (3) of subsection (a). The Secretary may not require that in order to serve in such a position an employee or potential employee meet any of the requirements of paragraphs (1) and (2) of that subsection.

`(2) The Secretary of Defense shall require that in order for a member of the armed forces to be selected for an occupational specialty within the armed forces that (as determined by the Secretary) is similar to the GS-1102 occupational series a member of the armed forces meet the requirements set forth in paragraph (3) of subsection (a). The Secretary may not require that in order to be selected for such an occupational specialty a member meet any of the requirements of paragraphs (1) and (2) of that subsection.'; and

(3) by striking subsections (c) and (d) inserting the following new subsections:

`(c) EXCEPTIONS- The qualification requirements imposed by the Secretary of Defense pursuant to subsections (a) and (b) shall not apply to an employee of the Department of Defense or member of the armed forces who--

`(1) served as a contracting officer with authority to award or administer contracts in excess of the simplified acquisition threshold on or before September 30, 2000;

`(2) served, on or before September 30, 2000, in a position either as an employee in the GS-1102 series or as a member of the armed forces in a similar occupational specialty;

`(3) is in the contingency contracting force; or

`(4) is described in subsection (e)(1)(B).

`(d) WAIVER- The acquisition career program board concerned may waive any or all of the requirements of subsections (a) and (b) with respect to an employee of the Department of Defense or member of the armed forces if the board certifies that the individual possesses significant potential for advancement to levels of greater responsibility and authority, based on demonstrated job performance and qualifying experience. With respect to each waiver granted under this subsection, the board shall set forth in a written document the rationale for its decision to waive such requirements. Such document shall be submitted to and retained by the Director of Acquisition Education, Training, and Career Development.

`(e) DEVELOPMENTAL OPPORTUNITIES- (1) The Secretary of Defense may--

`(A) establish or continue one or more programs for the purpose of recruiting, selecting, appointing, educating, qualifying, and developing the careers of individuals to meet the requirements in subparagraphs (A) and (B) of subsection (a)(3);

`(B) appoint individuals to developmental positions in those programs; and

`(C) separate from the civil service after a three-year probationary period any individual appointed under this subsection who fails to meet the requirements described in subsection (a)(3).

`(2) To qualify for any developmental program described in paragraph (1)(B), an individual shall have--

`(A) been awarded a baccalaureate degree, with a grade point average of at least 3.0 (or the equivalent), from an accredited institution of higher education authorized to grant baccalaureate degrees; or

`(B) completed at least 24 semester credit hours or the equivalent of study from an accredited institution of higher education in any of the disciplines of accounting,

business, finance, law, contracts, purchasing, economics, industrial management, marketing, quantitative methods, or organization and management.

`(f) CONTINGENCY CONTRACTING FORCE- The Secretary shall establish qualification requirements for the contingency contracting force consisting of members of the armed forces whose mission is to deploy in support of contingency operations and other operations of the Department of Defense, including--

`(1) completion of at least 24 semester credit hours or the equivalent of study from an accredited institution of higher education or similar educational institution in any of the disciplines of accounting, business, finance, law, contracts, purchasing, economics, industrial management, marketing, quantitative methods, or organization and management; or

`(2) passing an examination that demonstrates skills, knowledge, or abilities comparable to that of an individual who has completed at least 24 semester credit hours or the equivalent of study in any of the disciplines described in paragraph (1).'

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT- Section 1732(c)(2) of such title is amended by inserting a comma after `business'.