



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
CORPS OF ENGINEERS, NORTHWESTERN DIVISION
PO BOX 2870
PORTLAND OR 97208-2870

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

CENWD-MT-E (1130)

21 APR 2003

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: NWD Policy Memorandum #1-03, Professional Registration Policy for
Northwestern Division

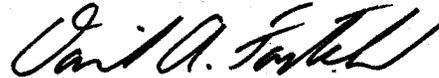
1. In November 2001, HQUSACE issued ER 690-1-1212 prescribing positions requiring professional registration, based on responsibilities associated with the positions. The long standing AR 690-950, that designates few key positions requiring professional registration by specific job titles, is supplemented by this ER which requires supervisors to determine additional positions requiring professional registration based on the responsibilities. This Policy Memorandum applies the requirements of ER 690-1-1212 to identify positions within NWD elements where the requirement for professional registration is applicable.
2. To be the world's premier public engineering organization, and to be recognized for the technical and professional excellence of our world-class workforce, it is vital that corporate emphasis be placed on encouraging active participation in professional organizations and registration of technical proficiencies. While encouragement for professional registration has been on-going for a long time, requiring professional registration as a selection factor for appointment had limitations due to OPM qualifications standards, requiring that registration must be essential for acceptable performance of the work for the position to be filled. The latest ER elaborates what constitutes being essential for acceptable performance. Using the definitions of responsibilities associated with positions that require professional registration, we applied the ER requirements to identify positions within NWD elements for implementation.
3. While we strongly encourage professional registration or certification of technical proficiency for all professional Career Programs in all functional areas of the NWD elements, those mandatory requirements of this policy are applicable only to those CP18 positions in job series 0801 through 0896, 1350, 1370, 1372 and 1373 that require performing engineering functions including construction related activities. For these positions, we require all GS-13 and above to be registered, and also require registration for any other grades in positions that require performing tasks that directly impact public safety and health. Further details of this policy are contained in the enclosed document.

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4. It is important to note this will not affect the grade or ability to continue to serve for anyone currently in a position affected by this policy. All are grand fathered for the position they are currently in.
5. This policy is to be effective immediately.
6. The hard work done and input provided by District DPMs, Chiefs of E&C, and Ops and several other Division members is appreciated.

Encl



DAVID A. FASTABEND
Brigadier General, USA
Commanding

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PROFESSIONAL REGISTRATION POLICY
FOR NORTHWESTERN DIVISION
18 APRIL 2003

1. Purpose. This regulation supplements the referenced regulations, and establishes the Northwestern Division (NWD) policy regarding professional registration for positions in the Engineers and Scientists (Resources & Construction) CP-18 career program. It also suggests policy and guidance concerning professional certifications in all professional Career Programs for all functional areas of the NWD elements. This program supports the USACE policy to attract and retain a world-class workforce.

2. Applicability. This regulation applies to all elements of NWD.

3. References.

AR 690-950, Civilian Personnel - Career Management

ER 690-1-1212, Professional Registration as a Selective Placement Factor

ER 1110-1-8152, Professional Registration

4. Distribution Statement. Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited.

5. Background.

a. The USACE Campaign Plan addresses strategic objective to attract and retain a world-class workforce, and one of the strategies is to sustain technical excellence by encouraging active participation in professional organizations and registration or certification of technical proficiencies.

b. AR 690-950 (ref. a.) addresses USACE requirement for professional registrations in key technical management positions. It identifies specific positions in HQUSACE, division, and district levels that require professional registration. ER 690-1-1212 (ref. b.) supplements the AR, by prescribing USACE policy on registration requirements that is not dependent on specific position titles. In addition to the key positions as identified in ref. a., ref. b. requires professional registration for positions having one or more of the following responsibilities:

(1) Final approval of engineering products and services to ensure the protection of life, property and the environment, including positions in each principal discipline that is responsible for the technical adequacy of that disciplines products and services.

(2) Providing authoritative engineering, construction and/or operations advice and determinations that could affect public safety and/or health.

(3) Oversight and certification of the technical adequacy and safety of existing facilities.

(4) Authoritative interpretation and administration of construction contracts.

(5) Developing engineering, construction, and/or operations policy, criteria and/or standards that could affect public safety and health.

(6) Representing USACE in relationships with professional associations, industry organizations, and government agencies on critical engineering, construction, and/or operations issues where registration is essential to achieve confidence, respect and cooperation.

6. Objective. The objective of this regulation is to advance professionalism in all functional areas of NWD elements by establishing NWD policy on professional registration and certifications that is commensurate with the USACE Strategic Vision and the Campaign Plan, as well as policies established by HQUSACE concerning professional registration.

7. Policy.

a. Professional registration or certification is strongly encouraged for all professions in any grade level. Although professional registration or certification may not be a condition of employment, it may be used in considering an employee's qualifications for a position. Such professional registration or certification shall be applicable to the major functions associated with that position, and shall be one that is widely recognized by professional associations, industry organizations or government agencies.

b. Professional registration shall be required as condition of employment for all grades GS-13 and above, limited to those CP18 positions in job series 0801 through 0896, 1350, 1370, 1372 and 1373 that require performing engineering and construction functions.

c. Professional registration shall be required for positions in any grade that require performing:

(1) Independent technical reviews of complex or high-risk projects, in areas that have direct impact on ensuring the protection of life, property and environment.

(2) Inspections of bridges, dams and other structures that have direct impact on public safety.

(3) Decision making on issues that directly affect public safety and/or health. For programs and project delivery teams that are involved in technical services and products, professional registration or certification of program and project managers may be a significant factor in the selection of the program or project manager for the team. Program and Project Managers that do not have professional registration shall not make any engineering decisions that impact public safety and health.

d. If a currently filled position is newly identified as requiring professional registration or certification, the requirement for registration or certification is waived for the duration of the current employee's incumbency.

e. Management shall ensure that strong efforts are made to encourage registration or certification to all employees, and appropriate mentoring, references, and other form of support are given to those seeking registration or certification. The following shall also be considered as means to promote registration:

(1) Granting excused absence from duty without loss of pay and without charge to other paid leave for the purpose of taking examination for professional registration or certification. This provision shall not cover time spent in preparing for such examinations.

(2) Include professional registration or certification as one of the short-term objectives for the employee's Individual Development Plan (IDP), and include appropriate training in the IDP. Fiscal rules permit the Government to pay for training required primarily for the performance of official duties, and currently* do not permit the Government to reimburse employees for expenses associated with training for the sole purpose of obtaining initial registration. However, training permitted for reimbursement by the Government may be used to comply with continuing education requirements for registration renewal purposes and refresher courses for obtaining registration, as long as the training is for improvement of job performance as identified in the IDP.

*(Note: Public Law 107-107, Section 1112, 28 Dec 2001, was passed to amend Chapter 57 of title 5, United States Code with inclusion of a new section 5757-*Payment of expenses to obtain professional credentials*. This law allows agency to use appropriated funds or funds otherwise available to the agency to pay for expenses associated with employee's professional registration or certification. Future HQ directive is anticipated regarding USACE policy for compliance with this law, at which time, the provisions of this NWD policy shall be modified as required to comply with HQUSACE policy.)

8. Action. NWD elements should review the referenced regulations, this supplement and their current job positions and add professional registration or certification requirements to those jobs that are affected by this policy. Recruitment of positions affected by this policy shall have recruitment plans that address professional registration or certification as one of the selection factors. Each office affected by this policy shall monitor the number of registered or certified personnel on an annual basis to determine the statistical trend of the registered or certified personnel in the workforce.