

# **THE ARMY CREDENTIALING PROGRAM**

**1 AUGUST 2016**

**PROFESSIONALIZE THE FORCE....**

**INCREASE READINESS....**

**APPROVAL DRAFT**

**AS OF 1 AUGUST 2016**



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*In May 2012, President Barack Obama announced Military Credentialing initiatives as part of the larger "We Can't Wait: Supporting Our Veterans" <sup>1</sup> program to help service members obtain civilian credentials and licenses for manufacturing and other high-demand skills received from attending military schools. It established a Military Credentialing and Licensing Task Force that within a year would complete; (1) identify military specialties that readily transfer to high-demand jobs; (2) work with civilian credentialing and licensing associations to address gaps between military training programs and credentialing and licensing requirements; and (3) provide service members with greater access to necessary certification and licensing exams. <sup>1</sup>*

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## **Section I: Framing the Concept**

### **1. Purpose**

The Army Credentialing Program provides every Soldier within the Total Force the opportunity to obtain applicable, high quality credentials by validating their individual Soldier skills, training, and work experiences. Credentialing improves military-technical competence, thereby improving Army readiness, while enhancing a Soldier's ability to secure meaningful employment upon transitioning from military service. The strategy outlined in this document will help to integrate and synchronize the ends, ways and means necessary for program establishment. The result is that Soldiers develop an enhanced capability to serve our Nation while in uniform and increase civilian employment opportunities after their military service.

This is a Commander's program which supports the strategic objectives of the Army by creating agile, adaptive, and innovative Soldiers, improved Total Force Readiness, and creating trusted Professionals – "Soldiers for Life". Achievement of the strategic endstate results in: Soldiers who exude pride in their profession, understand the value of their contributions to the Army's mission, and who appreciate the benefits of a career in the Army; Soldiers who demonstrate a deepened commitment to their designated specialty and who seek to further improve their functional skills; and Soldiers better prepared to enter the competitive civilian job market.

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<sup>1</sup> White House Press Release, 31 May 2012.

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*In December 2014, The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015, Public Law 113-291 specifically addressed service member education, training, and transition by enhancing authorities to assist members of the armed forces in obtaining profession credentials. The Secretary of Defense was directed to “carry out a program to enable members of the armed forces to obtain, while serving in the armed forces, professional credentials related to military training and skills that— (1) are acquired during service in the armed forces incident to the performance of their military duties; and (2) translate into civilian occupations.”<sup>2</sup>*

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## **2. The Problem**

The credentialing landscape is complex due to many factors. There are countless agencies offering vetted and un-vetted credentialing opportunities. Those credentials span both academic and vocational pursuits, some with minimal legal oversight. Further adding to the complexity is the difficulty in translating knowledge, skills, and attributes from military service to civilian employment. Within the Army, multiple organizations, including U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), U.S. Army Medical Command (MEDCOM) and other Army training schools, have separately developed credentialing opportunities aligned to various external organizations with varying degrees of success. Additionally, the alignment of nationally recognized credentials to some of the Army’s Military Occupational Specialties (MOS)/Functional Areas (FA) are fairly recognizable, but not all. The existing programs offered by Centers of Excellence and Army training schools, and facilitated by the TRADOC Credentialing Office, have made great progress for credentialing within the institutional learning domain. However, the Army lacks a unifying framework and a conceptual foundation to guide and synchronize credentialing efforts, hampering progress for credentialing efforts that may span the institutional, operational, and self-development learning domains, across the entirety of a Soldier’s Career Life Cycle. Furthermore, these credentialing landscape intricacies make it challenging for leaders to guide their Soldiers when trying to understand, access, and leverage credentialing opportunities in support of, or beyond, their military expertise or functional area.

## **3. Army Credentialing Program Fundamentals**

For the purpose of this program, credentialing is the process of meeting certain professional and technical standards by earning official recognition in the form of certificates, licenses, and other official verification of competency accepted by civilian industry or federal, state, or local authorities. This program will not address academic degrees, though they too are a form of official credential. (See Appendix B for further explanation and common industry definitions)

There are thousands of different credentials available in the United States which are often categorized by type, aligned to various vocational fields, and further differentiated by level. In general, and for the purpose of this program, these credentials will be referred to as either a *license* or *certificate*.

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<sup>2</sup> National Defense Authorization Act 2015, Subtitle E “Member Education, Training, and Transition”, SEC. 551. December 2014

#### 153 *a. License*

154  
155 Government issued credentials typically take the form of a license which is earned through a  
156 licensure/licensing process managed at the local, state, or federal level. A license is issued upon  
157 demonstrating the requisite skills, which may include a certificate or other requirements, in order  
158 to legally perform a specific function. Examples include state issued Commercial Driver's  
159 Licenses, Federal Aviation Administration issued Pilot Licenses, and state or municipal issued  
160 contractor licenses.  
161

#### 162 *b. Certificate*

163  
164 A certificate program and a certification program are often used interchangeably but by  
165 industry standards they may be considered quite differently. An organization which formally  
166 develops an individual's knowledge, skills, or competencies is conducting certification. Those  
167 organizations may then formally recognize their mastery or capacity within a specialty area by  
168 awarding a certificate. Industry certificates are typically issued from a third-party, independent,  
169 industry-recognized agency, such as the American Culinary Federation or the American Welding  
170 Society. For the purpose of the Army Credentialing Program, a certificate is documentation and  
171 formal recognition of a certification process through prescribed training, coursework, etc., by  
172 which an individual is certified to perform a particular set of skills, in a specialty or functional  
173 area, acknowledging a certain level of expertise.  
174

### 175 **4. Army Credentialing Program Objective**

176  
177 The primary objective of the Army Credentialing Program is to directly impact Army  
178 readiness by establishing and implementing programs to validate Soldiers' professional skills,  
179 training, and work experiences, and to bolster military-technical competence within the Army  
180 Total Force. Professional credentialing provides a clear and objective picture of a Soldier's  
181 competence, better the Soldier's capabilities, enhances duty performance, and expands upon  
182 U.S. Army capacity. Credentialing not only adds to a Soldier's personal and professional  
183 development, but it also enhances a Soldier's ability to secure meaningful employment after  
184 transitioning from service. Credentialing programs promote life-long learning and professional  
185 development opportunities throughout the Soldier Career Life Cycle which supports the  
186 principles of the "Soldier for Life" philosophy.  
187

188 This framework will attempt to improve: *Transparency* – allowing for shared understanding  
189 across the community of practice with increased awareness and tailoring to the needs of the  
190 Soldier, *Equity* – creating clearly visible pathways through more opportunity and greater  
191 transparency meant to increase personal and professional development across all cohorts,  
192 *Comparability* – making it possible for improved collaboration thereby increasing value and  
193 credibility, and *Portability* – allowing for the meaningful translation of learning outcomes and  
194 fluid transfer across institutions and between employers.  
195

196 The Army Credentialing Program Strategy Map (Appendix A) focuses on two lines of effort  
197 (LOE):  
198

- 199 • Institutional Delivery of Credential Opportunities
- 200 • Soldier Initiated Credential Opportunities



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On 12 June 2013, the Assistant Secretary of the Army, Manpower and Reserve Affairs (ASA M&RA) signed a revised memorandum authorizing and encouraging the Army to “conduct programs for professional credentialing of Soldiers throughout the Soldier’s lifecycle of service as part of their continued professional education and enhancement of skills and capabilities.” <sup>3</sup>

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## Section II: Ends

The practicability of a strategy is determined by how ways and means interact to achieve the ends. Sections II, III, and IV provide the strategy framework with specific objectives and tasks which begin to describe the interaction between ways and means which will achieve the Army Credentialing Program’s three strategic ends:

- Develop Agile, Adaptive, and Innovative Soldiers
- Improved Total Force Readiness
- Trusted Professionals... “Soldiers for Life”

### 1. Develop Agile, Adaptive, and Innovative Soldiers

The Army Credentialing Program supports the development of agile, adaptive, and innovative Soldiers and leaders with the capacity to thrive in the complex environment described in the Army Operating Concept. Implementation of credentialing programs will promote life-long learning and development opportunities throughout the Soldier Career Life Cycle. Credentialing provides clear, objective evidence of an individual’s competence, improves pride and job performance through recognition, encourages continued professional education, and develops improved capabilities and readiness in the Total Force. In order to dominate on tomorrow’s battlefield, the Army must not only invest in long-term technological and materiel solutions, but it must also invest in its people, as they are the most important resource available to the U. S. Army. While the Army has historically valued the ingenuity and creativity of its Soldiers, the ambiguous and decentralized combat environment of the 21st century makes agile, adaptive, and innovative Soldiers an especially valuable resource.

### 2. Improved Total Force Readiness

The Army Credentialing Program supports Total Force readiness by broadening a Soldier’s knowledge, skills, and abilities beyond those developed through the training, education, and experience they would normally receive through military means alone. Credentialing contributes to strengthening mutual trust both in and outside of the military by providing relevant and high quality standards of expertise, and improves Soldier competencies by helping them understand and achieve industry standards. The Army Credentialing Program is meant to be applied and used across all three learning domains (institutional, operational, and self-development), which include all components (Active, Army National Guard, and Army Reserve) of the enlisted, warrant officer, and officer cohorts. The Army Credentialing Program does not include the

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<sup>3</sup> ASA (M&RA) Memorandum, “Army Credentialing Program,” 12 June 2013.

246 Army Civilian Corps, as it is covered under the Civilian Personnel Management System, nor  
247 does it include credentials required by the proponent in order to attain the MOS.  
248

### 249 **3. Trusted Professionals... “Soldiers for Life”**

250  
251 The Army Credentialing Program provides measures of professionalism that are recognized  
252 by our Army and Nation with credentials that tie to and nest with the “Soldier for Life”  
253 philosophy. An Army Professional is an individual who meets the Army Profession’s  
254 certification criteria in character, competence, and commitment. Credentialing supports three of  
255 the five essential characteristics of the Army Profession; specifically military expertise, trust, and  
256 stewardship of the profession. Army Professionals receive initial and progressive credentials  
257 during their military service which increase their military-technical competence. Army  
258 Professionals also continue to certify and use their credentials within both public and private  
259 sectors after their terms of military service are complete. This strategy coordinates and  
260 synchronizes activities to ensure every Soldier has an opportunity to pursue a professional  
261 credential enhancing their military-technical competence while in the service and aiding in their  
262 professional competence when transitioning to the civilian workforce.  
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## Section III: Ways

This program defines Army resourced credentialing opportunities that Soldiers can receive through military training, education, experience, and self-development, thereby receiving credit for credit earned. Supported credentialing opportunities are those that are issued by a non-DoD government agency or independent non-government credentialing agency, those which improve Total Force readiness, and those which better prepare Soldiers for a career post-service.

### 1. LOE#1 Institutional Delivery of Credential Opportunities

Credentials within this line of effort are fully resourced, covering all costs to obtain the credential. Army training schools identify those credentials which cover the preponderance of the Soldier's duties and directly support the improvement of Soldier readiness and MOS/FA capability and capacity. Obtaining and maintaining these credentials provides clear and long-term benefit to Army readiness. Army training schools must account for Programs of Instruction (POI), Soldier testing, and credentialing costs. The Centralized Credentialing Fund will be utilized to support the maintenance of these credentials outside of the institution.

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| <b>Support provided</b>  | -Provide and/or pay for training (including preparatory courses), continuing education expenses, texts/supplies, and testing fees   |
| <b>Criteria</b>          | -Credential must be identified by the proponent   |
| <b>Funding mechanism</b> | -Funding is through the TRAS and related POM submission process   |
| <b>Possible Examples</b> | -Commercial Drivers License for 88M MOS<br>-Initiative to develop a Workforce Management Credential tied to Non-Commissioned Officer Education System<br>-Can include functional training (e.g., Safety, Master Fitness Trainer, SHARP) |
| <b>Notes</b>             | -Demonstrated military applicability and value for continued maintenance of certification   |

### 2. LOE#2 Soldier Initiated Credential Opportunities

These credentials ensure that Soldiers receive appropriate credit for military education, training, and experience. They may support the improvement of Soldier readiness and MOS/FA capability and capacity, but may also support Soldier-initiated credentials that have no direct linkage to the Soldier's MOS/FA. A Centralized Credentialing Fund, once established, will be available to cover the costs to obtain and maintain the credential, however, resourcing may not exceed \$800 per Soldier per fiscal year and \$4600<sup>4</sup> per Soldier during the course of a career, unless an exception to policy is approved. The local Education Center will assist Soldiers in accessing the Centralized Credentialing Fund. Soldiers may otherwise elect to utilize GI Bill, personal funds or other external sources to cover credentialing costs.

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<sup>4</sup> Amounts are based on FY19 submissions and subject to change at any time

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| <b>Support provided</b>  | -Provide and/or pay for all types of associated costs including preparatory courses, texts/supplies, test fees within the cost cap<br>-After reaching cost cap, Soldier is responsible for costs including all testing and associated maintenance (recertification) fees   |
| <b>Criteria</b>          | -Credential must meet eligibility screening requirements<br>-No requirement to be MOS associated   |
| <b>Funding mechanism</b> | - Soldier costs are funded through the Army Centralized Credentialing Fund which is obtained through a separate POM submission process than LOE #1   |
| <b>Possible Examples</b> | -AMMO 62 (HAZMAT shipping), Professional Engineer, Project Management Professional<br>-8K Army Instructor to industry trainer<br>-Can support an individual maintaining a functional certification (e.g., HAZMAT, Defense CBRNE Response Force Technical Rescue) when no longer needed to fulfill a unit position and/or mission requirement |
| <b>Notes</b>             | -Fully supports the mandate of ensuring Soldiers receive credit for military education and training<br>-Limitations required to address the reality of resource constraints  |

## Section IV: Means

Professional credentials provide clear, objective evidence of an individual's competence which may help when identifying appropriate Soldiers for specific duties and encourage continued professional military education which expand upon capabilities and Total Force readiness. Additionally, independent and common credentialing can help foster trust and cooperation between civilian and military sectors of society.<sup>5</sup> The Army supports a number of opportunities for Soldiers to pursue credentials while in the service through Army training schools, individual study, military/industry partnerships, and the Career Skills Programs during their transition from military service to civilian employment.

Army training school POIs are focused on training to Army standards. To increase the rate of innovation and flexibility within POIs, Army training schools may leverage credentialing standards in order to better attain learning outcomes which enhance and distinguish a Soldier's capability and proficiency. Doing so also provides the Soldier with readily transferable and recognized knowledge, skills and abilities aiding in their transition from the military.

Army appropriated funds may pay for expenses associated with credentialing. The term "expenses" means the costs including registration fees, study materials, classroom instruction, hands-on training, materials and manuals processing, tests, test site and related fees, and membership and recertification fees.

As previously mentioned, Army credentialing efforts focus on two LOEs to achieve the program's strategic objectives and the strategic endstate. Eight initiatives and multiple supporting actions support these lines of effort.

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<sup>5</sup> Under Secretary of Defense Memorandum, Payment of Professional Credentialing Expenses for Military Members, 16 July 2009

| INITIATIVES   | LOE 1  | LOE 2                                      |
|---|--|--|
|   | Institutional Delivery of Credential Opportunities | Soldier Initiated Credential Opportunities |
| Identify credentials aligned with MOS/ASI/FA                            | X  |  |
| POI review/incorporate relevant changes to bridge identified gaps       | X  |  |
| Adopt nationally recognized standards/vocabulary                        | X  |  |
| Develop and maintain MOAs/MOUs where applicable                         | X  |  |
| Collaborate with partners for possible new credentials                  | X  |  |
| Further develop funding sources for credentialing objectives            |  | X  |
| Create a credentialing system of record that supports talent management | X  | X  |
| Inform Soldiers and Leaders on credentialing opportunities and benefits | X  | X  |

## 1. LOE#1: Institutional Delivery of Credential Opportunities

- Identify relevant, high quality credentials which align with MOS/Additional Skill Identifier (ASI)/FA
  - Identification of credentials associated with MOS/ASI/FA and further alignment to training and POIs remains a key first step in the development of potential credentialing opportunities, and must include a periodic review and cross-functional analysis in order to benefit the Army at large
- Conduct comparative analysis of credential requirements and POI standards in order to determine potential gaps which may be addressed to the betterment of the Army and develop a strategy to bridge identified gaps
  - In some cases, training modules and tests may need to occur in the operational or self-development domains outside of the Army training school
- Conduct analysis of credentialing environment and adopt common standards and/or vocabulary between civilian industry and Army credentialing communities of practice, where appropriate
- Develop and maintain Memorandums of Agreement/Memorandums of Understanding (MOA/MOU)/Contracts with credentialing authorities, where applicable
  - Acceptance by credentialing agencies to grant appropriate credit towards credentials for associated military training and experience
  - Provide periodic updates to account for POI changes and to reflect changes in industry standards
  - Consolidate and centralize oversight of MOAs/MOUs to prevent duplication of effort and facilitate sharing of opportunities and best practices across proponents
- Collaborate with credentialing agencies, in specialized areas, where opportunities may exist for the military to partner with a credentialing agency in order to originate credentials that better document the knowledge, skills, and abilities that exist within an MOS/FA in relation to civilian industry.
- Create a single system of record to document and record training and experience relevant to credentialing opportunities
- Inform Soldiers and leaders of credentialing opportunities and benefits

- Leverage existing systems, such as the Army Career Tracker, the Digital Job Book, and others, in order to document the Soldier's credentialing progress

- **LOE#2: Soldier Initiated Credential Opportunities**

- Further develop funding sources for credentialing opportunities
- Create a single system of record to document and record training and experience relevant to credentialing opportunities
- Inform Soldiers and leaders of credentialing opportunities and benefits
  - Use online tools, such as Army Career Tracker and Digital Job Book, to support Soldier and leader understanding of credentialing opportunities, requirements, and associated tasks/timelines which support the individual's developmental goals
  - Further leverage those online tools in order to document the Soldier's credentialing progress
  - Use the installation Education Center to increase the Soldier and leader understanding of credentialing opportunities

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385  
386 *The Army Credentialing Program and Career Skills Programs are part of being a Soldier for Life and are*  
387 *elements of the Soldier Career Life Cycle Model that encourage Soldiers to capitalize on training and*  
388 *development opportunities throughout their military careers so that they grow and develop as*  
389 *Soldiers, fully capable of serving our Nation while in uniform, and as professional, credentialed*  
390 *civilians after their military service.*<sup>6</sup>  
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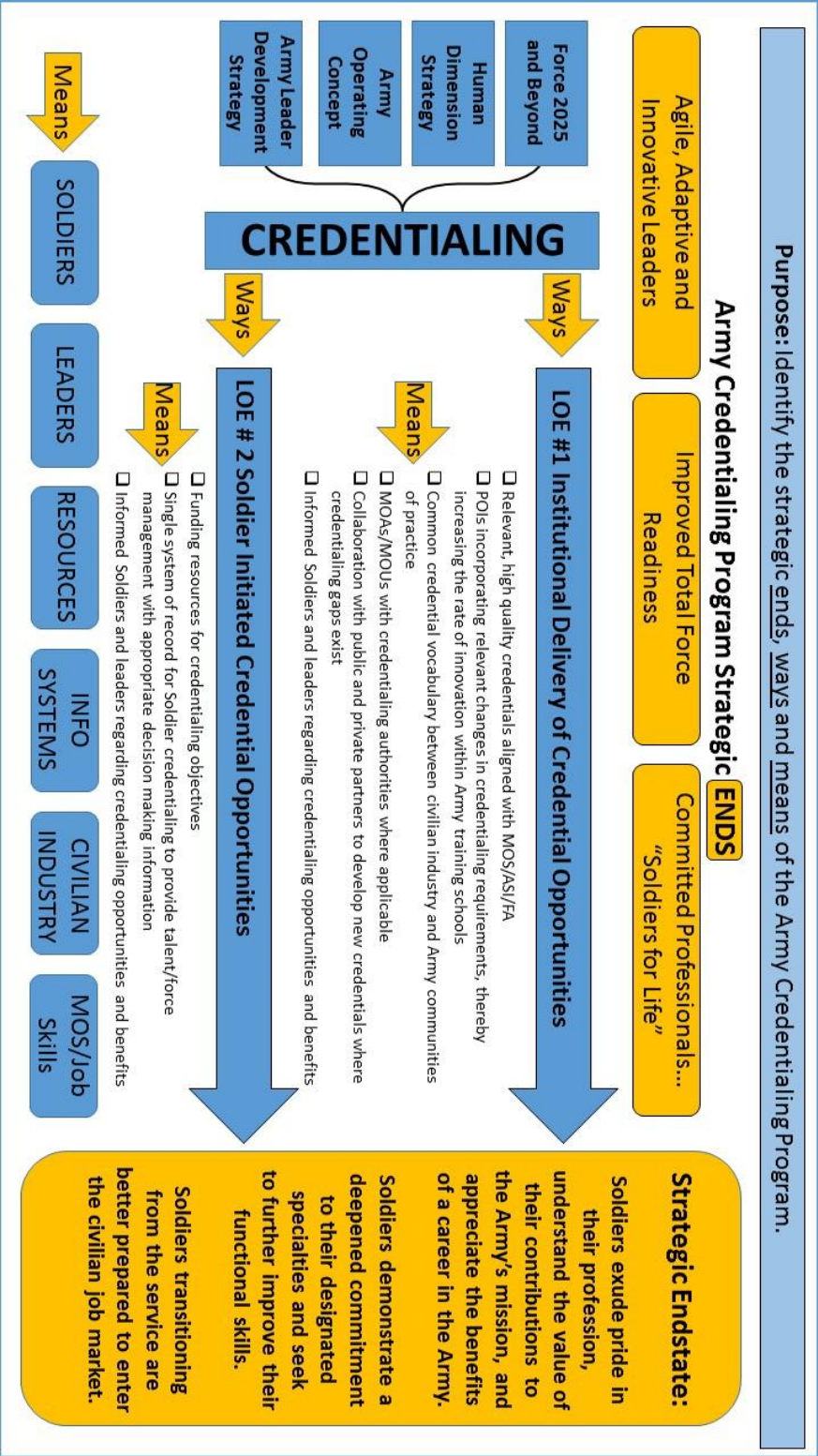
## 392 393 **Section V: Summary**

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395 Institutionalizing the Army Credentialing Program and adopting high quality standards for  
396 credentials will help create the agile, adaptive, and innovative Soldiers necessary to perform in  
397 the 21<sup>st</sup> century security environment. The ACP further supports the Army by enhancing  
398 operational agility, improving Army Professional Military Education, and creating trusted  
399 Professionals across the Total Force in support of the Army Operating Concept. The program  
400 will improve readiness and provide opportunities for Soldiers to earn vetted credentials, aiding in  
401 their likelihood of post-service employment.  
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<sup>5</sup> Under Secretary of Defense Memorandum, Payment of Professional Credentialing Expenses for Military Members, 16 July 2009

Appendix A: Army Credentialing Program Strategy Map





## Appendix B: Credentialing Terms

**Centralized Credential Fund:** an Army centrally resourced and managed fund, similar to the Tuition Assistance (TA) fund, used to resource Soldier initiated credential opportunities.

**Certification:** the voluntary process by which a non-governmental entity grants a time-limited recognition and use of a credential to an individual after verifying that he or she has met predetermined and standardized criteria. It is the vehicle that a profession or occupation uses to differentiate among its members, using standards, sometimes developed through a consensus-driven process, based on existing legal and psychometric requirements. It is the recognition or credential given to individuals who have met predetermined qualifications set by an agency of government, industry, or a profession. (DODI 1400.25-V410)

**Credential:** evidence of authority, status, rights, entitlement to privileges, or the like, usually in written form. A systematic review process used by an organization to assess and confirm that a credential seeker is competent and qualified to work in a designated field, having demonstrated requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities. It is an umbrella term for occupational licensure and certification. Examples include Six Sigma Black Belt from the American Society for Quality; Certified Executive Chef from the American Culinary Federation, Inc.; Advanced Engine Performance Specialist from the National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence; and Electrician License from the State of Utah.

**Credentialing Expenses:** costs including registration fees; the cost of study materials, classroom instruction, hands-on training, materials and manuals; processing, tests, test site and related fees; and membership and recertification fees.

**Credentialing Opportunities:** credentialing opportunities toward which the Army will commit resources.

**Education:** a structured process to impart knowledge through teaching and learning to enable or enhance an individual's ability to perform in unknown situations. Instruction with increased knowledge, skill, and/or experience as the desired outcome for the student. This is in contrast to training, where a task or performance basis is used and specific conditions and standards are used to assess individual and unit proficiency. (AR 350-1) It is also developing an employee's general knowledge, capabilities, and character through exposure of learning theories, concepts, and information. Education is traditionally delivered by an accredited institution, and may relate to a current or future mission-related assignment. (DODI 1400.25-V410)

**Institutional Delivery of Credential Opportunities:** credential opportunities managed by Army training schools, resourced through the training requirements analysis system (TRAS) and related program objective memorandum (POM) submission process, and delivered through approved Programs of Instruction (POI).

**Licensure/Licensing:** the act or process by which a governmental agency grants time-limited permission to an individual to engage in a given occupation after verifying that he/she has met predetermined and standardized criteria, and offers title protection for those who meet that

criteria. The process by which a government agency (federal, state, or local) grants permission to an individual to engage in a given occupation upon finding the applicant has attained the minimum degree of competency required to engage in that occupation. (DODI 1400.25-V410)

**Program Objective Memorandum:** a recommendation from the Services and Defense Agencies to the Office of the Secretary of Defense concerning how they plan to allocate resources for programs to meet the Service Program Guidance (SPG) and Defense Planning Guidance (DPG).

**Proponent:** an Army organization or staff that has been assigned primary responsibility for material or subject matter in its area of interest. The Commander or Commandant of an Army training school which controls the Program of Instruction is considered to be the proponent for that Program of Instruction.

**Soldier Initiated Credential Opportunities:** credential opportunities paid for by a Centralized Credentialing Fund, resourced through a separate program objective memorandum (POM) submission process than that of Institutionally Delivered Credential Opportunities, and administered through Army Education Center processes.

**Training:** a structured process designed to increase the capability of individuals or units to perform specified tasks or skills in known situations. Process of providing for and making available to an employee, and placing or enrolling the employee in, a planned, prepared, and coordinated program, course, curriculum, subject, system, or routine of instruction or education, in scientific, professional, technical, mechanical, trade, clerical, fiscal, administrative, or other fields that will improve individual and organizational performance and assist in achieving the agency's mission and performance goals. (DODI 1400.25-V410)

**Training Requirements Analysis System:** the management system that provides for the documentation of training and resource requirements in time to inject them into a resource acquisition systems. The TRAS uses three types of documents: individual training plans, course administrative data, and programs of instruction.

## Appendix C: Implementation Guidance

1. **Office of Primary Responsibility and exception authority:** IAW HQDA EXORD 214-15 (Establishment of the Army University) the Office of Primary Responsibility (OPR) of this program is Headquarters, Department of the Army, Deputy Chief of Staff, G-1. The OPR has the authority to approve exceptions or waivers to this program that are consistent with controlling law and regulations. As the Office of Coordinating Responsibility (OCR), the Commanding General, United States Army Human Resources Command, Army Continuing Education System, Chief Education Division, hereafter referred to as HQ ACES, may also approve exceptions and waivers to this program. The OPR may delegate this approval authority, in writing, to a division chief within the OPR agency or a direct reporting unit or field operating agency of the OPR agency in the grade of colonel or civilian equivalent or above. Activities may request a waiver to this program by providing justification that includes a full analysis of the expected benefits and must include formal review by the activity's senior legal officer. All waiver requests will be endorsed by the commander or senior leader of the requesting activity and forwarded through their higher headquarters to the program proponent.

### 2. **Purpose:**

- a. The Army Credentialing Program Implementation Guidance (ACPIG) establishes and implements a credentialing process to validate individual Soldier skills, training, and work experiences and improve military-technical competence. It provides a unified framework to guide and synchronize credentialing efforts in education and training environments across the Total Force.
- b. Implementation provides opportunities for every Soldier within the Total Force to obtain credentials and encourages Soldiers to capitalize on training and development opportunities throughout their military careers. Credentialing not only adds to a Soldier's personal and professional development, but enhances a Soldier's ability to secure meaningful employment upon transitioning from military service.
- c. The ACPIG relies on existing systems, processes, organizations, and control measures to avoid redundancy and gain efficiency. These may include Army COOL, GoArmyEd, Army Career Skills Program, Army Education Centers, the Training Development Capability processes, Army Career Tracker, Digital Job Book, and are supported by leadership through developmental counseling processes.
- d. These processes support key credentialing initiatives for POI alignment and MOUs/MOAs/Contracts with credentialing authorities and the sustainment of credentials once obtained by the Soldier. The ACPIG leverages skills and experience Soldiers gain during military service which are aligned to industry or governmental credentials, ensuring Soldiers receive credit toward credentials earned through institutional, operational, and self-development learning, providing Soldiers with opportunities to continue developing throughout their career life cycle. Ensuring Soldiers get the credit they deserve to obtain industry and government recognized credentials results in Soldiers with an enhanced capability to serve our Nation while in uniform and as civilians after their military service.

### 3. Overview:

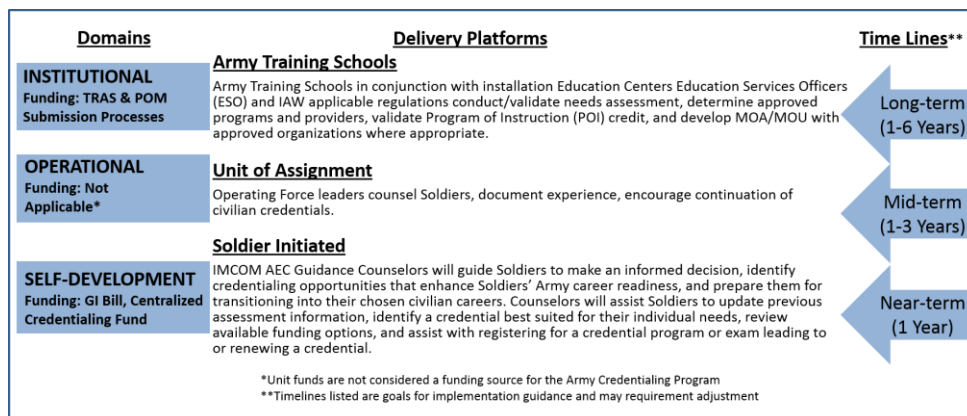
- a. This program supports credentialing opportunities throughout the Soldier Career Life Cycle across the learning domains.

(1) The institutional domain focuses on the efforts of Army training schools, working in conjunction with Army COOL, to align applicable credentials and determine if the credential opportunity can be provided by the school during entry or mid-level training. They then deliver the credentialing opportunities and periodically refine their POIs based on changes in Army and credentialing standards.

(2) Within the operational domain, a Soldier's leadership remains engaged and provides counseling on credentialing, documents the Soldier's work experience, and further encourages their Soldiers in the pursuit of credentialing opportunities. In support, the Educational Services Office provides additional counseling and guidance.

(3) In the self-development domain, Soldiers pursue their individual interests in regards to credentialing which is resourced by an Army centralized credentialing fund, use of their GI Bill, or their own personal or other external funds in order to obtain and sustain their credentials.

- b. The learning domains and the delivery methods which support them are below.



### 4. Resourcing:

- a. Institutional Funding: Credential opportunities provided by Army training schools are fully funded and managed by the proponent. Proponents should submit additional funding requirements associated with credentialing opportunities as part of their POI update/review through the Institutional Training Council of Colonels (IT CoC) for approval by the Training General Officer Steering Committee (TGOSC). Once approved, validation of resource requirements must enter the training requirements analysis system (TRAS) and related program objective memorandum (POM) submission process. Once finalized, Army training schools may consider a resource bridging strategy such as an unscheduled funding request (UFR) while waiting for POM funding. Submitted POIs must meet credentialing agencies minimum standards and provide students a reasonable opportunity to pass the credentialing examination. Army training schools should have an approved MOA/MOU/Contract, where applicable, with the credentialing agency.

- b. Centralized Funding: This fund is meant to complement TA funds. Whenever possible, TA should be used first before pursuing the Centralized Credentialing Funding. The installation Education Services Officer will be able to provide assistance when determining which fund is appropriate, TA or centralized credentialing funding (CCF). Soldier initiated credential opportunities are resourced to cover costs to both obtain and maintain the credential through a centrally managed credentialing fund. Resourcing from this fund may not exceed \$800 per Soldier per year and \$4600 per Soldier during the course of a career and are subject to change at any time. Exceptions to this provision must be determined IAW Paragraph 1, (Office of Primary Responsibility and exception authority). This funding assists the Soldier with attaining a credential that recognizes their military training, education, and experience, and may support the improvement of Soldier readiness and MOS/FA capability and capacity.
- c. Soldiers may elect to use their GI Bill, personal funds, or other external sources to pay for credentials not approved within the Army Credentialing Program, but prior to doing so, they are encouraged to engage with their organizational leadership and education counselor.
- d. Department of the Army activities that foresee or experience an increased workload and subsequent costs due to the implementation of this program, should submit additional funding requests through an unscheduled funding request (UFR), the POM submission process or other applicable budgetary processes.

## 5. Policy:

### a. General:

(1) Credentialing opportunities are separated into two funding categories. Credential opportunities provided at the Army training school, and supported through relevant POIs, are funded through Institutional Funding. All other approved credential opportunities are funded through the Centralized Credentialing Fund.

(2) Soldiers of the Active and Reserve components will be afforded equal opportunity to participate in the Army Credentialing Program.

(3) Army training schools align POIs to industry-recognized and proponent-selected credentialing agencies to the maximum extent possible.

(4) Army training schools will develop testing policies for Soldiers to obtain the credential.

(5) Participation in the Army Credentialing Program is voluntary and graduation from an Army training school will not be dependent on successful completion of a credentialing examination. MOS qualification requirements are not voluntary and although funded through the POI approval and POM process, just as Institutionally Delivered Credentials within the Army Credentialing Program, they are not included in this program. Both should be complementary in supporting the Soldier's Career Life Cycle but managed differently due to DOD policies.

(6) Payment of professional credentialing expenses includes classroom instruction, hands-on training and associated materials, manuals, study guides and materials, textbooks, processing fees, test fees and related fees for professional certificates and licenses.

(7) Soldiers, once operationally assigned, may use the Centralized Credentialing Fund to pay for the credential if they failed to achieve it during institutional training.

(8) If a Soldier fails to successfully achieve a credential using centralized funding, they will not be able to use centralized funding for credentialing until they have successfully achieved the credential using their own funds if required.

(9) The Army Credentialing Program complements and expands the Army's existing recognition of the value and professionalism that certification and licensure adds to the Total Force. However, the scope of this program is to identify and resource voluntary credential opportunities outside of exiting MOS qualification requirements. Therefore, while they are intrinsically key components of Army credentialing, the following mandatory credentials are excluded from this program.

(a) Credentials required for initial entry requirement. For example, a doctor is required to have a Medical License as an entry requirement.

(b) Credentials that are required to be MOS/FA qualified. These credentials are funded by the Army training school during MOS/FA training. For example, 91C (Utilities Equipment Repairer) requires EPA compliant certification (Clean Air Act Sections 608 and 609) in order to repair cooling systems.

(c) Credentials required to meet a unit requirement. For example, units cannot use the credentialing program to fund unit requirements like Hazardous Materials personnel certifications. However, the credentialing program may support the Soldier's continued maintenance of the credential when no longer required for the unit.

b. Eligibility requirements:

(1) Soldiers must complete one year of service following graduation from their Initial Military Training in order to use the centralized credentialing fund.

(2) Soldiers must be approved for participation in the Army Credentialing Program, outside of an Army training school, by the Soldier's company-level Commander. This authority may not be delegated. The approval authority shall put into place accountability procedures as part of the conditions of approval.

(3) Soldiers must complete all centrally funded credentialing requirements (training and testing) prior to discharge or release from service (similar to Army Tuition Assistance requirements).

c. Credentialing stakeholder roles and responsibilities:

(1) **Deputy Chief of Staff, G-1**

(a) Serve as the Office of Primary Responsibility for the Army Credentialing Program.

(b) Supervise HRC in managing the overall professional development of Soldiers.

(c) Seek funding requirements for the Centralized Credentialing Fund in support of Soldier Initiated Credential Opportunities.

(2) **U.S. Army Human Resources Command (HRC)**

(a) Identify civilian credentials related to Army Enlisted, Warrant Officer, and Officer MOSs/ASIs/FAs.

(b) Collect and publish on the Army COOL website detailed information on credential requirements, exam topics, exam preparation resources, and



resources Soldiers can use to prepare for credential exams and fill credential gaps.

(c) Screen credentials using credentialing standards developed based on industry-recognized quality assurance criteria and approved by the Joint Services Credentialing working group and DoD.

(d) Conduct comparability analysis between Army training (POIs) and civilian credentialing requirements to identify gaps.

(e) Disseminate information via the Army COOL web site.

(f) Work directly with Army training schools to provide information on credentialing requirements and to conduct MOS/FA gap analysis.

(g) Work to establish linkage between Army COOL information and the Army Training Management System (ATMS) as required.

(h) Manage the Centralized Credentialing Fund, once established leveraging existing processes and systems currently used for Army Continuing Education.

**(3) Deputy Chief of Staff, G-3/5/7**

(a) Exercise HQDA supervision for defining concepts, strategies, resources, policies, and programs for Army training, education, and leader development.

(b) Delegate the authority to approve all training requirements originating from HQDA that affect Soldiers and Army units.

(c) Chair the Army Training General Officer Steering Committee (TGOSC).

(d) Validate the annual courseware development “1 to N list” submitted by Headquarters, TRADOC.

(e) Validate with HRC, Army Continuing Education Division those courses that were submitted, recommended, and approved for credentialing recommendations.

**(4) Director, Army National Guard**

(a) Develop ARNG policies, procedures, and priorities consistent with this guidance to facilitate delivery of credentialing opportunities to Army National Guard Soldiers.

(b) Support data requirements for credentialing objectives.

(c) Provide guidance to implement the Army Credentialing Program to State ARNG Education Service Offices.

(d) Provide program management and educational support to individual Soldier's credentialing opportunities through ARNG Services Offices.

**(5) Chief, Army Reserve**

(a) Develop USAR policies, procedures, and priorities consistent with this guidance to facilitate the delivery of credentialing opportunities to Army Reserve Soldiers.

(b) Support data requirements for credentialing objectives.

(c) Provide guidance to implement the Army Credentialing Program to subordinate organizations.

(d) Provide program management and educational support to individual Soldier's credentialing opportunities through USAR Services Offices.

706 (6) **The Surgeon General**

707 (a) Develop policy, manage, and provide clinical and technical  
708 professional medical training and education to support training and education.

709 (b) Support data requirements for credentialing objectives.

710 (c) Provide guidance to implement the Army Credentialing Program to  
711 subordinate organizations.

712 (7) **The Judge Advocate General**

713 (a) Develop and administer the curriculum, doctrine, standards, and  
714 delivery of legal education and training for Soldiers in the Judge Advocate Legal  
715 Services and provide input on training requirements to HQDA G-1 and G-3/5/7.

716 (b) Direct education, training, and functions of The Judge Advocate  
717 General's Legal Center and School.

718 (c) Support data requirements for credentialing objectives.

719 (d) Provide guidance to implement the Army Credentialing Program to  
720 subordinate organizations.

721 (e) Provide legal counsel supporting the implementation of the Army  
722 Credentialing Program.

723 (8) **Chief of Chaplains**

724 (a) Develop professional and educational policies and procedures for the  
725 Chaplain Corps.

726 (b) Direct education, training, and functions of the U.S. Army Chaplain  
727 Center and School.

728 (c) Support data requirements for credentialing objectives.

729 (d) Provide guidance to implement the Army Credentialing Program to  
730 subordinate organizations.

731 (9) **Chief of Engineers**

732 (a) Exercise HQDA responsibility for engineer training and identify  
733 strategies and resources for engineer training.

734 (b) Support data requirements for credentialing objectives.

735 (c) Provide guidance to implement the Army Credentialing Program to  
736 subordinate organizations.

737 (10) **Commanders of Army Commands, Army Service Component  
738 Commands, and Direct Reporting Units**

739 (a) Counsel Soldiers on credentialing opportunities.

740 (b) Provide Soldiers the opportunity to maintain credentials within  
741 operational constraints, attend training during off duty hours, and take  
742 credentialing tests.

743 (c) Document applicable experience which may be necessary in order to  
744 achieve a credentialing requirement.

745 (11) **US Army Installation Management Command (IMCOM)**

746 (a) Provide program implementation and management through installation  
747 Army Education Centers supporting the individual Soldier's credentialing  
748 opportunities.

749 (b) Army Education Center Guidance Counselors provide individualized  
750 counseling for Soldiers seeking credentials.

(c) Supervise installation access requirements for credentialing providers IAW DODI 1322.25.

**(12) Commanding General, U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command**

(a) Administer training functions outlined in AR 350-1 and AR 10-87.

(b) Serve as the Army Senior Responsible Official and principle lead for training and leader development processes. Develop training doctrine and execute training policies and procedures as directed by HQDA.

(c) Designate Army training and education proponents responsible for the development of unit and individual training and the development of training products for approved training requirements.

(d) Assemble, prioritize, and validate the annual courseware development “1 to N list” for the U.S. Army, ARNG, and USAR.

(e) Provide skills-gap analysis associated with tasks and Individual Training Plans in support of the Army Credentialing Program.

(f) Serve as the Army’s functional proponent for the Army Training Management System specifically aligning credentialing opportunities to the separate functions of the system in order to support the institutional, operational, and self-development learning domains.

(g) Integrate credentialing opportunities in all training programs and the schools and training centers for officers, warrant officers, and enlisted Soldiers at progressive and sequential phases of their career development.

(h) Review POIs for institutional training courses to ensure compliance with established policies.

(i) Support AMC schools, the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Laboratory, the Judge Advocate General’s Legal Center and School, AMEDD Center and School, John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School and other non-TRADOC schools with their credentialing efforts.

(j) Coordinate the Training Requirements and Analysis System (TRAS).

(k) Obtain HQDA, G-3/5/7 Training Directorate approval on proposed changes resulting in resource increases such as new courses, course length, and changes to prerequisites causing additional resources for courses and training conducted under the control of TRADOC.

(l) Develop courses and make them accessible for instruction in non-TRADOC schools.

(m) Seek funding through the POM submission process for Institutionally Delivered Credential Opportunities.

**(13) Commanding General, Combined Arms Center, Army University**

(a) Assist with integrating and synchronizing credentialing efforts across all learning domains, cohorts, and components.

(b) In coordination with proponents, assist in the comparative analysis between MOS/ASI/FA job analysis and credentialing opportunities.

(c) Support proponents in the POI approval process.

(d) Provide input to HQ TRADOC during the budget and POM submission process in support of Institutionally Delivered Credential Opportunities.

(e) Provide input to HRC, ACED during the budget and POM submission process in support of Soldier Initiated Credential Opportunities.

(f) Coordinate with Initial Military Training Command and other Army training schools to document military training and education credit toward credentialing opportunities.

(g) Coordinate with Army COOL to display credential categories and funding eligibility for credentials.

(h) Assist with the Army's Soldier and Leader transition efforts.

**(14) Army Training Schools**

(a) Evaluate POI-related credentials, in conjunction with Army COOL program analysts, and submit credential list to Army University.

(b) For MOSs/ASIs/FAs that do not have a direct industry credential accredited by ANSI, NCCA, or ICAC, the MOS/FA proponent aligned with that industry/profession may submit a written evaluation of industry credentials to Army University for review/assistance.

(c) Seek approval for POI changes in order to align with a credential, through the Institutional Training Council of Colonels and Training General Officer Steering Committee.

(d) Redevelop POIs as required ensuring that One Army School System planning considerations are addressed and submit for approval through the training requirements analysis system (TRAS).

(e) Development of MOU/MOA/Contract, where applicable, with credentialing agency (copy furnish to TRADOC G/3/5/7 TID and the Army University Credentialing Office).

(f) Determine if any POI changes impact existing MOU/MOAs/Contracts.

(g) Provide documentation and supporting information for Quality Assurance (QA) evaluations by TRADOC and the credentialing body granting credential or credential credit.

(h) Coordinate with Army COOL to display applicable credentials within the Army Credentialing Program.

(i) Provide credential subject matter expertise to the Operating Force.

(j) Coordinate with installation Education Center Education Services Officer (ESO), when appropriate, regarding credentialing programs with educational and vocational institution.

**(15) Other commanders and leaders**

(a) All commands will develop training and education guidance in support of Institutionally Delivered and Soldier Initiated Credential Opportunities.

(b) To improve synchronization of the Army Credentialing Program, commanders will employ the ATMS to plan, resource, and manage individual and unit training to enforce Army and credentialing standards.

(c) Brigade-level commanders will provide training and education guidance; allocate resources, reduce training and education distractors, and support credentialing opportunities.

(d) Battalion-level commanders are the principal training managers and will develop, coordinate, implement, supervise, and evaluate performance-oriented training programs within the guidance and resources provided by higher

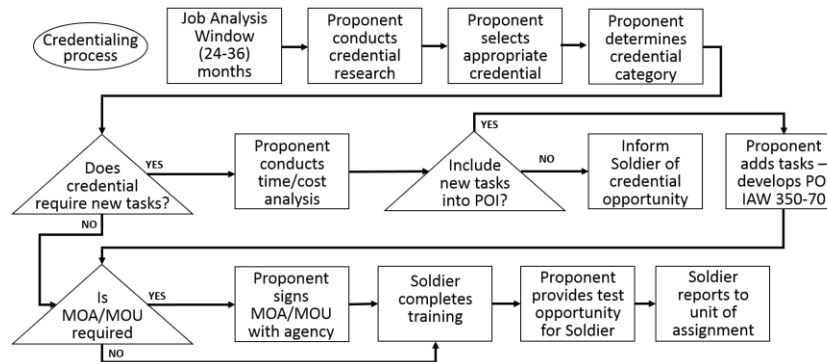
headquarters; develop specific training plans to correct training deficiencies; reduce training distractors and coordinate resources of subordinate units, including credentialing efforts.

(e) Company-level commanders are the primary trainers. As such, they assist the training managers in developing training plans, and prepare, execute and document their individual and unit training programs. Company commanders are the approval authority for Soldier Initiated Credential Opportunities, similar to Army Tuition Assistance. As the approval authority, company-level commanders must put into place accountability procedures as part of the conditions of credential approval.

(f) Non-commissioned Officers are the principle trainers for individual Soldiers and must provide Soldiers with sound counsel in support of Soldier Initiated Credential Opportunities. Encourage and support Soldiers' participation in self-development opportunities in both civilian educational and vocational courses and document credentialing requirements, as necessary and whenever possible, using ATMS processes.

- d. Institutional delivery of credentialing opportunities ensures that Soldier's receive appropriate credit for military training, education, and experience toward the credential, and may support the improvement of Soldier readiness and MOS/ASI/FA capability and capacity. Army training schools will identify credentialing opportunities not already an MOS qualifying requirement which are an 80% or greater match of the MOS/ASI/FA duties (a preponderance of duties). Army training schools will then develop a strategy to fill the remaining training or education gaps and identify the resources, if required, to provide the opportunity for Soldiers to complete the respective credential. This analysis should be conducted as part of the Training and Requirements Analysis Process. Army training schools may also pursue credentials with less than an 80% match, but associated resource requirements must be resourced through normal course funding processes. Army training schools should fully explore distance education or third-party training available at operational units. Training need not occur during a single phase or level of training. Credentialing programs can span numerous courses provided in the institutional, operational, and self-development domains during the Soldier Career Life Cycle. For credentials with a required experiential component (for example, a mechanic's hours of actual repair work), the Soldier's operational unit has a supporting role in documenting the Soldier's experience, be it MOS/FA related or otherwise, as part of their performance/developmental counseling. Army training schools must seek approval for POI changes IAW AR 350-1, AR 350-10, and TRADOC Pamphlet 350-70-9. Army training schools may submit additional funding requirements for approved POIs associated with credential opportunities through the TRAS and related POM submission process. Submitted POIs must meet credentialing agencies minimum standards, provide students a reasonable opportunity to pass the credentialing examination and should have an approved MOA/MOU/Contract on file with the Army University Credentialing Office.

## Institutional Delivery Process Example

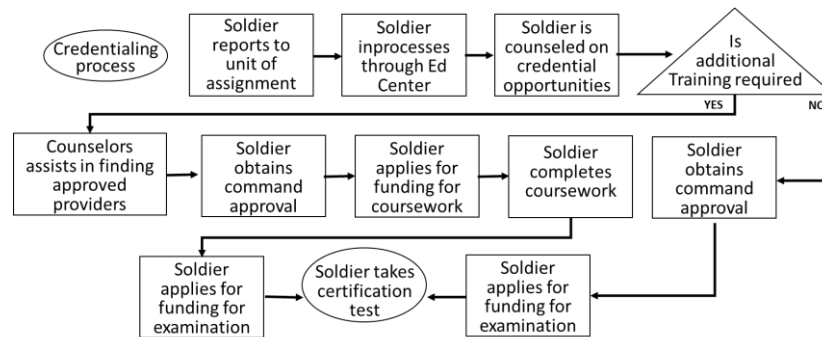


A job analysis is required if there are major changes in job structure or content of the tasks performed as part of the job, or every 24 to 36 months, for all Army TOE and TDA duty positions IAW TRADOC Regulation 350-70. The research of applicable credentials, and the tasks required to achieve the credential, should be conducted at this time. The Proponent's Training Development Manager or designee then leads the Critical Task and Site Selection Board (CTSSB) through the task analysis, including those required to obtain the credential. The CTSSB conducts an analysis, including time and resource requirements, and makes a recommendation on what additional tasks to include as required by the credentialing agency or body. One of the outputs of the job analysis is the individual critical task list (ICTL) which identifies the training domain in which tasks will be trained. If the tasks are approved for inclusion, the new individual tasks are further developed, lesson plans are developed or revised, and the revised POI is submitted seeking approval to implement the new curriculum. If the credentialing authority requires the student to attend a minimum number of contact hours in a preparatory course prior to testing for the credential, then a MOU/MOA/Contract should be developed stating that the POI meets the credential requirement. After the Soldier completes the training, the credentialing examination is provided. Once the Soldier reports to their unit of assignment, counseling occurs at the unit level and at the Army Education Center discussing additional levels of the credential and sustainment opportunities.

- e. Soldier initiated credentials ensure that Soldiers receive appropriate credit for military training, education, and experience toward the credential, and may support the improvement of Soldier readiness and MOS/ASI/FA capability and capacity. Soldier initiated credentials may also align with a Soldier's interests outside of their normal functional area. A key component of Soldier's selection is leader involvement. Soldiers may elect to use their GI Bill, personal or other external funds to pay for credentials not approved through the Army Credentialing Program.



## Individual Delivery Process Example



To ensure Soldiers receive appropriate credit for military education and training toward credentialing, Soldiers are authorized to pursue credentialing as a self-development, post-secondary activity. Once a Soldier reports to a duty station, counseling should occur both at the unit of assignment and at the Army Education Center. Army Education Center Guidance Counselors will review the Soldier's military and civilian training and education records, and provide counseling and information to the Soldier on credentials which are supported by the Soldier's previous learning experiences. Counselors will also provide information on credential opportunities which are not linked to their MOS/FA, but authorized under this program. The Soldier can then make an informed decision on which credential to pursue. Counselors can assist the Soldier in finding approved education providers that best fit the Soldier's needs. Any credential offered by an authorized post-secondary educational institution must first utilize TA. If TA is unavailable for the credential in question, the Soldier may then use the Centralized Credentialing Fund if the credential is approved under this funding source. The Soldier then obtains unit approval, applies for funding, and attends the training. If the credential examination is not part of the original course cost, the Soldier must separately apply for funding to cover the examination costs. Guidance Counselors will assist the Soldier with identifying the location in which the examination will take place.

## Appendix D: References

### 1. National Level:

- a. White House Press Release, "President Obama Calls on Congress to Act on Veterans Job Corps in "To Do List" and Launches New Military Credentialing Initiative to Fill Workforce Needs," 31 May 2012
- b. National Defense Authorization Act 2012
- c. National Defense Authorization Act 2015

### 2. DOD Level: Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness Memorandum "Payment of Credentialing Expenses for Military Members," 16 July 2000

### 3. Army Level:

- a. Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs Memorandum "Implementation of Payment of Professional Credentialing Expenses for Soldiers," 2012
- b. Office of Personnel Management Memorandum "Fact Sheet on Certification and Certificate Programs," 13 August 2008
- c. Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs Memorandum, "Army Credentialing Program," 12 June 2013
- d. Additional information may be found at: <http://www.apd.army.mil>

### 4. TRADOC Level:

- a. TRADOC Memorandum "TRADOC Credentialing Program," 17 September 2013
- b. TRADOC TASKORD IN151522 "TRADOC Credentialing Program Formalization," 15 June 2015
- c. Additional information may be found at: <http://www.tradoc.army.mil/tpubs/>

### 5. Army University Level:

- a. Executive Summary from Credentialing Operational Planning Team #1, 18 December 2014
- b. Executive Summary from Credentialing Operational Planning Team #2, 31 July 2015
- c. Executive Summary from Credentialing Operational Planning Team #3, 25 April 2016
- d. CAC Operations Order 16-089-003 "Army Credentialing Program," 29 March 2016
- e. Additional information may be found at: <http://armyu.army.mil/>

### 6. Draft Implementation Guidance:

- a. Title 10 U.S.C Section 2006a, Assistance for Education and Training
- b. Title 10 U.S.C Section 2007, Payment of Tuition for Off-duty Training or Education
- c. Title 10 U.S.C. Section 2015, Payment of Expenses to Obtain Professional Credentials
- d. Title 10 U.S.C Section 2142, Educational Assistance Program
- e. Title 10 U.S.C Section 3002, Definitions for All Volunteer Force Education Assistance Programs
- f. Title to U.S.C Section 3672, Approval of Courses
- g. Memorandum USD, Personnel & Readiness 16 July 2009, subject: Payment of Credentialing Expenses for Military Members

- 998 h. White House Press Release, "President Obama Calls on Congress to Act on Veterans Job  
999 Corps in "To Do List" and Launches New Military Credentialing Initiative to Fill  
1000 Workforce Needs," 31 May 2012
- 1001 i. National Defense Authorization Act 2012
- 1002 j. National Defense Authorization Act 2015
- 1003 k. Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness Memorandum "Payment of  
1004 Credentialing Expenses for Military Members," 16 July 2009
- 1005 l. Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs Memorandum  
1006 "Implementation of Payment of Professional Credentialing Expenses for Soldiers," 2012
- 1007 m. Office of Personnel Management Memorandum "Fact Sheet on Certification and  
1008 Certificate Programs," 13 August 2008
- 1009 n. Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs Memorandum,  
1010 "Army Credentialing Program," 12 June 2013
- 1011 o. TRADOC Memorandum "TRADOC Credentialing Program," 17 September 2013
- 1012 p. TRADOC TASKORD IN151522 "TRADOC Credentialing Program Formalization," 15  
1013 June 2015
- 1014 q. TRADOC Pamphlet 350-70-16 "Army Training and Education Proponents," 6 December  
1015 2011
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