

Q1. Who will be affected by AcqDemo?

A1. AcqDemo will cover mainly non-bargaining unit employees. Approximately 13,000 non-bargaining personnel in AFMC will be affected. As a test base to demonstrate the benefits of AcqDemo, there are limited bargaining unit employees at Arnold AFB which will be included. Additionally, there will be some bargaining unit employees at several of the Air Force Installation Contracting Agency locations.

Q2. Who are non-bargaining employees?

A2. The Federal Labor Relations Statute does not allow some positions to be included in a bargaining unit. These workers normally cannot have representation by a union and may not engage in protected concerted activity. Specifically, individuals employed in the following positions cannot be included in a bargaining unit: management officials, supervisors, some professionals (such as engineers, scientists, accountants, and lawyers), and employees engaged in federal personnel work other than purely clerical capacity.

Q3. Why are bargaining union personnel not participating?

A3. AFMC will continue discussions with the American Federation of Government Employees Council 214 Union and local unions to implement command wide for all employees. However, Council 214 has agreed that both non-bargaining and bargaining employees will be participating at Arnold AFB as a trial location to demonstrate the benefits of AcqDemo.

Q4. When will the change go in to effect?

A4. AcqDemo conversion will be effective 12 Jun 16, after the current General Schedule (GS) performance cycle to permit award payout under the GS system. All affected employees and their supervisors will first receive AcqDemo orientation and training beginning in January 2016; dates and locations will be announced.

Q5. Why was AcqDemo created?

A5. The acquisition community recognized there have been many fundamental changes that have occurred in the way the government does business. At the time of the introduction of a GS pay scale the primary grade of the GS workforce was a GS-3. Since that time the government has changed to a knowledge workforce whose employees require a set of advanced technical knowledge and competencies. The acquisition workforce took on the challenge to reform and modernizes itself to meet the challenges ahead while recognizing the importance of its workforce by introducing AcqDemo.

Q6. What are the desired results?

A6. The inflexibility of many personnel processes and the diffused authority result in a workforce that cannot posture itself for the rapidly changing technological and business environment. AcqDemo is designed to provide a personnel management system that increases our ability to attract, retain, and motivate the highly qualified acquisition workforce.

Q7. How does AcqDemo differ from NSPS?

A7. NSPS was a “performance based system” whereas AcqDemo is a “contribution-based” system. Performance is a measure of how well an employee does what they are asked to do and usually takes the form of objectives and measurements relative to the job. Contribution is a measure of the value of what an employee did and takes the form of describing a continuum of work and job outcomes along a value scale from those of very low impact on the organization and its mission to those of very high impact. At the end of the year the employee’s work and work outcomes are measured and placed along this scale to determine their value relative to the mission.

Q8. What is broadbanding and how will it benefit the employee?

A8. Broadbanding, also referred to as pay-banding, consolidates several pay grades into a broadband. Currently, the 15 grades of the General Schedule are used to classify positions and, therefore, to set pay. Under broadbanding, several grades are banded together, thereby creating more flexibilities for setting pay. The use of broadbanding provides a stronger link between pay and contribution to the mission of the organization. An employee can more easily be compensated at the level which reflects his/her contribution to the goals of the organization.

The common objectives of broadbanding are to reduce the number of distinctions between levels of work at the different grade levels, thereby greatly simplifying the process and eliminating substantial paperwork for employees to advance to another level of work and pay; and, to allow for more competitive recruitment of quality candidates at differing rates within the appropriate broadband levels.

Q9. How will my position be classified in AcqDemo?

A9. You will remain in the same occupational series; however, you will no longer have a GS designation. Under AcqDemo, the classification system is simplified. The current GS system includes 434 occupational series grouped into 22 occupational families. Eligible occupational series are listed in the Federal Register Notice (64 FR 1426, Jan 8, 1999, as amended). Trades, Crafts, and Intelligence positions are among the exclusions. While eligible occupational series are retained, the occupational families are replaced by three career paths of which affected individuals will be placed:

- a. Business Management and Technical Management (NH)
- b. Technical Management Support (NJ)
- c. Administrative Support (NK)

Q10. Why do we need a simplified classification system?

A10. The current job classification process is both time-consuming and costly. The aim is to create a simplified classification process so that managers can readily use it to classify positions. The classification system also needs to be simplified to reflect the changes from the current General Schedule system to a more generic broadbanding system. The position classification changes are intended to streamline and simplify the process of identifying and categorizing the work done within an organization.

Q11. AcqDemo is a demonstration project. How long will AFMC participate and what happens at the end of the demonstration period?

A11. AFMC will participate in AcqDemo into the foreseeable future. The Federal Register requires that at the end of the demonstration period, the project be reexamined for: (a) permanent implementation; (b) modification and additional testing; (c) extension of the test period; or (d) termination. Current project authority terminates 30 Sep 17 with the National Defense Authorization Act for 2016 containing an extension until 31 Dec 20. In addition, the DoD AcqDemo Program Office has submitted an FY17 Legislative proposal for program permanency.

Q12. Can you explain in more detail what the Contribution-Based Compensation and Appraisal System (CCAS) is and what benefits will be gained by adopting it?

A12. The CCAS provides an effective and flexible method for assessing and compensating the work force on the basis of their contribution to the mission of the organization, rather than on the basis of the amount of work accomplished and job longevity. It differs from the GS performance system in that instead of basing the appraisal on how well a specified job is done (i.e. performance), the appraisal is based on the employee's level of contribution. It is based on the value of the job to the mission of the organization. CCAS provides a direct link between levels of individual contribution and the compensation received.

CCAS provides a common set of contribution factors that state what is important to the mission of the organization. Jobs done by individuals are evaluated against these contribution factors. Job growth is available to all by increasing contribution against known factors. Providing a common set of factors is one way CCAS achieves fairness in the appraisal process.

Equity in pay is achieved by making annual salary adjustments that move toward the same pay for the same contribution. This means that those who are underpaid for their contribution will have larger increases and those who are overpaid for their contribution will have smaller increases. In time this process will achieve equity in pay.

The CCAS will provide at least four important improvements:

- a. Promote increased fairness and consistency in the appraisal process;
- b. Improve ability to compensate and reward employees in a timely manner commensurate with their contributions to the organization;
- c. Better convey to employees the key factors associated with advancement in their job category; and
- d. Focus attention on measurable contributions and productivity.

Q13. AcqDemo implies no actual loss but no pay increase for those who are overcompensated. Is this true?

A13. This system focuses on positive incentives and under the compensation system, no one's salary can be reduced. However, just as in today's system, management can undertake an adverse action to reduce salary or place someone in a lower graded position. The method for these types of action is similar to those found in today's system and contains the same type of employee protections.

Q14. What will my new pay be upon conversion into AcqDemo?

A14. Go to the AcqDemo calculator at <http://acqdemo.hci.mil/AcqDemoBIC.html>. This calculator is intended to help you understand the AcqDemo buy-in process, and provides your AcqDemo career path, broadband, and an estimated within-grade increase (WGI) buy-in. Your official conversion information will be through receipt of an SF-50, Notification of Personnel Action. Employees will convert into AcqDemo with no loss of pay.

Q15. What if I am on retained pay, how will conversion into AcqDemo affect my pay?

A15. Employees on retained pay may be absorbed into broadband level assigned and terminate retained rate; otherwise, remain on retained rate.

Q16. For the normal cost of living increases that the President declares - how does this play into AcqDemo? The GS pay scale changes based upon the cost of living increases. Do the broadbands change based on cost of living increases? Do employees receive cost of living increases or is this now part of the promotions based on contributions?

A16. As a point of clarification, GS pay adjustments authorized under 5 U.S.C. 5303 are based on the cost of labor, not the cost of living. GS pay adjustments are linked to changes in the Employment Cost Index (ECI). The ECI measures the overall rate of change in employers' compensation costs in the private and public sectors, excluding the Federal Government. The ECI does not measure the cost of consumer goods and services. These adjustments are in no way tied to an inflation index. They are an attempt to bring federal pay in line with private sector pay. Each year the broadbands will be adjusted upward to be equivalent to the new GS pay scale which will be changed by the general pay increase. AcqDemo includes these adjustments in the pay pool to be allocated through the contribution-based compensation and appraisal system. The only employees who would be at risk of not receiving their full general pay increase would be those who are contributing at a level much less than what is expected of them during the appraisal cycle.

Q17. If you are at the top of the pay band, what benefit is AcqDemo?

A17. If you are at the top of your broadband level, you can receive the full general pay increase since we will adjust the bands up each year according to the General Pay Increase (GPI). In addition, you will be eligible for yearly cash awards that could help offset the limitation of being at the top of your broadband if your contribution indicates you should receive a larger increase than the GPI. AcqDemo project creates a pool of money equivalent to at least 2% of each employee's salary to be used for increases in base pay over and above the general pay increase. The current system does not budget or provide any dollars for increasing people's salary that are at the top step of their GS grade.

Q18. Is the locality pay based on contribution also?

A18. Locality pay is not included in the broadband ranges. Everyone in AcqDemo continues to receive any and all locality pay adjustments.

Q19. How do we go to a higher pay band (get promoted)?

A19. Promotions under AcqDemo happen the same way they occur in the GS system. Most promotions will be competitive, but we have retained the current capabilities to achieve noncompetitive promotions. However, through the CCAS process, employees can receive salary increase without having to receive a promotion. The ability for employees to have their salary

increased in this seamless manner will allow them to be rewarded for their contribution to the organization, without some of the limitations found in GS.

Q20. What changes have been made to veteran's preference?

A20. Veteran's preference is maintained throughout AcqDemo. AcqDemo does not have the authority to alter veteran's preference.

Q21. If pay is broadbanded, will there be any more promotions by grade?

A21. Under the broadband system, promotions will only occur between broadbands. Salary increases within a broadband will be accomplished seamlessly using a pay adjustment. This will allow employees to increase their salary within a broadband level without the necessity of a promotion action.

Q22. What happens in AcqDemo if there is a Reduction in Force (RIF)?

A22. AcqDemo employees will be in a separate competitive area for RIF purposes IAW 5CFR 351. There will be a single round with displacement moves to same or next lower broadband versus bump and retreat. Employees are entitled to additional years of retention service credit based on appraisal results.

Q23. How is this going to impact my high 3?

A23. Law prohibits proposing any changes to the retirement system. Retirement calculations will continue to be determined as they are today, with any base salary increases you receive under AcqDemo counting toward your high 3.

Q24. Why is it called Acquisition Demo when not all employees work specifically in acquisition?

A24. AFMC meets eligibility requirements. Many of AFMC's organizations are listed as eligible organizations on Table 1 of the Federal Register (Vol 80, No 61, 31 Mar 2015). In addition, some organizations may meet eligibility with at least 1/3 members of the acquisition workforce; or at least 2/3 members of the acquisition workforce and supporting personnel assigned to work directly with the acquisition workforce.

Q25 How can I learn more about the AcqDemo program?

A25. There is an AcqDemo 101 course on the DAU website, <http://acqdemo.hci.mil/>