

THE GUARDIAN

Volume XVIII, Issue 2



DOD FM Certification

The new standard for training

Have you heard about the new FM Certification?

Have you heard that the National Guard has implemented the program?

Some of your soldiers, staff, and maybe even yourself have received notices of registration into the FM Certification track.

What does it mean? Good question. Hopefully the NG Chapter can help alleviate some of your concerns with the process.



QUICK LINKS FOR INFORMATION



http://comptroller.defense.gov/Portals/45/documents/FMCertProgram/Standard_DoD_FM_Briefing.pdf

<http://www.ng-asmc.org>

<http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/130026p.pdf>

<http://comptroller.defense.gov/externalLinks/FMCert.aspx>

<https://fmonline.ousdc.osd.mil>

Please visit our Facebook page for more information!!!

FM Certification Goals

Not everyone has grown up in the financial community throughout their careers. All managers do not have the institutional knowledge of financial management. The Financial Management certification will help bridge the gaps between the workforce and the decision support on financial audit readiness and credentialing standards.

The Secretary of Defense passed Public Law 112-81, gives the authority to prescribe Professional Certification and Credentialing Standards to members of the DoD, as with everything, this has reached the National Guard. All of this ensures that our workforce has the knowledge, skills, and abilities to achieve auditable financial statements.

What to Expect?

First, you need to find out where your state is posting the FM Certification Level you will be required to complete.

There are 3 different levels of certification.

Level 1, Level 2, and Level 3 are based on both GS Scale for civilians and Rank for military individuals.

This information will look strange because it is based on your highest financial linked position.

So if you drill and work in the financial realm you want to go with your higher of the two positions.

For example, if you are an E4 on the military side and a GS09 on the technician side, go to the GS side.

If you are an E8 and a GS 08, you want to go with your military rank.

The higher of the two levels will cover you for both certifications.

Any previous education and training related to financial management can be reviewed to apply towards certification.

This will significantly reduce the amount of time and effort to complete your FM Certification.

Speaking of time, you have 2 years to complete your certification level from the time of enrollment. The clock has begun for most!

After the initial certification is completed, each person will be required to maintain CPE's to keep his or her certification.

NG-ASMC will be able to assist with those too!

We look forward to helping you through this process. If you have any questions, feel free to contact the chapter leadership for assistance.

Look at the Chart below to review some items that can be reviewed each level of certification towards the Initial certification.

Good Luck!

*~ Jennifer Pontow
secretary@ng-asmc.org*

DOD FM Certification Level Requirements

LEVEL 1 REQUIREMENTS		LEVEL 2 REQUIREMENTS		LEVEL 3 REQUIREMENTS	
Financial Management Competencies	Course Hrs	Financial Management Competencies	Course Hrs	Financial Management Competencies	Course Hrs
• Financial Management Systems (PL1)	6	• Financial Management Systems (PL3)	8	• Financial Management Systems (PL5)	4
• Decision Support (PL1)	4	• Decision Support (PL3)	8	• Decision Support (PL5)	10
• Fundamentals and Operations of Primary Track (Accounting or Budget or Finance or Military & Civilian Pay (PL1))	6	• Accounting Analysis OR Financial Management Analysis (PL3)	10	• Accounting Analysis AND Financial Management Analysis (PL5)	12
Leadership Competencies		• Budget Formulation, Justification and Presentation OR Budget Execution (PL3)	10	• Budget Formulation, Justification and Presentation AND Budget Execution (PL5)	12
• Lead Self Level	6	• Concepts, Policies and Principles of Primary Track (Accounting or Budget or Finance or Audit or Commercial Pay or Payroll (PL3))	10	• Advanced Financial Management (PL5)	12
DoD FM 101 Course	24	• Fundamentals and Operations of Alternate Track (Accounting or Budget or Finance or Military & Civilian Pay (PL1))	6	• Concepts, Policies and Principles of Alternate Track (Accounting or Budget or Finance or Audit or Commercial Pay or Payroll (PL3))	10
12 Modules (1-3 course hours each), (Six of the twelve modules may be waived with the exception of Audit Readiness)		Leadership Competencies		Leadership Competencies	
TOTAL	46	• Lead Teams/Projects Level	10	• Lead People Level	12
		Other Required Courses: Audit Readiness, Fiscal Law, & Ethics	9	Other Required Courses: Audit Readiness, Fiscal Law, & Ethics	9
		TOTAL	71	TOTAL	81
		• At least 4 years of FM experience; 2 years must be DoD FM experience.		• At least 8 years of FM experience; 2 years must be DoD FM experience	
		• 60 CETs required every two years after achieving Certification Level.		• At least one 3-month Developmental Assignment	
				• 80 CETs required every two years after achieving Certification Level.	

PRESIDENT CORNER

ASMC National Guard Chapter members:

I want to thank all of you that attended the National PDI held in Orlando, FL. It was a first class event, reminiscent of the National Guard PDIs of the past. We may not reach that level of participation, over 3200 attended, but we can certainly bring our chapter back to a level of excellence.

One small step in that direction is the upcoming Army National Guard Financial Manager's conference at Camp Dodge, Iowa. This will be the first opportunity for the National Guard ASMC chapter to meet with a preponderance of members since 2012. The National Guard ASMC chapter will have a presence at Camp Dodge, with an ice breaker and guest speakers. We want to hear from you while at the conference so that we can bring more professional items of interest to next year's conference.

We will issue instructions for those CDFM members that need to document Continuing Education Points. Some of the conference will concentrate on FM Certification as well, earning credits for that program. Your full participation should be very beneficial to your professional career progression.

Included in this newsletter is an article discussing some of the unique challenges FM Certification poses for the Army National Guard. The intent of the article is to stimulate a thoughtful professional dialog within our FM community.

Look forward to seeing you at Camp Dodge.

Paul Wolfley, CDFM
President
National Guard Chapter, ASMC



ASMC MISSION:

To Promote Education, Training, & Professional Development in ALL aspects of Military Comptrollership.



NG - ASMC ICEBREAKER
Come see old friends & meet new ones!



YOU'RE INVITED!!!!

When: Tuesday Evening

Time: Beginning at 1800

Where: Located at the Historic Camp Dodge Pool Pavilion, BLDG 3746

The evening will include:

Cook-out Dinner and COL Meyer's famous ice cream

50/50 Raffles

Membership Information

Member Recognition

Scholarship Winner Announcement



You are welcome to bring your own alcoholic beverages
Please drink responsibly

Shuttle Buses will run until 2030

The DoD FM Certification Program: A National Guard Perspective

The Department of Defense (DoD) Financial Management (FM) Certification Program, established in 2013, is "...designed to improve workforce analytic capabilities and the audit readiness of the Department. The Certification Program is mandatory for military and civilian personnel who perform financial management work and are assigned to financial management positions."¹ Implementation is complete, with civilian and active duty military personnel going live in the program as of September 30, 2014, and reserve component (including National Guard) personnel going live as of March 31, 2015 (six months ahead of schedule). DoD considers that the program is in sustainment, with over 19,000 individuals achieving certification as of February 2016.¹

While the FM Certification Program is indeed implemented for the reserve components, the National Guard is continuing to struggle with program aspects and compliance. Rightly or wrongly, as the National Guard has experienced with many past initiatives, a program designed predominately for a stable civilian workforce and active duty military personnel does not fully accommodate the unique structure and challenges of our Army and Air National Guard formations and personnel. This currently manifests in one key area, the roles of United States Property and Fiscal Officers (USPFOs) and their deputies. (NOTE: This article, when originally written, also discussed the certification challenge dual status individuals assigned to two different FM positions faced. ARNG-G8 recently resolved this conflict by advising that individuals in this situation should achieve the higher certification level.)

As most of the readers of this newsletter know, USPFOs "...receive and account for all funds and property of the United States in the possession of the National Guard of a specific State, and ensure that Federal funds are obligated and expended in conformance with applicable statutes and regulations."¹ The role recognizes the fact that, in peacetime, National Guard elements serve as the state/territory militia under the command and control of the applicable Governor. Given this, USPFOs are charged with ensuring proper accountability of Federal appropriated funding, assets, and equipment. Because their mission includes oversight of Federal funding and budget execution, USPFOs were included in the DoD FM Certification Program as Level 3 positions.

While some USPFOs and deputies are career or qualified Finance Corps or comptroller officers, the majority come from non-financial management backgrounds and have never previously served in or held FM-coded billets. Therefore, as USPFO positions are coded at Level 3, this has created a significant certification issue for these officers. For example, to obtain the Level 3 certification, an individual must have eight years of financial management experience – a requirement that a USPFO or deputy coming from a non-FM background does not meet, and cannot meet given their normal appointment term of six years. USPFOs and their deputies are otherwise required to attend fiscal law training and receive annual ethics briefings. They are highly qualified professionals with an average of 20-25 years of military experience, including time as commanding officers at the brigade and/or battalion levels.

However, achieving eight years of financial management experience for certification purposes may not be possible.

To address and remediate this issue, current policy should be amended to allow for the initial waiver of non-FM personnel serving in USPFO and Deputy USPFO positions from certification program requirements. They can and should be encouraged to obtain certification as a Certified Defense Financial Manager (CDFM) once they have obtained the required two years of experience (which is well within the normal six year appointment timeframe). If a USPFO or deputy subsequently meets the eight year experience threshold, then he/she can complete Level 3 FM certification. Otherwise, this change will remove the huge administrative and training burden from non-FM officers while still meeting the intent of the overall certification program. (USPFOs or deputies with an FM specialty or serving in an FM career field should still be allowed to hold or maintain a Level 3 certification.)

Hopefully, this article has been successful in highlighting the unique challenges our National Guard FM community has with adhering to the requirements of the DoD FM Certification Program. While enthusiastically accepted by our Guardsmen and Military Technicians, many of these same individuals share the concerns expressed here. Therefore, we need to be thoughtful in working through the manifested unintended consequences (as often happens with large and expansive programs). The Guard FM Community remains committed to the DoD FM Certification Program and looks forward to supporting it in the years ahead.

¹ Office of the Under Secretary Of Defense (Comptroller) / Chief Financial Officer, *Financial Improvement and Audit Readiness (FIAR) Plan Status Report*, May 2016, page I-10.

¹ Ibid.

¹ National Guard Regulation 130-6/ Air National Guard Instruction 36-2, *United States Property and Fiscal Officer Appointment, Duties, and Responsibilities*, 1 July 2007, page 1. 32 U.S. Code 708

~ Paul Wolfley and Chris Babcock
President & Corporate Sponsorships

We Want YOU!!!

We are looking for people to fill vacancies within our sub-committees right away!

If you are interested in helping out this organization contact me for more details.

~ Jennifer Pontow (Secretary)

Corporate Sponsorships

We plan to keep sponsors informed as our chapter progresses in planning events conducive to corporate support.

The Corporate Sponsorship Committee has openings for individuals who would like to help market the chapter and work with corporate sponsors. If you are interested, please contact me for more information.

~ *Chris Babcock*
corpsponsors@ng-asmc.org

Enhanced Defense Finance Management Training (EDFMT) Course Dates

<u>Begin Date</u>	<u>End Date</u>	<u>Location</u>
17 Oct	21 Oct	Fort Belvoir, VA
17 Oct	21 Oct	Fort Jackson, SC
24 Oct	28 Oct	Fort Hood, TX
14 Nov	18 Nov	Orlando, FL
28 Nov	02 Dec	Buckhannon, WV
12 Dec	16 Dec	Arlington, VA

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from the chapter in
the future.

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