

ACQUISITION CORPS FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. How do I access? Who gets the application? Do I need to tell my basic branch?

This year eligible officers in Year Groups 98 - 94 will be sent an email notification in February to their AKO accounts. An application is sent with the notification electronically. No paper copies will be mailed. The interested officer completes the application/memorandum and submits it to the Army Human Resources Command point of contact indicated in the notification. Submissions will be due in April and the Board convenes in June.

2. What happens if I am not accessed? Can I access the following year?

Yes, there is a three-year window, between an officer's 8th and 10th year of service, in which to access. The earlier the better because you will have more time to complete Acquisition Corps (AC) assignments making you competitive for promotion and command down the road. Beyond that three-year window, your chances significantly decrease because of less opportunity to gain experience in the AC.

3. I'm accessed late. Can I still make PM (Product or Project Manager)?

You might still be able to make PM, but understand that chances are reduced. The later you access the less competitive one becomes because others in that year group will have had more opportunity for more AC assignments and experience.

4. Can I access without having had a company command?

Negative. You must complete a successful company command to be considered.

5. I am currently deployed and am concerned that I will not be able to update my file. Will that hurt my chances of being accessed into the corps?

No, exceptional situations like this are taken into consideration Army-wide. On the application annotate that you are deployed and this will help the board members understand your situation. Do not let deployment deter you from applying.

6. Does my branch have to let me go if I request to transfer to AC?

Your branch has to forward your file to the board if you request this. However, in certain specific situations the basic branch may keep you. This is not common practice.

7. Can I do an AC job and then go back to my basic branch?

This is unlikely. If you are accessed into the Acquisition Corps, all future assignments will be with the corps. Only officers who are FAD 51, not accessed into the corps, will go back into basic branch assignments.

8. Do I have to complete my assignment time in the RC/ACR?

Probably so. Most current assignments are completed by officers accessed into the AC, and when it comes time to PCS, they PCS into an AC position.

9. I was FAD 51. When can I work a 51 job?

If you are FAD 51 you will not work in an AC job until you access.

10. Why would I need to access if I have been FAD 51?

Functional area designation takes place between an officer's fifth and sixth year of service. A functional area groups officers by a specialty or skill. Regardless of your FAD, you must be accessed into the AC through a separate accessions board. This differs from a Career Field Designation (CFD), which is a career path. The AAC at this time does not participate in the CFD process. So the only way to become an AC officer is to access. Senior captains are designated into the AC as FA 51 in their 8th year of service.

11. Can I go straight to Advanced Civil Schooling/ Training with Industry once I access into the corps?

There is a possibility of attending school or training before working an AC assignment but nothing is guaranteed.

12. What does a good file look like for the Acquisition Corps (AC)?

Like basic branches, a successful company command is key. Doing well in all assignments given is what matters most.

13. Where will I go next?

Again, like any other branch, assignments are based on needs of the Army, officer preference and availability.

14. What locations can I plan on transferring to?

Acquisition assignments exist all over the country and overseas. Key regions stateside include the Washington, D.C. area, the Fort Monmouth/Picatinny, NJ area, Huntsville, AL, and Warren, MI.

15. What types of jobs are in the AC?

51A Systems Development: Contingency Systems Liaison Officer, Assistant Project Manager, Systems Engineer, Combat Development Staff Officer, Assistant TRADOC Systems Manager, Procurement Staff Officer.

51C Contracting and Industrial Management: Contingency Contracting Officer, Procuring Contracting Officer, Program Integrator, Chief of Contracting, Production and Industrial Manager, Assistant Production and Industrial Manager, Procurement Staff Officer.

51R Information Technology: Contingency Systems Liaison Officer, Software Engineer, Software/Systems Engineer, Assistant Project Manager, Combat

Developments Staff Officer, Automation Staff Officer, Systems Analyst, Procurement Staff Officer.

51S Research and Engineering: Science Officer, Research and Development Coordinator, Advanced Systems Concept Officer, Systems Integration Officer, Research and Development Staff Officer, Future Systems R&D Officer, Uniformed Army Scientists & Engineers.

51T Testing and Evaluation: T&E Officer, Operational Test Officer, Test Pilot, Procurement Staff Officer.

16. How do you choose between 51 A or C or R?

Many factors are reviewed to make the selection such as education degree, basic branch, previous assignments/experience and preference.

17. Can you explain the timeline and promotion rates?

The timeline and promotion rates mirror those of basic branches. However, in recent years the AC promotion rates to LTC and COL have been slightly higher.

18. What are the differences between Operational and Commands?

Commands within the AC are on a similar timeline as the basic branches regarding promotions to LTC and COL and subsequent commands. The only difference is that O5 and O6 Product/Project Managers, and those in Testing or Contracting Commands, etc, revolve around systems and contracts versus soldiers as with the Battalion and Brigade Commander counterparts.

19. Will I deploy as an AC officer?

Yes, there is a chance to deploy as an AC officer. Right now there are many AC missions overseas that range from contracting to fielding equipment. Normally AC deployments are shorter, TDY 6 months or less tours instead of 12-, 18-, or 24-month tours.