

# Forging the Future: A Blueprint for an Agile Cyber Workforce

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# The Mission Imperative

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## BEYOND INDUSTRIAL-AGE HR: REFORGING THE DIGITAL WEAPON SYSTEM

### NSS/NDS MANDATE *Achieving Overmatch*

Field a ready Cyber Work Force to **achieve cognitive overmatch** and secure a sustained information advantage.

### ARSENAL OF FREEDOM *Innovation Tempo*


Dismantling bureaucratic "underbrush" to replace legacy relics with 2026 innovation at **wartime speed**.

### CIO MANDATE *Qualified Lethality*

Aggressively operationalizing all authorities to ensure our cyber warriors are **qualified and dominant**.

### FEEDBACK LOOP *Call to Action*

Identify the policy, process, or compliance requirements hindering the mission. **Tell us what you need.**

  
Field Driven Requirements



  
Modernized Authorities



  
Qualified Cyber Workforce



  
Cyber Workforce Dominance



# The Department of War Cyber Workforce

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## THE DEPARTMENT OF WAR

Is the Federal government's largest employer of cyber talent approximately **240,000 strong**:

- ⚡ Categorical Exemption for Critical DCWF Positions
- ⚡ 21,000~ military and civilian vacancies
- ⚡ 10,000 DoW cyber professionals transition annually



**Total DoW  
Cyber Authorizations:**  
**184,000**  
*Military – 117,000 | Civilian – 83,000*



**Total DoW  
Cyber Personnel:**  
**171,000**  
*Military – 100,000 | Civilian – 75,000*



**Total DoW  
Contract Personnel:**  
**~70,000**



# DoW Cyber Workforce Overview

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## FUNCTIONAL COMMUNITY LEADER

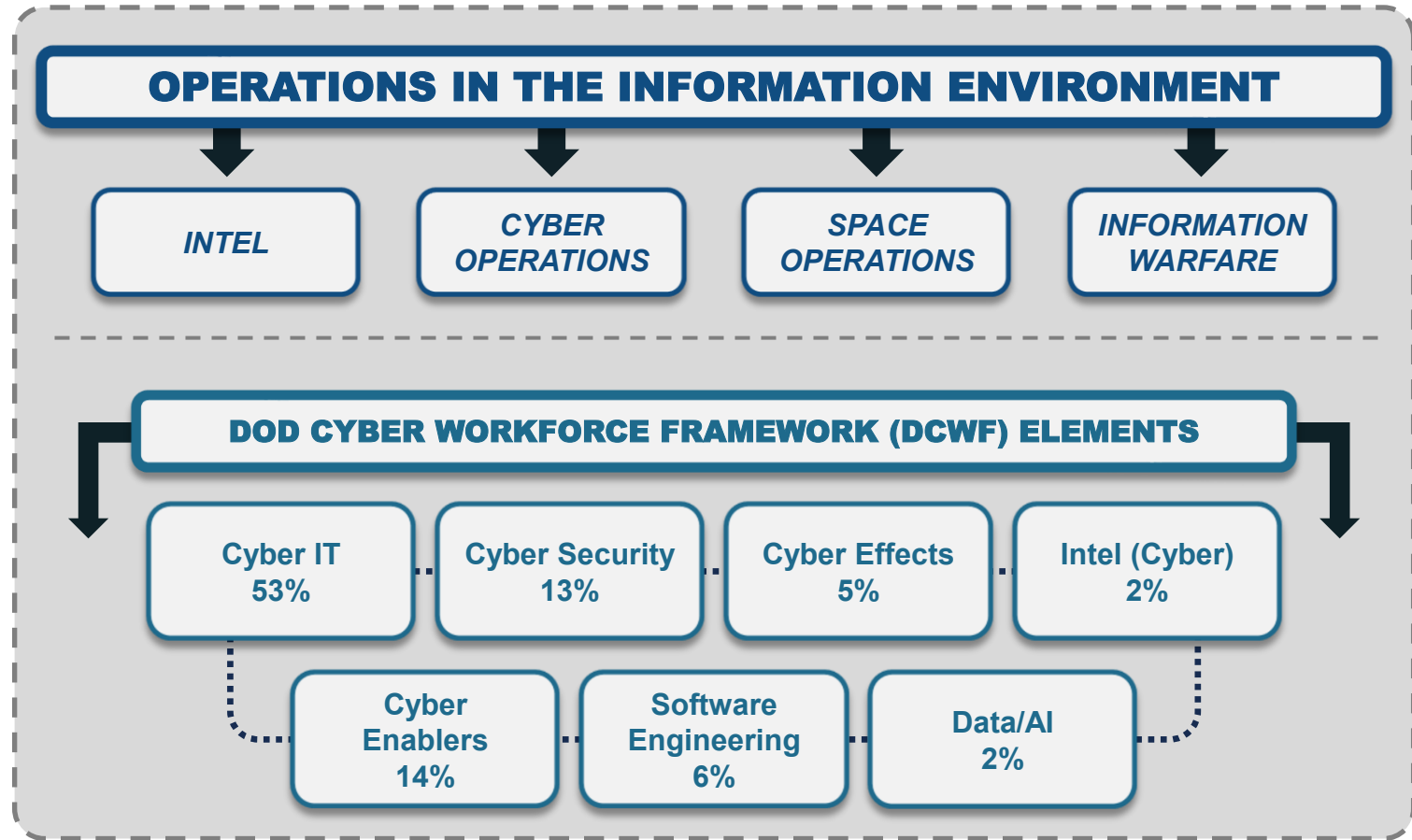
240K+ DoW Cyber Workforce

Oversight of the cyber workforce that executes the **FULL** spectrum of the DoW's cyber mission

- Define, Assess, & Qualify
- Direct Strategy & Policy
- Drive Standardization

\* DoDI 1400.25, Vol 250

\* 40 U.S.C. § 11315 (Clinger-Cohen Act)



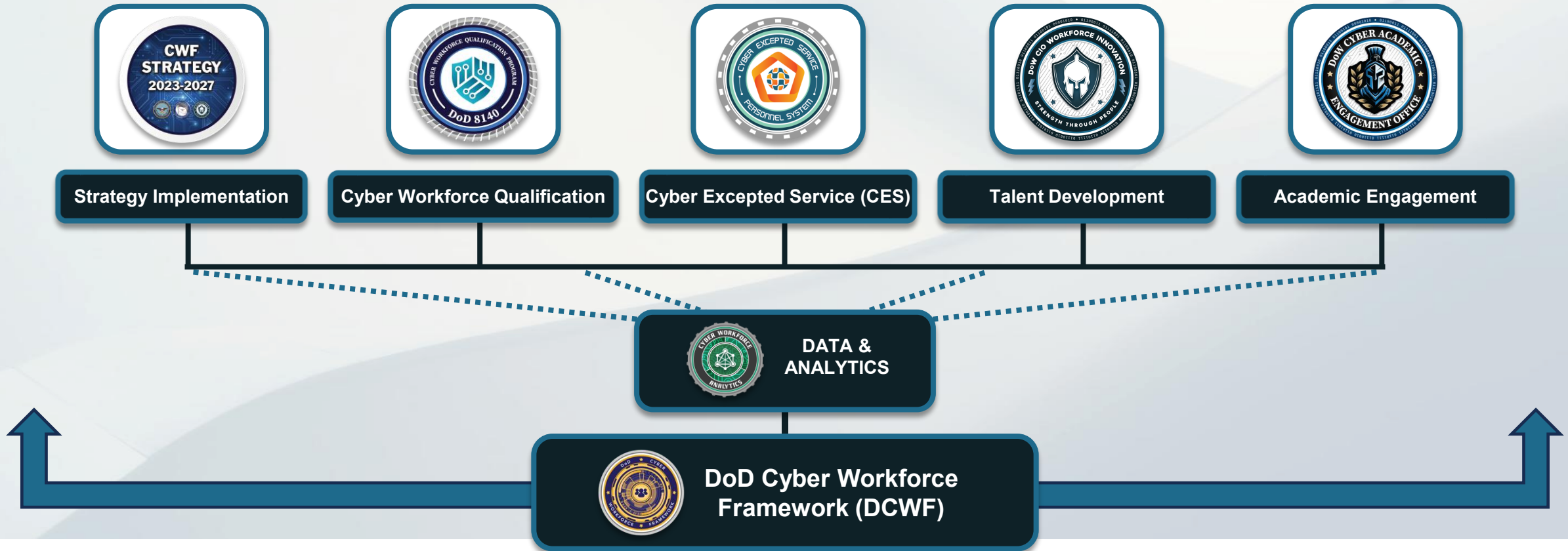
*A winning future requires a technology adept and data-literate workforce to achieve systems over-match*



# How We Support the Cyber Workforce

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A unified, agile, data-driven cyber workforce delivering sustained information advantage across all domains





# Cyber Workforce Strategy Implementation Plan

Closing out FY23 Strategy

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## IMPLEMENTATION HIGHLIGHTS

15 EFFORTS OVER 38 INITIATIVES



- ✓ Decreased average for Civilian time-to-hire to 75 days
- ✓ Identified & Coded 97% of Civilian Billets & 90% of Personnel



- ✓ Reduced Average Civilian Vacancy Rate to 15.25%
- ✓ Hired over 20K Civilians
- ✓ Granted Hiring Freeze Exception of all 74 DCWF work roles



- ✓ Implemented DoD 8140
- ✓ Implemented Enterprise wide CWF Visualizations
- ✓ Integrated Cyber Operation Scenarios in Training Exercises



- ✓ Established the Cyber Academic Engagement Office
- ✓ Increased Professional Development Opportunities

### WHAT'S NEXT

**"SETTING CONDITIONS FOR A NEW ERA OF TALENT WARFARE"**

- New Strategy coming soon

*Talent. Readiness. Dominance.*

# DoW Cyber Workforce Hiring Freeze Exemption Guidance



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18 Feb 2025 — DoW Hiring Freeze

10 Sept 2025 — USW(P&R) Memo

- **Categorical Exemption for DCWF Positions**

19 Dec 2025 — USW(P&R) Direct Hiring Authority Update

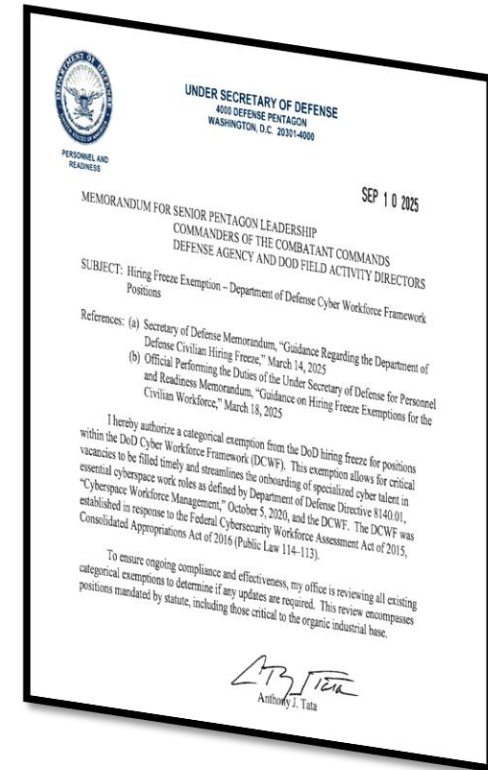
- Delegates hiring approval to **Component leaders**
- **Covered Positions:** Applies to a specified critical need occupations at GS-15 & below, including roles in maintenance, **cyber**, acquisition, STEM, & medical fields.

**DCWF positions have a categorical exemption.**

**Asking for an exemption from P&R is not necessary.**

16 Dec 2025 – USW(P&R) Strategic Hiring Committees

- Operationalizes Hiring Process for Component Heads to ensure Alignment



**To access all the hiring freeze exemption guidance and request process, please visit this Civilian Personnel Policy (CPP) site:**

<https://dod365.sharepoint-mil.us/sites/OSDPR-DoD-Civilian-Hiring-Freeze-Exemption>



# Powering a Qualified Force

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The DoD 8140 Cyber Workforce Qualification Program ensures the lethality and effectiveness of our cyber workforce through a tailored catalogue of agile qualification pathways, expertly crafted by dedicated partners from across the United States.

- ✓ **76 DoD Cyber Workforce Framework (DCWF) work roles** that expand the full operational scope of the department’s cyber mission.
- ✓ **With over 300 DoD 8140 foundational qualification options** available to improve resiliency against cyber attacks, regular maintenance with DoW’s partner organizations is critical.



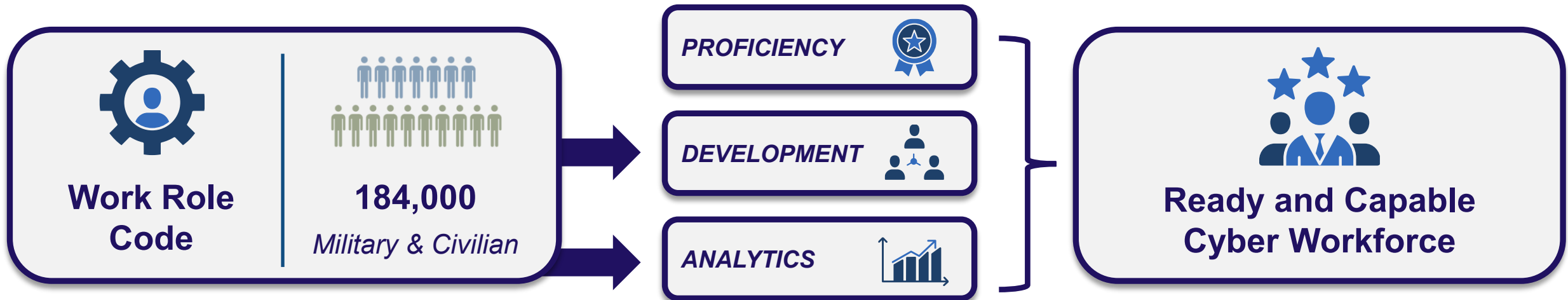


# DoD 8140 Policy: The Foundation of Readiness

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## THE 8140 POLICY SERIES: THE LEXICON OF THE DCWF



IDENTIFICATION

QUALIFICATION

READINESS



# DoD 8140 Qualification Overview

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## FOUNDATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

*Demonstration of Knowledge*



### EDUCATION

Over 3,500 degree-granting postsecondary academic institutions



OR



### TRAINING

214 Government-owned trainings aligned to DCWF CS, IT, EN, workforce elements



OR



### PERSONNEL CERTIFICATION

61 recognized industry certifications available



### RESIDENTIAL QUALIFICATIONS

*On the job qualification / Demonstration of capability*

### CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

*20 hours annually to keep current with technology and hostile actor tactics*



# DoD 8140 Future: “Real World” Skills Based Hiring

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## Benefits of Skills Based Assessments

- ✓ Rigorously validated to measure technical skills
- ✓ Each assessment aligns to a DCWF work role
- ✓ Evaluates a candidate’s technical DCWF KSAT’s through practical, real-world scenarios
- ✓ Simulates various operational environments

The screenshot displays a network analysis tool interface. On the left, a terminal window shows a list of failed SSH login attempts with details like 'Failed password for invalid user caritta 102.129.235.127 port 55633'. In the center, a packet capture window shows a table of network traffic:

No.	Time	Source	Destination	Protocol	Length	Info
463	0.692184	95.181.234.25	34.169.128.124	SSHv2	1074	Client: Key Exchan
464	0.692193	34.169.128.124	95.181.234.25	TCP	66	22 - 41855 [ACK] S
465	0.702711	34.169.128.124	95.181.234.25	SSHv2	87	Server: Protocol (
466	0.702987	95.181.234.25	34.169.128.124	TCP	66	48549 -- 22 [ACK] S
467	0.703291	95.181.234.25	34.169.128.124	SSHv2	1074	Client: Key Exchan
468	0.703302	34.169.128.124	95.181.234.25	TCP	66	22 -- 48549 [ACK] S
469	0.704211	34.169.128.124	95.181.234.25	SSHv2	1082	Server: Key Exchan
470	0.704729	95.181.234.25	34.169.128.124	TCP	66	22 -- 56859 [ACK] S
471	0.704773	34.169.128.124	95.181.234.25	TCP	66	22 -- 56859 [ACK] S
472	0.713859	34.169.128.124	172.98.71.191	TCP	88	22 -- 43777 [PSH, A
473	0.713892	34.169.128.124	172.98.71.191	TCP	66	22 -- 43777 [RST, A
474	0.714131	172.98.71.191	34.169.128.124	TCP	66	43777 -- 22 [ACK] S
475	0.714149	34.169.128.124	172.98.71.191	TCP	54	22 -- 43777 [RST] S
476	0.722474	34.169.128.124	95.181.234.25	SSHv2	1092	Server: Key Exchan
477	0.723045	95.181.234.25	34.169.128.124	SSHv2	114	Client: Elliptic C
478	0.723059	34.169.128.124	95.181.234.25	TCP	66	22 -- 54353 [ACK] S
479	0.723275	34.169.128.124	95.181.234.25	SSHv2	1082	Server: Key Exchan
480	0.723704	95.181.234.25	34.169.128.124	SSHv2	114	Client: Elliptic C
481	0.723714	34.169.128.124	95.181.234.25	TCP	66	22 -- 58841 [ACK] S
482	0.724265	34.169.128.124	95.181.234.25	SSHv2	1092	Server: Key Exchan
483	0.724692	95.181.234.25	34.169.128.124	SSHv2	114	Client: Elliptic C
484	0.724702	34.169.128.124	95.181.234.25	TCP	66	22 -- 43611 [ACK] S

On the right, a report form is visible with the following fields:

- Source IP Address(es) of Malicious Traffic: 102.129.235.127, 192.168.0.1
- Destination IP Address(es) for Malicious Traffic: 34.169.128.124
- Time of First Authentication Attempt: 21:34:56
- Were Any Credentials Compromised?: Yes
- Compromised User Account(s): userone
- Time of First Successful Authentication: 21:34:56
- Time of Last Authentication Attempt: 21:34:56

The bottom right corner shows a 'Case Report Submitted' message.



# CES: Your Competitive Edge in the War for Talent

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## CYBER EXCEPTED SERVICE

- A distinct **personnel system** to address DoW's critical cyber workforce requirements.
- Offers superior benefits and targeted, market-based pay to attract elite experts who would otherwise be out of reach.



## FY 2026 NDAA, SECTION 1113

- ❑ **Expanded Hiring Authority**
  - ❖ *CES expanded to positions in Combatant Commands, Defense Agencies, & Field Activities supporting USCYBERCOM*
  - ❖ *Establish up to 500 new positions for highly skilled cyber experts in critical, hard-to-fill roles.*
- ❑ **Enhanced Pay Flexibility**
  - ❖ *Pay may be set at a rate up to 150% of maximum rate of basic pay authorized for positions at the level I of Executive Schedule*

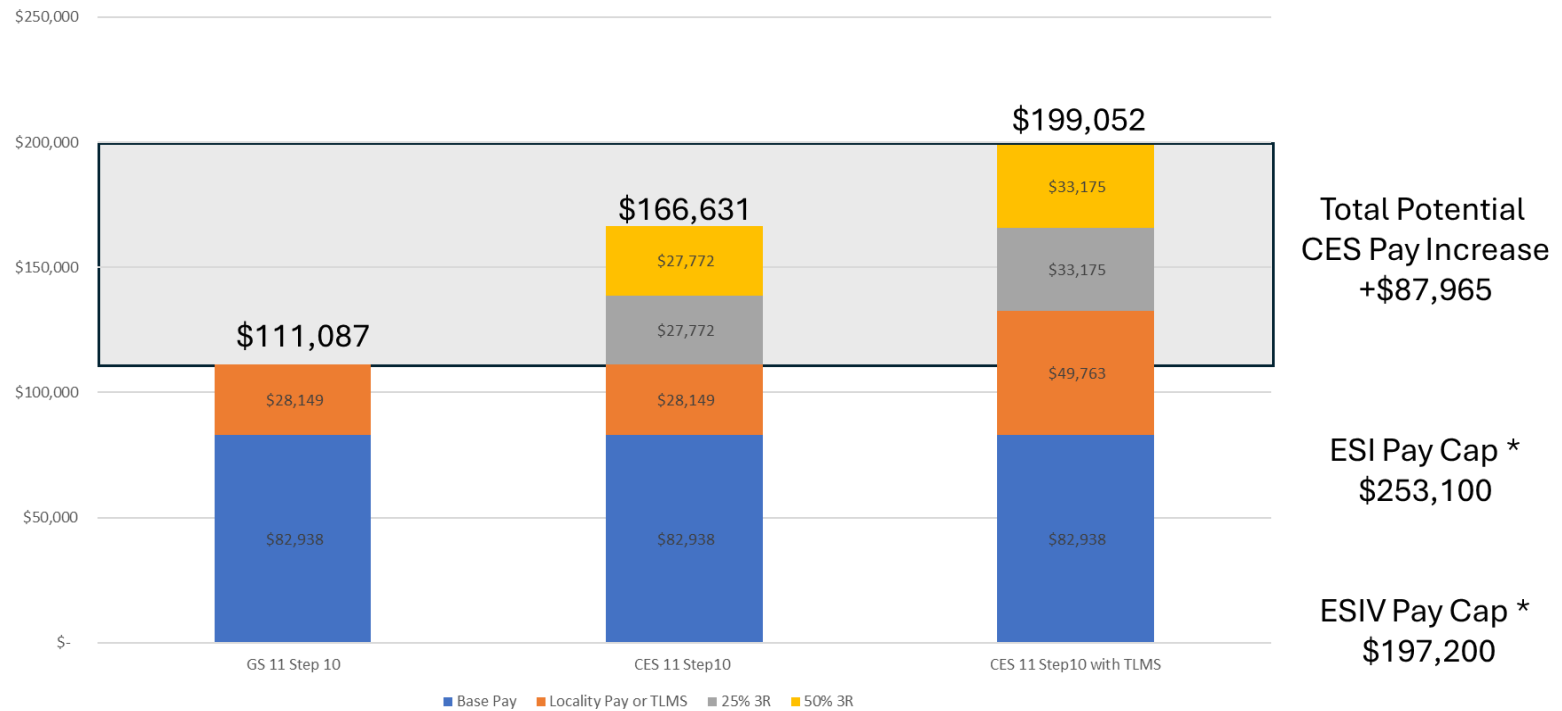


# Cyber Excepted Service Compensation Flexibility

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- CES provides significant benefits compared to competitive service scales, particularly when covered by the Target Local Market Supplement (TLMS).
- CES authorities allow for:
  - TLMS increases rates of basic pay to be more competitive with the private sector
  - CES authorities allow for provision of recruitment and retention bonuses equal to 25% of basic pay
  - Compensation at Step 11 or Step 12 for specialized roles
  - Total compensation to exceed the Executive Schedule IV pay cap

Pay Flexibilities Above GS



\*<https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/salaries-wages/salary-tables/pdf/2026/EX.pdf>



# Cyber Workforce Rotational Programs

Cyber rotation programs are vital for strengthening the Department's cyber capabilities. They foster cross-agency and private industry collaboration to enhance expertise, innovation, and resilience, ensuring a workforce prepared for evolving threats and capable of safeguarding national security.

## PROGRAM OFFERINGS:



### DoW Agency ↔ Federal Agency



Through the Federal Rotational Cyber Workforce Program (Public Law 117-149)



### DoW Agency ↔ Private Sector



Through the Public-Private Talent Exchange Program: Cyber & IT Component (CITEP) (DoDI 1322.06)



## WHY PARTICIPATE?



- ❖ Gain Real-World, Mission Critical Experience
- ❖ Broaden Technical & Strategic Skill Sets
- ❖ Expand Professional Network
- ❖ Promote Talent Recognition
- ❖ Enhanced Leadership Visibility
- ❖ Exploration of Various Cyber/IT Work Roles

## APPLY & SHARE NOW!



Accepting Applications  
**NOW → April 24**

### Open To IT/Cyber:

- ❖ Government Civilians
- ❖ Private Sector Employees

Scan QR Code for  
List of Opportunities  
& to Apply





# War Data Platform: *Your* Tool for Workforce Tracking and Analytics

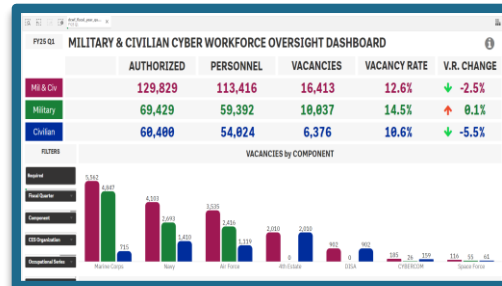
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- Drives Real-Time Decisions with Enterprise Cyber Workforce Analytics.
- Delivers Tailored Visualizations for All Levels: From executive dashboards to deep-dive analytics.
- Empowers Senior Leaders to Make Data-Informed Decisions.



## EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW

Holistic view of the workforce at scale



## WORKFORCE OVERSIGHT

Comprehensive views of cyber workforce



## ADVANCED ANALYTICS

Detailed data points for decision support



## OPERATIONAL READINESS

Cyber Workforce Qualification Reporting



# DoW Cyber Academic Engagement Office (CAEO): Mission

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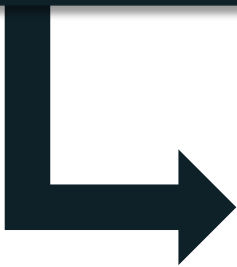
## FY 2024 NDAA Section 1531 Office for Academic Engagement Relating to Cyber Activities:

*"...to establish, maintain, and oversee the activities of the DoW that pertain to the relationship between the Department and academia, including with entities involved in primary, secondary, or postsecondary education, with respect to cyber-related matters."*



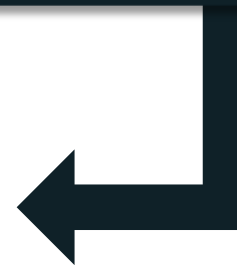
### MISSION: Serve as the focal point between the DoW and academia by:

- 1) **inspiring** and **cultivating** the next generation of cyber talent through academic engagement to **support force readiness**,
- 2) **advancing defense priorities** by **strengthening partnerships, innovation, and collaboration.**



### END STATE:

An **effective and efficient ecosystem** of academic programs and initiatives providing opportunities to inspire, build, and train mission-ready talent across academia for US dominance in cyberspace.





# DoW Cyber Academic Engagement Office (CAEO): Mission

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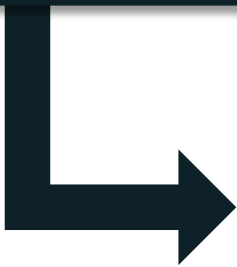
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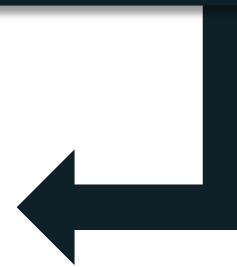
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# DoW Cyber Academic Engagement Office: Programs



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The CAEO serves as the connective tissue between the DoW and academia, integrating over 470 academic institutions across 54 states and territories.

### Current CAEO Programs

DoW CSA

NCAE-C NDU-CIC

Senior Military Colleges

VICEROY

UC2

DoW Components

### OPERATIONALIZING ACADEMIA TO:

- ✓ Drive partnerships to inspire, recruit, and retain cyber talent aligned to DoW cyber work roles.
- ✓ Translate DoW needs into program requirements, thereby generating metrics that evidence clear return on investment.
- ✓ Forge effective and efficient connections with DoW components.
- ✓ Effectively manage funds and resources to improve ROI of academic engagement.
- ✓ Provide a single point of contact for cyber academic Congressional stakeholders.
- ✓ Increase research capacity to forecast Cyber Workforce posture



# DoW Cyber Service Academy (CSA)



DoW CSA aims to secure the nation's information systems and networks through the recruitment of the nation's top emerging cyber talent; and retention of skilled DoW personnel and strengthening cyber education programs and curricula.

## 2025 COHORT

- 75 New Scholars
- 119 Returning Scholars
- 13 Agencies consider hiring
- 600+ recommended by their institution
- 3,000+ applicant accounts created

## Hire our people!

The DoW CSA Program office is currently executing the 2026 – 2027 application cycle and has talent available **NOW** for full-time placement.

- **Component Review:** 23 March – 15 April 2026
- **Football Draft:** 22 April 2026
- **DoW CSA Site:** <https://www.cyberworkforce.mil/>
- **Contact:** [osd.mc-alex.DoW-cio.mbx.DoW-csa@mail.mil](mailto:osd.mc-alex.DoW-cio.mbx.DoW-csa@mail.mil)



**Tychinna Corpening**

*Motivated by a personal circumstance... Tychinna sought answers at her local community college, which led her to discover the DoW CSA program. She currently works at Naval Information Warfare Center, Atlantic as an IT Specialist.*



# CY 26 Key Initiatives

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- **SKILLS BASED HIRING:** Implement skills-based assessments hire the best qualified candidates
- **DCWF QUALIFICATION:** Expand qualification standards across the enterprise
- **CES:** Expand eligibility for critical roles, utilizing competitive pay authorities to secure skilled professionals
- **CYBER WORKFORCE STRATEGY:** Set conditions for a new era of talent warfare and a mission ready workforce
- **CAEO:** Automate scholarship application & retention support





# DoW Cyber Workforce Readiness

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## STRATEGIC READINESS



## SHAPING THE CYBER WORKFORCE

### DRIVE READINESS

- Cyber Work Role Framework
- Qualifications Standardization
- Policy and Strategy

### SHAPE DEVELOPMENT

- Academic Engagement
- Industry Partnerships

### REAL TIME ANALYTICS

- Uniform Identification
- Data Collection and Visualization

### MISSION PERSONNEL SUPPORT

- Distinct Mission System
- Compete with Private Sector

*Leading the Human Capital Dimension while Shaping Business Systems and Modernization for Cyber Workforce Readiness*