

CEHR-E  
CECW-E  
CEMP-ZB

Regulation  
No. 690-1-1212

31 March 2004

Civilian Personnel  
PROFESSIONAL REGISTRATION AS A SELECTIVE PLACEMENT FACTOR

1. Purpose. This regulation establishes U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) policy regarding professional registration for positions in the Engineers and Scientists (Resources & Construction) Career Program (CP-18).
2. Applicability. This regulation is applicable to CP-18 positions in job series 0801 through 0896, 1350, 1370, 1372 and 1373 that are filled on a permanent or temporary basis in USACE.
3. References.
  - a. United States Office of Personnel Management (OPM), Operating Manual for Qualification Standards for General Schedule Positions – GS-800: All Professional Engineering Positions.
  - b. AR 690-950, Civilian Personnel – Career Management.
  - c. ER 1110-1-8152, Professional Registration.
4. Distribution Statement. Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited.
5. Background.
  - a. The USACE strategic vision is to be the world's premier public engineering organization. The mission of the Corps of Engineers is to provide quality, responsive engineering and environmental services to the Nation. Fulfilling this mission requires the Corps to employ a world-class engineering workforce. Professional registration is an important measure of the competency of the USACE engineering workforce and is widely recognized by our customers and the public.
  - b. Registration (also called licensure) promotes technical competency and professional responsibility. Registration of non-federal engineers, architects, landscape architects, surveyors, geologists, and related professions is required by states in order to safeguard life, health and property, and to promote the public welfare. Under the doctrine of federal supremacy, USACE is

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This regulation supersedes ER 690-1-1212, dated 30 November 2001 and previous HQUSACE policy memorandums regarding specific CP-18 positions that require professional registration.

generally not required to comply with state requirements for registration of federal engineers, architects and related professions, except as provided by federal environmental statutes and federal agencies' regulations published under those statutes. Registration is, however, still essential for certain positions to ensure the protection of life and property.

c. The referenced OPM qualification standards authorize professional registration as an appropriate selective factor for appointment to “certain, typically high-level, engineering positions.” The key consideration is that registration must be essential for acceptable performance of the work of the position to be filled. Duties and responsibilities that satisfy one of the following criteria require registration:

(1) “Responsibility for final approval of designs of major structures and facilities involving public safety where such compliance with state laws meets an essential need of the engineering organization to provide objective evidence to agency management and the public that the work is performed by engineers of proven competence.”

(2) “Responsibility for engineering determinations concerning contract awards or other major aspects of design and construction work to be performed by engineers in the private sector, where registration is essential to have their full confidence and respect to achieve cooperation on critical engineering issues.”

d. AR 690-950 identifies positions in USACE by specific title that require professional registration. However, identification of registered positions by specific title is no longer a practicable approach due to changing organizational structures. Hence, the primary objective of this regulation is to prescribe a USACE policy on registration requirements which is not dependent on position titles, and which is consistent with the OPM qualification standards and AR 690-950.

## 6. Policy.

a. Professional registration is strongly encouraged for all USACE engineers, architects, landscape architects, surveyors, geologists, and related professions at the GS-12 level and above. Registration signifies technical competence, proven ability, and professional integrity. Professional registration gives greater credibility and weight to an individual’s judgment and actions, both within professional circles and with the public at large. Registration is an important factor in career advancement, and may be a discriminator between two otherwise equal candidates for positions that do not require registration.

b. The supervisor determines when a position requires professional registration. Professional registration must be clearly identified in the position description and stated as a selective placement factor in the vacancy announcement. Professional registration is required as a condition of employment for the positions listed in AR 690-950, Chapter 11, and positions having one or more of the responsibilities listed below. Registration is appropriate for most GS-13 and higher positions in CP-18.

(1) Having independent responsibility for making engineering or architectural decisions or preparing engineering or architectural products that could substantially impact public health and safety and welfare.

(2) Final approval of engineering and architectural products and services to ensure the protection of life, property and the environment, such as the Chief of Hydraulics and Hydrology at a district. This requirement applies as well to the position in each principal discipline that is responsible for the technical adequacy of that discipline's products and services, such as the structural engineering team leader. (See ER 1180-1-8152 for USACE policy on approving design documents.)

(3) Providing authoritative engineering, architectural, construction and/or operations advice and determinations that could affect public safety and/or the environment, such as a regional technical specialist in a particular engineering discipline, and the Chief of the Technical Engineering and Construction Division at a Major Subordinate Command (MSC).

(4) Oversight and certification of the technical adequacy and safety of existing facilities, such as the positions of Dam Safety Program Manager, Dam Safety Officer and Bridge Safety Officer.

(5) Authoritative interpretation and administration of construction contracts, such as the positions of Area Engineer and Resident Engineer.

(6) Developing engineering, construction, and/or operations policy, criteria and/or standards that could affect public safety and the environment, such as a national subject matter expert at HQUSACE or the senior regional water management engineer at an MSC.

(7) Representing USACE in relationships with professional associations, industry organizations, and government agencies on critical engineering, construction, and/or operations issues where registration is essential to achieve confidence, respect and cooperation, such as the USACE Chief Architect or a USACE representative on the National Dam Safety Review Board.

(8) Chairing architect-engineer preselection and selection boards.

c. The required type of registration (engineer, architect, surveyor, geologist, etc.) shall be consistent with the principal duties, responsibilities and nature of a position. Registration may be in any state, Guam, Puerto Rico, or the District of Columbia. The individual's registration must be current and in good standing. Validation of current registration is the responsibility of the supervisor for an incumbent position, and selecting officials and the civilian personnel office when screening candidates for a vacancy.

d. When a position involves multiple functions, and engineering and/or construction functions do not comprise a major portion of the duties and responsibilities, professional registration is not required. However, the appropriate professional registration is required for the next lower level position(s) that is primarily responsible for engineering and/or construction.

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e. In accordance with the referenced OPM qualification standards, "if a currently filled position is newly identified as requiring professional registration, the requirement for registration is waived for the duration of the employee's incumbency."

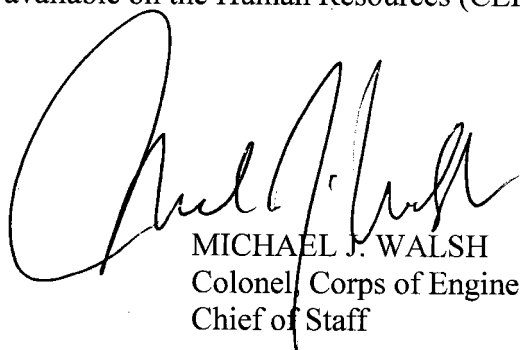
f. Professional registration is required for a temporary assignment to a position that requires registration. Since the temporary assignee assumes the duties, responsibilities and accountabilities of the position, the individual must be fully qualified to act in that position.

g. Professional registration is required for military personnel who are assigned to a position requiring registration.

h. The requirements of this regulation can only be waived by the CP-18 Functional Chief or the Functional Chief's Representative.

i. In accordance with 5 USC 5757 and implementing DoD, Army and USACE policies, USACE is authorized to reimburse employees for expenses to obtain and maintain professional registration. Current guidance is available on the Human Resources (CEHR) website.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael J. Walsh", is written over the typed name and title.

MICHAEL J. WALSH  
Colonel, Corps of Engineers  
Chief of Staff