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A CMS-Based Competency Assessment of the DoD Contracting Workforce

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- FY2020 NDAA Section 861
 - Congress directed the DoD to implement a professional certification program for the acquisition workforce
 - Certification program to be based on national standards developed by a third-party accredited program
- Feb 17, 2021 OUSD (A&S) DPC Memo “Restructuring of the Certification Program for the Contracting Functional Area”
 - Establishment of a new contracting workforce competency model based on the National Contract Management Association’s (NCMA) Contract Management Standard (CMS)

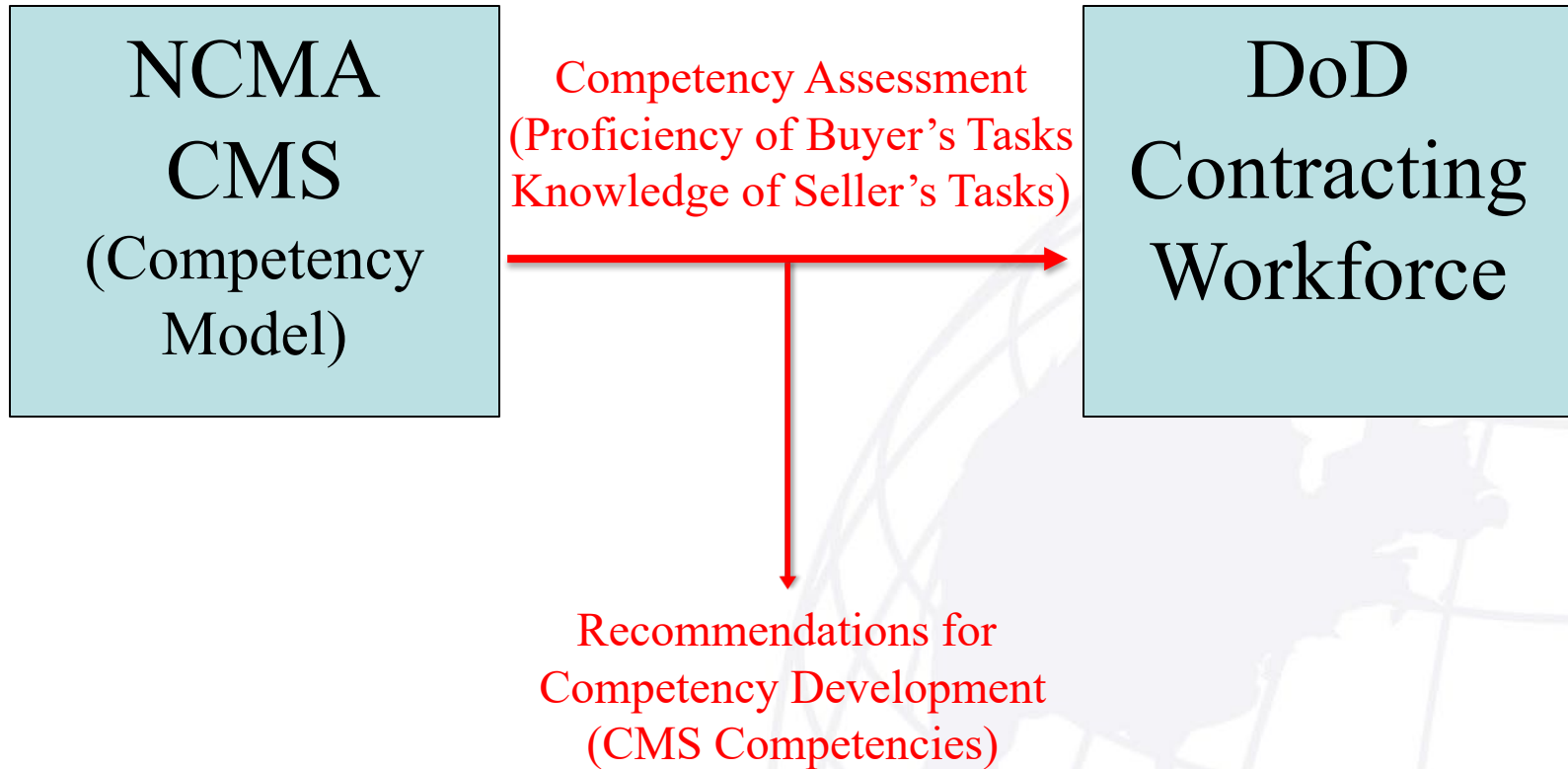


- Research Purpose
 - Conduct a competency assessment on the DoD contracting workforce using the new DoD contracting workforce competency model based on the National Contract Management Association's (NCMA) Contract Management Standard (CMS)
- Research Questions
 - Based on the competency assessment, what are the contracting workforce's buyer proficiency ratings and seller knowledge ratings for the NCMA CMS competencies?
 - What recommendations can be made based on the results of the contracting workforce competency assessment?



- **Auditability Theory**
 - Organizations need to have an established and effective knowledge management system supporting its governance processes and practices (Power, 1996).
 - A knowledge management system includes competent people, capable processes, and effective internal controls (Rendon & Rendon, 2015).

- **Competency Theory**
 - Individual and organizational performance is based on the essential competencies related to job tasks. The underpinning essential task competency results in superior performance (McClelland, 1973).





- Contract Management Standard (CMS)
 - CMS was established through a job task analysis, peer review, and public comment validation ensuring consensus, openness, lack of dominance, and balance of interests (ANSI accredited).
 - Contract life cycle includes separate and distinct processes for pre-award, award, and post award phases.
 - Life cycle phase processes include both buyer and seller domains (processes and job tasks)



- Web-based competency assessment instrument
 - Competency items aligned with CMS framework
 - Contract management life cycle (pre-award, award, post award)
 - Both buyer and seller domains
- Assessment conducted on Marine Corps Expeditionary Contracting Platoons (ECPs) and Regional Contracting Offices (RCOs)
 - Respondents self-assessed for each competency item

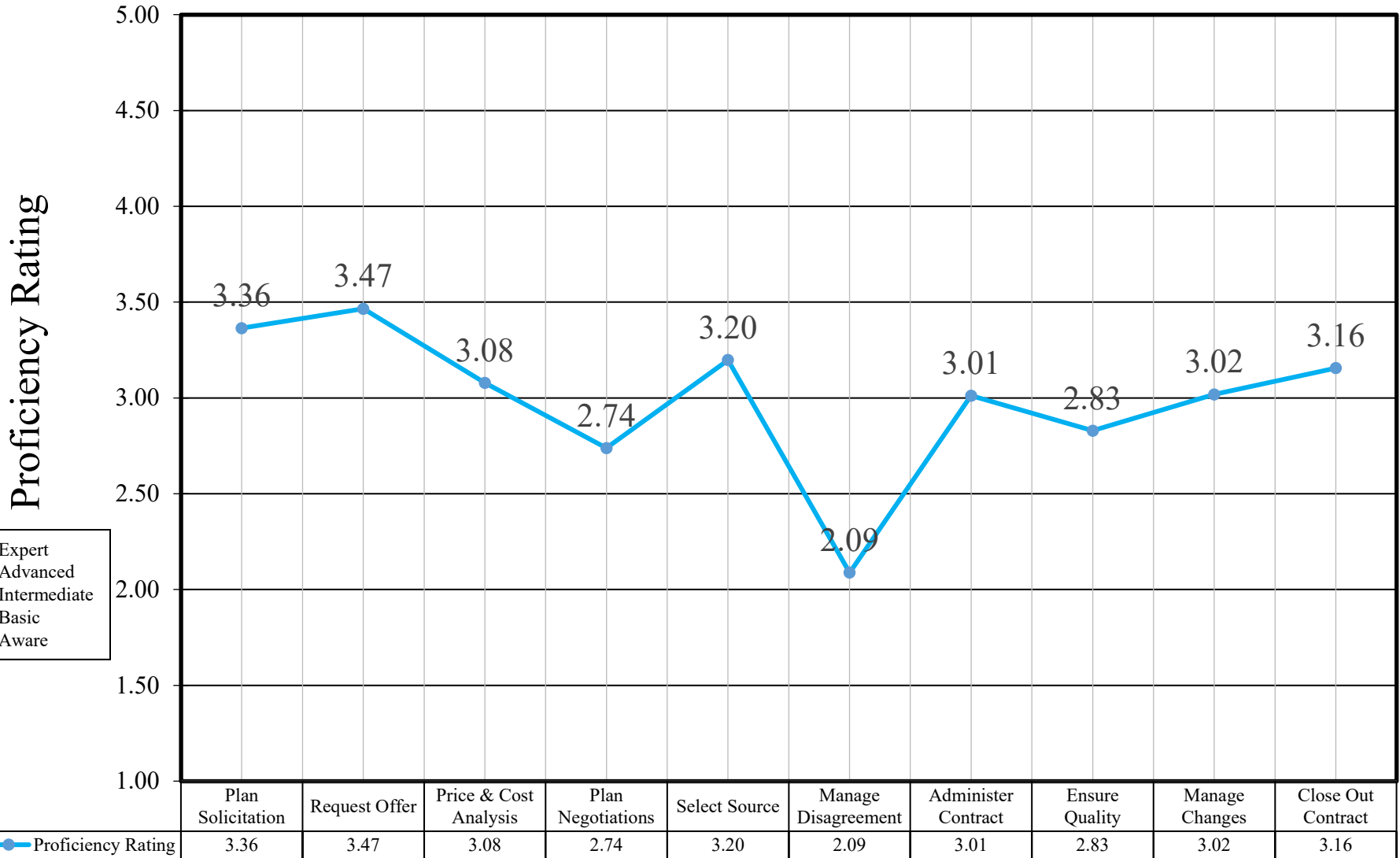


- Competency assessment sent to 100 contracting professionals
- Competency assessment completed by 33-41 contracting professionals
- 33-41% response rate

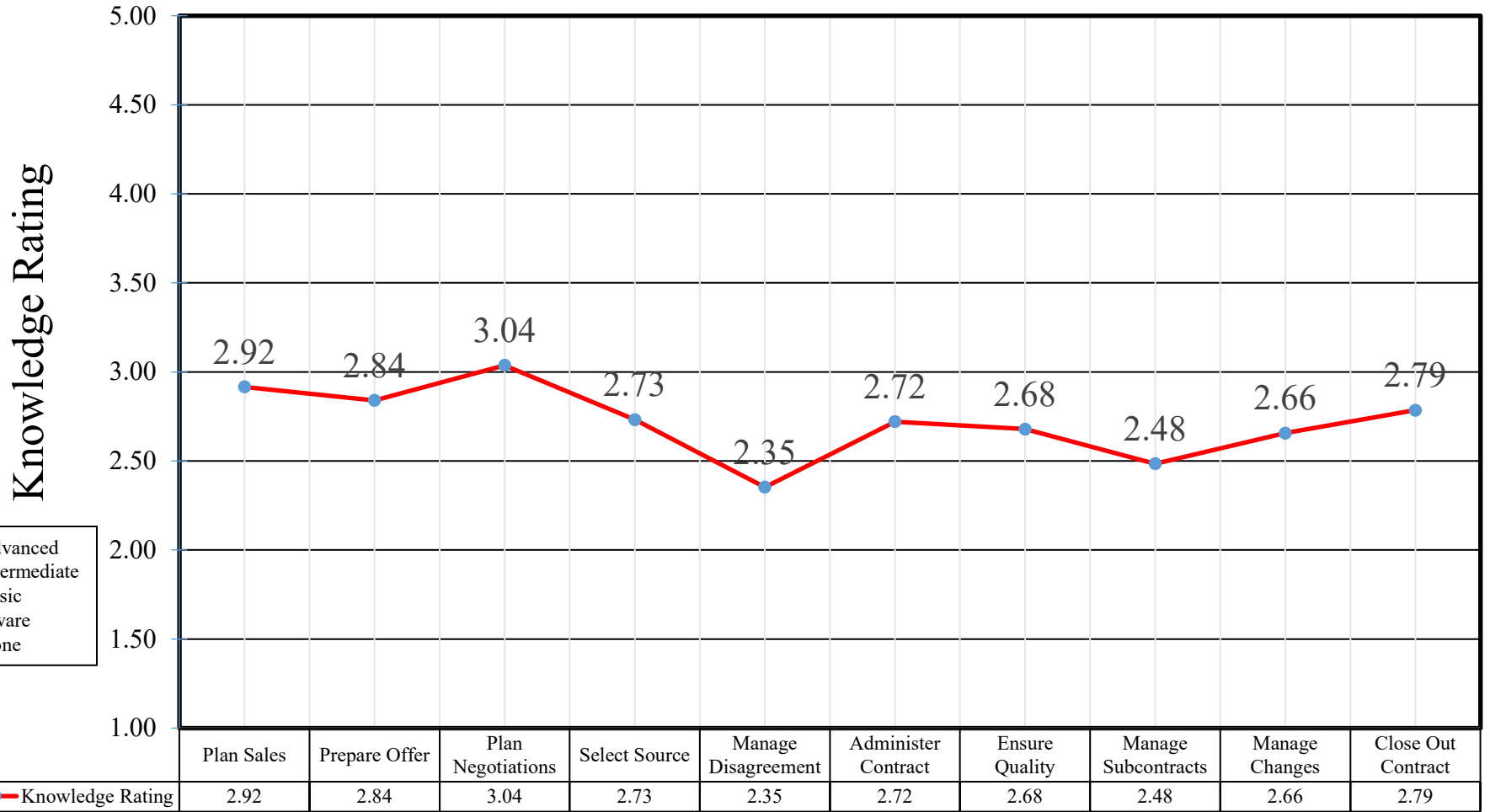
Table 1. Expeditionary Contracting Workforce Competency Assessment Demographics

DAWIA Contracting Certification Level	Number		Years of Contracting Experience	Number
None	8		3 or Less	15
Level 1	11		4 to 8	19
Level 2	16		9 to 13	5
Level 3	6		14 to 18	2
			19 or more	0

Contract Management Competencies (Buyer Competencies)



Contract Management Competencies (Seller Competencies)



5: Advanced
4: Intermediate
3: Basic
2: Aware
1: None

● Knowledge Rating



- Buyer Competencies
 - Proficiency ratings range between Basic and Intermediate levels
 - Higher ratings in Pre-Award competencies
 - Lowest ratings in Award competencies
 - Manage Disagreement has the lowest proficiency rating, followed by Plan Negotiations
- Seller Competencies
 - Knowledge ratings range predominantly within the Aware level
 - Relatively consistent throughout contracting life cycle
 - Manage Disagreement has the lowest knowledge rating, followed by Manage Subcontracts



- Buyer Competencies
 - Emphasize proficiency training on Manage Disagreement and Plan Negotiations
 - Resolving issues related to the solicitation or source selection process through informal or formal means
 - Using critical thinking, problem-solving, decision-making, conflict resolution skills
 - Emphasize training on Award and Post Award tasks
 - Price & Cost Analysis, Ensure Quality, Manage Changes
- Seller Competencies
 - Emphasize knowledge of seller tasks throughout contracting life cycle phases
 - Prepare Offer, Manage Disagreement, Manage Subcontracts



Questions/Comments

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