

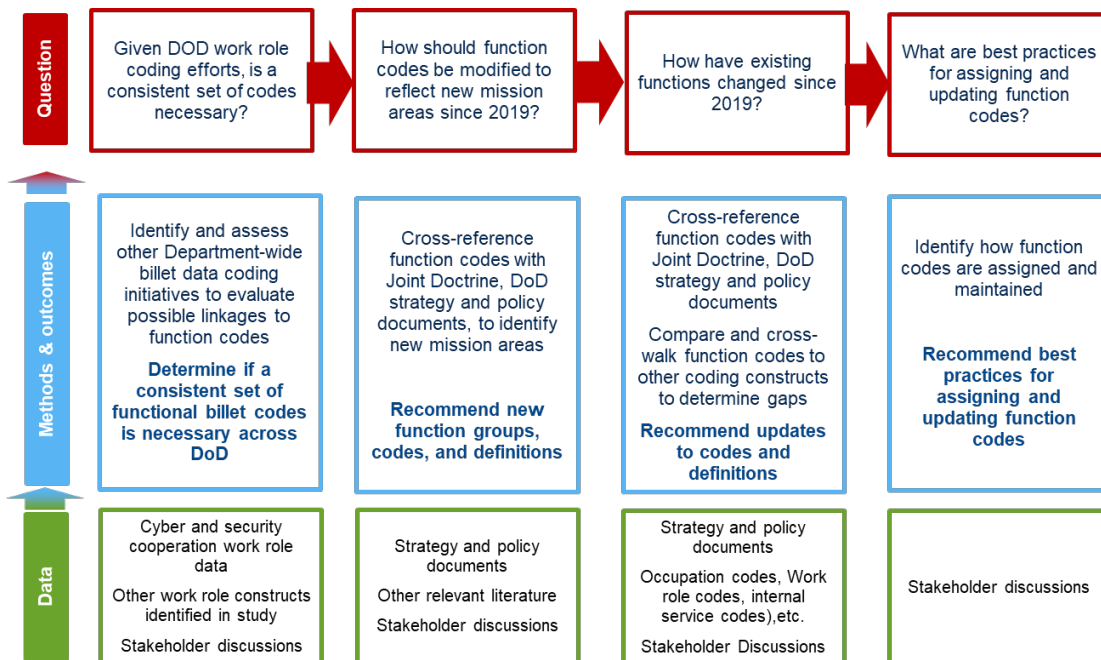
DOD Function Code Update and Coding Framework Review

Problem

Every manpower authorization (or billet)—including Active, Reserve, and civilian—is assigned a Department of Defense (DOD) function code to describe the work performed. This coding occurs in authoritative manpower systems and is critical to articulating the size and composition of the department's workforce from a perspective of requirements and types of work being performed rather than personnel inventory.

Historically, DOD function codes, submitted annually in the Inherently Governmental and Commercial Activities Inventory, have been relied on to identify work that could be considered for competition with the private sector and have been associated with the Office of Management and Budget Circular A-76 processes. Although the A-76 program remains suspended, the pressure to shape the total force effectively and economically—coupled with sustained scrutiny on the size, shape, structure, and workload alignment across the total force—means that these function codes must remain relevant and current. The current set of function codes, however, has not been reviewed since a previous CNA study in 2019 [1], and the recommended code revisions from that study were not implemented at the time; the 2010 function codes remain active. Therefore, OSD P&R/TFM&RS asked CNA to review the function codes again and to determine additional changes to the codes required by changes in work performed by DOD in the past five years.

In addition, in recent years, DOD has undertaken the development of other billet coding initiatives, such as work role codes, codes that detail the knowledge, skills, and abilities required for functions such as cyber. Other functional communities are in various stages of developing their own work role codes, suggesting the need to review these coding efforts across DOD and determine whether aligning DOD function codes with these frameworks is desirable for standardizing a DOD-wide framework. Therefore, in addition to updating the function codes, this study also assesses the ongoing work role coding efforts to assess their compatibility with DOD function codes.



Source: CNA.

Findings

Function Code and Work Role Comparison

Currently, function codes and work role codes serve different purposes. Function codes are used primarily for workforce analysis and work role codes are used for talent management. Further, only two communities, cyber and security cooperation, have formally developed and implemented work role codes. Although the majority of the defense cyber workforce and security cooperation workforce codes crosswalk to a cyber or security cooperation function code and would nest under function codes in a code hierarchy, it is not always a one-to-one match and work role codes sometimes crosswalk to a function code outside of that functional community.

| | Function codes | Work role codes |
|--|---|--|
| Purpose | High-level descriptions of work performed in a billet; describe what the work is | Describe the tasks personnel complete in their day-to-day duties, mapped to required KSAs; describe how the work is performed |
| Primary use | Workforce analysis | Talent management |
| Functional communities covered | All | Currently only cyber and security cooperation |
| Number of fields in manpower databases | One | Up to three |

Function Code and Work Role Comparison. Source: CNA.

Use of Function Codes

Neither the Services nor the Joint Staff are actively using or maintaining function codes. They all stressed that the strategic value of the codes should be communicated and some suggested that OSD should provide training for implementing and maintaining the updated function codes.

Recommendations

We recommend that function codes and work role codes continue to be coded separately. It is unclear whether all functional communities will develop work role codes. Therefore, function codes remain the only standard manpower code that describes the work performed by all military and civilian personnel in the infrastructure and operating forces. Function codes and work role codes can complement each other, however. Manpower analysts can use both codes to inform workforce analysis, and the codes can be used for checks on data quality

Specific recommendations on changes to the function code taxonomy can be found in the full report. In addition to our recommended revisions to the codes, we also provide the following recommendations to OSD to improve the currency, accuracy, and usefulness of function code data:

- Improve messaging about strategic value and usefulness of DOD function codes
- Enable components to update and maintain the function codes
- Develop and disseminate training for those entering the codes

References

[1] Wolfanger, Jessica, Tom Woo, and Jen Atkin. 2019. DOD Function Codes: Assessment of Currency and Relevancy. CNA. DRM-2019-U-019326-Final.

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This document contains the best opinion of CNA at the time of issue. The views, opinions, and findings contained in this report should not be construed as representing the official position of the Department of the Navy.

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