
McCain Fellow - General Engineering

I. INTRODUCTION

This position is to serve as a fellow in the John S. McCain Strategic Defense Fellows Program (McCain Fellows Program). The McCain Fellows Program is a one-year DoD civilian leadership program designed to acquire high performing and talented individuals with advanced degrees located throughout the United States who will gain experience and develop their leadership capabilities through challenging opportunities to flourish into a problem solvers, strategic thinkers and future leaders. Fellows represent high caliber graduates and are expected to possess a personal commitment to excellence, a strong capacity for leadership, exceptional ability evidenced through achievement, and a demonstrated commitment to a public service career. The program is designed to provide leadership development for the commencement of a career track toward senior leadership in the DoD.

The McCain Fellows Program is a one year civilian fellowship program administered by the Washington Headquarters Services (WHS) for the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD). The McCain Fellows Program is an excepted service position designed to serve as a special assistant in either the Office of the Secretary of Defense, or an office of the Secretary of a Military Department for 12 months. Upon successful completion of the fellows program, the incumbent may be placed in any reserved position in the excepted service within the DoD, without competition, to the next higher grade level upon successful completion of all required training, demonstrated ability to perform the duties at the next higher grade level, and possible audit verification of the level of work being performed.

II. MAJOR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Duties and responsibilities of the incumbent will vary from rotation to rotation. Performs assigned duties in a functional area whose programs and subject matter fields are compatible with the fellows' field of degree. Assignments are often projects that are time-sensitive and short-term in nature, requiring quick research, analysis, assessment and recommendations.

Applies professional engineering and/or architect knowledge, scientific work, complex theories, and advanced techniques in the fields of mechanical, electrical and civil engineering to optimize utility system performance.

Conducts business case, cost benefit, and life-cycle cost analysis or economic evaluations of programs and projects for the purpose of determining the most effective methods of meeting goals and objectives. Fellow provides technical guidance and recommendations to leadership. Keeps abreast of emerging technologies, developments, policy issuance, and related matters in technical fields to provide advice and recommendation for the assigned area of responsibility. Analyzes programs and trends, and proposes appropriate courses of action to fulfill program needs and to meet changing requirements.

Participates in the design and conduct of a variety of statistical studies, reviews and conducts analysis on programs and trends, various aspects of existing regulations, procedures and/or organizational functions, and provides background information, assessments, recommendations and other concerns relating to assigned projects. Determines and defines nature of technical problems, identifies factors and variables, defines alternatives and approaches to consider and methods to apply. Evaluates indications, develops measures to effect readiness assessment, and

investigates variables and unresolved uncertainties. Assists senior colleagues in such situations by providing information and serving as a team member.

Prepares, individually or collaboration with others, briefing papers, position papers, replies to Congressional and other governmental inquiries, and statements and back-up information for issues anticipated. Performs in-depth fact finding research, verification of data, and quantitative and/or qualitative analysis of voluminous material.

Maintains awareness and broad understanding of appropriate Federal laws, and DoD policies and directives, as well as understanding of the larger political, legal, and economic environment in which the DoD operates. Recognizes the urgency of all assignments, initiating the necessary action required to complete assignments. Accompanies senior managers to formal and informal meetings and conferences where key policy issues are discussed or plans developed for implementation of laws, executive orders, or national policy.

Safeguards and handles classified information, documents, materials, and office equipment in accordance with applicable executive orders, statutes, and regulations. Complies with all required security and information assurance training. Reports all security violations to the proper authorities.

McCain Fellows to possess strong work ethic, resourcefulness, adaptability, nimbleness, creativity and dedication to public service.

III. FACTOR EVALUATION

Factor 1, Knowledge Required by the Position:

Knowledge of related science, systems, technologies and engineering disciplines. Ability to analyze and apply several problem solving techniques necessary to perform project engineering, scientific and technical work. Fellows to interpret, select, and extend pertinent precedents, policies, directives, codes or guides relating to the field of engineering.

Knowledge of engineering concepts, administrative principles, regulations, operating procedures and analytical skills to evaluate and conduct studies of work processes in various organizations to identify, analyze and recommend technical solutions. Ability to relate technical decisions and recommendations to relevant policy guidance and department directives.

Ability to prepare long-range and short-range program goals and objectives. Knowledge of engineering systems and technical requirements, procedures and processes. Review project requirements, budget requests, task orders and contract elements affecting systems, funding, equipment and overall program success.

Ability to apply qualitative and quantitative methods to assess and contribute to the improvement of program effectiveness and the improvement of complex engineering systems and projects. Apply investigative techniques to gather clear-cut factual information regarding technical issues and problems or compliance with regulations.

Knowledge of the organization, programs, missions and functions of OSD and DoD.

Skills Required for the Position:

Analytical and technical skills to evaluate policies, regulations, procedures and potential trends in order to identify issues and potential ramification, develop recommendations and alternatives for

review by higher level managers and senior policy-making DoD officials making national level decisions.

Ability to organize, plan, and prioritize projects and assignments to best meet mission and organizational needs. Possess excellent oral and written communication skills to develop and deliver briefings, action memos and recommendations to higher-level managers. Ability to work effectively with employees at all levels in the organization.

Factor 2, Supervisory Controls:

The McCain Fellows Program Manager provides administrative and program supervision. The rotational supervisor or senior level specialist in the sponsoring organization provides technical and rotational assignment supervision. An assigned mentor provides career advice and Individual Development Plan (IDP) guidance. The fellow and rotational supervisor develop a mutually acceptable rotational assignment agreement, which typically includes a project plan, identification of the work to be done, scope, stakeholders, deadlines, and feedback from sponsoring organizations. The fellow informs the supervisor of potentially controversial findings, issues, or problems with widespread impact. Management officials whose programs would be affected by implementation of the recommendations may also review completed work critically outside the immediate office.

Factor 3, Guidelines:

Guidelines consist of general reference material such as administrative policies and guidelines, theories, precedent studies, and instructions and manual covering the subjects involved (e.g., DoD organizations, procedures, policies and regulations). Guidelines generally cover program goals and objectives within the context of broad regulatory guidelines. The incumbent may need to develop or refine more specific guidance and/or implementing regulations. The employee must use judgment in choosing, interpreting, or adapting available guidelines to specific issues or subjects studied. Analyze the subject and the current guidelines that cover it, and makes recommendations for change. The employee must use judgment to identify and research appropriate regulations, and to determine the relationship between guidelines and specific assignments.

Factor 4, Complexity:

Work consists of different and unrelated processes, methods and require the development of recommendations to resolve substantive problems of a policy nature. The work also consists of projects and studies that require analysis of interrelated issues of effectiveness, efficiency, and productivity of substantive mission-oriented programs. Projects consist of issues, problems, or concepts that are not always susceptible to direct observation and analysis (e.g., projections). Information about subjects is often conflicting or incomplete, cannot be readily obtained by direct means, or is otherwise difficult to document. The work requires originality in refining work methods and techniques for specific issues or resolution of problems. The fellow may revise methods for collecting data, adopt new measure of productivity, or develop new approaches as necessary. Decisions about how to proceed in planning, organizing and conducting studies are complicated by conflicting program goals and objectives which may derive from changes in legislative or regulatory guidelines, productivity, and/or variations in the demand for program services. Assignments are further complicated by: the need to deal with subjective concepts such as value judgments; the quality and quantity of actions are measurable primarily in predictive terms; and findings and conclusions are highly subjective and not readily susceptible to verification or reevaluation of results.

Factor 5, Scope and Effect:

The purpose of the work is to plan and carry out a variety of complex assignments, which typically involves analyzing and resolving problems of a varied nature. Completed work and recommendations guide high-level discussions on sensitive policy and programmatic matters, and influence decisions by senior DoD policy-making officials who make national-level decisions. The work contributes to the effectiveness, efficiency of other DoD organizations.

Factor 6&7, Personal Contacts/Purpose of Contacts:

Personal contacts are substantive within and outside of OSD at senior management levels and may include consultants, contractors, or business executives in a moderately unstructured setting. Purpose of contacts is to influence managers or other officials to consider and accept findings and recommendations on a variety of important and sensitive topics and issues. May encounter resistance due to such issues as organizational conflict, competing objectives, or resource problems.

Factor 8, Physical Demands:

The work is primarily sedentary, although some physical effort is required to inspect work in progress. Assignments may involve periods of standing, stooping, walking, climbing, squatting, and being cramped and/or uncomfortable positions.

Factor 9, Work Environment:

The incumbent typically works in an office environment. However, assignments are inside and outside of buildings where lighting, heating, ventilation, air conditioning, and the weather may or may not be adequate. May be exposed to injury. Use of safety equipment is required. May require occasional travel.

IV. OTHER CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT:

This position is designated as a Testing Designated Position (TDP) under the civilian drug-testing program. As a mandatory requirement for employment in this TDP, the incumbent is to (a) refrain from the use of illegal drugs and (b) if required, submit to urinalysis testing. The selectee must sign statements acknowledging the position is identified as a TDP.

The employee must be able to obtain and maintain a Special Sensitive (SCI) clearance, or appropriate security clearance as required by sponsoring organization.