

# IA Assurance Certification & Training: Knowledge Means Security

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Knowing what to do is one thing, knowing exactly how to do it is something else entirely. Knowing how to handle a firearm when standing guard is an obvious prerequisite for the job. Likewise, being up to-date on the latest information assurance and cyber security techniques before taking on the responsibility for any aspect of an Army network is just as important. The only way to do this is to take the time and effort to successfully complete the appropriate training and certification needed for the information technology you use or manage.

Working with Army systems, networks and applications is more than another IT job. It's taking on a key responsibility to provide secure support and protect warfighters and the nation. Individual talent at any level can only be made better and more efficient by completing the latest training available. This training will enable you to anticipate and prevent problems and defeat threats before they can affect Army operations and potentially put soldiers lives at risk.

There are two reasons for making sure your training and certification is complete and current. First, being trained and certified is mandatory. All Army organizations need to ensure that 100% of their workforce is certified by the end of 2009. Certification is a condition of maintaining an Information Assurance position. Not having the appropriate certification means assignment to non-IA duties.

That's the policy side. The practical side is that the information assets under your control are fully your responsibility. It's your job to use the technology and procedures necessary to ensure the security of the sensitive information and restricted access under your control. Because the technology world moves at lightning speed, it is necessary to keep up and not be left behind. You can be certain that our nation's enemies, rouge cyber-terrorists and even the casual hackers are constantly devising new ways to infiltrate Army systems and cause whatever damage they can or steal whatever information is available.

Who should be sure they are correctly trained and certified? The answer is everyone responsible for any aspect of an Army network. If you are a seasoned professional, completing your certifications will make you a role model. If you are taking on new assignments and responsibilities, certification and training will make your job easier and strengthen your contribution to the Army team. If you are new to the team, the training and certification will bring you on board faster, opening up paths to possible advancement.

Remember, all IA personnel need to be trained and certified for the functions they are performing at the required level for their position and responsibility. The training requirement applies to military, civilian contractors and foreign nationals with access to Army systems. Certification is not a one-time event. It is very important to maintain your certifications.

Preparing for training is easy. Personnel should work with their supervisors and Information Assurance Managers to determine the appropriate required certification. They should identify and complete pre-requisite training (consult the IA training Best Business Practice matrix for guidance). Plus, technical personnel should complete their privileged user agreement.

Keep your IA training and certificate up to date. It's more than a line on a resume. It's helping to keep Army information – and our soldiers' lives – out of harm's way.