Planner Database
5 October 2023
Q&A Summary

This webinar provided a refresher for the PCoP community on the USACE Planner Database. The Planner Database is the go-to source of information about USACE planners, their experience, their training, and their certifications and expertise. The Database is used to assemble project delivery teams and review teams; supervisors can use it to review training status and plan for out years; planners use it when applying for internal certifications (e.g., Agency Technical Review).

Presenter Debby Scerno (Environmental Agency Technical Review coordinator and Senior Environmental Reviewer, HQUSACE Office of Water Project Review) provided an overview of the Planner Database – where is it, what it includes, who should know about it, how it works, and why planners should be aware of it and update it regularly. The webinar also reviewed recent updates to the database and provided a live demonstration.

Questions and suggestions for Planner Database improvements are welcome at planningonline@usace.army.mil. Note: planners can ensure they receive relevant updates about planner certification processes and suspense dates by joining the relevant local Plan Formulation, Environmental, Economics, and/or Cultural Resources sub-CoP distribution list (DLL). To check DLL membership, click the "member of" tab within your Outlook Global entry; contact the appropriate "list owner" for a DLL to request to be added. All the PCoP DLLs are formatted as DLL-CE[org]-P-PCOP-[subcop]. You do not need to sit in a planning organization to be in the USACE planning DLLs.

This summary of the Question/Answer session of the webinar is not a transcription; questions and responses have been edited and reordered for clarity.

Documentation for Certifications in the Planner Database

Is documented experience required to be only from time spent as a planner, or can it include experience from other USACE positions and/or time spent working outside of USACE?
Experience can and should be documented be from across your time at USACE, as well as any relevant experience with other agencies or organizations. Planners should include any relevant experience in their profiles, experience does not need to be limited to only the past five years. However, for most of application/certification processes that use information from the Planner Database (e.g., Agency Technical Review [ATR] certification, Water Resources Certified Planner certification), recent experience is scored higher.

Is the Planner Database automatically updated with coursework completed, including Planning Associates?
No. Completed coursework, including Planning Associates and PROSPECT classes, must be self-reported.

Why isn't the "Apply Here" option available for Economics or Cultural Resources ATR certification?
Both the Economics and Cultural Resources ATR certification processes are done outside of the Planner Database.

More information on the Economics ATR certification process can be found on the Economics Sub-CoP Knowledge Management Portal site under the "ATR Certification for Economists" folder: https://usace.dps.mil/sites/KMP-ECON.

Was the information from the old Planner Database transferred into this one, or are planners required to re-populate their profiles?
All information from the previous iteration of the database was transferred to the updated version. Nevertheless, planners should make sure to update their profiles on a regular basis, and supervisors should review the database to ensure that planners that have left the organization are removed.

What certification or experience is required to check off the Subject Matter Expert (SME) field in the Planner Database?
There are no specific requirements for checking the "SME" field in the Planner Database. However, planners are expected to be able to teach others about the topic in question if they claim SME qualification.

How can users get the "ATR Lead Experience" field checked off in their profiles? For most users, this field is grayed out.
Planners must ask the relevant MSC sub-CoP lead (e.g., MSC Plan Formulation or Environmental lead) to go into the database and check off the ATR lead experience field within their profile.

Planner Database Functionality

I am not able to log into the Planner Database. How do I get access?
Users must first register their Common Access Cards (CACs) when using the updated Planner Database for the first time. E-mail planningonline@usacearmy.mil with any issues (i.e., if the "Join" or "Register" buttons cannot be clicked).

How similar is the USACE Planner Database to the Corps of Engineers Reviewer Certification and Access Program (CERCAP) for engineering ATR, and will the two platforms ever be consolidated into one USACE ATR database?
In addition to focusing on different skillsets (planning vs. engineering), CERCAP functionality is limited to uploading resumes whereas the Planner Database is a more interactive platform which can be searched. There are no current plans for the two databases to be combined.

Does the Planner Database have functionality to allow users to pull statistics on the USACE planner population (e.g., number of planners in each sub-CoP)?
Yes. There are several reports available that provide information across the entire community, by MSC, or by business line. You can also conduct a search for planners by skill, training, experience, or certification status. Click the Reports or Search tab to explore.