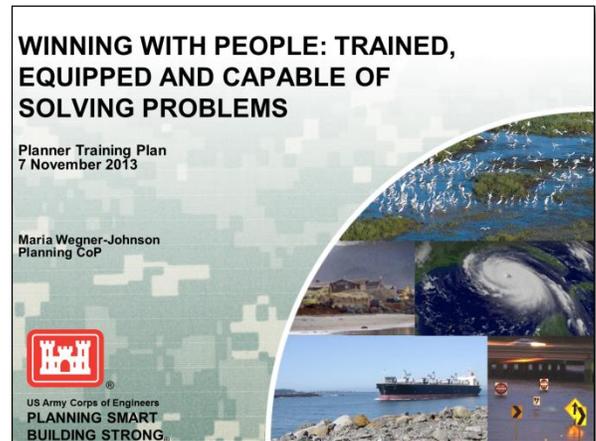


**Q&A: Winning with People: Trained, Equipped and Capable of Solving Problems**  
**SMART Planning Webinar Series #10**  
**November 7, 2013**

The November 7<sup>th</sup> webinar, part of a series of information-sharing webinars hosted by the Planning Community of Practice, provided an update on the Planning Community of Practice's Comprehensive Training Plan, and challenges and opportunities to achieving the Community's goals.

Maria Wegner-Johnson from the Planning CoP (HQ) was the presenter of this webinar. Following the webinar presentation, Maria and Sue Hughes (PCoP HQ) took questions from the field via the "chat" function.



The questions and responses below are not a direct transcript; they have been reordered and edited for clarity. Additional questions and feedback are always welcome via the SMART Guide comment form online at: <http://planning.usace.army.mil/toolbox/smart.cfm?Section=10&Step=1>

**The Training Steering Committee**

The Training Steering Committee includes:

- David Combs, MSC Planning Chief representative
- Eric Bush, District Planning Chief representative
- Tiffany Vanosdall, Planning Associates representative
- Cammie Knollenberg, Planning Centers of Expertise representative
- Judy McCrea, At Large
- Maria Placht, Current Instructor Representative
- Brian Harper, IWR, At Large
- Sue Hughes, Deputy, Planning CoP / PA Program Director

The training committee is the oversight body; they aren't developing the content or approving that specific content. Rather the Committee reviews the holistic curriculum, including delivery methods, to reduce overlap and increase the efficiency and effectiveness of training. The PCXes and Sub-CoPs are playing crucial roles in the development of courses and implementing the Training Plan.

## **Intermediate and Advanced Training Opportunities**

**For the intermediate and advanced training, is there a plan to treat it like Continuing Education with minimum training frequency for more experienced planners?**

The Training Committee has begun to discuss how to meet the needs of the Planner that has been in planning for 10, 20 or 30 years. We have begun to discuss options, such as an annual refresher, but we do not have a specific plan or recommendation for a requirement at this point.

## **Training Delivery**

**There are disadvantages to relying on virtual training as the primary learning option. We have been losing opportunities for face-to-face interaction for several years now, and losing the benefit of building relationships and future partnerships/workload sharing/etc.**

We are trying very hard to bridge the gap in training and travel, given how difficult conferences are right now. We also must balance the need to train our people with the constrained fiscal environment we operate in.

Some of the training we do, some of the content that is delivered, is well-suited to virtual training, while some is not. Some courses will continue to be face-to-face or have an in-person component, such as the Capstone; some will be entirely virtual, such as the Project Delivery Process; and some will blend virtual and in-person training. We need to carefully assess the goals and objectives of courses, content, and potential delivery mechanisms for each course, blending delivery methods across the entire curriculum, not just the Core Curriculum, to achieve the goals and intent of training.

**How are we training our trainers? What is expected of course-owners?**

We do intend to provide our trainers with additional training opportunities. Specifically, we are planning to send some of our trainers to virtual facilitation training, which will cover developing content and delivering webinars/other training modes using available virtual technologies in early Calendar Year 14.

There are also some free resources available, such as NetSpeed Learning, <http://netspeedlearning.com/>, doing one-hour webinars that demonstrate what can be done.

## **Identifying and Planning Resources for Planning in FY14**

**What is the status of developing and updating new PCCs courses? Should Districts hold off on sending people to training until they are completed in FY15?**

Many courses are still being offered in FY14. If you have the funding, you should continue to attend the courses for which you are signed up; do not hold off on opportunities you have.

**It appears this year will be tougher than last year for funding. Will Headquarters address that?**

Funding will be tighter than last year, as we all recognize. We don't know if there will be any new memorandum underlining the importance of training. What will continue is the importance of training; it is in the Campaign Plan and we will continue to work toward those goals with the resources available. We also know that there are some districts that have left Training money on the table, and we need to get a better handle on that in the organization.

**Will there be a national conference in FY14?**

A national conference doesn't appear to be on the table, although we will have opportunities for smaller-scale, focused engagement. Silver Jackets did do a virtual conference recently, and we're going to work with the Conflict Resolution & Public Participation Center of Expertise to examine their experience and lessons learned.