



# **U.S. Military Veterans in Facility Management:**

## **A Global Salary and Compensation Supplementary Report**



## The International Facility Management Association

Founded in 1980, the International Facility Management Association (IFMA) is the world's largest association for facility management (FM) professionals, supporting 24,000 members in more than 100 countries. This diverse membership participates in focused component groups equipped to address their unique situations by region (137 chapters), industry (16 councils) and areas of interest (seven communities). Together they manage more than 839 billion square feet/77.95 billion square meters of property and annually purchase more than US\$774 billion in products and services.

IFMA is a key contributor to the development of international FM standards and works with decision makers globally to inform and shape FM-related policy. IFMA provides career resources and continuing education, offers three industry-respected credentials, maintains the largest repository of FM-related content on the web and hosts year-round global events.

### PROJECT STAFF

**Nickalos A. Rocha, MPA**  
Director of Benchmarking  
[nickalos.rocha@ifma.org](mailto:nickalos.rocha@ifma.org)



## Prepared by the Simplar Foundation

The Simplar Foundation is a collaborative team of faculty and researchers who specialize in facility organizational assessment, performance measurement and analytics, process improvement, and advanced procurement delivery systems. Learn more at [simplarfoundation.org](http://simplarfoundation.org).

### LEAD RESEARCHERS

**Steve Call, PhD**  
[steven.call1@wsu.edu](mailto:steven.call1@wsu.edu)

**Jake Smithwick, PhD, MPA, FMP, SFP**  
[jake.smithwick@charlotte.edu](mailto:jake.smithwick@charlotte.edu)

**Kristen Hurtado, PhD**  
[kristen.hurtado@asu.edu](mailto:kristen.hurtado@asu.edu)

### U.S. Military Veterans in Facility Management: A Global Salary and Compensation Supplementary Report

©2023 International Facility Management Association

*Views expressed by the authors are not necessarily those of IFMA, nor any body connected with IFMA. Neither the authors, nor IFMA accept any liability arising from the use of this publication. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, or any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher. By purchasing this product, you acknowledge this is a single-user-licensed product and cannot be shared with anyone. Additional copies may be purchased through the IFMA Bookstore.*

For additional information, contact: (281) 974-5665 | [research@ifma.org](mailto:research@ifma.org)

**ISBN: 978-1-883176-65-5**

## Project Advisory Group

**Alex Cummings**

Chief Executive Officer  
FlowPath

**Dave Curfman**

Chief Engineer (Retired)  
Naval Facilities Engineering Command

**John D'Angelo**

Assistant Vice President Facilities Operations  
The University of Chicago

**Pete Maculan**

Commanding Officer  
Center for Seabees and Facilities Engineering and Civil  
Engineer Corps Officer School

**Terrell Odom**

Director Office for Military-Affiliated Communities  
University of Chicago



**Donald L. Gilpin**  
President and CEO, IFMA

## Message from the President

Salary remains one of the most important considerations for any career choice; and IFMA's range of salary and compensation reports provide practical value at both the individual and company level.

Current practitioners, graduates entering the workforce and those considering a career in FM can use the information to negotiate a raise, promotion or employment. Those in hiring positions seeking new FM talent can use the information to remain competitive amid workforce shortages and a tight labor market; and in this first-of-its-kind report, discover a new, underutilized source for recruitment.

Thousands of those in the U.S. Armed Forces transition from military to civilian life each year. Many bring with them an educational background thanks to federal education benefits, as well as a unique skillset and valuable hands-on experience; yet military veterans comprise only 16% of facility managers in the United States.

With the growth of the FM industry a high priority, IFMA is connecting active-duty and military veterans to educational and career opportunities through our Military Community. Both IFMA and the IFMA Foundation are working to introduce these men and women to the profession, and increase awareness among organizations of the value they can bring to their FM teams.

Globally, facility management professionals face new expectations from demand organizations, end-users and regulators. The pace at which FMs are required to assimilate and act on operational, digital, sustainable and societal trends has escalated. In response, IFMA has accelerated development of educational and informational resources that those in FM and the wider built environment can benefit from now and into the foreseeable future.

With more than 40 years of experience guiding and supporting the FM industry, IFMA does not use the descriptor "industry-leading" lightly. We are recognized as the most trusted source of academic and applied research on topics that carry the greatest urgency and importance to facility management professionals worldwide. We collaborate on a global scale with subject matter experts, industries and organizations that believe in improving the built environment through benchmarking and research. We turn information into insights, focused on how current and emerging trends, standards, practices and legislation specifically relate to optimizing facility operations for compliance and competitiveness, and establishing a foundation for long-term appraisal and improvement.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Donald L. Gilpin". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Donald L. Gilpin

# Table of Contents

## 7 Executive Summary

- 8 Using this Report
- 9 Methodology
- 10 Limitations
- 11 Definitions
- 12 Composition of Survey Respondents

## 14 Demographics and Veteran Status Mix

- 15 Age and FM Experience
- 16 Demographics and Industry
- 17 Primary Job Function and Level
- 18 Education

## 20 Compensation

## 24 Conclusion and Call to Action

## 28 References

## Veterans in FM Professional Profiles

- 6 Terral Christopher
- 13 Byron Edwards
- 19 John Kucinski
- 27 Jon Martens
- 29 Isreal Rodriquez



**“In both military and facility management, serving others is key. Always keep in mind the mission at hand. Embrace change and adaptability – skills honed in the military – to thrive in FM. Stay open to new ideas, think creatively and be a valuable team player in the evolving world of FM.”**

## Terral Christopher

### BRANCH

Navy

### RANK

Petty Officer First Class

### CURRENT JOB TITLE

Lead AC&R Building Operator

### CURRENT EMPLOYER

UC San Diego Health

### YEARS OF EXPERIENCE

8

### AGE

60

**What skills were you missing that you needed to work on as you transitioned to FM?** Whether to the country or the organization, those in the military and in FM share a willingness to be of service to others.

**Since both FM and the military have their own unique technical language and jargon, what is your advice to someone just starting out in FM learning to “speak the language”?** You need to be open – both attentive and receptive – to learning the language of FM. When you first start out either in the military or FM, there’s lots of terminology you won’t be familiar with. Listen carefully, ask for clarification, work the terms into your conversation, and soon the jargon will become second nature.

**What lessons did you take from the military that help you run a more efficient, successful team as an FM?**

I have always been involved in team sports. That, in particular, prepared me for the military. I had a 20-year career in the U.S. Navy, but my transition from the military was smooth because I was used to a team mentality: everyone pulling together for the common good of the organization.

**In the military, what lessons did you learn about decision making that help you run a facility more efficiently?**

In the military, as well as FM, bad decisions can have a tremendous cost. Planning plays an integral part of any process. As much as we can or are able, we need to plan accordingly. Of course, there are times when we must do things on the fly or find an immediate way to get something done, which we can do soundly if we always keep in mind the mission or plan. One constant in FM is change, which the military prepared me for.

**Any other words of wisdom to share to those transitioning to facility management as a career?**

Be open to change, learning new things and appreciating new ideas. Get in there and be that team player that everyone is looking for in the ever-evolving world of FM.

**What are your proudest**

**accomplishments?** My proudest accomplishment is my work with IFMA’s Military Community, especially mentoring emerging professionals.



The background of the page is a close-up, slightly blurred photograph of a dark blue military uniform. Several medals and ribbons are visible. A prominent red ribbon with a gold medal is in the upper center. To the right, a yellow and red striped ribbon with a large gold medal is visible. Other smaller medals and ribbons are scattered across the uniform. The lighting is warm, with a slight orange tint in the upper right corner.

# Executive Summary

IFMA's *U.S. Veterans in Facility Management: A Global Salary and Compensation Supplementary Report* explores the unique opportunities and challenges of military veterans in the facility industry. Recruitment, development and retention outlooks and trends are evaluated to support and grow the pool of talent entering facility professions from the military. Using data submitted by thousands of facility professionals, detailed comparisons are provided for salaries along with relevant demographic factors such as age, work experience, education and job level. This study shows the need for greater awareness of the best ways to attract the thousands of potential facility job candidates being discharged from the military every year and highlights key actions that organizations can take to help the military to civilian transition into the FM industry.



## Using this Report

IFMA's *U.S. Veterans in Facility Management: A Global Salary and Compensation Supplementary Report* is a general overview of the demographics and backgrounds of hundreds of professionals in the facility management field. Salaries are detailed for specific management levels, industry sectors and geographic areas throughout the United States. This report describes the various demographics and veteran status mix of respondents including age and educational attainment, as well as details on various salary determinants like job scope, industry and years of experience.

### When using this report, keep in mind:

- This survey represents a self-report of data. All data was submitted voluntarily. While the research team adjusted for outliers or other anomalous data, readers are advised to remember that this report represents a sample of the total population.
- Respondents are grouped into management levels for purposes of data analysis and summation. These groupings are based on responses regarding supervisory responsibility and must not be confused with actual position titles which vary across companies and industries. Facility managers have many different job titles. The research team reclassified job titles where appropriate to provide readers with a clearer view of compensation information.







## Methodology

To create this report, the research team reviewed questions posed in previous FM salary surveys to help track both historical and current compensation trends. Input and pilot testing were also provided by a panel of subject matter experts. Once tested, the survey was sent electronically to more than 12,400 facility professionals in February 2021. A total of 3,557 survey responses were received by April 2021, for a 29% response rate. Compensation data provided in local currency was converted to U.S. dollars based on currency exchange rates per the Federal Reserve of April 11, 2021. Interviews from the project advisory groups were also conducted in summer 2023. When applicable, comparisons are made to previous IFMA salary survey reports. Given the level of response to this survey, IFMA is 95% confident that responses given by all responding organizations can be generalized to all IFMA member organizations with a margin of error of approximately +/- 1.4%. It is important to note that as the sample size decreases in many of the tables, the margin of error increases.



## Limitations

As with any report of this nature, the reader should be aware of a few important limitations. It is important to note the sample size (N) when interpreting averages or medians. Percentages may not add to 100 percent due to rounding or the acceptance of multiple responses. In many cases respondents did not answer all questions, so the base numbers differ among the various quantitative findings. Salary and compensation are significantly affected by many factors, including geographic region, industry sector, experience and education. Readers are strongly encouraged to fully evaluate the presented data in the context in which it is provided. The goal of this report is to raise awareness of veteran's profiles and explore different facets of veterans in the FM workforce.



# Definitions

**COMPENSATION DATA** is only considered for salary and hourly data as very few respondents provided commission or contract data.

**JOB LEVELS** are defined as follows:

- Entry-Level – Manage employees or act as professional specialist
- Mid-Level – Manage supervisors who manage others
- Senior-Level – Manage two or more levels of supervisors

**AVERAGE**, also referred to as mean, is the sum or total of all responses divided by the number of respondents. This statistic is vulnerable to influence from very large or small values which tend to misrepresent the true middle. The median is the best estimate of the middle of the distribution, especially in small samples. Mean averages were used in this report except when significant outliers required use of the median.

**BASE SALARY** is the reported annual cash compensation excluding bonuses or other payments. For the sake of consistency in reporting values, all monetary values are U.S. dollars (US\$). Readers may use the exchange rates to adjust values into their preferred currency.

**MEDIAN (50th Percentile)** is the middle value in a range of responses. One half of all responses fall at or below the median and one half at or above. The median is recommended for comparison of salary data and is emphasized throughout the report. The median is not as vulnerable to extreme values as is the mean.

**“N”** is the number of respondents supplying the data in a table or chart. Either the N or the percentage of total sample is reported (from which you can calculate the size of the reported group). Generally as N decreases, the statistic being reported becomes less reliable.

**PERCENTILES** are simple divisions of the data. The percentile indicates what percent of the responses fall to the left if arranged on a number line. For example, the 25th percentile of compensation means at this point 25% of respondents have less compensation than the reported value.

**VETERAN** refers to an individual that completed a service for any branch of the armed forces. For this report, it also includes respondents still in active duty.





TABLE 1

## Respondents by U.S. Region

Region	Veterans	Non-veterans
Midwest	45	319
Northeast	28	268
South	151	547
West	59	417
Total	283	1551

## Composition of Survey Respondents

Military veterans comprise 16% of facility managers in the United States. Veterans as a portion of the U.S. FM workforce is relatively high considering veterans make up only 7% percent of the general population (Census, 2020). Most veteran respondents, total numbers and as a portion of the FM workforce, were from the South (28%) followed by the West (14%), Midwest (14%) and Northeast (10%) regions (Table 1).



**“After working in construction in the Army, I found that my experience and skills in project and operations management easily crossed over to facility management.”**

## Byron Edwards

### BRANCH

Army

### RANK

Sergeant First Class/SFC

### CURRENT JOB TITLE

Building Management Specialist

### CURRENT EMPLOYER

U.S. Dept. of Energy

### CREDENTIALS

FMP, SFP

### HIGHEST EDUCATION

Bachelor's Degree

### DEGREE

Organizational Management

### YEARS OF EXPERIENCE

19

### AGE

60

**What skills were you missing that you needed to work on as you transitioned to FM?** When I transitioned to FM, I lacked customer service skills. I focused on learning to provide individualized attention and understanding, which is crucial to effective FM communications.

**What are the similarities you find between a career in the military and facility management?** After working in construction in the Army, I found that my experience and skills in project and operations management easily crossed over to facility management.

**Since both FM and the military have their own unique technical language and jargon, what is your advice to someone just starting out in FM learning to “speak the language”?** Don’t hesitate to ask the questions needed to understand the language of the organization.

**What lessons did you take from the military that helped you run a more efficient, successful team as an FM?** Lessons learned in the military that I applied to leading FM teams include knowing your role in the organization and how it fits in the overall strategic plan, and knowing your strengths and weaknesses so you can make improvements where needed.

**In the military, what lessons did you learn about decision making that helped you run a facility more efficiently?** In both the military and FM, you must review the options and risks associated with the decision to be made. Ensure you’re making a sound decision with minimum risks and high rewards.

**What would you advise others to look for in a mentor if they made the same career change to FM?** When looking for a mentor, try to associate with someone you can trust to give you sound, truthful, nonbiased advice. Seek out someone who has a good reputation in the profession.

**As a mentor, what is the best advice you offered your mentee(s)?** I advise young professionals to ask all the questions they need to ask. The only bad question is the one never asked.

**Any other words of wisdom to share to those transitioning to facility management as a career?** If you believe in selfless service, then FM might just be for you. Most FMs do not look for self-gratification. They serve for the greater good.

**What are your proudest accomplishments?** I am most proud of being a public servant, with 20 years in military service and 19 years in public service.



A photograph of a soldier in camouflage uniform walking away from the camera on a paved path. The soldier is carrying a box under their arm. The background shows a brick building and green foliage. The image is framed by a thin orange border.

## **Demographics and Veteran Status Mix**



# Age and FM Experience

Military veterans in facility management are an average of 52 years old, compared to non-veterans at 47 years old. There are far more veterans near retirement age (>56 years old) than non-veterans (Table 2). This age and experience disparity, consistent across job levels (Table 3), is at least partly explained by veterans typically entering the FM workforce after spending time in military service; it does not appear related to a contemporary lack of veterans entering the FM profession as the trend of about 2% recruitment from military for FM jobs has held steady for decades (Table 4). While the military has experienced little to no growth as a recruitment source for FM, in contrast, colleges and universities have realized significant development as a primary source for new FM talent. Higher ages and FM experience levels for veterans do not appear to be expediting promotion timeframes compared to non-veterans in FM (Table 5).



**TABLE 2**  
Percent of Respondents Age by Veteran Status

Age Range	Veterans	Non-veterans
Less than 24	0%	1%
24–42	17%	31%
43–56	44%	39%
More than 56	39%	28%

**TABLE 3**  
Respondents’ FM Experience in Years at Job Levels by Veteran Status

Job Level	Veterans	Non-veterans
Entry Level	14	11
Mid Level	16	15
Senior Level	20	19

**TABLE 4**  
Percent of Respondents’ Recruitment Source into FM by Age

Recruitment Source	Born before 1965	Born after 1965
From military	2%	2%
From college	9%	17%

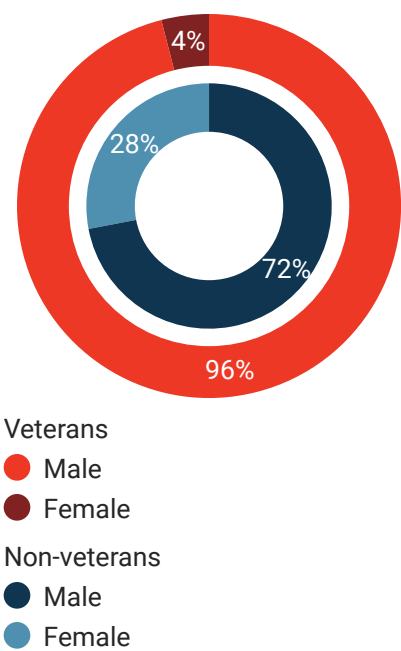
**TABLE 5**  
Percent of Respondents Receiving Promotion Last 3 Years by Veteran Status

Group	Promotion within the last 3 years
Veterans	40%
Non-veterans	45%

# Demographics and Industry

Although women constitute 25% of the U.S. FM workforce, only 4% of military veterans in FM are women (Figure 1). This gender gap may be due to the historically small portion of women serving in the U.S. military; nevertheless, the percentage of women in the active-duty and selected reserve continues to grow (DOD, 2021). The largest industries to employ U.S. military veterans, as a percent of FM workforce, are government (22%), banking and investment (22%), healthcare (16%) and education (11%) (Table 6). While it is understandable for government entities to employ large numbers of veterans, additional exploration is necessary to appreciate the differences in employment rates for veterans at other large industries. Nevertheless, part of the draw for military veterans to enter the banking and investment industry may be the relatively high starting pay; conversely, military veterans in FM may be averse to working in the education industry considering a lag in pay as careers progress (Table 7).

**FIGURE 1**  
Percent of Respondents' Gender by Veteran Status



**TABLE 6**  
Percent of Respondents' Industry Employment by Veteran Status

Industry	Veterans	Non-veterans
Government	22%	78%
Banking and Investment	22%	78%
Healthcare	16%	83%
Education	11%	89%

**TABLE 7**  
Respondents' Median Base Salary at Job Levels by Major Industry

Industry	Entry and Mid Level	Senior Level
Government	\$91,000	\$146,380
Banking and Investment	\$115,440	\$130,910
Healthcare	\$91,000	\$146,380
Education	\$91,000	\$112,720

# Primary Job Function and Level

The majority of both military veterans and non-veterans consider facility operations as their primary job function (Table 8). Facility operations has the largest portion of veterans (79%), followed by construction and projects (5%), engineering (4%) and real estate (2%). Significantly more non-veterans in FM consider real estate and interior design and space planning as their primary job function. Military veterans in FM appear most likely to hold a mid or senior level job in FM (Table 9). It's taking both veterans and non-veterans, seeking new employment in FM, 13–14 weeks to find a mid or senior level job (Table 10). Interestingly, veterans are able to find entry-level employment about twice as fast as non-veterans; this again, may be partly due to higher experience levels entering FM from military service (Table 3).



**TABLE 8**  
Percent of Respondents’ Veteran Status by Primary Job Function

Primary Job Function	Veterans	Non-veterans
Facility Operations	79%	77%
Real Estate	2%	5%
Construction and Projects	5%	5%
Engineering	4%	3%
Interior Design and Space Planning	0%	4%

**TABLE 9**  
Percent of Respondents’ Veteran Status by Job Level

Job Level	Veterans	Non-veterans
Entry Level	10%	90%
Mid Level	15%	85%
Senior Level	16%	84%

**TABLE 10**  
Respondents’ Duration Finding New Employment at Job Levels by Veteran Status

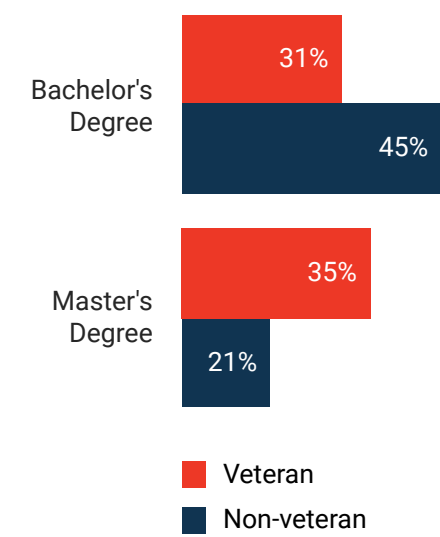
Job Level	Veterans	Non-veterans
Entry Level	8 weeks	15 weeks
Mid Level	13 weeks	14 weeks
Senior Level	14 weeks	13 weeks



# Education

Military veterans in FM have similar levels of higher education as non-veterans (66%). However, veterans are more likely to have a graduate degree than a non-veteran in FM (Figure 2). This higher level of graduate education amongst veterans may be a result of the military sponsoring and funding opportunities for officers to pursue graduate degrees while in active-duty as well as GI Bill education benefits that can cover the cost of graduate school upon discharge (Army, n.d.; VA, n.d.). Veterans in FM with college degrees commonly major in business management or engineering (Table 11). While facility management is a preferred major by FM professionals regardless of veterans status, veterans are less likely to major in liberal arts or architecture/interior design compared to non-veterans. Military veterans are also just as likely as non-veterans (70%) to hold common professional credentials, and as a portion of workforce (Table 12).

**FIGURE 2**  
Percent of Respondents' Degree by Veteran Status



**TABLE 11**  
Percent of Respondents' Common Degree Majors by Veteran Status

Degree Majors	Veterans	Non-veterans
Business Management	34%	33%
Facility Management	8%	10%
Liberal Arts	4%	14%
Architecture/ Interior Design	2%	7%
Engineering	23%	11%
Finance/Accounting	2%	3%
Construction Management	4%	4%

**TABLE 12**  
Percent of Respondents' Common Professional Credentials by Veteran Status

Professional Credential	Veterans	Non-veterans
LEED AP/GA	12%	88%
Lean Six Sigma	20%	80%
CFM	17%	83%
FMP	14%	86%



“Military values and skills are assets, making each day full of diverse challenges in engineering, management, procurement, and leadership — all of which make for interesting days and a rewarding career.”

## John Kucinski

**BRANCH**  
Navy

**RANK**  
Commander (O-5)

**CURRENT JOB TITLE**  
VP Facilities

**CURRENT EMPLOYER**  
Salem Five Bank

**CREDENTIALS**  
CFM

**HIGHEST EDUCATION**  
Bachelor's Degree

**DEGREE**  
Civil Engineering

**YEARS OF EXPERIENCE**  
45

**AGE**  
71

**What skills were you missing that you needed to work on as you transitioned to FM?** Mostly I needed to learn the civilian ways and lingo of the business world. That said, what we do in the field of facilities pretty easily translates between the military and civilian communities.

**What are the similarities you find between a career in the military and facility management?** You've got to be honest, hard-working, show respect for others, and be flexible.

**Since both FM and the military have their own unique technical language and jargon, what is your advice to someone just starting out in FM learning to “speak the language”?** Listen to the “new” language and don't be afraid to ask clarifying questions. Not to worry, you'll start to feel comfortable with the language (and the job) in a few weeks and be fluent within the first year.

**What lessons did you take from the military that help you run a more efficient, successful team as an FM?** What I DIDN'T take back upon returning to the civilian world was the military's culture of giving orders. While still a leader/manager, more finesse is needed in the civilian world to be able to effectively work with others to get the job done.

**In the military, what lessons did you learn about decision making that help you run a facility more efficiently?** When I was once in charge in a military role contemplating options to solve a problem and apparently taking too much time to make a decision in the opinion of a more junior member of the command, he said metaphorically, “Pull

the trigger, Sir. I don't care which way you point, just pull the trigger.” I refer back to that moment often.

**What would you advise others to look for in a mentor if they made the same career change to FM?** Find someone willing to mentor you who has had a successful career and is willing to trust you with opportunities to succeed.

**As a mentor, what is the best advice you offered your mentee(s)?** It wasn't advice as much as it was the opportunity for my mentees to professionally grow, gain some confidence, and demonstrate their increased skills to a broader audience, often to those more senior in the organization.

**Any other words of wisdom to share to those transitioning to facility management as a career?** Go for it! Military members, especially those with construction skills like Navy Seabees, are well-equipped for a career in facilities management. It's straightforward work where military discipline and skills translate to success and enjoyment. You'll engage in diverse challenges, from engineering to leadership, ensuring no two days are alike and your career remains fulfilling.

**What are your proudest accomplishments?** I take great joy in having raised three wonderful children, enjoying my grandchildren, and still being able to work full-time. I find fulfillment in making my colleagues' workdays smoother through facilities management, which is a rewarding way to serve after my Navy career.



# Compensation



# Compensation

Military veterans in FM receive similar pay as non-veterans from entry-level and early mid-level jobs, but lag behind non-veteran pay at late mid-level and early senior-level roles, before rising again in late senior-level career (Figure 3); additional investigation may be warranted to understand the reason for this temporary pay dip for veterans, especially considering veterans have similar responsibility for people, area, budgets and graduate education compared to non-veteran peers during this same FM career period (Table 13). Nonetheless, overall low levels of undergraduate education for veterans (21%), compared to non-veterans (40%), may be associated with low pay during their late mid-level and early senior-level FM careers. Regardless of any difference in pay between veterans and non-veterans at various FM job levels, there appears to be no difference in satisfaction with pay between these groups (Table 14). Military veterans and non-veterans also share similar job tenures and employment status (Table 15).



**FIGURE 3**  
Respondents’ Median  
Base Pay at Job-Level  
and Experience by  
Veteran Status





**TABLE 13**

**Respondents' Median Responsibility for People, Area, Budget and Percent with Higher Education by Mid (11 years+) and Senior (<16 years) Job Level and Veteran Status**

Responsibility/Category	Veterans	Non-veterans
People	25	24
Area (GSF)	600,000	700,000
Operational Budget	\$4,000,000	\$3,800,000
Capital Budget	\$1,200,000	\$1,000,000
Percent with Bachelor's Degree	21%	40%
Percent with Master's Degree	40%	34%

**TABLE 14**

**Respondents' Satisfaction with Pay by Job Level and Veteran Status**

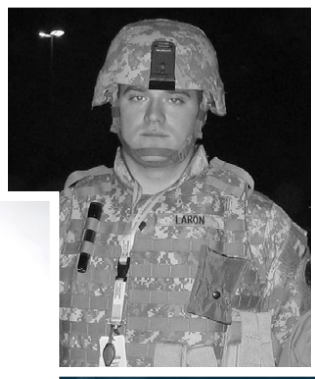
Job Level	Veterans	Non-veterans
Entry Level	83%	82%
Mid Level	85%	86%
Senior Level	90%	88%

**TABLE 15**

**Respondents' Current Job Tenure, Percent Contracted and Part-time Employment by Veteran Status**

Job Category	Veterans	Non-veterans
Current Tenure	8 years	9 years
Contracted	15%	13%
Part-time	1%	1%





## Bobby LaRon

### BRANCH

Army

### RANK

SGT

### CURRENT JOB TITLE

Senior Commercial  
Property Manager

### CURRENT EMPLOYER

CBRE

### CREDENTIALS

FMP

### HIGHEST EDUCATION

Master's Degree

### DEGREE

BA History, MS  
Management

### YEARS OF EXPERIENCE

14

### AGE

44

"At its core, FM is about serving people and not just the buildings we manage. Many veterans miss the esprit de corps found within the military. Service above self and being a servant leader can be continued from the military into your FM career."

**What skills were you missing that you needed to work on as you transitioned to FM?** Capital budgeting was something I hadn't done in previous roles until I transitioned into FM.

**What are the similarities you find between a career in the military and facility management?** I have found that the US Army's FM7-8 Infantry Rifle Platoon field guide is very applicable to all business endeavors. Especially METT-T!

**Since both FM and the military have their own unique technical language and jargon, what is your advice to someone just starting out in FM learning to "speak the language"?** You need to form a trusted cadre of advisors that surround you and that you can bounce ideas off of. Your local chapter of IFMA is great for that.

**What lessons did you take from the military that help you run a more efficient, successful team as an FM?** Acting with integrity in all matters and building trust among your team is universal. Both in business and the military.

**In the military, what lessons did you learn about decision making that help you run a facility more efficiently?** My ability to triage every obstacle as it comes in was strengthened and sharpened in the military. It makes your decision tree very obvious and removes decision paralysis.

**What would you advise others to look for in a mentor if they made the same career change to FM?** Look for someone who is doing the work that you would like to do and ask a lot of questions. Don't be afraid of looking stupid. An earnest desire to learn is better than someone who is faking competence.

**As a mentor, what is the best advice you offered your mentee(s)?** Clearly defining your wants and desires is paramount to a successful engagement.

**What are your proudest accomplishments?** I conducted 40 hours of oral history interviews of the 506th PIR "Easy Company, Band of Brothers." I will never forget that experience. It was incredible to share stories with those heroes.





## Conclusions and Call to Action

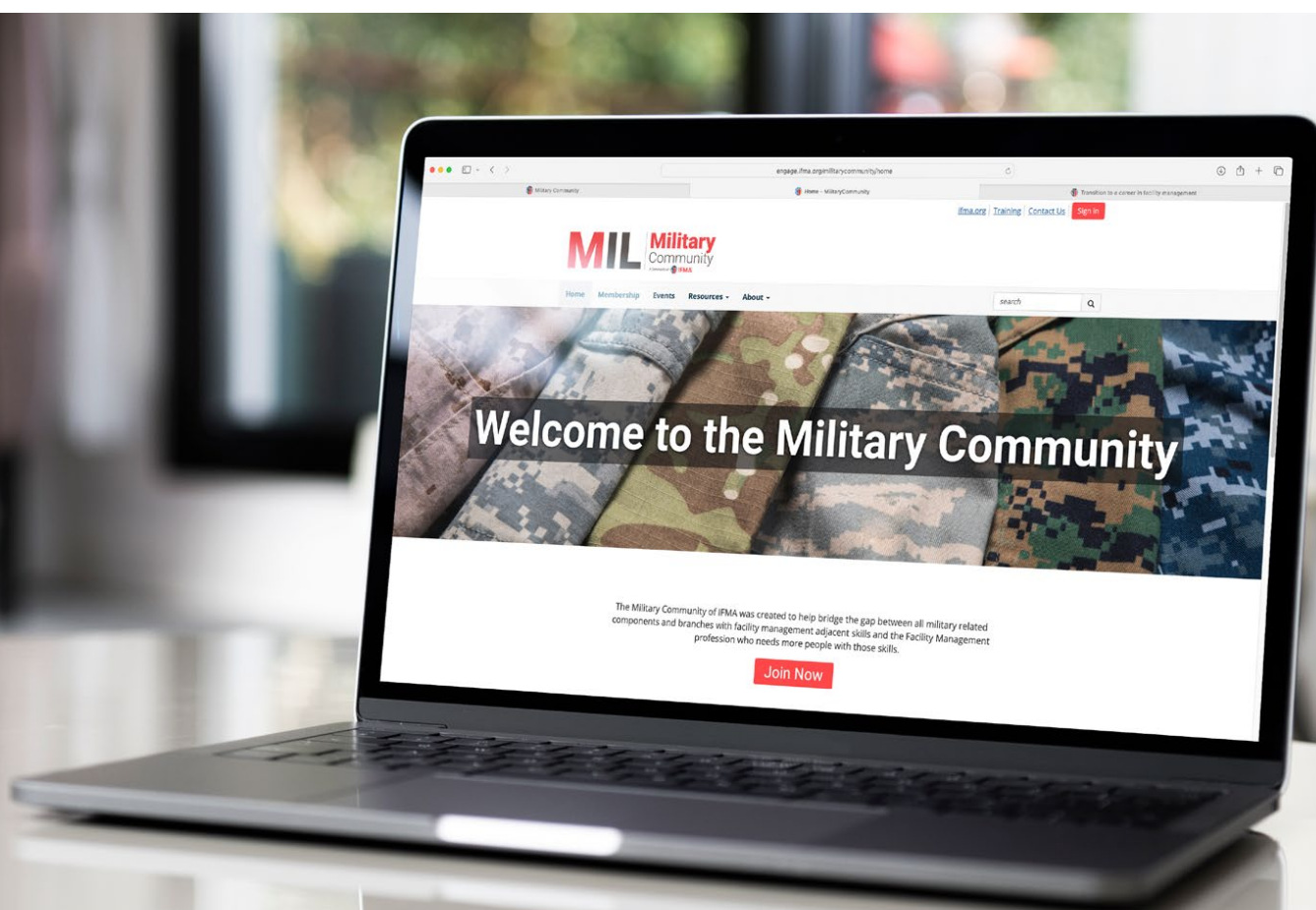


## Conclusion and Call to Action

Military veterans have been, and continue to be, a very small portion of new hires in FM. This is surprising as noteworthy efforts are being made to cultivate this distinct talent pool (IFMA, n.d.). The main issue impacting historically low hiring levels of military veterans in FM appears to be that organizations are generally unaware how to best support and attract the thousands of potential candidates transitioning out of the military every year (DOD, 2021). Organizations that understand the military to civilian transition process appear much better positioned to attract military veterans into their FM workforce; a key is becoming aware of, and engaging with, well-established entities and programs that can facilitate the development of military veterans as a primary, sustainable recruitment source for future facility professionals.

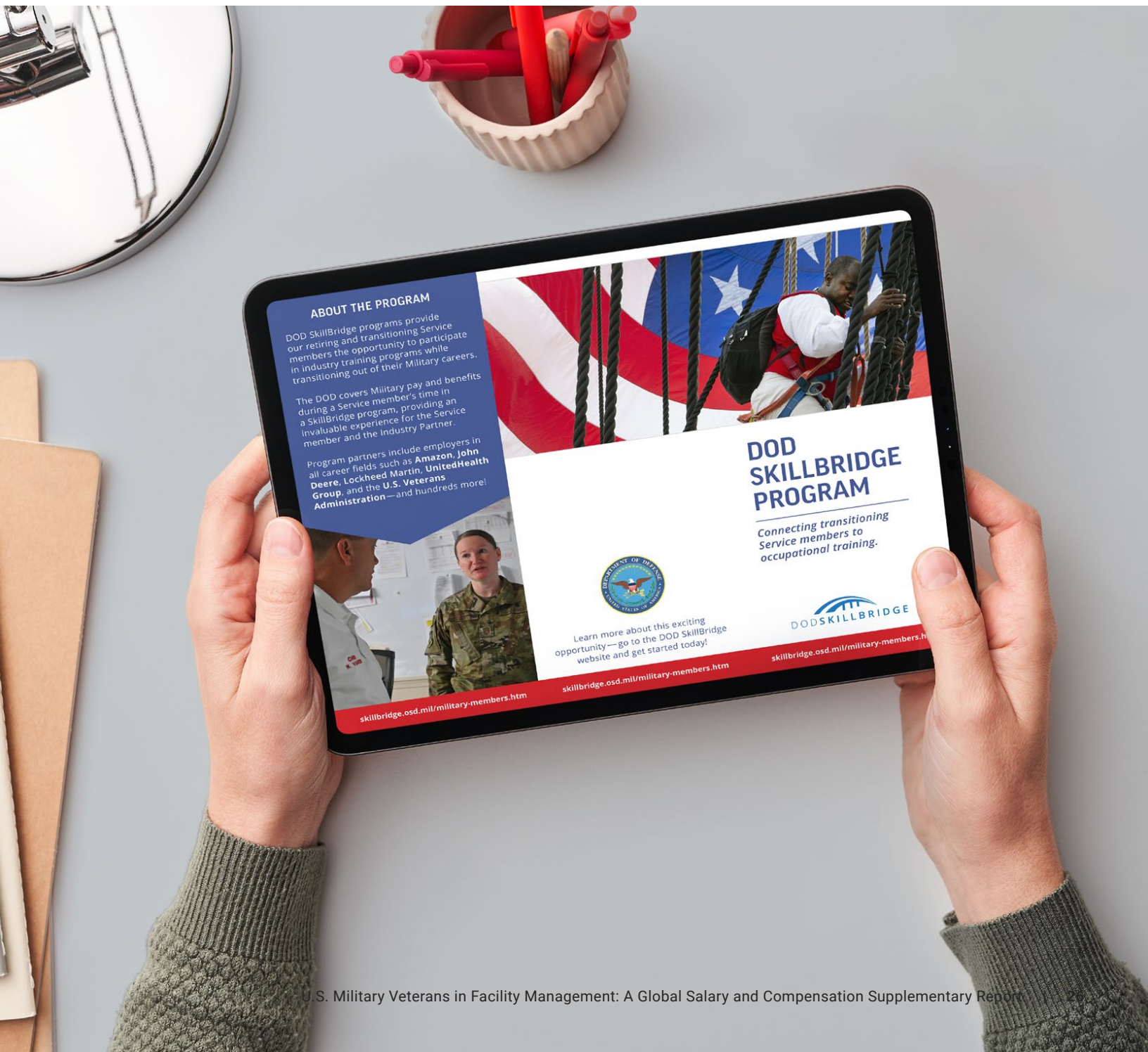
### The Military Community of IFMA

The Military Community of IFMA is a great way to get involved with an association dedicated to bringing military affiliated community members into the Facility Management profession. This community bridges the gap between military veterans with facility management adjacent skills and organizations seeking facility professionals, facilitating the transition from military occupational specialties into FM opportunities. To learn more about The Military Community of IFMA, visit [engage.ifma.org/militarycommunity](https://engage.ifma.org/militarycommunity).



## The SkillBridge Program

The SkillBridge program is a remarkable opportunity to attract more veterans into FM. This program allows service members the opportunity to gain industry specific work experience via apprenticeships or internships during their last 180 days of service while providing industry partners access to a highly trained and motivated workforce. And it comes at no cost to employers as service members continue to receive their military compensation and benefits. Leveraging this program can provide a sustainable path into the FM profession for a highly trained and motivated workforce transitioning out of military service and help address ongoing FM attrition challenges. For more information on this program, and how to become an Authorized SkillBridge Organization, visit [skillbridge.osd.mil](https://skillbridge.osd.mil).







## Jon Martens

### BRANCH

Navy

### RANK

Master Chief Petty Officer

### CURRENT JOB TITLE

President

### CURRENT EMPLOYER

JEMCOR

### CREDENTIALS

CFM, FMP, SFP

### HIGHEST EDUCATION

Master's Degree

### DEGREE

Business Administration

### YEARS OF EXPERIENCE

50+

### AGE

70



**"For military personnel transitioning into FM as a career, I say jump in, hold on and enjoy the ride – it's a rollercoaster, but so was life in the service!"**

**What skills were you missing that you needed to work on as you transitioned to FM?** Learning to speak the language of FM (core competencies and concepts, terms, systems and processes) in the civilian sector.

**What are the similarities you find between a career in the military and facility management?** In both the military and FM, you'll find a culture of comradery and mentorship.

**Since both FM and the military have their own unique technical language and jargon, what is your advice to someone just starting out in FM learning to "speak the language"?** One of the best ways to build your FM vocabulary as well as the skills necessary to turn words into action is earning IFMA's Facility Management Professional credential. In addition to setting you up for success, it is a lifetime credential with no maintenance requirements.

**What lessons did you take from the military that helped you run a more efficient, successful team as an FM?** In the military, you understand and respect the chain of command, and you look at things from an operational perspective. FMs understand and work within the corporate structure, a similar ladder of roles and responsibilities that contribute to the successful function of an organization.

**In the military, what lessons did you learn about decision making that helped you run a facility more efficiently?**

Getting a second (or even third) opinion from facility managers in like facilities will help you make better-informed decisions. This is where the connections I made through IFMA helped me out greatly.

**What would you advise others to look for in a mentor if they made the same career change to FM?** As someone who benefitted from an inspiring mentor, then had the honor and pleasure of serving as a mentor to others, my advice for finding your best mentor is to look for someone who has qualities you admire and respect. My advice for getting the most out of the experience is to follow the guidance of your mentor and don't go to someone else for a second opinion – great mentors will never steer you in the wrong direction. They are invested in guiding you on the right path to reach your goal.

**Any other words of wisdom to share to those transitioning to facility management as a career?** For military personnel transitioning into FM as a career, I say jump in, hold on and enjoy the ride – it's a rollercoaster, but so was life in the service!

**What are your proudest accomplishments?** My two proudest accomplishments were making Master Chief Petty Officer in the Navy and being named an IFMA Fellow – each is representative of the upper .05 percentile.



## References

Army (n.d.). Advanced Civil Schooling: Benefits Fact Sheet. Retrieved at [https://myarmybenefits.us.army.mil/Benefit-Library/Federal-Benefits/Advanced-Civil-Schooling-\(ACS\)](https://myarmybenefits.us.army.mil/Benefit-Library/Federal-Benefits/Advanced-Civil-Schooling-(ACS))

IFMA Military Community (n.d.). Transition to Facility Management. Retrieved at <https://military.ifma.org/#Contact-Us>

U.S. Census Bureau (2020). *Those Who Service: American's Veterans From World War II to the War on Terror*. Retrieved at <https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2020/demo/acs-43.pdf>

U.S. Department of Defense (2021). *Demographics: Profile of the Military Community*. Retrieved at <https://download.militaryonesource.mil/12038/MOS/Reports/2021-demographics-report.pdf>

U.S. Department of Defense (n.d.). Military Discharge Data. Retrieved at <https://skillbridge.osd.mil/separation-map.htm>

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (n.d.). About GI Bill benefits. Retrieved at <https://www.va.gov/education/about-gi-bill-benefits>



## Israel Rodriguez

### BRANCH

USAF Reserve

### RANK

E9 - Chief Master Sgt

### CURRENT JOB TITLE

Senior Facilities Director

### CURRENT EMPLOYER

JLL

### CREDENTIALS

CFM

### HIGHEST EDUCATION

Bachelor's Degree

### DEGREE

Applied Technology

### YEARS OF EXPERIENCE

20+

### AGE

54

"FM is a dynamic field that most people don't understand. It's very sophisticated in that every facility has its own set of challenges and a way it operates."

**What skills were you missing that you needed to work on as you transitioned to FM?** Budgeting, Communicating with the C-suite.

**What are the similarities you find between a career in the military and facility management?** You have to have a logistical mindset to handle requests, following protocols and policies of the organization.

**Since both FM and the military have their own unique technical language and jargon, what is your advice to someone just starting out in FM learning to "speak the language"?** Read lots of FM magazines and log onto the IFMA engage and read how the FMs on that platform communicate.

**What lessons did you take from the military that help you run a more efficient, successful team as an FM?** Being adaptable and engaging with many kinds of personalities of the organization. Also, having a can-do spirit pays dividends for success.

**In the military, what lessons did you learn about decision making that help you run a facility more efficiently?** Tackle the issues expeditiously by up channeling events as they happen so you can garner support for any remedies that need to be implemented. When you communicate, you need to speak with conviction. However, make sure you do a thorough analysis first to ensure your proposals are well thought out.

**What would you advise others to look for in a mentor if they made the same career change to FM?** Look for someone who is well versed in the field and willing to show you the ropes.

**As a mentor, what is the best advice you offered your mentee(s)?** Be flexible, willing to learn new things as the field is always evolving and being proactive as much as possible.

**Any other words of wisdom to share to those transitioning to facility management as a career?** FM is a dynamic field that most people don't have a clue what it is all about. They think is just about running a mailroom and/or getting a light bulb changed. It's a lot more sophisticated than that and that every facility has its own set of challenges and the way it operates. You wear many hats, develop knowledge of the many systems out there and you switch gears a lot as one moment you are at a desk updating the budget and then you are running around trying to solve an issue like a major water leak. Every day is different for us.

**What are your proudest accomplishments?** Being able to tackle new challenges. At my last job, my position was new and with time, I was well respected at the ivy-league university's engineering school. Having that technical knowledge helped me when it came to talking to engineers. To be respected by the engineering professors was rewarding in itself.

# Knowledgeable? Skilled? Resourceful? **Motivated?**

Advance your career with FM training.

Curious about earning  
your FMP or CFM?

Trying to connect with  
FMs in your industry?

IFMA provides you with  
resources to help you meet  
evolving demands and  
accelerate your FM career.

**Explore Our FM Training  
and Credentials**



**Join IFMA's Military  
Community**



IFMA.org

