

You can always amend a big plan, but you can never expand a little one.

**I don't believe in little plans.
I believe in plans big enough
to meet a situation
which we
can't
possibly
foresee
now.**

— President Harry S. Truman

(Photo courtesy of the Library of Congress)



Eastern Region Offices Discuss Accomplishments, Challenges Since Strategic Plan Implementation

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Last September, the Defense Contract Management Agency senior leadership team developed the agency's strategic plan, focusing on several key areas to include: policies and process, acquisition enterprise, human capital and stewardship.

In a message sent to agency employees shortly after the implementation of the

plan, Charlie Williams, Jr., DCMA director, stated the plan is to provide a clear path forward into the future for the agency while providing employees with a “big-picture” perspective of the challenges the agency faces.

A year into the strategic plan, two Eastern region contract management offices, DCMA Sikorsky Aircraft Stratford

and DCMA Garden City, discuss their accomplishments, challenges, lessons learned and future goals since the plan's implementation.

Accomplishments

DCMA Garden City views their early implementation of stages of the DCMA strategic plan as an opportunity to return

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— Betty Monroe, Defense Contract Management Agency Garden City director

to basics and focus their attention on the entire DCMA enterprise.

“The strategic plan identifies four perspectives, or quadrants, of the DCMA Balanced Scorecard: acquisition enterprise, policies and processes, human capital, and stewardship. We focused on three quadrants — acquisition enterprise, policies and processes, and stewardship — for changes at DCMA Garden City,” said Betty Monroe, DCMA Garden City director.

DCMA Garden City focused on the strategic plan policies and processes, initiative number two, developing and documenting policies, processes, competencies and training needed to drive effectiveness and efficiency in its mission and support its business processes. Their first step was to develop a Quality Council that reviews all quality assurance defect data generated by the CMO’s Integrated Quality Database Management System. IQDMS includes material review boards, defect rates, corrective action reports, first pass yield as well as customer quality issues.

“Once the Quality Council completes the review of the various data, they determine whether a Quality System Evaluation should be performed or a focused audit of a specific issue should occur,” said Neil Mintz, DCMA Garden City deputy director.

According to DCMA Garden City, the implementation of the strategic plan provided employees the opportunity to participate in many integrated process teams that covered performance

indicators. Also, DCMA Garden City strengthened and reinvigorated their Performance Improvement Council, which provides a peer-level review of CMO performance. Although chaired by a supervisor, the council members consist of performance advocates and representatives from tertiary CMOs.

“The PIs allowed us to focus on the enterprise and put the emphasis back on basic contract administration,” said Monroe. “One of our strengths is, and always has been, the ability to get to the root cause of the red and yellow PIs and understand the problems associated with each indicator.”

DCMA Sikorsky cites great success in the human capital area of the strategic plan — specifically, aggressive recruiting initiatives at local colleges and universities. “We have ramped up our recruiting efforts by personally visiting colleges to attract potential candidates,” said Navy Capt. Louis M. Borno III, DCMA Sikorsky Aircraft Stratford commander.

A rotational assignment with local DCMA geographic offices is another unique recruiting incentive offered to potential DCMA Keystone interns. “Our memorandum of agreement with the local geographic CMOs provides a broader experience for our Keystones [interns], allowing them to work both at a geographic and plant office,” said Borno.

Challenges

The one critical aspect DCMA Garden City learned to appreciate is that making adjustments to the plan while moving forward is not a bad thing. Adjustments to the plan are almost a necessity for success.

“While we are not green in all the metrics, we have a good understanding of the issues and are making changes to make improvement,” said Mintz.

Although recruiting efforts are helping, DCMA Sikorsky still faces some challenges due to personnel shortfalls. DCMA Sikorsky administrative contracting officers do not have a dedicated staff (contract administrators and procurement technicians), so they must share these limited resources. “This is an innovative way of doing business,” said Borno. “We have tried to find a better way to use our limited resources more efficiently.”

Lessons Learned

DCMA Sikorsky Aircraft Stratford said the greatest lesson learned is the strategic plan is not a static document, but, rather, it is a constantly changing and adapting plan to address agency requirements.

“It was [President Dwight] Eisenhower who said, ‘Plans are nothing; planning is everything,’” said Borno. “The strategic plan demonstrates that DCMA is engaged in planning to better serve all its stakeholders.”

