

Customer Relations — Providing the Cornerstone of Customer Engagement



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The words “change” and “transformation” have become very familiar to all DCMA employees over the last few years. Nowhere are change and transformation more evident than in the Program Support and Customer Relations Directorate, DCMA-PI. Mr. Bob Murphy, deputy executive director for Customer Relations, sees the Directorate’s transformation as nothing but positive: “Years back, we were known as ‘Program Integration.’ We realized our role was much greater, and we evolved into ‘Program Support and Customer Relations,’ and today we continue to evolve.” When Ms. Rebecca Davies became Program Support and Customer Relations executive director in July 2004, she envisioned PI becoming even more customer focused in order to effectively support a much-needed customer engagement strategy and also to support the Agency shift to performance-based management: “While we were working on issues with our external customers, a great deal of our focus continued to be internal and operational.”

Ms. Davies saw an opportunity for change and headed in a new direction. “In order to ensure



effective customer interaction and engagement, you need an organization that is dedicated solely to doing just that,” she stated. This began the transformation of PI to an organization that is known singularly as “Customer Relations.” As an organization, it is an important link between the Agency and the customer. It is considered the external arm of the Agency, assisting in identifying and segmenting the customer base, working to manage customer relationships and helping to identify potential customer outcomes.

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There’s a lot going on in Customer Relations as the transformation continues. One significant event was the establishment of the Customer Liaison Center in April 2004. “The Center was created with the purpose of bringing all of the CLRs [customer liaison representatives] under one roof,” said Mr. Murphy. Customer liaisons are the on-site representatives of DCMA at 24 customer locations, including:

- Air Force Materiel Command in Dayton, Ohio
- Army Tank-automotive & Armament Command in Warren, Mich.

(Above) Mr. Bob Murphy, deputy executive director, Customer Relations, DCMA Headquarters, is working to foster effective and positive relationships with all of his group’s customers. (DCMA staff photo)

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- Naval Inventory Control Point in Philadelphia, Pa.
- Defense Acquisition University
- National Defense University

Contact information for the liaisons can be found at <http://home.dcma.mil/dcma-pi/liaisons.htm>.

Prior to the Center’s creation, organizational responsibility for the CLR’s was split between the East and West Districts. “The Districts were doing a very good job managing the liaisons, but we felt there was a synergy that could be gained by having them reporting into one location as a cohesive unit,” Mr. Murphy remarked. A CLR charter outlining the roles, responsibilities and expectations of the CLR’s was developed and can be viewed at http://home.dcma.mil/dcma-pi/files/clr_charter.doc.

Customer Relationship Management is another area of responsibility for the Customer Relations Directorate and an integral part of the organization’s changing face. Information relating to customers is found in many locations and in many forms. The challenge lies in gathering the myriad of customer-related information and effectively assembling that information in a way that makes it readily accessible so that it can be shared across the enterprise. This, in turn, fosters a collaborative environment where all elements of the enterprise, contract management offices, Divisions and Headquarters are sharing information and are engaged in discussion with each other relative to helping customers achieve identified outcomes. “Major General Scott [DCMA director] has talked about ‘seamless access to information.’ That’s where we’re trying to get to,” said Mr. Murphy.

The Agency customer engagement strategy is another of the Customer Relations Directorate’s

responsibilities. Determining the various levels of interaction between the customer and DCMA and what responsibilities are associated with each level is vitally important. Customer Relations is working to ensure that the strategy covers all aspects of customer interaction, communication and reporting so that the Agency is providing a consistent message to its customers in terms of meeting their expectations. Ms. Davies sees the customer engagement strategy as vital to building successful and productive relationships with the DCMA customer base. “You can’t build effective relationships without first having the cornerstone of customer engagement in place,” remarked Ms. Davies.

As the Agency continues to change and transform, the Customer Relations Directorate continues its journey down a similar path. “These are exciting and interesting times. Standing still is not an option,” said Mr. Murphy. “The Customer Relations Directorate is doing all it can to foster effective and positive relationships with not just some but all of our customers.”



(Right) From left: Customer Relations employees Mr. Steve Martinez, Lt. Christopher Sylvester, Mr. Rob Annicelli and Mr. Richard Florez at DCMA Headquarters (DCMA staff photo)

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