

Represent Attention

Centuries old architecture, as pictured, lines the community square near the Host Nation Conference site in Luxembourg City, Luxembourg. (Photos by Mark Woodbury, DCMA Public Affairs)

As defense markets become more global, the use of host nation contract management services — the process whereby one country performs CMS functions on behalf of another country — has become increasingly common.

In an effort to unify the mutual government quality assurance process around the world, the Defense Contract Management Agency and its International Division host a yearly conference so attendees may learn best practices from other nations, overcome prior challenges associated with the process and gain important networking contacts for future operations.

Seventy-four attendees from more than 20 different nations and one North Atlantic Treaty Organization agency met at the NATO Maintenance and Supply Agency facilities, Capellen, Luxembourg, to participate in this year's 2008 Host Nation Conference June 2-6.

Representatives From Around the World and DCMA Host Nation Conference

*By Mark Woodbury,
DCMA Public Affairs*

Navy Capt. David Graff, International Division commander, started the conference by encouraging attendees to get everything they could out of the conference and also to bring back what they learn to their colleagues. He said doing so would allow for the largest possible impact and benefit.

Throughout the conference, presentations from various attendees highlighted programs and issues affecting or related to the mutual GQA process. The conference also offered workshops designed to further train attendees on particular issues, procedures and policies.

Along with these benefits, the one factor the conference provides attendees they couldn't get anywhere else is an opportunity for attendees to establish invaluable working networks with various nations involved in the mutual GQA process, according to Roland Quitariano, conference co-organizer. "The lasting effect from this conference is found in the networks established between attendees," said Quitariano. "When I speak with attendees, I encourage each of them to leave here with multiple working relationships from each of the various countries represented here. Every attendee should leave the conference with a name and face from each country represented."

For one attendee, the conference is his only real face-to-face working time with associates from Israel. "Since we know both of us are going to be here, we use this conference as an opportunity to discuss prior issues experienced throughout the year," said

Did you know?

It is Department of Defense policy that DCMA will perform contract administration services for allied nations and international organizations that request support.

Although DCMA will perform requested CMS services for any of the U.S. allies, DoD has entered into international agreements and memoranda of understanding with certain foreign governments for the exchange of CMS services. In accordance with the Arms Export Control Act, requested services are provided on the basis of a fee-for-service or as a no-cost reciprocal service.

Currently, there are 15 nations with which the U.S. has agreements to perform certain CMS functions at no charge.



Luxembourg City's old quarter homes, located on the Alzette River, could be seen by conference attendees from their hotel rooms across the river.



Created by a popular local artist, a fountain within the community square has become a popular “must have” photo for visitors to Luxembourg City, Luxembourg.

Netherlands Lt. Col. Dirk van Duijn. “With this, along with the opportunity to establish new working relationships with other country attendees, this conference is one that is critical to me.”

For Rex Russell, Australian director of materiel policy and assurance, the conference was also an opportunity to see how NATO nations are working and



Attendees gather before the conference to discuss the upcoming day's events while also establishing future Host Nation working networks.



Conference attendees gather outside the main conference hall to discuss specific situations each has experienced involving Host Nation issues and options on how best to handle each more efficiently in the future.

coordinating on the mutual GQA process. “As a representative from a non-NATO nation, I wanted to see what guidelines NATO nations were using to coordinate their GQA work and what issues they were encountering,” said Russell. “From this conference, I plan on aligning [Australian] policies to best fit with the NATO nations we currently do contract work with.”

Having been a part of organizing the annual conference since the first one in 1997, conference co-organizer Michael Buchanan said he is amazed at how far this conference has come from its early beginnings. He is proud to be a part of something that has a true influence and impact in assisting with the improvement of the mutual GQA process for both the Department of Defense and its allies.

Presentations given at the conference are available for viewing at the DCMA International Portal page under project name Host Nation - DCMAI. 

Did you know?

Without a doubt, the most common CMS function exchanged between countries is quality assurance. Because of the global reliance on international standards, the approach to government surveillance between countries is very similar.

Although some countries may lean more toward system surveillance and others toward process surveillance, the U.S. and its allies, in most cases, are playing from the same sheet of music — the international standard. The same is not true with many of the other Federal Acquisition Regulation CMS functions.

Detailed information about the host nation CMS process is on the DCMAI Web site at <http://home.dcma.mil/dcmai/hostcas.htm>.