



CONTINGENCY CONTRACTING CORNER

Contingency Contracting Corner Voices from the Theater: Insiders' Perspectives of Deployment

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For most people, making the decision to voluntarily deploy is not easy. Family matters or concerns about the dangers associated with deploying may prevent one from making this type of commitment. However, those who have embraced the opportunity to deploy with the Defense Contract Management Agency Contingency Contracting Administrative Services describe it as one of the most fulfilling experiences of their lives. We spoke with one more DCMA employee who has gone through this experience to get his thoughts and perspectives on being deployed.

U.S. Army Lt. Col. Lance Green, military assistant to the director, DCMA Headquarters, and former commander of DCMA Soldier Systems and Contract Augmentation Program – Albuquerque.

His contingency contracting deployments have led him to be a contract division chief in the U.S. Army Contracting Command,

Europe; chief of contracting for southern Iraq; DCMA lead administrative contracting officer for northern Iraq; and DCMA theater-wide ACO, with duty at various locations in Iraq.

Communicator: How many times have you deployed and to where?

Lt. Col. Lance Green: I have deployed three times as a member of the Army Acquisition Corps. The

first time was prior to and during the initial ground war [in Iraq]. I was a contingency contracting officer and the chief of contracting for southern Iraq, located at Tallil Air Base, just outside An Nassiriyah, Iraq. We provided contingency contracting support for all military personnel located in and around An Nassiriyah, all the way down to Basrah and Um Qasr. I was at Tallil Air Base for a 6-month tour. My second tour was in Tikrit, Iraq,

located at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, where I served as the DCMA lead ACO for northern Iraq. I worked with a great group of DCMA and LOGCAP [Logistics Civil Augmentation Program] personnel who provided LOGCAP support for the 101st Airborne Division. My third tour was as the DCMA Iraq/Afghanistan theater-wide ACO, at the DCMA Iraq/Afghanistan headquarters at Camp Victory, Iraq. I provided contract management and oversight of the LOGCAP contract and provided support to the Joint Contracting Command Iraq/Afghanistan for contracts delegated to DCMA I/A.

C: Why did you decide to deploy?

LG: The CCAS folks did a great job matching my experience and background to my first DCMA assignment. I was assigned to COB Speicher where I supported the 101st Airborne Division, multiple Stryker Brigade Combat Teams, U.S. Marine Corps and U.S. Air Force personnel operating in northern Iraq. It was a really good mission. I commanded a rifle company in the 101st and became senior leadership in the division. By sheer luck, one of our former commanders was the assistant division commander at the time of my deployment. He understood LOGCAP support, and every week he took me and the LSO [LOGCAP support officer] with him via helicopter to visit the 101st locations where LOGCAP support was being maintained. We were able to maximize travel in convoys and air



U.S. Army Lt. Col. Lance Green receives the Field Grade Officer of the Quarter award from U.S. Army Col. Peggy Carson in June 2006 in Baghdad. (Photo courtesy of Lt. Col. Lance Green, DCMA Headquarters)

operations to meet with and support our customer — the warfighter.

C: What are the challenges of being in a deployed environment?

LG: Support structure, environment and physical fitness.

Regardless of location, you have to figure out the support structure and how the LOGCAP and Regional Contracting Center requirement process works. The warfighter is the customer, but there are established procedures that must be followed in order to provide support: know the system; quickly identify the unit contracting officer representatives, the garrison/division/corps reporting chain and the other players who can help you best support the warfighter; and build a solid relationship with the garrison command mayor cell. Conditions are still a bit austere,

depending on which site or base camp you're assigned to. You have to mentally prepare for the living conditions, weather, operational tempo and working environment. Most importantly, you have to maintain your focus on the tactical environment.

I think our DCMA personnel adapt to the environment pretty well, especially those who volunteered for the theater-wide mission. The mission required DCMA I/A to expand operations to new locations in Iraq and Afghanistan in support of JCC-I/A, almost all of which required heavy infrastructure development. The DCMA theater-wide commanders did an outstanding job building their teams and the life support required to execute their mission.



From left: Army Lt. Col. Mike Milner, Army Lt. Col. Lance Green and Army Maj. Shane Taylor awaiting a flight to Balad, Iraq. (Photo courtesy of Lt. Col. Lance Green, DCMA Headquarters)

Obviously, you work long hours, sometimes 16- to 18-hour days. It's a challenge to maintain your physical fitness. You must be in good physical condition and maintain a solid fitness program while deployed. Being fit pays off tremendously when you're working long hours, dealing with the heat, environment and stressors that come with being deployed. Depending on where you're located, convoys and air movements can be dangerous — a lot of convoys have been shot at, targeted or hit by improvised explosive devices. That being said, all military and civilian personnel wear body armor and a Kevlar® helmet for extended periods when conducting convoy or air operations. Again, this is another reason to be physically fit and maintain a fitness program.

C: What were some of the greatest challenges you faced?

LG: The DCMA I/A theater-wide mission. The mission was new, and we had to increase our number of DCMA personnel in theater. We had very little time to build the infrastructure, basic life support and develop a theater-wide concept of support, all of which was extremely challenging. The first wave, as well as the follow-on personnel, did an outstanding job adapting and tackling the JCC-I/A contract management and oversight mission.

Contract support planning and personnel management were extremely challenging. I worked with two great officers at the DCMA I/A headquarters: [Army] Lt. Col. Mike Milner and [Army] Maj. Shane Taylor. We were the theater leads that leaned forward on LOGCAP support planning for units as they arrived in theater, in addition to building the DCMA I/A team in Iraq

and Afghanistan. You have to keep in mind that requirements change as units rotate and as the DCMA workload continues to grow.

Training the customer on LOGCAP can be a challenge. By now, most of our military units have a pretty good idea how the LOGCAP system works. However, working with the customer to get monthly performance evaluation and award fee board feedback can be a challenge. Also, you're the link between the customer and the contractor. You have to manage customer expectations and how they work and communicate with the contractor.

C: What did you miss most about home?

LG: That's easy — my family. I missed my wife and kids very much. I have little ones, a 5-year-old son and 2-year-old daughter. I missed some of the neat things little ones do as they grow and develop. Our wives, all military and civilian included, have my deepest respect and appreciation. It's incredible how strong our wives and families have to be when we're deployed. In a lot of ways, our wives have the tougher mission. I also missed the personnel in my command. I missed the personal relationships and being part of that great organization — DCMA Albuquerque.

C: What are the most valuable experiences you've gained from your deployment experiences?

LG: The DCMA CCAS deployments have expanded my knowledge and experience in all areas of contract administration with the most important being quality assurance and property administration.

The deployments have also allowed me to get back in the books. Digging through the Federal Acquisition Regulation and Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement has been good for me. You actually do the research and execute the contracting functions. Hands-on contracting is the best teaching method.

Working with our DCMA civilian leads was extremely rewarding. We have some extremely talented personnel in DCMA. John “Jack” Kesler and Keith Cole were the theater property and quality assurance leads. They were a huge help, and I learned a lot from both gentlemen. Without a doubt, the theater-wide mission added to their already challenging mission with quality assurance and federal property accountability.

Personal relationships, experiences and sharing of ideas — I have built some great relationships with my peers and received an education, coaching and mentoring, from my leadership. I’ve been very fortunate to have folks like [Army] Lt. Col. Bill Boruff, [Army] Col. Peggy Carson, [Army] Col. Keith Edwards, [Army] Col. Kirk Vollmecke, [Army] Lt. Col. Mike Milner and [Army] Lt. Col. Dave Kaczmariski in my corner

to guide me along. They’ve been great role models I wouldn’t feel right if I didn’t mention how much I appreciated their support and mentoring.

C: What has been your most memorable experience?

LG: Supporting the warfighter. No particular event, just being there for our troops and deployed civilian workforce. DCMA has a tremendous responsibility, and our warfighting customer is counting on us to provide the necessary support. Things have improved tremendously since my first deployment in 2003. Outstanding LOGCAP performance can be directly traced back to our DCMA personnel. I’m proud of our folks, their sacrifices and what they’ve done to make things better for our soldiers.

C: How would you describe your overall experience?

LG: My deployments have been great. They have allowed me to learn my profession by way of hands-on contracting. They have allowed me to share with some of our newer, more junior acquisition personnel. I also enjoy working with our great soldiers. I am an Army infantry guy. I haven’t forgotten where I came from. They have a huge mission and need our dedicated support.

C: Would you do it all over again?

LG: Yes. Our soldiers deploy every 18 months for periods that usually

exceed 12 months. They deserve the very best.

C: What advice do you have for DCMA civilians who are thinking about doing a voluntary deployment in the future?

LG: I already mentioned the environment and being physically fit. Deployees need to also ensure that their family situations are taken care of before they deploy.

C: Is there anything else you would like to add?

LG: Be a leader and maintain the DCMA values at all times. There has to be that direct interface with military leadership to train them on LOGCAP and how we, DCMA, can be best utilized. Let the commander know up front that you’re part of the team and you’re there to provide world-class support via the LOGCAP service contract. You also have to manage expectations, but never turn your back on the warfighters or leave them unsupported. Give our warfighters 100 percent — they deserve the best. **C**