

GREENING TALKS CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER TRANSITIONING

By Mark Woodbury, DCMA Public Affairs

Charlie E. Williams, Jr., Defense Contract Management Agency director, recently announced the appointment of Marie Greening, acting Operations Management & Customer Relations executive director and Aeronautical Systems Division director, to the chief operations officer position. The COO is a newly created position under the agency's regionally aligned organizational structure.

Greening says she is excited about the opportunity to serve in the position as well as the opportunity to establish its importance within the agency. In doing this, Greening says there are three basic courses of action she will need to take:

- Identify the initial cadre of professionals who will staff both the COO office and regions.
- Further develop and define the concept of operations among the operations staff, regions and contracting management offices.
- Ensure that throughout the transition there are only positive experiences for DCMA's customer and contract partners.

"The agency needs to carry out our mission as if our internal changes were not occurring," said Greening. "This needs to be transparent to our customers ... most importantly our warfighters."

Within these three actions, Greening says it is imperative she and her staff focus on leading the way by executing the director's strategic plan initiatives. She firmly believes in the path Williams has set for the agency, and, by following his initiatives, the COO position, along with the entire agency, will get from "good to great."

Greening, however, recognizes there will be challenges within the



Marie Greening, left, Defense Contract Management Agency acting chief operations officer, speaks with former DCMA director retired Army Brig. Gen. Edward M. Harrington, center, after the DCMA tenth anniversary celebration March 18 at headquarters in Springfield, Va. (Photos by Mark Woodbury, DCMA Public Affairs)

COO position through the "good to great" journey. She sees her biggest challenge being able to assist everyone in keeping their collective "eyes on target" throughout the transition.

"We cannot make this a 'half-baked' transition," said Greening. "We must have very discrete milestones by which to measure our progress, and we cannot skip critical steps or drop handoffs from the product divisions to the new structure. Such lapses in communication and coordination will ultimately yield lapses in our customer support."

To prevent this, Greening says communication both within and outside the agency is critical.

"There's an old saying in real estate

that the most important factors are location, location and location," she said. "I contend that in our transition the most important factors are communication, communication and communication."

In addition to communicating the transition, Greening credits Williams' decision to appoint the finest military officers, Air Force Col. Aaron Clark, Army Col. Jeffrey Gabbert and Navy Capt. Sidney Kim, the first regional commanders, as a major milestone to accomplishing the transition successfully.

"I have already established a battle rhythm with these leaders and with Mr. Sweeney, our acting Portfolio Management and Integration chief,

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our functional leaders, Mr. Kranz, Mr. Ricci and Mr. Shields, as well as the transition team lead by Mr. Ulshoeffter,” said Greening. “We have one plan for moving forward ... together. Staying in sync with these critical partners and our workforce is the only way this transition will seamlessly occur.”

The biggest benefit Greening sees in a regional structure that reports through the COO is a consistent concept of operation that will yield world-class contract management for agency customers and contractors.

“My goal is to develop highly agile professional COO and regional staffs whose sole purpose is to ensure the delivery of high-quality, efficient service to our customers through standard interpretation and execution of policies established by our functional leaders and the formal translation of lessons learned across the agency,” she said. “The COO and regional staffs will not be designed to burden our CMOs but, rather, to enhance their operations through mentoring and partnerships.”

Greening says she expects those within her staff to help craft and drive strategic initiatives as well as maintain a pulse on the day-to-day operations.

“I expect my staff to be engaged in the issues and putting forth their ideas on getting these issues resolved,” she said. “Similarly, I believe it is my job to enable others to succeed, and I am willing to take on just about anything anyone brings to me if resolution of the issue is for the good of the agency and the employee.”

The importance of the work happening within the CMOs is not lost on Greening, and she realizes how vital it is that she and her staff be a supportive force to what is happening within the CMOs.

“The rubber meets the road in our CMOs,” said Greening. “If we don’t understand the challenges the CMOs are facing and help them, rather than function only as an oversight layer, we will not be successful.”

Looking back over her 27-year career, Greening says she has been blessed with phenomenal career

opportunities leading to the COO position. She says she has been in multiple positions before that have been steeped in change management, and she has a track record of getting the job done in some of the most challenging environments. She plans on leveraging her past experience in “this very large job.” Greening says she “is ready to go to work” to make the realignment happen and welcomes everyone in the agency to work through it right alongside her. 

MARIE GREENING

Marie Greening, Defense Contract Management Agency acting Operations Management and Customer Relations executive director and Aeronautical Systems Division director, started her government service career at the Naval Aviation Depot, Cherry Point, N.C., where she provided engineering support to production line and component overhaul activities for six aircraft types and developed advanced composite repair schemes for military aircraft.

She later transferred to the Naval Air Systems Command Headquarters and began a 10-year association with the F/A-18 Hornet aircraft program.

She first reported as the configuration manager and depot programs coordinator responsible for the fielding of new system support and the scheduling and management of aircraft and component overhaul. Her next assignment was as the lead structural engineer for the F/A-18 aircraft, responsible for the structural integrity of the air vehicle system.

She was next appointed as the product support team leader for International Programs. In this capacity, she was integral to the sale of Hornets to the governments



Marie Greening, right, Defense Contract Management Agency acting chief operations officer, poses a question to Charlie Williams, Jr., DCMA director, during the Spring Commanders Conference April 26 in Springfield, Va.

of Switzerland and Finland, the restoration of aircraft support capabilities by the government of Kuwait in the post-Desert Storm time frame, and the support of F/A-18s procured by the governments of Canada, Australia and Spain.

She was then promoted as the product support team leader for all F/A-18 aircraft, and her responsibilities included logistics program management for 850 fielded Navy and Marine Corps aircraft, program development for the F/A-18 Super Hornet and international program support.

Greening was then selected as NAVAIR's principal deputy for aviation support equipment in 1999 and was subsequently appointed as the program manager. Her responsibilities there included leading a 400-person team to procure \$300 million of support equipment acquisitions per year and sustaining Naval Aviation's support equipment inventory valued in excess of \$6 billion.

In 2002, she was appointed to the Senior Executive Service as the Defense Contract Management Agency's deputy executive director, Contract Management Operations.

In 2003, she returned to NAVAIR as the product support department head. In this capacity, she was the chief logistician for all aircraft acquisition platforms and was responsible for the sustainability of airframe, avionics and engine commodities.

In 2005, she was appointed as the deputy program manager of the \$1.6 billion Navy Marine Corps Intranet Program, the largest Intranet in the world, serving more than 650,000 U.S. and Japan-based users. In 2006,

she was appointed as program manager of both the Navy and Marine Corps Intranet and the One-Net program, the Navy's overseas-based network. In this capacity, she was responsible for all worldwide shore-based naval networks.

In May of 2007, Greening returned to the agency with her appointment as the director of the Aeronautical Systems Division.

Greening is a native of Johnstown, Penn., and a graduate of Pennsylvania State University with a Bachelor of Science in chemical engineering and North Carolina

State University with a Master of Engineering. Greening is a graduate of the Naval Air System Command's Senior Executive Management Development Program, the Defense Systems Management College's Advanced and Executive Program Managers' Courses and the Federal Executive Institute's "Leadership for a Democratic Society" curriculum.

She is also the recipient of the Civilian Meritorious and Superior Service Awards, has authored papers on advanced composite repair and holds a private pilot's license.



Marie Greening, Defense Contract Management Agency acting chief operations officer, speaks to Spring Commander Conference attendees April 27 in Springfield, Va.