



From left: Rhonda McDougal, with the Defense Commissary Agency acting as an augmentee for a Procurement Management Review; Theodora Hancock, a PMR augmentee from Headquarters U.S. Air Force; and Cathy Moore, Defense Contract Management Agency procurement analyst, review files while conducting a PMR. DCMA receives support from other organizations to help augment their capabilities and knowledge base. (Photo by Kevin Conneen, DCMA Contracts)

# DCMA assists DOD agencies with PMRs

Matthew Sablan | Staff Writer

## Buying things within the Department of Defense involves moving parts

which must function across a wide spectrum of military services and government agencies while adhering to government acquisition regulations. To determine whether DOD agencies properly manage procurements, periodic Procurement Management Reviews are conducted.

“PMRs are an opportunity to go in and look at how our organizations do contracting. We can identify what they do well, and what they can do better,” Richard Ginman, Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy director, said. “At the end of the day, PMRs ensure the way contracts are placed and that they are filled in a quality manner that respects industry and taxpayer dollars.”

Since smaller organizations lack specialized staff and training required for these reviews, DPAP has directed the Defense Contract Management Agency to manage the PMR program for agencies that receive their procurement authority from DPAP. DCMA’s Procurement Management Review Division manages the PMR program for 18 smaller DOD

organizations. DCMA reviews one-third of the 18 DOD organizations assigned each year, meaning each organization is reviewed roughly every three years.

“We provide a service to small activities that don’t have the personnel to keep up with the changes that are being made,” said Kevin Conneen, DCMA supervisory contract specialist. “We are a tool that helps the defense agencies ascertain how well they are performing.”

These reviews provide DPAP with an oversight arm. They are a routine part of DPAP’s commitment to maintaining excellence and oversight to encourage the best stewardship of tax dollars.

### Conducting PMRs

Each review occurs during a three-week onsite visit by DCMA’s PMR team. Prior to arriving, DCMA procurement analysts set up logistics, ensure IT access and select the files which will need to be reviewed.

The first week includes background research, where the team reviews the available records and contract files flagged prior to their arrival. During the second week, the team interviews as many individuals related to that DOD

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activity as possible — from senior leaders to customers and contract specialists. The final week involves finishing the interviews and providing the organization with a report, more specifically an out brief, which explains their findings. DPAP is the final approving authority on the reports prior to publication.

The PMR team also works closely with the DCMA-AQP, Procurement Directorate as well as the Procurement Center when not on the road conducting reviews. Combining these Directorates under Conneen has enabled the Procurement Center to improve the quality of the contracting support it provides to DCMA as well as provide the PMR team members the ability to stay current on operational issues facing acquisition professionals. “(During reviews), we look at the best practices (of other agencies) and pass

that knowledge to other organizations,” Christopher Moore, DCMA procurement analyst, said. “We’re not too proud to steal good ideas.”

Reports consist of seven chapters, each covering information critical to ensuring compliance with laws and regulations, such as an organization overview, policy, contract pricing and acquisition planning. The team works with the other defense agencies while drafting the report to maintain high standards of accuracy.

PMRs provide a method for DOD to find best practices that organizations use while operating under a continuous resolution authority. “The Better Buying Memo has helped highlight the value of PMRs,” Christopher Moore said. “Pricing has become a big issue (for the government).”

“Participating on reviews is a great learning experience,” Cathy Moore, DCMA procurement analyst, said. “They are good opportunities to see what other organizations are doing. We’ll share what we’ve learned, and a lot of times, we can catch new policies or ways of looking at things.”

One review in January highlighted a new

determination and finding required during the pre-award stage, which the team forwarded to the Procurement Center. The PMR Program has enabled DCMA to see how other organizations structure their policies, which in turn informs DCMA’s policy structure.

“The value DPAP gets from these reviews is seeing best practices shared across the activities, which allows us to improve the overall level of quality provided to the federal government,” Ginman said. 

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## Become an Augmentee

Employees from the Defense Contract Management Agency and other organizations are eligible to volunteer to support the Procurement Management Review Division. Augmentees expand the skills available to the team and gain unique insights into the PMR process.

“(As augmentees,) we provided the Defense Acquisition University’s technical expertise, and the reviews help get DAU instructors into the field, where we can put our hands on real contracting issues and work with other contracting experts,” Fred Schlich, DAU professor of contract management and augmentee, said.

Look for an announcement from Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy this summer for details on volunteering for the Fiscal Year 2013 reviews.

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