



# INSIGHT

# 25<sup>TH</sup>

## ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

DEFENSE CONTRACT MANAGEMENT AGENCY 2025

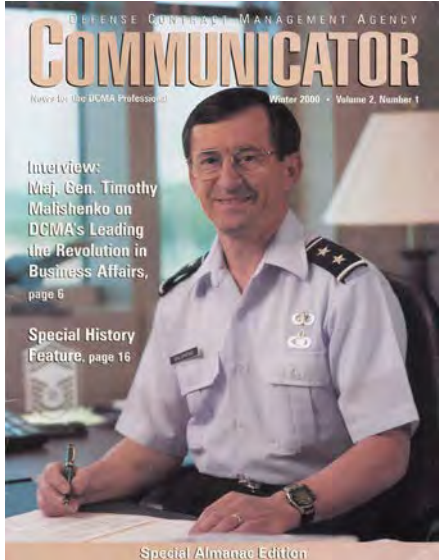


# OUR TEAM

**DCMA Director:** Lt. Gen. Gregory L. Masiello  
**Chief of Public Affairs:** Mark Woodbury  
**Editor:** Thomas Perry  
**Contributor:** Patrick Tremblay  
**Contributor:** Misha King  
**Writer:** Elizabeth Szoke  
**Writer:** Alun Thomas  
**Regional PAO:** Tonya Johnson  
**Regional PAO:** Jason Kaneshiro  
**Regional PAO:** Luis Delgadillo  
**Layout and Design:** Cameron Piper, Thomas Perry  
**Graphics and Cover:** Debbie Watts  
**Graphics:** Cameron Piper, Cheryl Jamieson

INSIGHT is published annually with appropriated funds by authority of the director, Defense Contract Management Agency. The director has determined that this publication is necessary in the transaction of business required by law and the Department of Defense. Contents are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. government, DOD or DCMA. INSIGHT has a controlled circulation.

DCMA launched the Communicator, a quarterly publication, in 2000 to share updates and news with employees and other stakeholders. By 2016, the editorial staff shifted to the annual INSIGHT magazine to consolidate resources and offer more in-depth features and information to their audience. This transition allowed DCMA to maintain a high standard of quality while reaching a broader readership.



Winter 2000 | Volume 2, Number 1: After an initial digital launch for Volume 1, the first printed Communicator explained the agency's goals and how the organization was designed to improve customer service and Defense Department direct support for contracting and the Defense Industrial Base.



Spring 2010 | Volume 10, Number 1: After a decade of warfighter support, the Communicator recognized the 10th anniversary of DCMA. The cover shows then-DCMA Director Charlie Williams Jr. accepting an agency-level award from the Department of Defense.



INSIGHT 2020: In its fifth annual publication, DCMA marked its 20th anniversary with INSIGHT, which replaced the agency's quarterly Communicator in 2016. The magazine highlighted its acquisition professionals and reinforced its value through deliverables.



# INSIGHT



# OUR WARFIGHTER SUPPORT MISSION

## MISSION

We are the independent eyes and ears of DOD and its partners, enhancing warfighter lethality by ensuring timely delivery of quality products and providing relevant acquisition insight supporting affordability and readiness.

## VISION

A team of trusted professionals delivering value to our Warfighters throughout the acquisition lifecycle.

## INTEGRITY

Committed to the highest standards of ethical and moral behavior at all times.

## SERVICE

Working for the benefit of our nation and putting professional responsibilities before self-interests.

## EXCELLENCE

Committed to exceptional performance in everything we do.



*Soldiers conduct a dismounted patrol at the National Training Center, Fort Irwin, Calif. (Army photo by William Farrow)*

Welcome to INSIGHT magazine! As we celebrate our 25th anniversary, the following pages provide an inside look at Defense Contract Management Agency's important work performed for our warfighters and military services. You will also meet some of our DCMA professionals who shepherd much of our nation's defense acquisition, contract administration, quality assurance, delivery and sustainment support as America pursues Peace through Strength.

Our team provides invaluable insight from the pre-award phase through early acquisition stakeholder engagements. DCMA expertly manages contracts post-award, ensuring requirements are met at costs our nation can afford and delivering critical equipment when and where it is needed — often directly to deployed units. Our presence extends throughout the acquisition lifecycle and ends at contract closeout.

Last year, our trusted professionals delivered more than 312 million warfighter items to program offices, buying commands and other customers. This includes hundreds of aircraft, more than 6,000 ground combat vehicles, over 14,000 missile systems, millions of rounds of ammunition, and all the systems and support items necessary for our armed forces to deter our adversaries and, if needed, fight and win. The next time you see an MH-60 Seahawk, Apache, P-8, F/A-18 or F-35 fly; or when you see an M7 next-generation Army service rifle, you're seeing DCMA-delivered battlefield lethality.

Last year we also modernized processes and tools, transforming how we use technology and data. Our people were recognized at the federal, Department of Defense and functional level, and thanks to their diligence we continued our exceptional track record of saving DOD money. Our return on investment last year was an incredible 5.83 to 1 — the highest since we began tracking it. In fiscal year 2024, we saved, recovered or cost avoided \$9.24 billion against our \$1.59 billion allocated budget. DCMA has now produced a positive return on every dollar invested in our workforce for the past nine years.

When I joined the agency in December 2023, our internal reorganization was in full swing. In 2025 we will complete this transformation, as we reinforce our capability portfolio execution and analysis in our newly formed Systems Command and Geographic & Systems Support Command. We anticipate significant workflow, data and analysis updates, dramatically increasing our value to military programs, buying commands and taxpayers. Our new realignment strengthens DCMA's role as our nation's sensor network across the defense industrial base from balance sheet to factory floor.



Our unmatched access to industry ideally positions agency professionals to support DOD's priority of rebuilding our military by reviving the defense industrial base, reforming acquisition processes and rapidly fielding emerging technologies.

Our military is equipped with advanced, precise and lethal weapon systems, and is enabled, in part, by our dedicated, well-trained professionals who are entrusted to deliver, support and maintain those warrior systems.

Since our creation 25 years ago, DCMA has never stopped evolving. We've built an unmatched track record of providing exceptional service to our nation, our partners and allies. I am proud of DCMA's contribution to our national defense and our goal to enhance America's battlefield lethality. I am honored to lead 10,000-plus DOD civilians and uniformed servicemembers who provide value and deliver positive returns on taxpayer investment — and, after a quarter century, we're just getting started.

Semper Fi,  
G. L. Masiello  
Lieutenant General, U.S. Marine Corps  
Director



# BY THE NUMBERS

As of March 26, 2025. Data sources include DCMA Executive Dashboard/Fourth Estate Manpower Tracking System, Contract Administration Management System and Contract Property Administration Module.



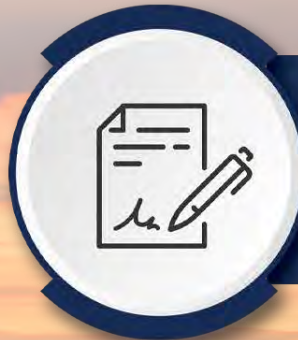
9,811  
CIVILIAN  
EMPLOYEES



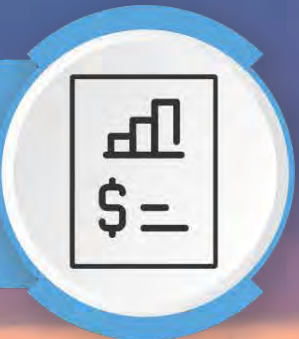
519  
FILLED MILITARY  
BILLETS



880  
DCMA SITES  
WORLDWIDE



MANAGING  
302,846  
ACTIVE CONTRACTS



AVERAGING MORE THAN  
\$1 BILLION IN CONTRACTOR  
PAYMENTS EACH BUSINESS DAY



OVERSEEING  
\$125 BILLION  
IN GOV PROPERTY



SERVING  
17,427  
CONTRACTOR LOCATIONS

WITH A TOTAL  
VALUE OF **\$5.9T** PROVIDING DIRECT SUPPORT TO DOD  
AND OTHER GOVERNMENT AGENCIES



# PLATFORM DELIVERIES

In fiscal year 2024, DCMA delivered 312.2 million items worth \$81.4 billion, with many valued at more than \$1 million per unit. Data source: DCMA Executive Dashboard/Program Support Application, DCMA Executive Dashboard/Fourth Estate Manpower Tracking System, Contract Administration Management System, Contract Property Administration Module, fiscal year 2024 Delivery Report, and Integrated Database.

339,090

Missiles/Rockets



6,054

Combat Vehicles



399

Aircraft



381

Aircraft Engines



Contract litigation, cost accounting standards, fraud cost recoveries, incurred cost settlements and property claims



Commercial pricing, property and plant clearance, and surge support efforts (recommended)



Cost savings from contract terminations

In fiscal year 2024, DCMA saved, recovered or cost avoided \$9.24 billion against an annual \$1.59 billion budget. The agency has produced a positive return on investment for the past nine years. Data source: DCMA ROI Repository.

**5.83 to 1**  
Fiscal Year 2024 ROI





113 Programs



Data source: DCMA Executive Dashboard/Program Support Application

44 ACAT 1\*

83 Programs



Data source: DCMA Executive Dashboard/Program Support Application

35 ACAT 1\*

106 Programs



Data source: DCMA Executive Dashboard/Program Support Application

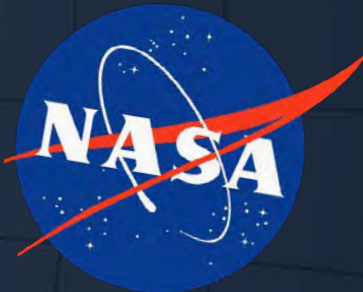
37 ACAT 1\*

## Fiscal Year 2024 Deliveries

Total Items:  
312.2 million items shipped  
\$81.4 billion total value

DLA Contract Items:  
44.3 million items shipped  
\$8.1 billion total value

In addition to the services, DCMA performs contract work on behalf of other Defense Department and federal organizations, from NASA to the Defense Logistics Agency. DLA is the agency's largest customer by contract count. Data source: Contract Administration Management System. Contract Property Administration Module, fiscal year 2024 Delivery Report, and Integrated Database.



\*ACAT I, or acquisition category I, denotes a program that has either been designated by the undersecretary of defense for acquisition and sustainment as a major defense acquisition program or is estimated to require an eventual expenditure for research, development, and test and evaluation of a certain dollar value.



# DCMA VISION

By PAO Staff

In 2023, the Defense Contract Management Agency launched a comprehensive three-year plan to evolve its organizational structure from a regional alignment to a systems-support infrastructure.

DCMA Vision supports aggressive realignment of the agency's workforce to better serve U.S. military assets, buying commands, key decision makers and ultimately, America's warfighters.

"For the past two years, DCMA dramatically reorganized to better meet customer needs and to concentrate its highly-skilled workforce on high-risk production lines on the factory floor," said Sonya Ebright, DCMA deputy director. "The agency is on target to meet a major milestone this fall, when it replaces the current three continental United States regional structure with the larger Systems and the Geographic and Systems Support commands."

Vision's driving force reconfigures the agency through office consolidations and realigned reporting structures, creating two major continental U.S. commands — the first aligned as portfolios of Systems and the second focused on geographic Defense Industrial Base sectors supporting the Systems Support Command.

As an example, DCMA Space Enterprise's

establishment consolidated all agency work related to space to provide a clear interface for Space Force and other federal agencies with related contracts. This realignment streamlines customer communication, eliminates duplicative work, strengthens standardized support and accelerates the acquisition process.

The restructure reinforces the Department of Defense philosophy of Peace through Strength and the department's command priorities:

- We will revive the warrior ethos and restore trust in our military. We are American warriors. We will defend our country. Our standards will be high, uncompromising and clear. The strength of our military is our unity and our shared purpose.
- We will rebuild our military by matching threats to capabilities. This means reviving our defense industrial base, reforming our acquisition process, passing a financial audit and rapidly fielding emerging technologies. We will remain the strongest and most lethal force in the world.
- We will reestablish deterrence by defending our homeland — on the ground and in the sky. We will work with allies and partners to deter aggression in the Indo-Pacific by Communist China, as well as supporting the President's priority to end wars responsibly and reorient to key threats.

We will stand by our allies — and our enemies are on notice.

"DCMA enables lethality through delivery, government efficiency through audit, and return on investment through detection and elimination of unnecessary spending," said Marine Lt. Gen. G. L. Masiello, DCMA director. "In 2024, our internal reorganization entered full swing, with seven U.S. offices restructured to better support our customers. The benefits have been immediate and profound, maximizing our workforce while strengthening our relationships with program offices. DCMA was born of change and has embraced it — pursued it even — since its inception. It's necessary for our national defense efforts, for our people and for our fiscal responsibilities."

DCMA is "the independent eyes and ears of DOD and its partners, enhancing warfighter lethality by ensuring timely delivery of quality products and providing relevant acquisition insight supporting affordability and readiness." As the agency enters a new era of acquisition support, its leaders and team members stand ready for emerging challenges.

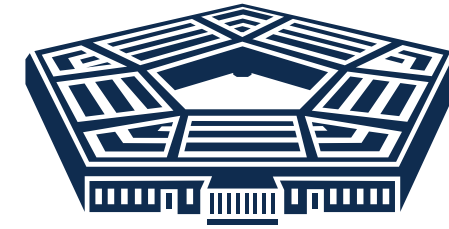
"Four more office consolidations are planned, culminating with the stand up of our new Geographic and Systems Support Command and Systems Command on Oct. 1, 2025," said Masiello. "This will significantly improve our workflow and continue to dramatically increase our value to the military program offices and buying commands. Many other changes will take place alongside this evolution. With ongoing technology, data and other modernization projects, the new structure will move the agency forward and further bolster our warfighter support mission."

- Marine Lt. Gen. G. L. Masiello, DCMA director

"DCMA enables lethality through delivery, government efficiency through audit, and return on investment through detection and elimination of unnecessary spending."

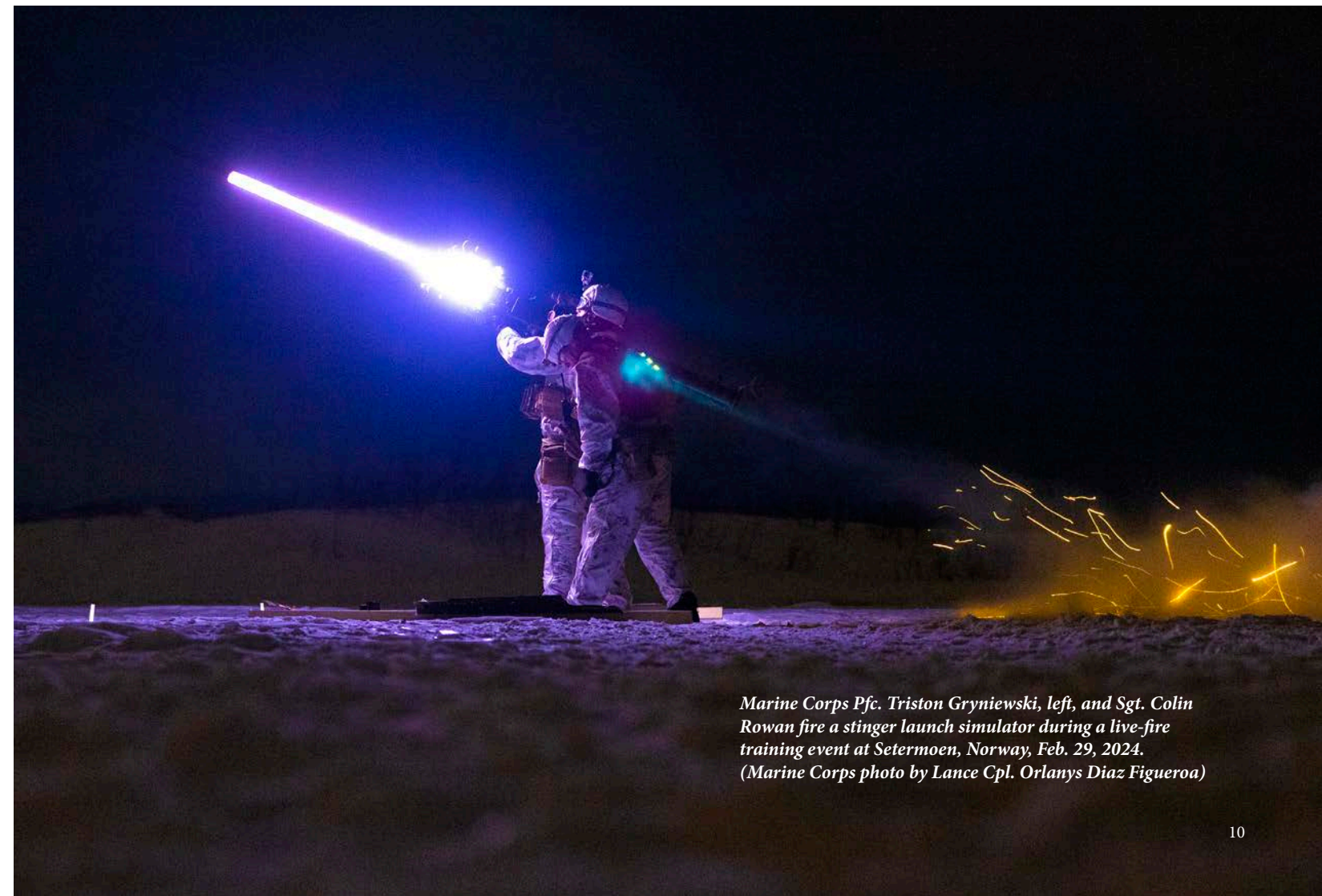
## "Peace through Strength" Department of Defense Priorities

Revive the warrior  
ethos: High standards,  
unity and purpose.



Reestablish deterrence:  
Defend the homeland,  
deter aggression, stand  
with allies.

Rebuild the military: Match threats to  
capabilities, reform acquisition processes  
and field new technologies quickly.



Marine Corps Pfc. Triston Gryniowski, left, and Sgt. Colin Rowan fire a stinger launch simulator during a live-fire training event at Setermoen, Norway, Feb. 29, 2024. (Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Orlanys Diaz Figueroa)



# DCMA AT 25

By Patrick Tremblay and Nick D’Amario, PAO

Creating the Defense Contract Management Agency in 2000 was the boldest and most effective step in seeking efficiency in defense acquisition in more than two centuries.

Before the establishment of the Defense Contract Management Command, DCMA’s precursor command, 24,000 people from 144 organizations managed U.S. defense contracts. Today, most of that work is done by just over 10,000 people working for a single three-star agency, providing contract administration services for the Department of Defense, other federal agencies, foreign governments and international organizations.

DCMA relentlessly refines itself with one mission focus — providing the equipment necessary for service members to fight, survive and win on the battlefield. Even as the agency enters its second quarter century, it is midway through another internal reorganization that promises even better support in tomorrow’s world.

## Long History of Contract Support

From the appointment of the first quartermaster general in 1775 by George Washington and the first law regulating federal procurement

passing Congress in 1792, contracting has played an important, evolving role in our nation’s history.

After 200 years of conflict and war — from the American Revolution through World War II — the need to consolidate and control the vast and growing facets of procurement to deliver products and services effectively became evident.

Amid the Cold War, manned space travel and major technological developments in the 1960s, management of DOD contracts surged to record levels. With this came the realization that the department’s numerous procurement systems, housed within branches of the services, were ill-equipped to contend with a rapidly increasing new generation of contracts without the resulting duplication, excessive operating costs or lack of timely delivery to the end user — the warfighter.

In response to these concerns, the Office of the Secretary of Defense established Project 60, a structured and systematic effort to define and improve DOD’s contracting processes. Almost three decades of studies, projects, reports and congressional testimony followed. The most significant result was the 1989 recommendation to establish a stand-alone agency to administer contracts and a task force to bring all contract administration services under the new organization.

Initially, this new agency launched as a command under the Defense Logistics Agency called the Defense Contract Management Command, established in 1990. After 10 years of demonstrating its agency-level capability, DCMC was ready to fulfill Project 60’s original vision and become independent.

On March 27, 2000, Deputy Secretary of Defense John Hamre signed a memo establishing the Defense Contract Management Agency, consisting of “all personnel and resources of the former DCMC, including 12,539 full-time equivalents.” A letter to Congress explaining the decision underscored efficiency and stated DCMA’s creation was “intended to reduce the overall requirement for management headquarters and will ultimately reduce the personnel requirements associated with these two critical functions (contract management (DCMA) and logistical management (DLA)).”

## Today's Mission: DCMA Vision

DCMA has championed two consistent threads throughout its 25 years. First, the agency delivers on its mission. In fiscal year 2024, DCMA professionals delivered more than 312 million items to our military services, worth more than \$81 billion. This includes 339,090 missiles and rockets, 6,054 combat vehicles, and 8,444 flight hours to deliver 399 aircraft.

For the ninth year in a row, the agency did so with a positive return on investment, averaging a return of \$3.20 for every dollar

budgeted since September 2015.

Second, DCMA continually refines itself, ingraining improvement and efficiency into every business function and decision. The constant honing is born of two driving forces, chief being the ever-changing landscape of threats and requirements of DOD customers. The world looks very different today than it did in 2000. The terrorist attacks of 2001 sharply refocused our national defense efforts. Cyberattacks, improvised explosive devices, drones and other threats present challenges unknown in the last millennia. Our military must be more flexible than ever, and industry as well, with new technology and processes introduced at an unprecedented rate.

The second driving force for DCMA is its critical understanding of the defense dollar. The agency performs a dynamic mission within a fixed budget — 87% of which is dedicated to payroll. To maintain its edge and help customers get the most out of their budgets, DCMA has to perpetually develop its highly skilled workforce. Budget realities require this workforce to be as focused and efficient as possible.

Fortunately, advances in technology are on DCMA’s side. In 2020, COVID-19 forced a hard look at how and where the agency’s functional specialists do their job. Along with many in the federal government, the agency initially leveraged telework technology to continue its mission. This success freed DCMA to examine its overall organizational structure, leading to a new vision. Employees returned to newly realigned offices, carefully designed to more closely match the structure of the military services, buying commands and program offices, closing communication gaps and injecting efficiency into the greater acquisition process.

The pandemic also reinforced DCMA’s importance in assuring the health and viability of the defense industrial base. While many employees initially teleworked, a large cadre of agency professionals continued critical visits to contractor locations. This uninterrupted access and proximity were leveraged as part of the whole-of-government response to COVID, ensuring not only our national defense posture but also assisting in the coordination and distribution of test kits and other essential items. Today, DCMA administers contracts at more than 17,000 contractor locations, giving the agency unmatched access to industry, and ideally positioning it to support the Department of Defense’s priority of rebuilding our military by reviving the defense industrial base, reforming acquisition process, and rapidly fielding emerging technologies.

## Future of Contracting

By the end of its 25th year, DCMA anticipates being broadly transformed, with two large commands covering defense contract administration in the continental U.S., a third command for international work, and a refined slate of focused components



providing specialized work and support.

Today, DCMA professionals — 9,811 civilians and 519 military service members — administer more than 302,846 contracts valued at nearly \$5.9 trillion, delivering millions of products a year to our military and authorizing about \$1 billion in contractor payments every business day.

Tomorrow, the total value of contracts will likely continue to rise, just as their complexity and criticality will rise. DCMA will keep refining itself and reinvesting in its people. At its 50th anniversary the data points will have changed, but the results will be the same — mission success.

1775

George Washington appoints the first quartermaster general: Maj. Gen. Thomas Mifflin. From the time of this appointment, contracting has played an important, evolving role in our nation’s history.



1792

First law regulating federal procurement — Congress authorizes the Treasury Department to make all purchases for the War Department.



1812

War of 1812: Congress creates the Office of Commissary General under the Secretary of War. Quartermaster Department established to aid in buying, inspecting and distributing equipment.

1861

During the Civil War, the pressure of supplying a much larger Army causes the contracting process to break down, leading to many procurement scandals. Congress passes legislation requiring advertising for proposals and competitive bids.



1908

Army Signal Corps awards two bicycle manufacturers from Ohio a contract to build a flying machine. In July 1909, the Wright Brothers successfully complete a 10-mile flight at Fort Meyer, Virginia.



World War I leads to greater production of aircraft. Pilots complain of poor quality. The Army Signal Corps creates an inspection department to fix problems during manufacturing. War Industries Board aims to control war materials, finished products, labor and prices.

1917



# Central Region celebrates past, embraces path forward

By Tonya Johnson, PAO

Michael Harris, a quality assurance engineer with the Central Region based in Texas, remembers when the Defense Contract Management Agency became a separate agency from the Defense Logistics Agency.

Back in 2000, Harris was an engineer with the Defense Contract Management Command Northern Europe, based in Bristol, England. Before DCMC, he was an Army civilian and engineer who performed contract management at Bell Helicopter in Texas.

"I've been with DCMA since its creation," he said. "I didn't find the transition from DCMC into DCMA as a stand-alone agency to involve much difficulty at all. But initially, there were some changes to my work practices."

Harris said he has enjoyed working for DCMA throughout the last 25 years and is proud of the agency's mission.

"One reality the 25th anniversary has brought into focus for me is that the mission has not fundamentally changed," said Harris. "We may use different acronyms and buzzwords over time, but the mandated contract management mission as



Rickey Weigel is currently a quality assurance specialist in the Technical Directorate. He has had numerous assignments at DCMA. He deployed to Bagram Air Base in Afghanistan in late 2006 and was assigned as a quality assurance lead. This picture was taken in Kandahar in 2007. His other deployments include Iraq and two additional tours to Afghanistan in Bagram and Kabul. (Photo courtesy of Rickey Weigel)

contained in the Federal Acquisition Regulation has remained basically the same. Of course, our tools have changed drastically, and our overall organization size and structure have also changed drastically over this period."

Gary Jacobson, a lead quality assurance specialist in the Technical Directorate based in Arlington Heights, Illinois, joined the agency shortly after it was established. He came to DCMA in 2003. He

stayed with the agency because of the mission and said the anniversary reminds him of why the agency is important. In the past, he has worked on a variety of programs, including the solid rocket booster program, the High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle known as the Humvee, and the F-35 Lightning II.

"I have stayed with the agency because of the mission of providing what warfighters need while making proper use

of the taxpayer's money," he said. "I enjoy the opportunity of working with cutting-edge technology and programs. I also had the honor to serve with great and experienced professionals both inside and outside the agency."

"This milestone anniversary is an opportunity to reflect on what we, at DCMA, have done to continually adapt to the ever-changing landscape and environment while keeping focus on our mission of providing the warfighters with the means to fulfill their important mission," he added.

Rickey Weigel, a quality assurance specialist in the Central Region based in Michigan, joined the DCMA team in 2006.

"I have heard many naysayers throughout the years saying DCMA would not last, yet here we are still providing an invaluable service as the independent eyes and ears for our country. I feel this independence is the real reason we exist. We do not work for the buying commands. We work for our nation and support our buying commands by ensuring both parties uphold the contractual requirements," said Weigel. "We support our nation and the warfighter. What we do makes a difference."

## History of Change

Over the years, these three DCMA employees have seen many changes. Harris said one of the major changes during the last two decades has been a decrease in the workforce. Another change has been how the agency approaches contractor surveillance. In the past, agency employees were more hands-on, and Harris said the approach was more transactional, whereas now, employees review and embrace more data.

"There has been a massive increase in our ability to gather and analyze data across the entire spectrum of our operations and those of our contractors," said Harris. "We are extremely data rich and getting more so all the time. Our business tools have become more capable over time as well."

Weigel explained that the surveillance tools have expanded over the years and helped employees do their jobs more effectively and efficiently.

"Our policies, tools and training have each made significant changes throughout the years. Quality surveillance planning was almost nonexistent, and now we have progressed to giving our customers live online access, which is truly remarkable," he said.

Jacobson agreed that the agency's changes have impacted how employees accomplish the DCMA mission. He has seen the agency's realignment to include regions and now back to product commodities as a part of DCMA Vision, the agency's strategic

reorganization initiative.

"As far as mission activities, I have seen us grow from an end-item focused activity to determining where best our impact can be made by emphasizing process and system-based oversight," he said. "Systems, or a more holistic approach, has helped to create a more multifunctional approach and given us the advantage of having a more unified and greater impact on contractor performance and support to the warfighter."

## Opportunities

Harris said that in addition to the agency's mission of supporting our nation's warfighters, another reason why he has stayed with the agency is the numerous opportunities for career growth. In addition to working for the Central Region, some of his career assignments include working with DCMA International in the United Kingdom and DCMA Bell Textron in Texas. He has been a quality assurance specialist and an industrial specialist. For Harris, most of his assignments have been in engineering or program integrator roles. He spent nine years as a supervisor in two CMOs, DCMA Bell Textron and DCMA Europe, and three years as a tech director at DCMA Bell Textron.

"I've been doing a variety of technical positions for a long time," Harris said. "The term 'career' for me is a little bit of a misnomer because I've never really pursued a career path. I've

In 1969, Apollo 11, propelled by a Saturn V rocket, was the first mission to land astronauts on the moon. (NASA photo)

pursued what looked interesting. But DCMA has given me opportunities to do that, and in my case, especially with multiple international assignments. But there are so many opportunities to develop and grow, and for those who wish to follow a more focused and purposeful career path, there are many developmental opportunities. You just need to look for them."



1921

The Army awards a contract to the Boeing Aircraft Company to produce 200 MB-3A airplanes. The Army Air Service (the Army's air arm) established its first peacetime in plant inspection office in 1921.



1940-1945

World War II brings high demand for contract support. In 1942, the new War Production Board negotiates prices, ensures management-union cooperation, and opens war production jobs to women, African Americans, and other minorities.



1948

Congress passes the Armed Service Procurement Act, which attempts to standardize purchasing methods for all military departments. This leads to the Armed Services Procurement Regulation, which becomes the backbone for defense contracting over the next 30 years.

1962

Defense spending rapidly increases due to the Cold War's missile and space programs, and contracts become more complicated and expensive. In 1962, 200 defense procurement officials from government and industry meet in Williamsburg, Virginia, to establish uniform field contract management.



1964

The Secretary of Defense consolidates the contract management offices of the armed services, creating Defense Contract Administration Services.



Landing the Saturn Launch Vehicle on the moon involves the cooperation of more than 500 contractors and millions of parts and components.

1969



“We do have an important mission that you can be proud of,” added Harris. “Excellence will be rewarded, and there are opportunities not only to grow but to further your career, but that may involve change and some stretching outside of your comfort zone.”

Weigel has seen career growth as well. In addition to his current position, he has been an emergency essential deployable quality assurance specialist, first-level supervisor, and Quality Assurance Group director. Weigel deployed three times to Afghanistan and did a tour in Iraq. He was a first-level supervisor in Grand Rapids, Michigan, for 11 years, which began as its own office and then became a tertiary office of DCMA Cleveland. He later became a Quality Assurance Group director for DCMA Detroit in 2014.

“I’ve had the opportunity to deploy to Afghanistan and Iraq, become a certified quality technician, participate in rotational assignments with the Central Region, work many integrated product teams with DCMA headquarters, and pursue countless hours of training. I don’t understand how anyone doesn’t love their job with DCMA,” Weigel stated. “We have awesome benefits, unbelievable flexibilities and unlimited opportunities.”

Jacobson has also worked at various DCMA organizations besides the Central Region staff. Some of those locations include DCMA Denver, DCMA Chicago, and DCMA International, based in Vicenza, Italy.



— Michael Harris, a DCMA quality assurance engineer based in Texas

*“DCMA’s mission is important, and I believe in it. It’s always been satisfying and challenging to work directly with the contractors and customers to work through problems when necessary and ultimately to see the systems successfully delivered.”*

my position, which gave me the ability to properly perform my duties. I have had many excellent mentors, who have helped me along the way, and other opportunities to develop my technical skills, leadership skills, and administrative and mentoring skills.”

“The opportunities to serve, learn and develop within DCMA can be numerous,” added Jacobson. “There are areas of professional and personal growth in each area of responsibility and even the occasion to adjust your assignment or functional position to better fit your skill set. Everyone has the opportunity to better understand the mission of those who serve and defend our nation. DCMA is also very supportive of the individual and family and provides opportunities for a great work-life balance.”

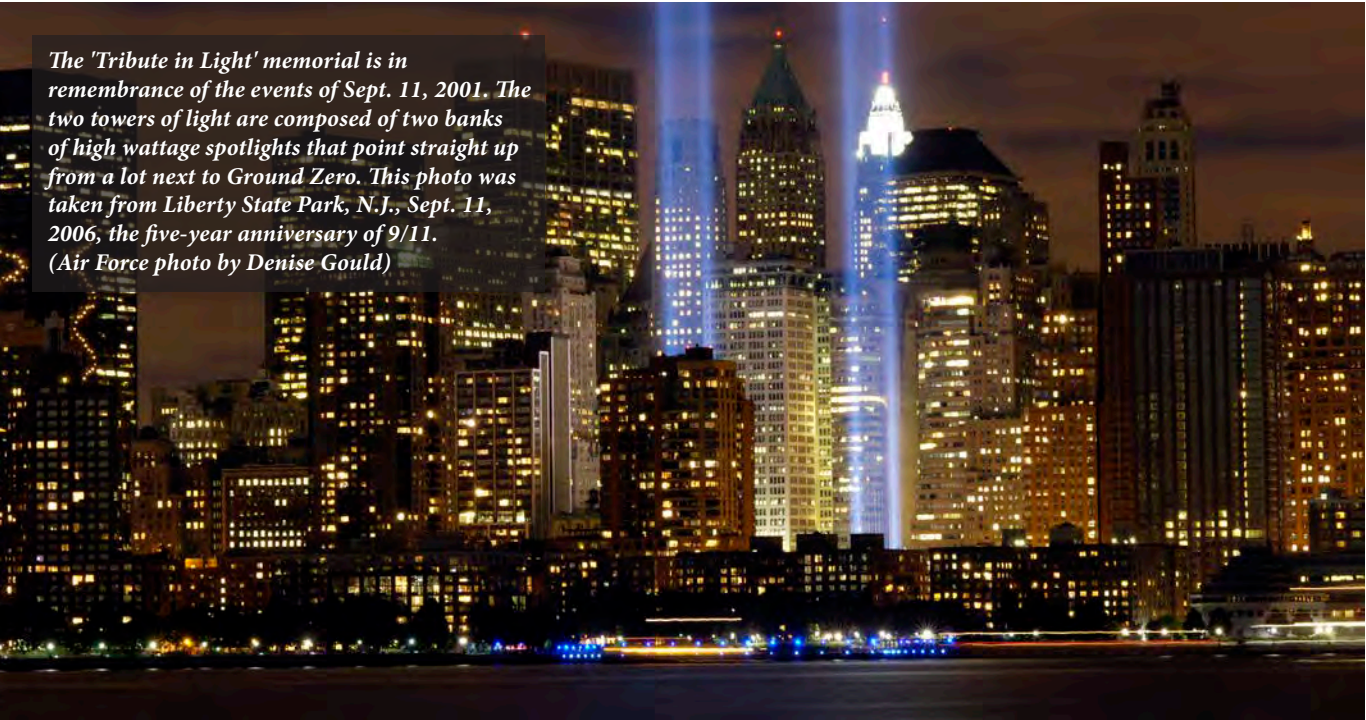
**DCMA Vision**

DCMA Vision will change how the agency does business in the next 25 years as agency leaders and employees will enhance the customer service and business tools and processes to support its customers.

“I feel that DCMA Vision has the potential to help streamline the agency’s approach to our mission,” said Jacobson, who is open to seeking a new leadership role within the agency. “It will be a challenge based on the many changes and time that it will take for the effort, but it will be helpful in the end to support mission requirements. It’s a chance to be introspective and determine what is truly value added and what we need to change or adapt based on our current mission and available resources.”

Harris looks forward to working at DCMA as the agency embraces change. He said he wants to continue learning new skills for his job and look for additional opportunities to use his current skill set and experience.

“DCMA’s mission is important, and I believe in it,” said Harris. “It’s always been



The 'Tribute in Light' memorial is in remembrance of the events of Sept. 11, 2001. The two towers of light are composed of two banks of high wattage spotlights that point straight up from a lot next to Ground Zero. This photo was taken from Liberty State Park, N.J., Sept. 11, 2006, the five-year anniversary of 9/11. (Air Force photo by Denise Gould)

satisfying and challenging to work directly with the contractors and customers to work through problems when necessary and ultimately to see the systems successfully delivered.”

“We get to be involved in many different aspects of that effort at the point of execution,” Harris elaborated. “And this is one of the best things about working for DCMA: the broad scope of the contract management mission and the chance to be involved in a variety of technical areas and with different systems and hardware. It isn’t difficult to branch out if you’re willing to look. If you’re bored working for DCMA, you’re not trying very hard.”

Weigel emphasized that DCMA is a great place to work, and he is proud to celebrate the agency’s 25th anniversary with his colleagues.

“DCMA is absolutely the best place I have ever worked,” he said. “There are job and training opportunities, flexible work schedules, and stability. I plan to continue being a part of shaping and influencing what the DCMA of tomorrow will become.”

“We accept everything from nuts and bolts to tanks, airplanes, and satellites,” added Weigel. “I have visited the largest corporations down to one-person shops, who are all supporting our nation. You can be a remote traveling quality assurance specialist, a supervisor in a large city, an internal audit team member, a policy writer, or anything you can think of because DCMA offers numerous opportunities. DCMA leaders allow us to give input and make changes that make the agency a better place — this agency is truly what you make of it.”

1989-1990 1990-1991 2000 2001 2014 2023

Defense Management Review Decision 916 recommends consolidating virtually all defense contract administration (except shipbuilding and ammunition plants). The Defense Contract Management Command is established in 1990.



Operation Desert Storm: 76 U.S. contractors deployed — at the same time as the first U.S. troops — providing maintenance, technical assistance and equipment support.



Defense Contract Management Agency established as an independent organization to complete the recommendations of Defense Management Report Decision 916.

The attacks on Sept. 11, 2001, result in U.S. government declaring “War on Terrorism.” The Tribute in Light memorial (pictured above) honors the citizens who lost their lives in the World Trade Center attacks. The two towers of light point straight up from an adjacent lot.



DCMA participates in Operational Contract Support Joint Exercise 2014 and ceases DCMA Iraq operations. The purpose of OCSJX-14, was to train and assess operational contract support capabilities against a variety of exercise scenarios.



DCMA launches a comprehensive three-year plan to evolve its organizational structure from a regional alignment to a systems-support order. DCMA Vision’s aggressive realignment champions the agency’s warfighter-support mission to better serve U.S. military assets.





# DCMA pilots manage global delivery mission

By Jason Kaneshiro, PAO

For decades, the U.S. military has deployed its helicopters across the globe in scenarios ranging from disaster relief to combat operations. Their impact and strategic role have become so operationally ingrained it may be difficult for a modern observer to imagine U.S. military operations without the sound of rapid-spinning rotors.

Ensuring these rotary wing aircraft are delivered safely to the military services is a task the Defense Contract Management Agency routinely performs.

While “routine” may imply that there is little to no variation in how the task is performed, the realities of aircraft delivery are complex and vital.

All aircraft flight operations are susceptible to changes that result from unpredictable weather and aircraft maintenance abnormalities, said Navy Cmdr. Jeffrey Thomas, director of Flight Operations and executive officer for DCMA Sikorsky Aircraft.

“As a result, planned travel and aircraft ferry operations are an extremely fluid effort and, oftentimes, result in unplanned changes in pre-approved destinations and the duration of stay at various locations,” Thomas said.

DCMA pilots conduct government flight acceptance and delivery flight operations of government-procured aircraft to Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps and foreign military service units, Thomas explained.

These deliveries often require agency pilots to fly long distances across the country and the world.

“Due to the high probability of variations in over-the-horizon deliveries, there have been multiple occurrences where pre-

approved travel arrangements have required modification in real-time,” Thomas said.

Once an aircraft is bought by the responsible military service and the DD Form 250 is signed, it is slated for delivery to a receiving unit, he said.

“A DCMA team of two pilots and one crew chief is designated for the delivery, and amongst them, a delivery plan is developed, and a Defense Travel System authorization is created for each member using a line of accounting from the branch of service responsible for the aircraft,” Thomas said.

“Aircrews depart and fly the delivery aircraft from origin to destination, usually for five to eight hours per day, over the course of one to three days until ultimate arrival at the destination where custody of the aircraft is turned over to the receiving military service, and the delivery team then commercially travels back to their origin.”

Orchestrating the movement of aviators and aircraft is the responsibility of the Mission Support Office function at DCMA contract management offices.

Megan Pryor, a management analyst and the lead defense travel administrator for DCMA Sikorsky Aircraft, is one of those personnel who plays a key administrative role in aircraft delivery.

“I must ensure our military aviators have their DTS profiles up-to-date and that the crews have active government travel charge cards,” Pryor said. “Aircraft deliveries are cross-organizationally funded, meaning that they are not funded by DCMA but directly by the buying command, program office or military service.”

Pryor validates that DCMA aviators have access to the correct line of accounting in the travel system and that the routing list for reviewing and approving the DTS

authorization is correct.

Additionally, Pryor said she maintains visibility in DTS to ensure the authorizations are not stuck in the approval process, and she is able to monitor the review and approval status.

As most deliveries have three aircrew members, they try to travel together for crew integrity and to save on transportation expenses to the maximum extent possible, Pryor said.

“If I couldn’t accomplish my duties administering travel, there is the potential for a delay in the delivery of the aircraft or a delay in the length of the travel, which could result in increased costs for the receiving military services,” she said.

Common challenges are working on aircraft delivery with very short notice or dealing with last-minute crew member changes and approvals.

“I must ensure all travelers have approved orders before they depart,” Pryor said. “Communication is key. Sometimes, I know about the delivery a week in advance, and sometimes, it is on very short notice. With each and every aircraft delivery, weather and aircraft maintenance play significant roles before the start of the delivery and throughout the duration of the delivery mission.”

Pryor maintains availability to assist throughout the delivery process.

“I communicate with our military aviators as needed while they are on travel,” Pryor said. “Depending on the circumstances, I will sometimes contact the Travel Management Office to assist with flight changes, such as changing ticketing information for their return commercial flights.”

Thomas said he

An MH-60R Sea Hawk helicopter from the Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron-72 takes off from the flight deck of the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Harry S. Truman in the Atlantic Ocean, Aug. 10, 2024. (Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Hunter Day)



DCMA personnel and aircrew deliver the first MH-60R helicopter to the South Korean navy, strengthening their capabilities and enhancing interoperability with U.S. forces. (DCMA photo)



recognizes and appreciates Pryor's dedication to DCMA's aviators, which she demonstrates by responding to them at all hours, across multiple time zones and working to rectify travel issues.

"Also, due to variability of aircraft readiness, she is highly adept at 'short-fused' and last-minute processing, thereby ensuring mission capability even under the most restrictive of timelines," Thomas said. "If Ms. Pryor did not perform her responsibilities at the remarkable standard that she has established, the pilot offices and military service's accounting offices she supports would undoubtedly show serious deficiencies in the execution of travel coordination."

Because delivery is only one component of the DCMA aviator's mission, it is essential that travel is processed efficiently.

"In addition, the processing of completed travel, and the accounting of it, is of major importance not only to the individual but also to the respective military services that allocated the funds to support the delivery," Thomas said. "Ms. Pryor is essential to ensuring all stakeholder's priorities are satisfied."

Along with remaining mindful of her

responsibilities to be a good custodian of taxpayer dollars, Pryor said she focuses on aircrew safety.

"The safety of our military aviators is my number one priority," Pryor said. "I want to ensure they can focus on the aircraft delivery and not have to worry about travel system details or worry about making commercial flight changes while they are in the air flying an aircraft."

Pryor said the aircrews are truly amazing for their flexibility, ability to adapt and ability to overcome adversity to accomplish their mission.

"They could encounter severe weather patterns, they could be delayed or grounded due to aircraft maintenance issues, or a crew member may occasionally fall ill," Pryor said. "They are all dedicated to the mission of delivering the aircraft while still remaining conscious of costs while traveling on duty."

However, not all surprises that can occur during a delivery flight are negative in nature. During a recent mission to deliver the first MH-60R helicopter for the South Korean navy, Navy Lt. Austin Schumacher, chief of flight operations and the aviation safety officer for DCMA Lockheed Martin Owego, which falls under DCMA Sikorsky

Aircraft, had an unexpected encounter.

"This was the most rewarding delivery for me for a few reasons," Schumacher said. "It is the first MH-60R accepted by South Korea, marking a new chapter in their navy. It is also my first time meeting the foreign military pilots of an MH-60R I delivered."

Schumacher recalled when he showed up at the Fleet Replacement Squadron to learn to fly the MH-60R.

"It was a very exciting time, so I think it was special that we got to take part in that excitement with the (South Korean) pilots," Schumacher said. "To put into perspective how exciting this was, when we were ferrying the aircraft to North Island, California, we landed in Des Moines, Iowa, for gas. As we were waiting in the fixed base operator, a civilian pilot, who just landed, walked in."

Schumacher said the civilian pilot immediately approached them to ask about the helicopter. She was Korean and recognized the decals and text on the side of the aircraft.

"We told her that the aircraft was bound for California to train South Korean pilots, and she lit up, shook all our hands while saying thank you," he said. "So, the big takeaway for me was that this was exciting."

# Section 508 compliance plan seeks max access, usability

By Misha King, PAO

The Defense Contract Management Agency Information Technology Directorate hosted a two-day Section 508 Fielding Awareness Conference in 2024 to share knowledge and implement a plan to increase digital accessibility agency-wide through Section 508 compliance.

Over 360 stakeholders heard subject matter experts from DCMA, the Department of Defense, the General Services Administration, the Department of Homeland Security and the U.S. Access Board share information and best practices for ensuring information and communication technology, or ICT, is accessible to all individuals. The presentations helped attendees better understand accessibility and compliance in preparation for their roles in executing the Section 508 Program Management Office's fielding plan.

Antonio Boston, DCMA's former\* digital accessibility officer and Section 508 PMO manager, said attendees explored important accessibility topics across the agency and in the federal space.

"The knowledge and strategies we discussed will undoubtedly have a profound impact on our continued efforts to create a more accessible digital space for our employees and external audience," he said.

Karen Schultheis, DCMA's chief information officer, said events like this fielding awareness conference contribute to the agency's workforce in achieving the Defense Department's mission.

"DCMA's Section 508 strategy provides a structured approach for improving accessibility to our digital content," said Schultheis. "It's critically important that all employees have access to the digital workplace, maximizing workforce effectiveness. Our ultimate objective is to execute DCMA's mission for our customers by ensuring the entire workforce is fully integrated within the agency and across the Department of Defense."

Jen Haggerty, DOD's digital accessibility officer, explained Office of Management and Budget Memorandum M-23-22, which outlines the requirements to make websites and digital services accessible to people of different abilities. She also discussed how OMB M-24-08 outlines performance



The General Services Administration is tasked under Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act to provide technical assistance to help federal agencies comply with requirements. (Courtesy photo)

measures departments and agencies should use when monitoring and evaluating IT programs and resources.

"The federal government serves people of all abilities," Haggerty said. "Agencies must strive from the start to maximize access and usability so the widest possible range of team members may reach and interact with the government through its websites and digital services."

During his fielding plan presentation, Boston said DCMA's 508 posture has improved 67% over the past five years pursuant to OMB's evaluation criteria. While this indicates a significant increase, Boston said the fielding plan seeks to boost accessibility compliance agency-wide using a top-down approach. As part of the strategy, DCMA's commands and directorates appointed information resource managers to coordinate with the headquarters PMO team and implement the plan locally.

"I was moved by the attendees' passion and commitment to push the boundaries of what's possible in digital accessibility," said Boston. "Their dedication to this cause will undoubtedly lead to significant improvements in the agency's digital accessibility."

Conference attendees also participated in workshops and expert-led sessions to learn effective strategies for evaluating and remediating websites and software applications for accessibility compliance. Bill O'Brien, the PMO team's IT program

specialist who tracks the agency's document compliance, said the conference provided insights into each DCMA command's specific Section 508 responsibilities to ensure all employees are well-informed about maintaining accessibility compliance.

"This understanding is vital for fostering a culture of accountability within the organization," he said.

Haggerty praised DCMA for undertaking Section 508 compliance with a methodology not seen in any other DOD agency.

"This is the first I've heard of a DOD component actually having a structured plan for addressing its digital content," she said. "They are using a forward-thinking approach to strategizing document evaluation, remediation and coordinating with fielding commands to manage the heavy task of remediating millions of agency documents."

Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a federal law that requires federal agencies to ensure people with disabilities have equal access to information and data through Information and Communication Technology, which includes technology, online training and websites. The law was amended in 1998 and is part of the Federal Acquisition Regulation.

*\*Editor's note: JaVon Warren and Samuel Gutema of the DCMA Section 508 Program Management Office contributed to the writing of this article. As of publication, William O'Brien is DCMA's acting digital accessibility officer and Section 508 PMO manager.*





## Stephen Matoesian, lead QA engineer

By Tonya Johnson, PAO

My name is Stephen Matoesian, and I am a lead quality assurance engineer at DCMA Boeing St. Louis in Missouri. My job duties include working to support multiple weapon system programs while also mentoring and training other quality assurance engineers. We cover not just the in-plant work but all the issues, such as nonconformances and repairs at sub-tier suppliers as well.

My current role is a dual role in which I use both my quality system experience and technical background to make informed decisions. For example, I use my previous experience to evaluate a contractor's proposed repair dispositions. If a proposed repair disposition is not clear, then the operator at the sub-tier supplier may damage a part. The object is not only to generate data collection and analysis reports, but to provide actionable data that helps drive contractor surveillance.

Some of the great things about working at my location include seeing the variety of products we manage. My contract management office oversees both aircraft and weapon systems contracts. This has exposed me to large long-term aircraft contracts with one or two deliveries a month and to smaller weapon system contracts that have hundreds of deliveries a month. These

products vary in scale, production rate, technical complexity, contract size and customer. This has allowed me to have an in-depth view of different products that are critical to the warfighter and Department of Defense.

I am happy that I am part of a cross-functional team, and I work with many quality assurance specialists. This gives me additional insight into the contractor's data and has made it easier for me to be on the shop floor with them during inspection. Since we're on the same team, we work closely together to see if maintenance and reliability in the field could be impacted by nonconformance.

I have been a part of the DCMA team for eight years. I like working at DCMA because there are opportunities to develop my skills for advancement, and I can be successful in performing my job. I am happy I have had the opportunity to learn about new areas, such as developing robotic drilling machines and electronic hardware processing.

I would never have been exposed to these areas if I still worked at my previous jobs. So, while we perform contractor oversight at DCMA, there are opportunities to learn about new areas.

It's commonly said that DCMA's biggest asset is its people, and, as cliché

as it is, I believe that's true. My mentors and peers at DCMA have made my experience both enjoyable and gratifying. When every day starts to feel like Groundhog Day, the camaraderie I have with my team and co-workers helps keep my morale high.

DCMA is important to America's warfighters because we help deliver quality products to the warfighters as fast as contractually possible.

The world of weapon systems maintains a high tempo, which requires us to maintain the ability to make well-informed decisions quickly. A product delivered quickly is only good if it can meet the warfighter's need. For example, a guided bomb with the wrong software does not help the warfighter. Good quality is good business, and DCMA's presence helps to ensure that.

DCMA has changed over the years. I think the biggest changes will come as the agency restructures and focuses more on data and process surveillance. I have been lucky to work with great coworkers at DCMA, and I'm sure that will continue.

My future career goals include continuing to grow my skills and advance within the agency. I also want to continue to mentor others to help them grow and advance in their careers. Helping people advance in their careers, whether it is within DCMA or not, is a personal goal for me.



*"I feel like DCMA's mission is critical to the warfighter because we provide contract management and quality assurance surveillance to help ensure all military equipment meets contract requirements."*

- Pashion Gray-Curry, Headquarters human resources specialist

*"Without this agency, our warfighters would not have the equipment they need. We are the best at ensuring delivery of what was agreed upon, and we are experts at providing excellent customer service."*

- Ryan Baylon, DCMA South aerospace engineer



## My DCMA showcases the agency's experienced and dedicated workforce and highlights what being part of the national defense team means to them.



*"We are the silent guardians. We ensure the safety, needs and well-being of America's bravest are met while they defend our nation. Our work is more than just paperwork and checklists — it is accountability and civic duty."*

- Kendra Barnard, DCMA South administrative contracting officer

*"No other agency provides the contract administrative support DCMA does on a global scale. The acquisition oversight DCMA offers enhances the sustainment of the armed forces, who risk it all every day. DCMA is unequivocally the vanguard of support for the warfighter."*

- Stephan Delatour, DCMA Northeast lead quality assurance specialist





# San Antonio extends aircraft service life

*Service life modifications bolster efficiency, save money and ensure operational readiness*

By Elizabeth Szoke, PAO

Aircraft Integrated Maintenance Operations San Antonio’s mission demands and celebrates excellence within its aircraft sustainment role.

Defense Contract Management Agency’s AIMO San Antonio team performs overhaul, maintenance, modification, and repair operations and contractor logistics support. Their dedication ensures safety, operational lethality and mission capability, and when dealing with aircraft designed to project battlefield superiority, their home front support impacts global priorities.



San Antonio revives aircraft to ensure operational readiness DCMA’s Aircraft Integrated Maintenance Operations San Antonio command team celebrates the final career flight, also known as a “Fini Flight,” of Navy Cmdr. Michael McLaughlin’s career in San Antonio, May 29, 2024. (DCMA courtesy photo)

upgrades to extend their original service life.

“MRO facilities are crucial for validating the continued airworthiness and safety of aircraft,” said Sonny Gomez, an AIMO San Antonio government flight representative. “We are able to provide a range of services, from routine inspections and preventative maintenance to complex repairs and component overhauls.”

The Texas-based AIMO team conducts more than 300 line-item checks per aircraft, ensuring each aircraft meets safety and performance standards.

“These checks and modifications are critical,” said Gomez. “For example, if a F/A-18 has completed its original programmed lifespan, the SLM allows us to modernize it and keep it flying safely and efficiently providing both cost-savings to the taxpayer and operational readiness for our troops.”

AIMO San Antonio works closely with contractors on the F/A-18 SLM since the program

began it 2019. They have since delivered 42 Super Hornets, extending the aircrafts’ lifespan from 6,000 to 12,000 flight hours, effectively doubling their service life. The SLM checklist includes functional flight checks prior to delivery, which requires pilots to fly the aircraft, take notes and provide feedback to the quality team.

“Having a DCMA aircrew piloting the aircraft adds a personal touch,” said Andrew Johnson, AIMO San Antonio’s F/A-18 and F-15 quality supervisor. “You get to know them and that responsibility for their safety becomes even more personal.”

From call signs to unit logos, personalization can play a large role in the military pilot community and San Antonio is no different. The AIMO San Antonio team once surprised a former DCMA pilot with a water salute to commemorate his final military flight, traditionally known as a “Fini Flight.” This long-standing custom honors pilots who conclude their aviation careers by conducting a water salute on the flight line.

“It was a very bittersweet moment for me, but a great place to have that flight with a great team supporting me,” said former DCMA pilot, Navy Cmdr. Michael McLaughlin, who has since returned to the fleet as an air operations officer onboard the aircraft carrier USS George H. W. Bush (CVN 77) in a non-flying capacity.

McLaughlin’s final flight was a SLM functional check on the F/A-18 Block III Super Hornet, adding to over 2,500 logged flight hours during his Naval career. His aviation experience included training and operational missions before McLaughlin joined AIMO San Antonio. At DCMA,



A Navy F/A-18 Super Hornet, assigned to the Harry S. Truman Carrier Strike Group’s Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 136, flies a mission over the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility, March 2, 2025. (Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Jackson Manske)

he completed more than 28 functional checks, inputs and delivery flights. McLaughlin piloted aircraft through different lifecycle stages during his time in service.

“This was my first time in an acquisition environment, which was a very maintenance-focused and detail-oriented type of flying,” McLaughlin said. “I took a lot of pride in knowing that the quality assurance team and I were the last ones to touch these jets to ensure they were fully operational before we sent them back to the fleet.”

There are currently two Navy F/A-18 pilots, and a naval flight

officer assigned to AIMO San Antonio. They work closely with a DCMA Boeing St. Louis flight team, pilot contractors, and unit aircrews when conducting functional flight checks and delivering aircraft back to the military services.

“DCMA’s mission has a direct impact on our work out here in the fleet,” McLaughlin said, reflecting on his time with the agency. “Their role in inspecting the quality of contractor-produced parts, supplies, weapons and materials ensures that we in the fleet receive what we need at the standards we expect. In combat

we need our weapons, aircraft, sensors and defenses to operate ‘up-to-spec’ every time. DCMA’s enforcement of those contractual requirements are critical to our mission success.”

AIMO San Antonio’s team members delivered more than 2,000 aircraft over the past 25 years. In fiscal year 2024, the team flew a total of 126 military flight missions and almost 300 total flight hours.

“These numbers are inclusive to all programs we have on site,” Gomez said. “Regardless of the program, the goal is the same: we maintain, repair, and overhaul aircraft to perform future

missions on time and at cost.”

The F/A-18 is just one out of eight major programs AIMO San Antonio supports, to include Air Force One.

“While the executive fleet is high visibility, it is just one of eight programs onsite that are of high strategic value for the nation,” said Air Force Col. Joann Kenneally, AIMO San Antonio’s commander. “This team takes a lot of pride and responsibility overseeing each aircraft as they come in and out of this site. I’m extremely proud of the team’s diligence in our mission and how everyone takes care of one another.”





# Speaking Defense

## IT unveils acronym translator to break business barriers

By Misha King, PAO

As a result of a recent in-house Information Technology contest, Defense Contract Management Agency employees now have access to a business dictionary-like reference tool to assist them with key terms directly related to the missions of the agency and the Department of Defense.

The DCMA Information Dictionary received second place at the internal IT Training Summit Innovation Contest Aug. 15, 2024, which encouraged IT professionals to demonstrate their abilities to drive innovation and continuous improvement within the agency.

The winning DCMA IT Enterprise Architecture team comprised of Joseph Lowe, data architect and team lead; Sabrina Francis, business architect; Larry Hairston, technology architect; and Keith Young, security architect.

The team used artificial intelligence to capture publicly releasable policy information to develop the dictionary as a dashboard for agency use. Two of the main goals were creating a single location to review key terms and the ability to quickly reference and understand unfamiliar terms and DCMA directives.

“We used a Power BI report that resembles a business dictionary consisting of seven reports that enable users to filter and view official DCMA, DOD, Federal Acquisition Regulation, and National Institute of Standards and Technology terms, definitions, acronyms and references,” said Lowe. “We manually extracted data over a period of six months from over 660 documents including more than 28

thousand rows of data that defines over two thousand unique terms and acronyms, and nearly two thousand unique references.”

Henry Chambers, DCMA IT Strategy and Planning Division’s chief enterprise architect, said this dashboard is the first effort of its kind to list all these values sourced directly from policy.

“The ability to filter terminology across relationships between capabilities and policies makes this a powerful and comprehensive tool,” he said. “The dictionary has already been accessed 400 times over the past month despite it not being widely publicized.”

Each member of the EA team had specific roles in bringing the dictionary to life. As the business architect, some of Francis’ tasks included assisting in identifying any disconnects in policy and providing context for the definitions of “operational activity,” “activities” and “processes” relative to enterprise architecture. She also validated that the product could assist agency stakeholders if taxonomy questions arise.

“It sounds complicated, but the dashboard is actually very user-friendly,” said Francis. “For example, you can pick a filter on the left-hand navigation such as ‘DCMA Acronyms’ and then search the words in alphabetic order. Let’s say you pick the term ‘ACQDemo’ from the list. The filter will show you all the different possible names for that acronym plus any related capabilities and policies related to the term. You can bookmark your searches and share them as well.”

As team lead, Lowe set the goals for the project and worked closely with his team to ensure the gathered information met their collective requirements. His specific tasks

*“The ability to filter terminology across relationships between capabilities and policies makes this a powerful and comprehensive tool.”*

— Henry Chambers, DCMA IT Strategy and Planning Division’s chief enterprise architect

included developing the report using Power BI, a business intelligence platform designed to help analyze and visualize raw data into actionable information. He also extracted and organized the terms, definitions, acronyms and references from DCMA policy.

“Ontologies define a common vocabulary shared across the agency,” said Lowe. “The combination of the information used by the business capabilities and their relationships comprise the enterprise ontology. I’m proud to say our approach to documenting organizational information for enterprise architectural purposes will be presented to DOD, other federal agencies and industry in the coming months.”

Those who have served under DOD in any capacity are no strangers to acronyms and abbreviations. Andy Bradshaw, DCMA’s Total Force Directorate Policy Branch supervisor, said he and his team are the keepers of TF’s policy issuances, so they need

ready access to acronyms and definitions.

“We used an internal Excel spreadsheet to track a lot of these things before this dictionary was developed,” said Bradshaw, who also served 23 years in the Marine Corps. “There are so many DOD and DCMA unique acronyms, and new ones are always being developed that we’re often asking, ‘what does XXXX stand for?’ Then we go on a rabbit hunt trying to figure it out, and at times, there is more than one meaning. The DCMA Information Dictionary saves us a lot of time and frustration in determining acronyms and their definitions. It’s a great tool for us, and it will be a great asset for new agency employees as well.”

Hairston, who has over 11 years of experience in enterprise architecture, said although the dictionary is a great tool as-is, he does foresee improvements and additions in the future.

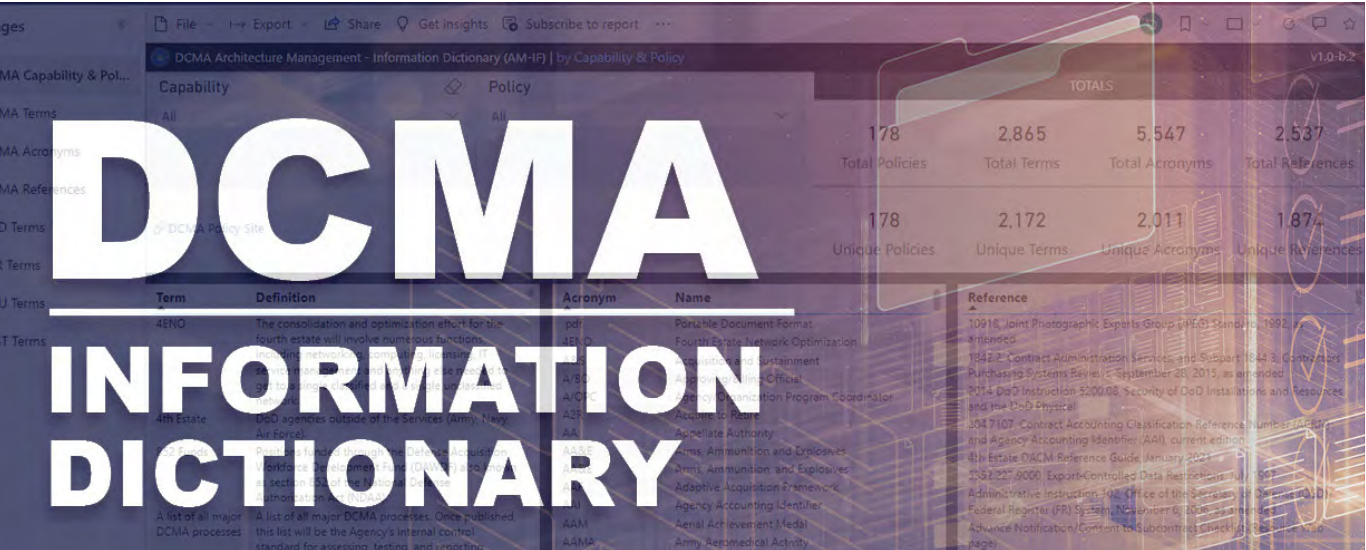
“The goal is to unify the language across

all agency policies and procedural manuals so everyone speaks the same language,” he said. “We are constantly seeking ways of improving communication across the agency by engaging in conversations, learning as much as we can and sharing our knowledge.”

From a security perspective, Young said it’s imperative to prioritize the information dictionary’s security architecture to fully realize its benefits while minimizing risks.

“This dashboard is a prime example of how we can communicate the definition of cybersecurity practices like zero trust and identity, credentialing and access management while maintaining a consistent understanding of key terms and acronyms used across cybersecurity architecture, the agency and DOD,” he said.

Lowe said the next step is to automate the addition of new terms, definitions, acronyms and references for policy updates to ensure the dictionary remains current.





# Land Systems launch marks storied history

By Thomas Perry, PAO

Army Maj. Jared Ryan serves as the deputy for the Engineering, Manufacturing and Software Group at Defense Contract Management Agency Land Systems. Ryan received his commission from Army Officer Candidate School in November 2010 as an engineer officer.

After serving in various company leadership positions from platoon leader to company commander as an engineer, he served as a senior route clearance observer and trainer coach at the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, California. During that assignment, he decided to transfer to acquisitions and eventually landed at DCMA Detroit.

DCMA Land Systems replaced DCMA Detroit in June 2024 during an agency realignment. DCMA Detroit was a regional contract management office, and the new designation recognizes the organizational focus on ground combat and tactical systems wheeled and tracked vehicles.

Prior to his time at the agency, Ryan served within the Army Watercraft Systems, part of Program Executive Office Combat Support and Combat Service Support, focusing his efforts on the service life extension program for Landing Craft Utility-2000 and the prototype development of the Maneuver Support Vessel (Light). When working on the prototype, he learned about the agency from two DCMA employees assigned to the project.

After recognizing the value those professionals added, Ryan decided to join DCMA to further discover the agency’s capabilities and provide insight to his counterparts across the military services.

**Q: What is your biggest surprise since joining the agency?**

A: How underutilized DCMA is by the PEOs. When I was in the PEO, I chalked up my lack of knowledge of DCMA due to me being new to the acquisition community. Since I have been here, I’ve been fortunate to meet a lot of my peers who work in various PEOs or contracting jobs, but none of them really understand what DCMA does outside of having the administrative contracting officer or signing DD 250s. It has been

rewarding to educate my peers on agency competencies so they can apply the lessons I’ve learned to help their programs.

**Q: What is your greatest accomplishment during your time with the agency?**

A: When we were still Detroit, the software and program integrator team lead was selected for a promotion and took a job with Central Region. This left his position unfilled. We knew the team lead position was going away because of agency realignments, so leadership did not want to promote someone into the position only to have it disappear when we became Land Systems. I was initially hesitant to take over the software assignment because it is not a functional area I have a lot of experience with. Ultimately, I served as acting team lead for about eight months, which really forced me to learn a lot about software. It also gave me a great appreciation for what my civilian peers went through daily. I am grateful for the team of software specialists and program integrators I led as they all had more time in DCMA than I did. It was a rewarding experience.

**Q: How has your time with the agency impacted your professional development?**

A: As an assistant program manager, I lost track of the big picture. I knew my one program and its phase within the acquisition lifecycle extremely well. But outside of that one program and the Engineer and Manufacturing Development Phase, I knew very little about the rest of the acquisition career field. Land Systems has programs across all aspects of the acquisition life cycle, I’ve been fortunate in that the program integrators and program support team members on these programs have spent a lot of their time educating me on their programs and helping me understand how they fit into each phase.

This is not just in the Program Assessment Report, or PAR, reviews either, but throughout the month as common themes emerge across programs or contractors, and as I try to tie impacts together and figure out second- and third-order effects, everyone I speak with

is extremely knowledgeable and willing to spend time working together to better support the programs.

**Q: What is Lands Systems’ mission?**

A: Land Systems’ mission is to provide contract administration support to our 22 commercial and government entities while serving as the independent eyes and ears of DOD through our technical surveillance. We accomplish this by having personnel in plants daily and working with the contractor to provide a quality product to the warfighter and relevant acquisition insight to the buying commands and the program executive offices.

**Q: How has the transition from DCMA Detroit to DCMA Land Systems worked?**

A: We spent a year working on the structure and portfolio of DCMA Land Systems, while our office brought people and programs together from offices in Chicago, Dallas and Huntsville, Alabama, we worked most closely with Dayton, Ohio. DCMA Dayton became DCMA Ohio River Valley the day after we became DCMA Land Systems, and they absorbed all Detroit’s geographic work — roughly 3,000 contracts and 100 people. Air Force Col. Thomas Clohessy, Jason Edem, John Zipperer and the rest of their team were instrumental in ensuring there was a smooth transition for both of our offices.

One of the biggest benefits is PEO Ground Combat Systems and PEO Combat Support and Combat Service Support — our two biggest PEOs — and Army Contracting Command-Warren are four miles down the road from our

contract management office. DCMA Land Systems Director Amy Kozlowski can talk in-person to the PEOs or meet with the program managers, PCOs or the senior contracting official.

This level of interaction provides benefits you just cannot achieve through digital or phone interactions. Likewise, our incoming director has spent time in both PEO GCS and CS&CSS. When he arrives to Land Systems, he will come over already having a personal relationship with all the major stakeholders on Detroit Arsenal.

**Q: How will this transition impact agency customers, warfighters and contractors?**

A: Customer — From speaking with the Army Contracting Command, or ACC, and the PEOs, they had good relationships with the various contract management offices they interacted with, but now they can come to Land Systems for their major program information. Having one office versus five makes it easier for them to communicate and ensures any product we deliver is consistent across their programs.

Warfighters — None, they were already receiving quality vehicles regardless of which office had the contract, no vehicle fieldings have been missed across any major program we now support since COVID-19 first hit.

Contractors — Similar to our customers in that they are dealing with one office instead of multiple, so this cuts down on the number of engagements they need to have, allowing them to spend more time and energy on production and less on administrative tasks. The people physically in the plant did not change, they just realigned to Land Systems, so the contractors and customers still maintained established working relationships.

**Q: What are some of the major programs Land Systems manages now; and what successes can the command point to within that effort?**

A: The Abrams Main Battle Tank has been a staple of DCMA Detroit/ Land Systems since our founding. The team in Lima, Ohio, continue to provide outstanding support. That program also highlights the cooperative nature within our agency as DCMA Transportation helps deploy these vehicles all over the world.

The Joint Light Tactical Vehicle program came to us from the Chicago office. The JLTV-A1 has been built by Oshkosh Defense for the past 10 years. AM General was recently awarded a 10-year contract, and they built a new facility near South Bend, Indiana, to produce the JLTV-A2 and trailers. We are expecting first deliveries in March 2025. This is a great example of why we became Land Systems as the JLTV-A2 shares a lot of the same major suppliers with our other programs. As the program support team briefs the Land Systems leadership at the monthly PAR reviews, leadership can analyze how the supply chain within the defense industrial base is impacting multiple programs.

BAE Systems has shifted a lot of its M88 family of armored recovery vehicles and Paladin Integrated Management work from a facility in York, Pennsylvania, to one in Anniston, Alabama. This is another great example of how realigning personnel to Land Systems has eliminated numerous full-time equivalents through letters of delegation between the Detroit and Huntsville offices. Now, those people work directly for DCMA Land Systems and are program-focused.

**Q: What are some of the new programs the command is excited about; and how will these programs impact battlefield performance/capability?**

A: The XM-30 Mechanized Infantry Combat Vehicle is part of the Army’s next generation combat vehicle portfolio and is replacing the Bradley Fighting Vehicle. As such, it is designed for a near-peer fight with the intent of allowing the armored brigade combat team to maneuver, engage and destroy the enemy. It is our first program to be designed in the digital engineering environment. We have already started capturing lessons learned, and as more programs in our portfolio incorporate this, we will be able to better support them.

As part of our early acquisition engagement with the XM-30 program manager, we participate in their

biweekly digital manufacturing integrated product team meetings. This is the next phase of the contract that is focused on how industry will build and test production vehicles. During this phase, we will still conduct surveillance and DD 250 vehicles, but how we accomplish these tasks are expected to change. Having that relationship with the PEO and ACC where they brought us in this early has been valuable as it allows us to start training the workforce now and start thinking about how we are going to evolve to meet these new demands.

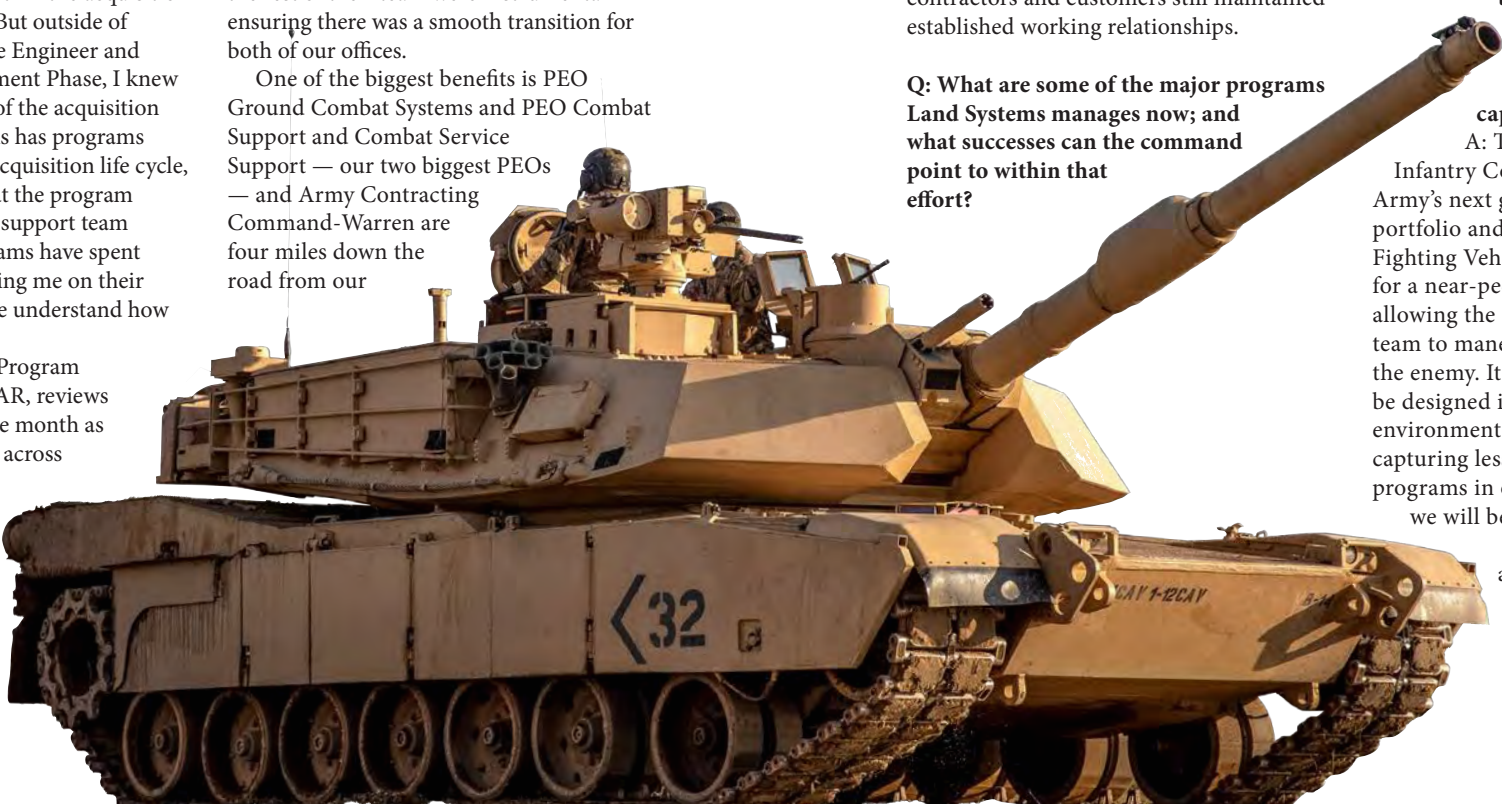
The M1E3 is a new variant of the Abrams Main Battle Tank. The intent is for it to be lighter than the current version, allowing for better performance as technological advancements are added while maintaining battlefield survivability. The JLTV-A2 will have a new engine, better fuel economy and enhanced electrical architecture that better prepares the vehicle for future technology insertions.

**Q: What is Land Systems greatest success?**

A: Our greatest achievement is the execution of contract administration services with outstanding customer engagement — all driven by our exceptional workforce of dedicated professionals. By adherence to DCMA’s mission statement, we ensure efficiency and excellence in every contract we manage. Our mission combined with our commitment to customer engagement has strengthened our relationships within the ground combat wheeled and tracked vehicle community. It enables us to understand and execute their needs effectively.

**Q: What are the challenges the command faces within its warfighter support mission?**

A: One of the biggest concerns is place of performance for work outside our current geographic footprint. As new programs come into our portfolio, we are not resourced to support if they are not in one of our current in-plant facilities. Hypothetically, if a new combat vehicle







*DCMA Land Systems supports the M10 Booker, which, pictured here, participates in a live fire demonstration to mark the conclusion of the M10 Booker Dedication Ceremony at Aberdeen Proving Ground, in Aberdeen, Md., April 18, 2024. (Army photo by Christopher Kaufmann)*

were to be built in Louisiana, we would have to have multiple full-time equivalents worth of letters of delegation with the DCMA South office or be given additional funding to hire people for in plant work.

The LODs are a concern as well as every office is operating in the same resource constrained environment. If a major supplier to multiple programs within Land Systems becomes higher risks, and we deem it necessary to increase surveillance, depending on the support required, that could put the geographically located CMO in a tough spot as they have their own internal distribution of risk they are worried about.

**Q: Who are some of the unsung heroes within the command, and how do they impact mission success?**

A: Impossible to just list a couple. The thing I've been most impressed with is, as people within the office retire or get promoted and leave, this creates additional workload within the office until a replacement can be hired. However, the budget cuts the agency has received over the past couple of years has turned what should be a person doing extra work for a couple of months into the new normal. I've seen it across all functional areas at each of our locations.

While challenging, people haven't complained because they realize their work directly impacts the warfighter, and

that overarching mission drives people. It's not just a sense of pride in their work, but it's the fact they are either prior service or have children, siblings, or even DCMA coworkers currently deployed all over the world. I'm happy to be associated with such a dedicated workforce and be able to see firsthand every day what they do to support our country.

**Q: Would you recommend active-duty service within DCMA? What advice would you give service members new to the agency?**

A: Every six months, the Army does its hiring process where people about to move interview for jobs that are becoming available. I'm on the Army team that does this for DCMA and have participated in town halls the past two years. I am grateful for this as it allows me to speak to a lot of my peers — we had 137 Army majors at our last town hall. And, it is not just in that forum, officers reach out after, and we talk one-on-one as well. I talk to them about how I am exposed to lots of programs and their acquisition lifecycles. The other main point I bring up is that the agency is good at letting a person mold their position based on the individuals' strengths and ambitions. Not every assignment has the flexibility DCMA offers. This has been one of my favorite assignments in my career, and I'm sure others would gain the same great experience.

**Q: Is there anything else you would like to add?**

A: I would like to thank everyone I have worked with during my time at DCMA, I have learned a lot the past two and a half years and its because they took time out of their day to help me. Thanks to that, my leadership — Carlos Lago and Amy Kozlowski at Land Systems, and Army Col. Kenneth Darnall at Central Region — have all been supportive of me and given me opportunities to brief senior leaders. Before he left, I had briefed former DCMA Director Army Lt. Gen. David Bassett. I've also briefed Deputy Director Sonya Ebright and Chief of Staff Cory Rosenberger multiple times. These experiences have been vital to gain a better understand of how they think and their vision for the agency. I would really encourage any commander out there to find a way to get their officers physically in the same room as DCMA Director Marine Corps Lt. Gen. G. L. Masiello or Deputy Director Ebright — even if they are not briefing leadership. I attended the Central Region Performance Review in August 2024 and just listening to Lt. Gen. Masiello and Deputy Director Ebright speak and receiving briefings from other people was truly beneficial. I am looking forward to working with DCMA functional specialists in future assignments and hope to return to the agency at some point.



*(Above) A 3rd Infantry Division Armored Multi-Purpose Vehicle drives off of a 497th Multi-Role Bridge Company, 92nd Engineer Battalion barge during a wet-gap crossing exercise on Fort Stewart's Pineview Lake in Georgia. Engineers constructed barges to move an M1A2 SEPv3 main battle tank, a Bradley infantry fighting vehicle and the AMPV across the lake. DCMA Land Systems manages the contracts for all of these vehicles. (Army photo)*

*(Left) DCMA Land Systems is at the forefront of supporting the Army's newest combat vehicle, the M10 Booker. Thomas Duffy, a quality assurance supervisor, Ward Acker, a QA specialist, and Keith Walker, a program integrator, all work on the program. (DCMA photo)*



# Quality experts evolve mission

DCMA’s quality assurance teams embrace innovation to support DOD technology, customer requests and warfighter needs

By Elizabeth Szoke, PAO

The Defense Contract Management Agency has been at the forefront of ensuring quality assurance in Department of Defense contracting for over two decades, focusing on delivering quality products to the U.S. military and its partners.

Government quality assurance, or QA, ensures contractors meet their obligations for both quality and quantity and is overseen by government QA professionals assigned to the 1910 job series.

“During my tenure as a quality assurance professional, I watched the processes change to accommodate the increasing demands of modern technology and the complexity of global defense operations,” said Dwayne Bennett, who leads the Technical Directorate's Logistics Center and formerly served as its Quality Division director. “The biggest changes began happening in response to the Defense Reform Initiative, which also led to the establishment of DCMA in 2000.”

According to the U.S. Army Acquisition Support Center, Secretary of Defense William Cohen issued the Defense Reform Initiative in 1997, which was “designed to streamline DOD’s organizational structure and business practices. The initiative centered on reforms in acquisition, logistics and financial management and led to the creation of the Defense Management Council and the Defense Reform Initiatives Office.”

Historically, quality assurance in government contracting centered on inspecting individual parts and materials following military standards. QA professionals were responsible for checking every detail, from the smallest screw to the final assembled product, ensuring it met exact specifications.

Change was on the horizon, however. A notable example involves the production of ammunition casings.

“We had staff at the ammunition plants that would stand there as they were rolling ammo off 155-millimeter Howitzer shells, and they would gauge each one to make sure

it met the quality standard,” said Bennett, who has 43 years of federal service. “We no longer have to look at 100% of the shells because we now look at how the contractor manufactures the shells.”

In the early 2000s, government QA shifted from inspecting individual parts to evaluating contractors’ entire manufacturing processes, ensuring that the systems in place consistently produce high-quality parts and products.

“We realized it was more efficient to ensure the contractor’s process was sound rather than check every single part ourselves,” Bennett explained. “This process shift enables us to catch issues before they become major defects, reducing waste and ensuring timely delivery to the warfighter.”

As the number of contracts grew and government quality assurance personnel diminished — from around 10,000 in the late 1990s to roughly half that today to meet another goal of the Defense Reform Act — DCMA needed to adapt. The solution was to use a risk-based approach, which allowed the agency to focus its resources on the contracts and products that presented the highest risks.

“By utilizing risk, we direct our resources toward the areas that matter most, ensuring the safety and reliability of defense products,” Bennett added. “This approach ensures that high-risk contracts — those involving complex weapons systems or life-critical components — receive the most scrutiny, while lower-risk contracts are monitored more efficiently.”

In addition to shifting focus from individual parts to process management, the agency began aligning itself with industry-wide standards like ISO 9001 and AS9100 rather than maintaining its own

government-specific standards. This change simplified the requirements for contractors and allowed them to compete more effectively in the global marketplace.

“It was a game-changer,” said Jeffery Taylor, another long-serving DCMA QA specialist. “Moving to industry quality management system standards allowed contractors to use one standard across their entire operation, saving time and money while still meeting our quality expectations.”

An example of this shift involved military-grade vehicles. Rather than inspecting each vehicle piece by piece, DCMA now ensures the contractor’s production line adheres to robust industry standards, making managing quality across multiple systems easier.

“Adopting commercial quality management system standards didn’t mean lowering our expectations — it streamlined the quality process while ensuring we received the same, if not better, quality products,” Taylor said.

DCMA currently oversees major programs from missiles to aircraft, tactical ground equipment, munitions and more. The agency also conducts surveillance on lower-value products like uniform items and clothing.

“While the work is lower in risk and dollar value, well-made clothing for our service members is important,” said Clay Chaffee, a longstanding DCMA quality assurance specialist.

An exception to DCMA’s oversight is

Navy shipbuilding, which is still governed by military standards.

“DCMA does, however, provide surveillance at subcontractor facilities, just not at Navy shipyards,” Chaffee said. “We also do quality assurance for foreign partners who write foreign standards into their contracts.”

DCMA works with foreign partners on 22 quality assurance agreements to exchange services with allied nations and to effectively deliver equipment and products to partner defense organizations.

“We work with other countries, so we don’t have to send our (quality assurance representatives) everywhere,” Taylor said. “We delegate most of the work in other countries that are manufacturing a product, and other countries delegate anything that’s being done here to us, so they don’t have to put people here either.”

By the mid-2010s, DCMA started incorporating technology to further enhance its QA efforts. The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the agency’s move toward virtual inspections, but the groundwork had been laid years earlier.

“While the pandemic sped things up, we were already using virtual tools to help us do more with fewer people,” Bennett said.

In 2014, DCMA began distributing high-resolution cameras to its QA representatives. These cameras allowed them to document findings in real time, taking photos or videos of any issues encountered during inspections.

The use of remote inspections provided significant advantages, such as this specific example of an inspection of fuel cells in aircraft wings. In the past, QA specialists had to

physically crawl into confined spaces to check for defects. Now, contractors can record the inside of the fuel cells, allowing DCMA to review the footage remotely. This process saves time, reduces the physical risks to DCMA employees and cuts costs.

“The use of cameras has not only saved us time and money, but it has also increased the precision of our inspections,” Bennett said. This method ensures DCMA personnel can inspect even the hardest-to-reach parts of complex systems without leaving their offices.

The virtual inspections also extend to the examination of highly sensitive systems, where contractors and government personnel need to maintain strict control over classified data. Video and photo evidence from inspections can now be uploaded securely, giving DCMA immediate access to the documentation. This capability reduces the need for in-person visits, a significant benefit during the height of the pandemic and for highly restricted facilities.

“The continuous development of the VR process and technologies will continue to yield incalculable value,” said Brian McGinnis, director of NASA Product Operations, as he commented on the value of this innovation. “It enables the agency to fully leverage our subject matter experts across multiple product lines globally.”

Despite technological advances and the push toward automation, quality assurance professionals are still needed to uphold quality standards.

“We still rely on the eyes and ears of our team to make the final determination,” Bennett said. “Tools can give us data, but it’s our experts who interpret that data and ensure the contractors are meeting the required standards.”

Looking ahead, DCMA is working to integrate all of its quality assurance tools to create a seamless experience for QA specialists and contractors alike. The agency’s current systems, like the Supplier Risk System and the Product Data Reporting



*F-35 Lightning II aircraft are assembled on critical timelines, so DCMA QA Specialist Antonio Powell ensures proper manufacturing processes are adhered to, avoiding potential impacts to structural integrity and availability. (Photo by Marine Corps Capt. Staci Reidinger)*

and Evaluation Program, or PDREP, to help streamline the QA process, but there is still room for improvement.

“Our goal is to have all these tools talking to each other,” Bennett explained. “For example, if a quality assurance representative finds an issue during an evaluation, they should be able to immediately upload that information into PDREP and notify relevant parties in real time.”

This evolution of quality assurance at DCMA underscores the agency’s commitment to delivering safe, reliable products to the U.S. military while adapting to an ever-changing technological landscape.

“We’re always looking for ways to improve, and at the end of the day, our mission is about ensuring that our warfighters have the best possible equipment when they need it,” Bennett said. “Most of us on this team have been in uniform on the other end of the product, and we needed that equipment to work, so we have a deeply rooted sense of accountability to our mission.”





# 'Exceptional opportunity'

## After 10-month master's program, Naval War College grad returns to agency role after strategic education

By Thomas Perry, PAO

Aiming to build on his strong analytic and procurement contracting background, Kiet H. Truong joined the Defense Contract Management Agency in 2012.

His agency journey began as a price/cost analyst at DCMA Boeing Seattle.

"I decided to join the federal workforce after a recruitment opportunity that highlighted the crucial role DCMA plays in managing and overseeing defense contracts in order to provide valuable support to our warfighters," said Truong, who currently serves as a Cost and Pricing Command supervisory contract price/cost analyst.

While serving as a corporate administrative contracting officer in Carson, California, Truong drew leadership's attention by helping stand up the Product Data Reporting and Evaluation Program and training corporate/divisional administrative contracting officers to use the system. This, and his effort to drive warfighter support initiatives, led to his nomination to the distinguished U.S. Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island.

"The nomination came about through a combination of my performance and contributions to the agency," said Truong. "They recognized my potential for growth and felt that the NWC program would enhance my skills and benefit the agency. I believe I was selected because of my commitment to continuous improvement and my willingness to take on new challenges. The leadership team must have seen that I not only had the drive to learn but also the ability to apply that knowledge in a way that would positively impact our work."

Truong was selected into the 10-month master's program in Defense and Strategic Studies. According to the college's website,



*Retired Navy Capt. George Lang Jr., U.S. Naval War College Foundation president and chief executive officer, and Navy Rear Adm. Peter Garvin, former president of the NWC, present Kiet H. Truong (center), a DCMA Cost and Pricing Command supervisory contract price/cost analyst, with the Diane M. Disney Award during Truong's time at NWC. The award is presented to students who work diligently to improve their writing skills throughout the course. Truong's improvement efforts were instrumental in his graduating with distinction with a cumulative GPA of 3.7 and ranking in the top 13% of the class. (Courtesy photo)*

"The mission of the USNWC is to develop strategic and operational leaders. The program is focused on developing leaders with character who can be operationally and strategically minded, critical thinkers, who are proficient in joint and interagency matters."

Programs like the NWC are available through the agency's Centralized Development Program, which "offers a variety of leadership, management, education

and technical-oriented training programs that provide a foundation for organizational excellence by encouraging the development of a well-trained and educated workforce. Doing so enhances the knowledge, skills, and abilities of the DCMA workforce in meeting and exceeding our customers' needs and expectations."

Truong said his initial coursework was challenging due to its focus on military concepts and practices.



"It meant that I had to invest considerable time and effort into preparation such as reading, research and study sessions to bridge the knowledge gap," he said. "This preparation was crucial for me to engage actively in discussions, understand the military perspectives presented and contribute meaningfully to the seminars."

With the initial goal of earning a master's degree, Truong pushed himself throughout the course by taking advantage of every learning opportunity offered to improve his skills, garnering awards for his efforts.

"Although I considered myself a competent writer, the feedback on my initial writing assessment indicated that there were areas for improvement," he said. "Determined to improve my skills and my grades, I fully utilized the NWC Writing Center's offerings. I attended workshops, participated in one-on-one meetings, and spent considerable time in the writer's lounge refining four of my essays. This support was invaluable, and it helped me significantly improve my writing. With the high grades I received, I was encouraged to submit my essays for competitions and was honored to receive the Diane M. Disney Award."

The Diane M. Disney Award is presented to students who work diligently to improve their writing skills throughout the course. Truong's improvement efforts were instrumental in his graduating with distinction, with a cumulative GPA of 3.7 and ranking in the top 13% of the class.

NWC's degree programs emphasize seminar-style discussions, encouraging its diverse group of high-level U.S. and international military members and civilian professionals to share and expand their knowledge.

"This group allowed each participant to share unique perspectives, enriching the learning experience for everyone involved," Truong said. "The discussion-driven format



*The U.S. Naval War College in Newport, R.I., maintains a mission to develop strategic and operational leaders within the Department of Defense. The picture above is from present day. (Left) The NWC in 1925. (Naval History and Heritage Command photos)*

fostered an environment where we could deeply explore complex topics and benefit from the varied insights and experiences of our peers."

"Hearing from individuals with different backgrounds and viewpoints not only broadened my understanding of strategic defense and policy issues but also highlighted the value of interdisciplinary and cross-cultural dialogue," he continued. "These interactions underscored the importance of considering multiple angles when addressing global security challenges. The collaborative nature of these seminars was instrumental in enhancing the overall quality and depth of the program, making it a truly comprehensive and enlightening educational experience."

After graduating, Truong was promoted to supervisor of an Overhead Should Cost Review, or OHSCR, team, leading a group of multi-functional professionals of price/cost analysts and engineers. He will also co-lead the Negotiation Intelligence Cost Evaluation Capability, which provides DCMA customers with insights on risk management, cost evaluation and streamlined acquisitions. Truong said he would leverage his newfound skills to support that mission as well.

"The program has provided me with essential skills that will greatly enhance my ability to support warfighters and agency customers," he said. "Its focus on leadership principles and managing complex organizations has been particularly valuable as I step into my new role as a supervisor for the OHSCR team. I am confident that these skills will enable me to lead a high-performing multifunctional team effectively, make sound decisions under pressure and manage resources efficiently in support of the agency's goals."

"Additionally, the program has sharpened my ability to communicate complex ideas and arguments clearly and persuasively,

both in writing and verbally," Truong continued. "This is particularly important as I am responsible for reviewing and approving reports from the OHSCR team, which offer recommendations and valuable insights to corporate and divisional administrative contracting officers and procurement contracting officers. Effective communication will also be essential for briefing senior leaders, collaborating with various stakeholders and ensuring that management's intentions are clearly understood and executed."

Truong said he highly recommends the degree program to other DCMA team members and rising Defense leaders.

"The program offers a comprehensive and rigorous education that is invaluable for anyone involved in defense and strategic planning," he said. "It provides an exceptional opportunity to deepen one's understanding of military strategy, policy and international relations. Moreover, the program's focus on leadership, strategic thinking and understanding diverse perspectives equips participants with the tools needed to make informed decisions and lead initiatives with confidence. The insights gained into military doctrine, policy formulation and joint operations can significantly enhance our ability to contribute to strategic planning and operational effectiveness at DCMA."

Although these types of programs may be imposing, Truong encourages DCMA employees to push themselves to expand their knowledge.

"It is easy to settle into a comfortable routine, something we all tend to desire," he said. "However, embracing challenges and stepping out of my comfort zone have been incredibly rewarding for me. I encourage everyone to step out of their comfort zone, even just a little, as the growth and rewards are well worth it."



# Dedicated techs inspire procurement innovation

## By Contracts Directorate

The Contracts Executive Directorate launched a call for volunteers in 2021 to create functional working groups focused on enhancing training, career resources, and position descriptions for various roles.

In June of that year, a team of over 45 current and former procurement technicians, subject matter experts, supervisors, and staff from across the agency was chartered and began gathering insights to address these challenges.

Procurement technicians play a pivotal role in every phase of contract administration, from receipt through closeout. Their contributions directly impact performance metrics, customer satisfaction and overall operations, enabling the Defense Contract Management Agency's ability to pay and manage more than 300,000 contracts globally.

The Procurement Technician Functional Working Group, or PTFWG, has emerged as a catalyst for innovation and efficiency within DCMA, said Kelli Zagata, director of DCMA Acquisitions and PTFWG champion.

"This dedicated team of professionals has tirelessly worked to tackle the unique challenges facing the functional community while streamlining processes and enhancing training, reinforcing the DCMA as an employer of choice," Zagata said. "Their commitment to excellence has laid the foundation for a stronger, more agile organization, and I couldn't be prouder of the solutions they've brought to life."

The group's efforts to provide consistent, high-quality training through the 1106 Workforce Training Portal, a dynamic resource with nearly 10,000 views, is a prime example of their commitment. The portal was designed based on feedback from the procurement technician community.

"We built the portal to centralize essential resources and create a space for interaction and learning that supports our technicians' specific needs," said Erich Wieber, contract specialist, DCMA Acquisitions and PTFWG training team leader.

These include interactive forums, curriculum, practical resource guides and ongoing development of the first

procurement technician-focused course through collaboration with the Defense Acquisition University College of Contract Management. By providing accessible and engaging training opportunities, the team is cultivating a skilled and knowledgeable procurement technician workforce.

"Innovation remains at the core of the group's achievements," said Stacy Soldon, contract specialist, DCMA Acquisitions and Equip Team lead.

The introduction of the 1106 Request System, a groundbreaking workload management tool, has significantly streamlined the process of receiving, tracking and fulfilling over 140,000 Requests for Mechanization of Contract Administration Services, or MOCAS, actions to date.

The system automates the receiving, tracking, and notification of 1797 requests, which arrive nearly every minute during a typical workday, enhancing productivity across the workforce.

"The system's dashboard feature has revolutionized reporting for technicians and requesters, providing quick access to essential data for real-time status updates while helping leaders to identify workload imbalances and training gaps," said Mike Bono, DCMA Mid-Atlantic technical director and system developer.

The first procurement technician Resource Workload Model, or RWM, was developed to accurately capture and analyze workload through task identification, detailed workload breakdowns, and time-stamped transactions, said Sue Brown, supervisory contract specialist, DCMA Northeast and RWM team lead.

"This model offers powerful data analytics capabilities that go beyond managing resources and balancing agency workload," Brown said.

The model provides insights into systemic issues — such as Wide Area Work Flow, or WAWF, entry errors and data integrity concerns — contributing to additional workload. Additionally, the introduction of the RWM has brought unprecedented visibility into workload distribution, enabling leadership to allocate resources more effectively and address

demand more strategically.

The PTFWG's Recruit and Develop Teams, led by Tara Thompson, human resource specialist, DCMA Total Force, and Veronica Smith, contract specialist, have played a pivotal role in elevating the procurement technician role within DCMA.

By redefining position descriptions, they have created opportunities for professional growth and advancement. The introduction of the GS-1106-08 Lead and NK-1106-03 supervisory roles will empower technicians to take on leadership responsibilities and drive innovation.

Additionally, the PTFWG has focused on career pathing, which assists with potential growth opportunities, outlining both lateral and vertical movements within and beyond the series, from functional specialist roles to supervisory positions. Redeveloped recruitment strategies will focus on attracting and retaining top talent, ensuring a strong and sustainable workforce.

Also, the PTFWG conceptualized organizational structures in alignment with DCMA Vision that drive effective resource management, efficiency and increased workforce satisfaction, leveraging DCMA Southern California as the pilot location. This integrated team will combine 1106s from across the geographic contract management office, incorporating two leads and one supervisor into a single team.

The pilot will test established measures and capture results connected to increased agency efficiency through workload sharing, workload prioritization, accelerated MOCAS special accesses and training, improvements to mission requirements such as demand activities, and increased employee retention through planned monitoring over time. The pilot will guide future efforts further to refine workload sharing, training and mission-critical tasks.

The PTFWG's passion, dedication and collaborative spirit have created lasting changes that will benefit both the procurement technician community and DCMA. By addressing core challenges with innovative solutions and unwavering commitment, they have set the stage for a stronger, more efficient DCMA, ready to meet the needs of today and tomorrow.



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