

Three Agency Civilians Advance to Super Grades

by Mr. Dick Cole, Chief, DCMA Public Affairs

Two of the three Defense Contract Management Agency (DCMA) civilians inducted into the senior executive service (SES) Oct. 20 never expected to reach the civilian “super grades” when they began their civil service careers. Yet, Mr. Steve Bogusz and Mr. Dave Ricci reached this prestigious career summit and are eager to face new challenges. For Mr. Mitchell Howell, a recently retired Army colonel, his appointment to the SES was a logical extension of his 29-year Army career.

The SES — the men and women charged with leading the continuing transformation of government — share a broad perspective of government and a public service commitment grounded in the Constitution. The Civil Service Reform Act of 1978 established the

SES to provide a corps of executives selected for their leadership qualifications, not their technical expertise.

“My career goal was to seek progressively responsible positions where I thought there were important and interesting issues to be worked and where I had some ideas and believed I could make a positive difference,” said Mr. Ricci. “I honestly never focused on attaining a certain grade.”

Mr. Bogusz agreed: “My goal was to attain a position in public service where I felt I could make a positive influence and contribute to my community or nation.”

In particular, the tragedies of 9/11 did much to motivate Mr. Bogusz to be a leader in the civil service. “I lost a dear DCMA friend and colleague — Herb Homer — who was killed at the World Trade Center,” he said. “He was a great role model for anyone in civil service.” Mr. Bogusz also lost a Naval War College classmate, Navy Capt. Gerry DeConto, in the attack on the Pentagon. “The deaths of these two friends, and the traumatic events of 9/11, were a catalyst for me to reflect on how important our mission

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(Above) Mr. Mitchell Howell, new executive director, Ground Systems & Munitions Division, has oversight of acquisition support services for more than 46,000 contracts valued at \$157 billion for the Department of Defense. (Photo by Mr. Sam Rousso, DCMA Public Affairs)

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is at DCMA in support of America and our warriors. It helped me to strengthen an already strong commitment I had to ensuring our soldiers, sailors, Marines and airmen have the right equipment, weapons or parts they need to protect us,” he said.

For Mr. Howell, an alumnus of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, “It was always my goal to perform public service at the highest level in accordance with my abilities. The different leadership scenarios, coupled with the education and training opportunities afforded me, made becoming a member of the SES a logical next step.”

Each of the new SES civilians prepared for their increased grade and responsibilities by performing their jobs to the best of their abilities, taking advantage of career-expanding experiences, accepting challenging assignments and taking care of their customers. In addition, all attended training that broadened their perspectives and added to their executive

skills whenever possible and had one or more individuals who made a positive impact on their careers and served as important mentors.

For Mr. Bogusz, Mr. Gerry Cawley, former deputy director of the DCMA East District, was that all-important mentor. “Gerry was a very dynamic and positive leader,” Mr. Bogusz said. “He used to tell us to ‘break the rules!’ Gerry didn’t mean for us to go out and violate laws or regulations, but what he really wanted was for us to execute our mission in an innovative manner that still served our customers.” Mr. Bogusz said that Mr. Cawley was the individual who taught him the benefits of taking risks and embracing change — “He was like a breath of fresh air to our organization and to me.” Mr. Bogusz described the characteristics of Mr. Cawley’s leadership style that he hopes to emulate: “empowering people — not just supervisors, but all people; motivating people and instilling in them a passion for their work.”

“I’ve been fortunate to have worked for a long string of absolutely wonderful supervisors from my very first one at DCMA Sikorsky right up to my present supervisor,” said Mr. Ricci. “All of them were successful leaders and most all were recognized as such with promotions — four of them, in fact, to the SES level.” Each had different styles and strengths, according to Mr. Ricci, and rather than emulate one specifically, he adopted certain attributes and refined specific skills he thought were keys to their success.

Mr. Howell credits several senior supervisors and mentors for helping him reach his



(Above) Mr. Dave Ricci (right), executive director for Program Support & Customer Relations, speaks with Air Force Col. Keith Weyenberg. (Photo by Mr. Dick Cole, DCMA Public Affairs)

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new position. “Recently retired Deputy Undersecretary of the Army for Operations Research Walt Hollis; Army Gen. Paul Kern, commander of the Army Materiel Command and military acquisition deputy; and Dr. Robin Keese, director of the Human Research and Engineering section of the Army Research Lab all provided expert advice and counsel.”

Mr. Bogusz assumes the responsibilities as executive director, Naval Sea Systems Division, Boston, where he will manage more than 100,000 contracts valued at approximately \$100 billion for the Department of Defense, other federal agencies and foreign governments. “My immediate goal is to establish a solid working relationship with my Naval Sea Systems Command customers and the Naval Sea Systems Division leadership team,” he said.

Mr. Ricci will serve as executive director for Program Support & Customer Relations at the Agency headquarters, responsible for policy direction and deployment, training development, and mission support tool development for 8,000 Agency personnel working in contract administration, property, product assurance, engineering and customer relations.

His first priority is working with the office of the secretary of defense and the defense industry associations to resolve the specialty metals issue. Until recently, U.S. manufacturers providing goods to the federal government could not include such specialty metals as titanium procured from foreign sources in the products they manufacture under federal contracts. Recent changes to the law will change some of these requirements. “I think the flexibilities in the new law, coupled



with DCMA’s unique ability to engage with companies at the enterprise level, provide the opportunity for some creative solutions to alleviate the administrative burden associated with this issue,” said Mr. Ricci.

Mr. Howell will serve as executive director, Ground Systems & Munitions Division, with oversight of acquisition support services for more than 46,000 contracts valued at \$157 billion for the Department of Defense, other federal agencies and foreign governments. He is concentrating on establishing performance-based management and enterprise project subject matter expertise within his division. “My personal goal is to enhance our support to our primary and ultimate customers — the program executive offices and the service members on the front line — through increased knowledge, skills and abilities,” he concluded.

(Above) New Senior Executive Service inductee Mr. Steve Bogusz (left), executive director, Naval Sea Systems Division, speaks with staff members Mr. Mark Lecuyer, Naval Sea Systems Operations, and Ms. Cynthia Veasey, executive officer, DCMA Aeronautical Systems and Naval Sea Systems Divisions. (Photo by Ms. Ann Jensis-Dale, DCMA Public Affairs)