

DCMA Afghanistan Command Created

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Anticipating the troop buildup and the need for greater support services oversight in Afghanistan, the Defense Contract Management Agency International Division established a separate command within the country recently.

The general order signed by Charlie Williams, Jr., DCMA Director, on May 4, 2009, renamed DCMA Iraq/Afghanistan as DCMA Iraq and established DCMA Afghanistan as a separate command on Aug. 2.

Command-level leadership has been overseeing all operations in Afghanistan since March, even

though the organization was not born until Aug. 2. Army Col. Jack Cunnane took a temporary-duty assignment from his DCMA Maryland commander position to fill this role. Having successfully fulfilled the assignment, Army Col. Keith Edwards replaced Cunnane on June 5.

According to Air Force Maj. Desmond Carter, DCMA Afghanistan chief operations officer, multiple benefits to the agency have resulted from establishing a separate Afghanistan command. "Some of the benefits of having a separate command within Afghanistan are localized control of personnel, a direct line of communication with DCMA



Army Col. Keith Edwards, Defense Contract Management Agency Afghanistan commander (left) and Air Force Maj. Bach Nguyen, DCMA Afghanistan chief of operations, pose for a picture with Nguyen's "going away" plaque he was presented with by the command before heading back to his home duty station of Palmdale, Calif.

International and the alignment of decisions and directions to be more in line with efforts taking place on the ground," he said. "Overall, having the separate command has allowed for a more timely and efficient direction of resources."

Success has not come without its challenges. Especially challenging to the command has been the availability of human resources. In an effort to minimize this problem, however, the command is constantly working with both

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DCMA International and the Combat Support Center to ensure the identification of requirements in advance, minimizing short deployment notifications and allowing for the selection of the right person for each position.

According to Carter, capturing lessons learned and best practices from the Iraq command have been critical for the new command and have greatly reduced the spin-up time on many efforts. “Much of the policy, guidance, practices and procedures are borrowed directly from Iraq,” said Carter. “However, these aspects have been specifically tailored to suit the unique conditions and circumstances of the Afghanistan area of responsibility.”

Some of the specific programs and lessons learned DCMA Afghanistan has leveraged from DCMA Iraq include the Synchronized Pre-deployment and Operational Tracker Standard Operating Procedure; the Contracting Officer Representative program; and the electrical grounding and bonding initiative.

To ensure the two commands continue to leverage information and lessons from each other, DCMA Afghanistan and DCMA Iraq personnel make it a point to communicate regularly at all levels.

To handle the issues that come from the transition from Logistics Civil Augmentation Program III to the LOGCAP IV contract, the command formed teams to specifically identify and overcome any issues arising from the

transition. DCMA Afghanistan’s leadership has also held meetings with Flour and DynCorp, awardees of the Afghanistan north and south task orders, outlining expectations and anticipated transition challenges to mitigate as many issues as possible.

According to Carter, DCMA Afghanistan will continue to work diligently with the incumbent and

incoming performing contractors to ensure the transition is a “win-win”, and, most importantly, that it is seamless to the warfighter.

For more information on Contingency Contracting Administration Services volunteer opportunities, visit <https://home.dcma.mil/cntr-dcmac-t/ccas/index.htm>. 



DCMA Afghanistan headquarters building located on Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan



Derek Urban, Defense Contract Management Agency lead property administrator (left), and Gerrie Burress, DCMA Aircraft Integrated Maintenance Operations management analyst, pose for a picture in front of the DCMA Afghanistan sign posted on the command headquarters building located on Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan.