

COMMUNICATOR





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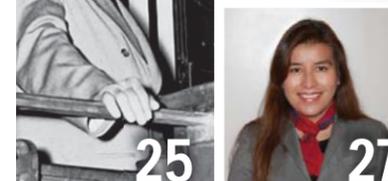
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Meeting our Strategic Priorities A Journey, not an Overnight Trip



Over the last two years, I have sought to set a clear strategic vision for this agency focused on moving us from good to great while also addressing the ongoing changes around us. From that vision we crafted a strategic plan that lays out what we want to achieve as an organization. It has now been more than a year since we unveiled the agency's *Strategic Plan FY 2009–2013*, and, while I am pleased with our progress, there is much left to do.

On the positive side, I think our customers — particularly at the Office of the Secretary of Defense level — are starting to appreciate what we can bring to the table in terms of insight, data and analysis. We have to do more, but I think we are starting to see traction with our customers and their understanding of the vast capabilities we have at the Defense Contract Management Agency in support of their programs. In addition, we have made significant progress over the last year in rebuilding our workforce and creating a more diverse and dynamic agency designed to take us to the next level of service to our warfighters.

We still have much work to do in meeting the strategic priorities we set forth last year. For example, I think we can continue to improve our products and results by increasing the functional skills of our workforce. This means we have to do a better job of training and ensuring that we have an organization that learns while it works. I also believe we need to enhance our capability to integrate information, analyze that information and deliver predictive, decision-quality insight to our customers.

These are just some of my 50,000-foot reflections on the strategic plan one year after its release. In this issue of the *Communicator*, I sat down with the magazine's editor and answered some in-depth questions about the plan and our path forward. In this issue, you will also find articles about the progress of our strategic plan from the field perspective. Please read about how our contract management offices are progressing in implementing the plan initiatives and challenges they've encountered along the way.

I continue to remind everyone that we are on a journey. This is not an overnight trip. While I think we are heading in the right direction, we have to stay true to our mission, vision and the strategic plan that guides our steps. This steadfast attitude, coupled with open communications and strong leadership, are keys to our success.

Warmly,

Charlie Williams, Jr.
DCMA Director

St. Louis Recognized for Community Outreach

Andy Kremer | DCMA St. Louis

Defense Contract Management Agency's St. Louis contract management office received the 2010 Civilian Welfare Council Community Service Team Competition Award May 6 for its contributions to the local community. James Titus, DCMA St. Louis acting director, and Sandy Waidmann, DCMA St. Louis CWC president, accepted the award at the St. Louis Federal Executive Board Awards Breakfast Program.

The awards committee said it was impressed with the CWC contributions to both DCMA St. Louis civilian employees and the greater St. Louis community.

During the 2009–2010 holiday season, the CWC adopted Every Child's Hope — a local organization that assists troubled

children by providing experiences to help prepare them for effective personal, family, community and career interactions. DCMA St. Louis employees donated outdoor toys and games, including basketball nets, basketballs, soccer balls, jump ropes, baseball bats and gloves and other items to 50 children attending the Early Education Center. CWC members delivered the items to the center and visited the children. A DCMA employee also dressed up as Santa Claus to help distribute the toys.

The CWC also helped support DCMA St. Louis employees who were deployed overseas in Iraq, Kuwait and Afghanistan. They collected items such as lotions, soap, chewing gum, toothpaste, coffee and baseball caps and put together care



Sandy Waidmann, Defense Contract Management Agency St. Louis Civilian Welfare Council president, accepts the 2010 CWC Community Service Team Competition Award from John H. Bonapart, Jr., at the Annual St. Louis Federal Executive Board Awards Breakfast Program May 6.

packages. They also collected donations for shipping. The effort had a positive impact with deployed members sending letters and e-mails to the CWC thanking them for their work.

In addition to all the projects the CWC performs for the community, they were also praised for continuously striving to enhance and improve DCMA St. Louis workforce morale.

Conquering the 'Final Frontier'

Sam Rousso | DCMA Public Affairs

NASA recently honored Yung Kit Tsang, Defense Contract Management Agency NASA Product Operations Pratt & Whitney aerospace engineer, for his outstanding contributions to the space program.

For his efforts, Tsang was selected as a manned space flight awareness launch attendee of the shuttle Atlantis (STS-132) to the International Space Station on May 14. "The main engines performed superbly as they boosted Atlantis," Tsang said proudly.

Working on the space shuttle main engine program, Tsang — in conjunction with the contactor and local NASA safety and mission assurance representative — is responsible for the shuttle main engine's value stream mapping effort. Value stream mapping is a manufacturing technique for analyzing the flow of materials and information currently required to get the product to the user. The mapping was performed to determine the current,

ideal and future flow of information and materials. It identified issues associated with accuracy and timeliness of the fuel system flow-down.

Tsang also has been a key focal point in the Ares transition plan bottom-up review. The Ares program is intended to eventually replace the space shuttle and may be a key component in any possible return of people to the moon.

Tsang prepared a consolidated, reimbursable cost data report in response to a very short suspense. The data represented information on labor hours reimbursable to DCMA on behalf of NASA from four separate teams scattered across the country.

As a launch honoree, Tsang joined other honorees at Kennedy Space Center in a variety of activities. A reception, tour and view of the launch were among the activities honorees attended.

"I deeply appreciate being nominated for this honor," Tsang said. "Thanks to both

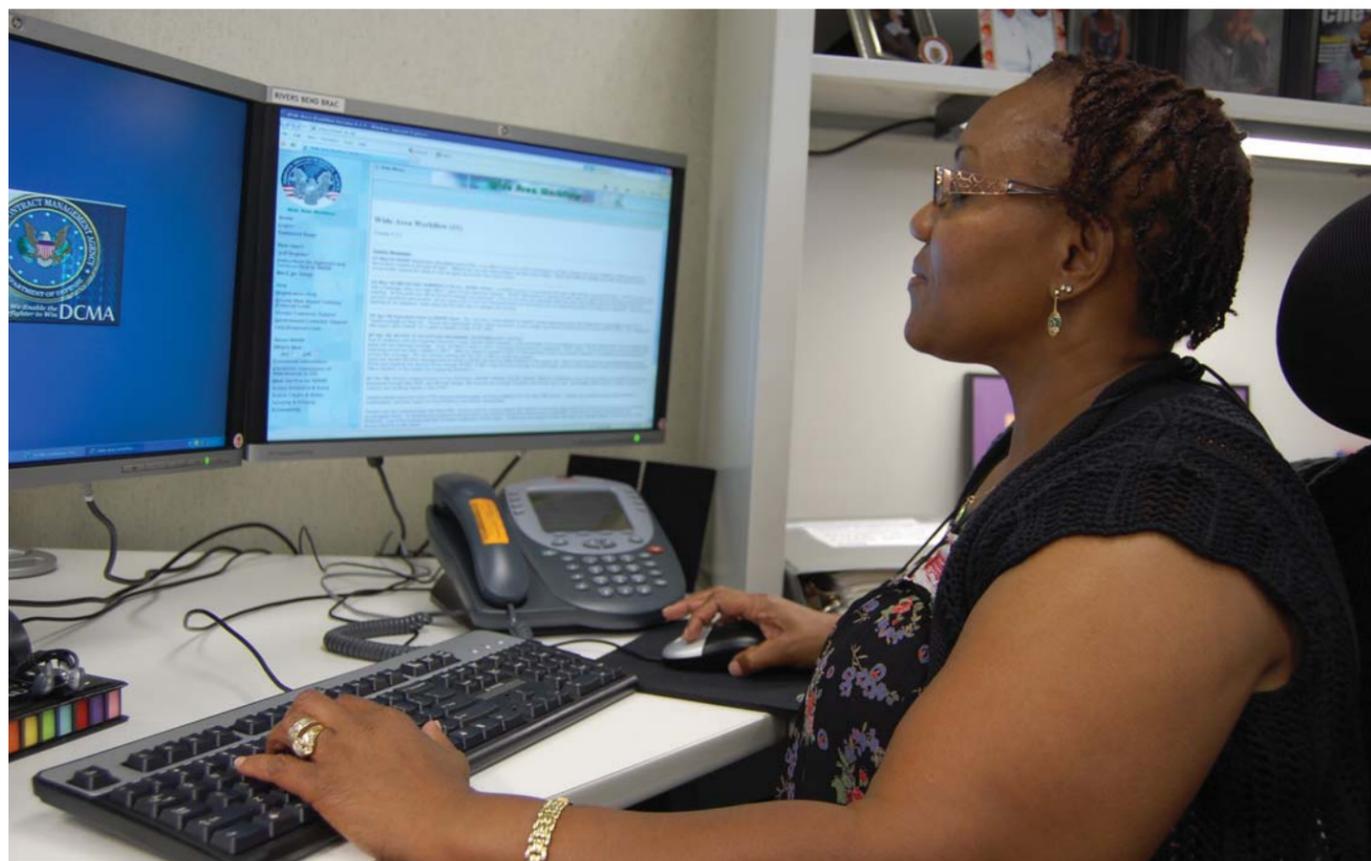


Yung Kit Tsang, Defense Contract Management Agency NASA Product Operations Pratt & Whitney aerospace engineer, was recognized as a launch honoree and attended the STS-132 launch of the Atlantis to the International Space Station. Tsang was selected for his outstanding contributions to the space shuttle main engine and J-2X engine programs for the past three years. (Photo courtesy of Pratt & Whitney)

DCMA and NASA. It was a tremendous thrill to see the shuttle launch and watch those engines work perfectly."

Workflow System Reaches Milestone

Jordan Holt | DCMA Information Technology Customer Service Organization



Lorretta McCray, Defense Contract Management Agency Office of Independent Assessment – Internal Review Team auditor, utilizes the Wide Area Workflow system to review and approve a contractor’s invoice July 14 at the Rivers Bend, Va., office. (Photo by Mark Woodbury)

Finding a business tool that improves service, saves money and is user-friendly isn’t just a goal, it’s a reality when it comes to the Wide Area Workflow system. WAWF is a system enabling vendors and Defense Contract Management Agency users to electronically access and process documents needed to generate payment for goods and services. It speeds payments to customers and is more efficient than the previous paper-based system.

The DCMA eBusiness Directorate recently announced that the WAWF system surpassed the \$1 trillion mark in

Mechanization of Contract Administration Services invoices.

David Guinasso, former DCMA eBusiness director, said WAWF was put into service in 2002 and has grown exponentially in both dollars invoiced and technical capabilities. DCMA has more than 98 percent of the contracts it administers submitted electronically to WAWF.

“The growth of WAWF since its inception is a credit to many DCMA employees and contractors who helped build and make the system what it is today. From design to development to training, it truly has been a team effort spanning

“The growth of WAWF since its inception is a credit to many DCMA employees and contractors who helped build and make the system what it is today.”

— David Guinasso, former Defense Contract Management Agency eBusiness director

nearly a decade. Everyone in eBusiness has a stake in the past, present and future success of WAWF,” said Guinasso.

During the last half of fiscal year 2005, WAWF invoices totaled more than \$46 billion in MOCAS contracts. Since then, the program has grown in MOCAS dollars invoiced annually by an average of 21.5 percent. The growth trend is expected to continue in FY 2010 with more than \$237 billion expected to be invoiced.

While saving dollars is crucial, WAWF’s real success is the time saved through the accurate electronic invoicing of contracts. With WAWF, the invoice cycle time was reduced by 50–80 percent. A large part of the reduction in cycle time came from WAWF’s capability in document storage.

WAWF also helps eliminate work related to lost documents, which required information to be reentered, resubmitted or tracked down. WAWF has also led to a 55 percent reduction in rejected invoices, which were previously linked to errors during manual data entry. With WAWF’s

speed and accuracy, the cost of paying an invoice has been reduced by 80 percent.

More than 90 percent of DCMA’s vendors submit all of their contracts electronically. In 2007, that number was only 78 percent. More than 95 percent of DCMA’s vendors submit at least a portion of their contracts electronically.

By using WAWF, customers save more than \$56 million per year in Prompt Payment Act penalties. In 2007, those savings totaled \$16 million. WAWF also saved DCMA customers who submit 100 percent of their contracts via WAWF more than \$100 million a year in MOCAS billing rates.

Customers are not the only ones to benefit from WAWF; eBusiness has been able to save the agency more than \$57 million in data input costs through the WAWF program.

The bottom line: WAWF’s value as a business tool continues to grow, and the agency and its customers are all reaping the benefits. 

What could \$1 trillion buy?

- Two G5 Gulfstream airplanes for every Defense Contract Management Agency employee
- Six international space stations
- 588 space shuttles
- 666 new Yankee stadiums
- Enough gas for 1,359,388,275 round trips from DCMA headquarters to Carson, Calif.
- Enough gas for more than 80 billion round trips from DCMA headquarters to Fort Lee, Va.
- The five biggest U.S. companies — Exxon Mobil, Wal-Mart, Microsoft, Proctor & Gamble and AT&T



(Photo courtesy of iStockphoto.com)

Teaming to Improve Audit Resolution

Cassandra Locke | DCMA Public Affairs

Charlie Williams, Jr., Defense Contract Management Agency director, and Patrick J. Fitzgerald, Defense Contract Audit Agency director, signed a memorandum May 7 reinforcing their commitment to ensure fair and reasonable contract prices for warfighters, the Department of Defense and taxpayers.

DCMA is the component that works directly with defense suppliers to help ensure that DoD, federal and allied government supplies and services are delivered on time, at projected cost and meet all performance requirements.

DCAA is responsible for performing contract audits and providing accounting and financial advisory services on contracts and subcontracts to all DoD components responsible for procurement and contract administration. The agency's services include negotiation, administration and settlement of contracts and subcontracts to ensure fair and reasonable contract prices.



“To this end, we expect that auditors and administrative contracting officers will always strive to resolve issues quickly and productively within each of our respective organizations,” Williams and Fitzgerald said jointly in their memorandum. “Although disagreements and differences of interpretation will occur, the competence and professionalism of our collective organizations should permit the successful resolution of issues while respecting the opinions of each party.”

The memorandum states both agencies will focus on eliminating communication and process challenges and forge a more cooperative and cohesive relationship between DCMA and DCAA.

“We do not accept the notion that the workforces of our agencies are unable to work professionally together to accomplish the department's business. It is our strategic intent to ensure we address and deal with the issues as they arise in an open and transparent manner, and we look to each and every one (within our agencies) to do the same,” Williams said.

The pricing and cost allowance decisions that DCMA ACOs must make are often accomplished with the input of DCAA audits. Therefore, establishing a good working relationship is critical. To accomplish this, employees have to

understand and respect the regulatory responsibilities of each agency. According to the document, “Those responsibilities are carried out best when both auditors and contracting officers establish the appropriate working relationships and lines of communication. This is our expectation.”

Dave Ricci, DCMA Contracts executive director, and Ken Saccoccia, DCAA Policy and Plans assistant director, conducted a joint presentation at the 2010 DoD Procurement Conference/Training Symposium held in Orlando, Fla., May 10–14 to show the collaborate efforts under way.

Ricci said there will be quarterly meetings between the two agency directors, daily communication between the headquarters staffs and regular meetings at other levels. Ricci noted that both agencies understand the ACO is the decision maker, and DCAA's advice is integral to DCMA's decision-making process.

The agreement ends stating each agency collectively recognizes that to be successful, it is imperative to work together and respect the independence and professional expertise of each agency. 

To see the memorandum in its entirety, visit https://home.dcma.mil/command/_files/dcma_dcaa.pdf.

“Although disagreements and differences of interpretation will occur, the competence and professionalism of our collective organizations should permit the successful resolution of issues while respecting the opinions of each party.”

— Charlie Williams, Jr., Defense Contract Management Agency director, and Patrick J. Fitzgerald, Defense Contract Audit Agency director

Tapping Into Resources

Cassandra Locke | DCMA Public Affairs



Don Lupton, Defense Contract Management Agency lead recruiter, goes over the hiring process with a prospective candidate at the Residence Inn in Manassas, Va., recently.

Finding qualified personnel to fill critical jobs is a challenge for both businesses and federal agencies alike. Recruiting is something savvy employers take seriously, and they're finding new ways of tapping the pool of applicants.

The Defense Contract Management Agency's Office of Diversity and Inclusion and Recruitment and DCMA Manassas held an on-the-spot hiring event June 29 using the Expedited Hiring Authority. The Army Servicing Team came from Fort Riley, Kan., to support the event.

According to Donna Albrizio, DCMA Manassas director, this was the first hiring event of its kind and geared toward hiring contract specialists.

Contracting specialists are responsible for a full range of pre- and post-award contracting actions in support of DCMA's mission, including acquisition of goods and services, revenue generation and execution of licensing agreements, monitoring contractor performance,

negotiating price adjustments and recommending action in problem situations.

Albrizio said one of DCMA Manassas's challenges is retaining experienced contract specialists against the capital region's competition.

“It's hard to compete with private industry and other federal agencies,” said Albrizio. “We've experienced an attrition rate of 20 to 25 percent.”

DCMA's overall workload has increased by 25 percent since 1990 with a 50 percent reduction in staffing. In addition, 24 percent of DCMA's total workforce is currently eligible for retirement with 62 percent eligible within five years. The agency is forecasting a growth of more than 3,000 employees by fiscal year 2015.

Albrizio had 27 vacancies to fill, and 13 people tentatively accepted the positions. Most positions ranged from the General Schedule 11 to 13 levels. Albrizio said the goal is to hold a hiring event at least twice a year.

According to Don Lupton, DCMA lead recruiter, the event was a huge success with applicants receiving conditional offers, completing employment paperwork on the spot and receiving instructions on the next steps in the hiring and security process. “Overall, this event could cut off a month of the time it takes in the hiring process,” said Lupton.

Lupton said applicants were very pleased with the process, and even those not selected were impressed by the professionalism displayed by all DCMA employees. Applicants who were not selected were given a final disposition outcome and pointers on how to apply for DCMA and other federal jobs. “Jeannie Mahoney, one of the agency recruiters working the event, was instrumental in leaving all applicants with a positive impression of DCMA prior to leaving the event,” said Lupton.

DCMA employees from the headquarters office, the contract management office and the Army Servicing Team were at the event and proved the team hiring approach to be very successful.

According to Albrizio, special recognition goes to Teresa Angel, field recruiter for DCMA Manassas, who was instrumental in coordinating the logistics and resources for the event. 

“Overall, this event could cut off a month of the time it takes in the hiring process.”

— Don Lupton, Defense Contract Management Agency lead recruiter

Employee Earns Top Honors for Supporting Liberty Program

Cassandra Locke | DCMA Public Affairs

Air Force Maj. Steve Jacque, Defense Contract Management Agency Special Programs South, received the DCMA Government Flight Representative of the Year award for 2009.

Phil Yacovoni, director of DCMA Special Programs South, praised Jacque for forging a unified government and military team focused on improving all aspects of safety of flight to deliver mission-ready platforms. “Jacque has been a real asset to DCMA Special Programs South and a true combat multiplier,” said Yacovoni.

Jacque was lauded for his contributions to the program Secretary of Defense Robert Gates initiated to repair the intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance deficit in Iraq and Afghanistan. The program, Project Liberty, involves the procurement of 37 MC-12W aircraft, also known as the Liberty Project Aircraft.

The Liberty provides real-time, full-motion video used to augment other downrange intelligence-collecting capabilities to help military leaders make battlefield decisions. The aircraft sends video to relay nodes distributed throughout the country. Those nodes then push the video to forward-deployed ground forces.

“Platforms like the MC-12 help troops disrupt and hunt down our enemies, often before they strike, saving the lives of

American troops while sparing innocent civilians,” Gates said at a visit to the production lines of L-3 Communications in Greenville, Texas.

The \$950 million program is a success story for DCMA. It normally takes a decade for an acquisition program to reach a 90-percent solution. It took less than a year to field the first MC-12W aircraft, which was brought into combat within 10 months. In addition, the Air Force was able to field three expeditionary squadrons within a year and a half.

Project Liberty’s accomplishments included setting new acquisition, training and deployment benchmarks to provide a full combat aircraft squadron to the Iraqi war zone in less than 10 months. This is the fastest delivery of an Air Force weapon system from concept to combat since the P-51 Mustang during World War II.

Jacque leads an aviation program team that provides oversight for contractor aviation special programs. The team works with Kerry Smithers, GFR at DCMA Aircraft Integrated Maintenance Operations – North Texas. Smithers’ team supports the Liberty Project Aircraft.

DCMA aviation program teams oversee ground and flight operations at contractor facilities. Each team has a GFR, an aviation maintenance manager and a contract safety manager. While Smithers’ team manages multiple programs at various facilities, they’ve provided extra attention



Secretary of Defense Robert Gates is briefed on the MC-12 Liberty aircraft during a tour of the production facility in Greenville, Texas, Aug. 31, 2009. Gates initiated Project Liberty to repair the intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance deficit in Iraq and Afghanistan. (DoD photo by Cherie Cullen)



From left: Air Force Maj. Jose Lopez, 645th Aeronautical Systems Squadron, and Air Force Maj. Steve Jacque, Defense Contract Management Agency Special Programs South government flight representative, work together to support Project Liberty. Jacque's efforts on the program led to numerous GFR mission improvements throughout Special Programs South and enabled the contract management office to participate in the agency's first-ever Single Point of Failure pilot program.

“Both of us have worked diligently to ensure the Project Liberty contractor and subcontractor procedures were sound and effective, ensuring asset security, safety and overall quality of the contractors’ efforts — all while getting the Liberty aircraft to the warfighter.”

— Kerry Smithers, Defense Contract Management Agency Aircraft Integrated Maintenance Operations – North Texas government flight representative

and oversight to the Liberty Project and its fast-moving, frequently changing demands.

“Jacque is a very focused and serious officer who strives to make a difference daily,” said Smithers. “Both of us have worked diligently to ensure the Project Liberty contractor and subcontractor procedures were sound and effective, ensuring asset security, safety and overall quality of the contractors’ efforts — all while getting the Liberty aircraft to the warfighter.”

While modification and maintenance to the Liberty aircraft are routine, the flight-testing aspect shows how Jacque stepped up and went above and beyond to ensure program success, Smithers said. “These aircraft go almost directly from the contractor facility to the fight. Because of that, all aircraft system and

most mission capability testing, calibration and validation flights take place at the contractor facility,” said Smithers.

The sheer number of aircraft and sorties placed a huge demand on Air Force Materiel Command pilots, and Jacque soon took on additional ‘pilot duty’ to help out. “Needless to say, he was part of something very important to the warfighters, and he made it happen when, and however, he could.”

DCMA has GFRs that fly, but Jacque’s billet was not originally a flying one. He came into the position as a fully qualified C-17 pilot and was able to augment that DCMA mission by stepping in and helping fly C-17s into depot maintenance facilities. When DCMA learned that the Air Force needed experienced C-12 pilots, Yacovoni endorsed Jacque’s chance to

fly as guest help outside of DCMA. The 645th Aeronautical Systems Squadron worked rapidly to get Jacque a training slot alongside one of their pilots, Air Force Maj. Jose Lopez.

“Since I’d flown a previous version of the C-12, I was able to step in as one of the initial cadre of MC-12W instructor pilots. It gave the AESS an extra instructor pilot without the administrative cost of acquiring another pilot,” said Jacque.

After training, Jacque and Lopez went right into accepting aircraft from Hawker Beechcraft and conducted functional check flights. Since the initial deliveries, around-the-clock Liberty production efforts have meant Lopez and the other Liberty pilots fly seven days a week for months at a time. Jacque was able to provide a few days break when it was needed the most. He contributed 45 days to the flying schedule and another 15 days to ground training, testing and administrative work required to stay current.

“Initially, I filled a shortfall for the 645th until they could train more pilots,” Jacque said. “For the last couple months, my GFR schedule has only allowed me to fly on the

weekends twice a month, as well as some holidays. It’s not a great deal of flying, but it gives the pilots assigned to the 645th at least a few weekends as well as some holidays off.”

According to Yacovoni, it is Jacque’s spirit of professionalism and dedication that helped him earn the honor of GFR of the Year. However, Jacque is more pleased to know that the intelligence gathered by the aircraft he has supported has led to the capture of 60 terrorists and criminals in Iraq and helped locate and identify countless roadside bombs around the southern Afghanistan town of Marjah. 

“Jacque has been a real asset to DCMA Special Programs South and a true combat multiplier.”

— Phil Yacovoni, Defense Contract Management Agency Special Programs South director

The push for better intelligence in Afghanistan comes as violence continues to surge, particularly the placement of improvised explosive devices. In April 2010, insurgents planted 1,058 makeshift bombs, compared with 435 in April 2009, according to the Joint IED Defeat Organization. Intelligence gathered by the MC-12W has led to:

- Capturing 60 terrorists and criminals in Iraq
- Killing or capturing 20 insurgents in Afghanistan, including four commanders
- Capturing a Taliban commander responsible for helping suicide bombers travel in eastern Afghanistan
- Locating and identifying roadside bombs around the southern Afghan town of Marjah in advance of a Marine-led offensive in March.

The first MC-12 Liberty aircraft in theater taxis out of an aircraft hangar for its first combat sortie June 10, 2009, at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. The Air Force's new manned intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance platform, the MC-12 is designed to directly support ground forces with real-time intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Tiffany Trojca)



Back to Basics: DCMA International Conference Focuses on Performance

Jo Adail Stephenson | DCMA Public Affairs

“Go forward, back to basics, not backward,” Defense Contract Management Agency International Commander Navy Capt. David Graff said in his remarks to attendees at the DCMAI Pacific-hosted 2010 Commander’s Conference April 19–23 in Tokyo.

The conference’s theme “Getting Back to Basics — Executing Performance Management” mirrored the agency’s focus on performance management as an integral component of the DCMA strategic planning and management philosophy.

“I want you to engage. Build these relationships. It’s important as a team to work together. Transfer the knowledge — engage, share, talk, communicate,” Graff said.

The conference gave DCMAI leadership, contract management office and tertiary leadership teams, and key DCMAI personnel a face-to-face opportunity to engage with peers and draw from each other’s accomplishments and challenges, while exchanging ideas to maximize mission effectiveness.

“Unlike most DCMA CMOs that can easily meet with only a few hours travel time, it is a considerable undertaking to bring DCMAI CMO leaders from the U.S., Europe, Middle East and Asia together,” said Air Force Col. Michael Luft, DCMA Pacific commander and host of this year’s conference. “The yearly DCMAI conference allows leadership to engage directly with each other in real time on the

“Transfer the knowledge — engage, share, talk, communicate.”

— Navy Capt. David Graff, Defense Contract Management Agency International commander

various issues affecting the international environment,” Luft said.

Throughout the conference, the DCMAI team took a top-down, disciplined look at strategic planning elements, performance indicators and integrated management assessment activities. Participants also looked at ways to better assess operational capability and capacity to improve DCMAI’s collective



Attendees of the 2010 Defense Contract Management Agency International Commander’s Conference in Tokyo pose for a group photo. (DCMA photos by Jo Adail Stephenson)



Navy Capt. David Graff, Defense Contract Management Agency International Division commander, stressed building relationships, transferring knowledge and working together as a team at the DCMAI Pacific-hosted 2010 Commander’s Conference April 19–23 in Tokyo.

and individual CMO organizational health, effectiveness and efficiency.

Sessions included an agency human capital update by DCMA Human Resources Executive Director Randy Sawlsville, a presentation by DCMA Union President Wayne Howard, updates by CMO commanders and key division representatives as well as panel discussions. “Partnership and participation are the key factors to our successful relationship,” Howard told attendees.

The underlying theme of the conference was summed up in a comment made by one of the attendees, “people are the key to all of this.”

In his closing remarks, Graff said, “Don’t let this be the only time you engage. The key is for us to move forward. Share it (what was discussed at the conference) with your people. You’ve made me very proud. This is what makes it all worthwhile.”

DCMA Northern Europe and Southern Europe personnel were unable to attend the conference due to the disruption in air travel caused by the eruption of Eyjafjallajökull in Iceland. The conference after-action report captured video teleconference suggestions for personnel unable to attend future conferences. 



Picturesque lights and signs provide the nighttime backdrop for Tokyo, one of the largest cities in the world with a population of more than 12 million.

Global Group Targets Quality Processes

Jo Adail Stephenson | DCMA Public Affairs

More than 63 attendees representing 20 countries and two NATO agencies participated in the 12th Defense Contract Management Agency Host Nation Conference at Zaandam-Amsterdam, Netherlands, June 15–17.

In his welcoming remarks, DCMA Director Charlie Williams, Jr., drew a correlation between the conference's purpose and the agency's vision of being leading experts in

quality assurance and enabling DCMA's partners to achieve contract objectives.

"We believe it is extremely important that our quality assurance processes are world-class," Williams remarked.

This year's conference provided the characteristic sharing of information, concepts, initiatives and process improvements to facilitate the continuous improvement of the mutual government quality assurance process.

"The opportunity for sharing has helped other nations to adopt these ideas or processes. As we globally standardize our approach into a truly mutual GQA process, we will provide our customers and each other that confidence to know our products will work at the right time, every time," stated Roland "QT" Quitoriano, DCMA International Host Nation program manager.



These annual conferences are specifically aimed at sharing lessons learned and identifying management challenges influencing the GQA community or process in the near future. “The briefings and workshops are tweaked each year to include current challenges or the current environment, so we are addressing current issues while hoping to find real-time, value-added solutions,” Quitoriano said.

“As we share lessons learned to common challenges, we help each other to establish joint strategies/approaches that assist in overcoming these challenges and to identify potential solutions or process improvements to facilitate the improvement of the mutual GQA process,” said Quitoriano, who has attended all 12 conferences.

The workshops provided a smaller forum so attendees could interact in small groups.

“This part of the conference is an excellent opportunity to share experiences

and knowledge, meet friends and colleagues who we collaborate with and be exposed to the best ideas from other nations,” said Petr Vacek of the Czech Republic in his end-of-conference survey.

First-time attendee Manfred Bach, Technischer Regierungs Oberamtstrat, Germany, said, “It is important for us to know how other countries are organized, how DCMA is organized.”

E.J. Sierzego, DCMA Southern Europe quality assurance specialist, was also a first-time attendee. “This conference allowed me to make that face-to-face connection with my host nation partners, which can be the cornerstone of a successful working relationship,” he said.

Carin Hansson, Swedish Defence Materiel Administration quality manager, has participated in all the DCMA host nation conferences. “In addition to the business and cultural experience, it’s good to catch up with old friends and meet new ones,” she said. Hansson finds the

conferences educational and is already looking forward to the 13th conference next year. 

“As we globally standardize our approach into a truly mutual GQA process, we will provide our customers and each other that confidence to know our products will work at the right time, every time.”

— Roland “QT” Quitoriano, Defense Contract Management Agency International Host Nation program manager

Agency Continues Army Partnership

Mark Woodbury | DCMA Public Affairs



From left: Cliff Dickman, Army Civilian Human Resources Agency deputy director, and Charlie Williams, Jr., Defense Contract Management Agency director, sign a memorandum of agreement extending the partnership to provide human capital assistance from CHRA to DCMA.

When it comes to anniversaries, it’s traditional to give a gift of gold to partners reaching the 50-year milestone and silver for those celebrating 25 years together. The Defense Contract Management Agency and the Army’s Civilian Human Resources Agency marked their five-year partnership with a memorandum of agreement signing ceremony April 30.

Charlie Williams, Jr., DCMA director, and Cliff Dickman, CHRA deputy director, recognized the anniversary and pledged to continue the partnership for another five years. Although the memorandum covers five years, the agreement is considered a “living document” to be reviewed yearly by both agencies to ensure the appropriate level of personnel support is provided.

Through the agreement, CHRA provides civilian human resources support to DCMA in areas such as: position classification, recruitment and staffing advice, recruiting for vacancies and personnel action processing. CHRA also is responsible for management and advisory services if DCMA requires a reduction in force, overseeing entitlements and providing required processing, counseling and advice as well as assistance with the employee

benefits program and maintenance of personnel records and files.

Williams said he is excited about continuing to partner with CHRA and reaffirmed their commitment to process improvements rather than resting on past successes.

“This is why we are working hard in several areas but particularly focusing on the hiring process,” said Williams. “We both agree that it takes entirely too long to bring personnel on board, and we have to work together to improve the process.”

DCMA held a Lean Six Sigma continuous process improvement event on the hiring process and examined the initiatives identified by the White House and the Office of Personnel Management to improve personnel management processes.

Barbara Panther, CHRA director, said she was committed to ensuring that CHRA provides the civilian HR services that DCMA deserves and improving an already good working relationship.

Williams said over the past five years, CHRA has worked with the agency to overcome several personnel challenges and consistently provided excellent support, something he is sure will continue in the next five years.

“There have been three realignments of which two were major — the 2006 product restructuring, the current geographical realignment and the conversion into, and out of, the National Security Personnel System; two Voluntary Early Retirement Authority opportunities; and the ongoing Base Realignment and Closure of the headquarters activities,” said Williams.

The CHRA team has processed 12,561 fill/recruit requests for personnel actions, issued 11,753 referral lists and processed 18,149 realignment actions in support of DCMA between April 2005–March 2010.

“CHRA is very excited to have an opportunity to continue our partnership with DCMA,” Panther said. 

Some information and story idea provided by Wendy Ellis, DCMA Human Capital

“CHRA is very excited to have an opportunity to continue our partnership with DCMA.”

— Barbara Panther, Army Civilian Human Resources Agency director



Attendees of the 12th Defense Contract Management Agency Host Nation Conference pose for a picture during the conference at the scenic waterfront in Zaandam-Amsterdam, Netherlands. More than 63 people attended the conference from 20 different countries and two NATO agencies. (DCMA Public Affairs photo by Jo Adail Stephenson)

Commander Earns Top NASA Award

Brian Reilly | DCMA West, Mark Pickart | DCMA NASA Product Operations

Air Force Col. Ray Harris, Defense Contract Management Agency NASA Product Operations commander,

recently was honored at the NASA Safety and Mission Assurance Directors Meeting at NASA's Ames Research Center in California.

Harris received a framed U.S. flag that was flown aboard the Atlantis on STS-129 and a NASA certificate of appreciation for his leadership and support of NASA and the space shuttle and Constellation programs while serving as NPO commander.

Bryan O'Connor, NASA Safety and Mission Assurance director, presented the award, which includes a picture of the Constellation Program's Ares I-X test flight with a shuttle on the launch pad. The

award is rarely presented to individuals outside NASA.

O'Connor, a former astronaut, hosted the event with Safety and Mission Assurance directors from each of the NASA space flight centers attending.

DCMA participation in this forum included discussions on future agency support to NASA based on changes related to the fiscal year 2011 budget. With the completion of Space Station assembly and the phase-out of the space shuttle, NASA awarded contracts for commercial cargo resupply to the Space Station.

DCMA representatives discussed mission assurance experiences related to the commercial acquisition of the Evolved

Expendable Launch Vehicle program for the Atlas V and Delta IV launch vehicles. Before the most recent contract, the Emerged Expendable Launch Vehicle (Atlas and Delta boosters) contracts contained "insight" and "noninterference" requirements that limited government technical oversight. DCMA is focusing on new directives designed to strengthen mission assurance.

The wide-ranging discussion included dialog on the implementation of quality assurance in a more rigid environment, the role of insurance brokers to mitigate financial risks in the commercial space arena and the resultant conservatism in introducing new, unproven technologies in commercial satellites. 



Air Force Col. Ray Harris, Defense Contract Management Agency NASA Product Operations commander, left, is presented with a framed U.S. flag that was flown aboard the Atlantis on STS-129 and a NASA certificate of appreciation by Bryan O'Connor, NASA Safety and Mission Assurance director, at the NASA Safety and Mission Assurance Directors Meeting at NASA's Ames Research Center in California.

Initiatives at Heart of Procurement Conference

Cassandra Locke | DCMA Public Affairs



From left: Ken Saccoccia, Defense Contract Audit Agency Policy and Plans assistant director, and Dave Ricci, Defense Contract Management Agency executive director of contracts, give a joint briefing to conference attendees regarding the agencies' working relationship at the 2010 Department of Defense Procurement Conference/Training Symposium. (Photos by Erica Kobren)

Charlie Williams, Jr., Defense Contract Management Agency director, addressed the agency's

priorities, manning concerns and rebuilding of the cost and pricing capability during the 2010 Department of Defense Procurement Conference/ Training Symposium in Orlando, Fla., May 10-14.

One of the biggest priorities the agency is working on, according to Williams, is the rebuilding of its workforce. "DCMA's

overall workload has increased by 25 percent since 1990 with a 50 percent reduction in staffing," he said. "In addition, 24 percent of DCMA's total workforce is eligible for retirement with 62 percent eligible within five years."

To assist the agency in overcoming this issue, DoD has authorized expedited hiring through a Defense Acquisition Workforce Development Fund, referred to as Section 852. Section 852 resources have supported the recruitment of 125

journeyman-level cost and price analysts and expanded the workforce with 340 intern hires. "This is our highest onboard strength since September 2006," said Williams. "We are forecasting a growth of more than 3,000 employees by fiscal year 2015."

In addition to manning concerns, Williams said customers are demanding enhanced analytical capabilities in the areas of price and cost analysis, earned value management and supply chain management.



From left: Patrick Fitzgerald, Defense Contract Audit Agency director; Charlie Williams, Jr., Defense Contract Management Agency director; and Elliot Branch, Contracts for Naval Sea Systems Command executive director, speak on a panel at the 2010 Department of Defense Procurement Conference/ Training Symposium in Orlando, Fla., May 10–14.

“The general sessions gave you a firsthand glimpse at the senior leadership in the department, the services, industry and other agencies.”

— Sallee Justis, Defense Contract Management Agency Procurement Division director

Williams also discussed the agency’s rebuilding of its cost and pricing capability. He said DCMA is improving its engagement in managing forward pricing rates, developing the capacity to conduct overhead should-cost reviews and establishing training for journeymen.

“We have reestablished the pricing branches at all contract management offices and hired 30 new pricing branch chiefs,” said Williams. “We have hired 150 new cost price analysts and cost monitors to date, with a target goal of 200 in 2010, and plan to hire 100 new engineers to provide technical support to negotiations.”

Williams said DCMA has worked to establish the cost pricing center with

five fully staffed hub sites to provide CMOs with pricing expertise, training and specialized assistance. Hub sites are located in Boston, Chicago, Dallas, St. Petersburg, Fla., and Seattle. The hub site in Chicago is 100 percent dedicated to cost and pricing training. He added that all corporate administrative contracting officers have been reassigned to the center.

More than 150 total DCMA contract specialists attended the conference to gain insight on current trends and the future of the procurement trade. Sallee Justis, DCMA Procurement Division director, said she found the general sessions to be the most beneficial.

“The conference provided a wonderful forum for networking with other contracting professionals,” said Justis. “The general sessions gave you a firsthand glimpse at the senior leadership in the department, the services, industry and other agencies. The topics were current and timely,” she added.

Sonia Johnson, DCMA contract specialist, said she benefitted from the wealth of information provided from Shay Assad, Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy director, and senior

industry leaders on developing better acquisition strategies.

“The information that was provided during the general sessions and from attending the classes added value to sharpening my tools in preparation for the upcoming end of fiscal year requirements and becoming a more highly effective contracting professional,” said Johnson. ☐

“We have hired 150 new cost price analysts and cost monitors to date, with a target goal of 200 in 2010, and plan to hire 100 new engineers to provide technical support to negotiations.”

— Charlie Williams, Jr., Defense Contract Management Agency director

Employee Earns Financial Management Expertise Award

Ann Jensis-Dale | DCMA Public Affairs



Bob Joyce, Defense Contract Management Agency Manager’s Internal Control program manager, third from left, displays his award with other award winners during the American Society of Military Comptrollers Professional Development Institute Conference in Orlando, Fla., in June.

A Defense Contract Management Agency employee was recognized by Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller) Robert Hale during the June American Society of Military Comptrollers Professional Development Institute Conference in Orlando, Fla.

Bob Joyce, Defense Contract Management Agency Manager’s Internal Control program manager, DCMA Planning and Budget Center in Boston, earned honors in the Improvement to Financial Management Internal Controls Individual Award (below command level). He was recognized for improving the Aeronautical and Naval Sea Systems Divisions’ Manager’s Internal Control Program financial management controls.

“This award not only recognizes me but the entire DCMA agency for its program. I wish the region and contract management office commanders could attend the ceremony to understand the importance the Under Secretary of

Defense (Comptroller) assigns to internal controls in mission accomplishment,” said Joyce. “This award recognizes significant improvement and the ability to identify weaknesses in internal controls and how systemic weaknesses in internal controls are resolved and executing corrective action plans consistent with laws, regulations and administrative policy. Most importantly, the improvements ensure that individual weaknesses will not reoccur.”

According to the award citation, Joyce initiated new improvements and techniques for the MIC program, which resulted in efficiently utilizing DCMA’s limited resources, allowing for a more effective program. This initiative included developing mandatory MIC reviews to highlight systemic issues, developing a standard operating procedure for the MIC report process and formatting an MIC report template.

“Simply said, internal controls are a tool to help ensure that what you want

to happen happens — mission and/or business support process — and what you want to avoid is avoided,” said Joyce.

Joyce’s efforts have helped improve customer satisfaction and also ensured corrective actions plans for MIC reports are accurate and timely. ☐

“Simply said, internal controls are a tool to help ensure that what you want to happen happens — mission and/or business support process — and what you want to avoid is avoided.”

— Bob Joyce, Defense Contract Management Agency Manager’s Internal Control program manager

Kirk-McAlpine Retires After 37 Years of Service

Sam Rousso | DCMA Public Affairs

Patricia Kirk-McAlpine, former Defense Contract Management Agency Space and Missile Systems

executive director, retired June 3 in a ceremony at Los Angeles Air Force Base, Calif., after 37 years' service.

Family members, friends, coworkers and members of the DCMA Council were among the more than 300 people at the ceremony.

Retired Air Force Maj. Gen. Darryl Scott, former DCMA director, officiated at the ceremony. Kirk-McAlpine said Scott officiated the ceremony because he is a long-time mentor of hers.

Kirk-McAlpine was presented the Defense Distinguished Civilian Service Award, recognizing her years of service to the agency and the nation.

During her remarks, she thanked people who worked with her.

"I certainly could not have accomplished what I did without the support of many, many people," she said. "All the awards I

"I certainly could not have accomplished what I did without the support of many, many people. All the awards I have received are a tribute to you all."

— Patricia Kirk-McAlpine, former Defense Contract Management Agency Space and Missile Systems executive director

have received are a tribute to you all."

Immediately following the ceremony, a luncheon was held in her honor at the same venue.

Kirk-McAlpine was the division's first, and only, director, and she was director of DCMA's Western Division before the agency realigned into product divisions.

Kirk-McAlpine began her career in the three-year Army Career Intern Program in 1973 at Huntsville, Ala. She worked for the

Air Force and the CIA before coming to DCMA. She was appointed to the Senior Executive Service in 1998 and is certified in Contracting (Level III) and in Acquisition Program Management (Level III).

Her prior awards include: a Presidential Rank Award, the Patriot Award for outstanding support to the Guard and Reserves, and numerous performance and exceptional service awards as well as honors presented by civic groups.

She holds a bachelor's degree from Stillman College, Tuscaloosa, Ala., and a Master of Business Administration from Alabama A&M. She completed the University of Southern California Executive Development Program, Harvard University Senior Executive Fellows Program, Syracuse University National Security Leadership Course, Air University Senior Executive Services Seminar and University of North Carolina Executive Development Course.

Kirk-McAlpine's future plans include working as a consultant to industry. 



Patricia Kirk-McAlpine, former Defense Contract Management Agency Space and Missile Systems Division executive director, observes as the DCMA flag is folded during a ceremony at Los Angeles Air Force Base, Calif., recognizing her 37 years' service.



Charlie Williams, Jr., Defense Contract Management Agency director, discusses the agency's strategic plan with Steve Herlihy, DCMA Strategic Effects executive director, in his office at the headquarters building in Alexandria, Va., recently.

Strategic Plan Straight Talk

Mark Woodbury | DCMA Public Affairs

'If you fail to plan, you plan to fail' — an adage that is synonymous with the military and the importance of planning missions. It's also a strategy successful leaders and businesses apply. Charlie Williams, Jr., Defense Contract Management Agency director, is a strong advocate of setting a clear, unified direction for the agency.

Shortly after taking over as agency director in 2008, Williams and the agency's senior leadership team held two off-site sessions to focus on defining new mission and vision statements for the agency. As a result of the off-sites and many planning sessions soon after, DCMA unveiled its

Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2009–2013 in summer 2009.

Almost a year later, the *Communicator* had a chance to catch up with Williams and discuss the progress the agency has made on meeting the objectives set out by the strategic plan.

Q: What made you take the initiative to create a new strategic plan for DCMA?

A: I think the responsibility of every leader is to establish the strategic framework and vision for where you want to take the organization. I wanted this organization to have a clear strategic direction and focus on what we do.

"I am optimistic about where we are heading, but we are not where I would like us to be."

— Charlie Williams, Jr., Defense Contract Management Agency director

Q: Can you share some of the insights and strategy to the four quadrants of the strategic plan?

A: The four quadrants of the strategic plan are fairly simple, and they are

the basics from a strategic planning perspective. *Acquisition Enterprise* reflects the customer. What our agency does is bigger than a program office or an individual contracting officer. Our responsibilities within DCMA cut across the acquisition enterprise to include those that are above us, below us and outside of the Department of Defense in other federal agencies. DCMA is not a singularly focused organization; it operates within a much larger enterprise.

For *Policies and Processes*, the idea of getting back to the basics kept surfacing during the strategic planning sessions. We have to ensure policy is accurate, current and streamlined so that we don't have a lot of miscellaneous operating procedures that people are living off of as opposed to a consistent agency policy.

For *Human Capital*, the focus is on taking care of our people. At DCMA, people are not just our most important asset — they are it. We must ensure that the dedicated men and women of DCMA have the tools, training and resources they need to be successful. We need to develop effective strategies to recruit, develop and retain our workforce now and in the future. If we don't get the people equation right, then we are going to fail in every other endeavor.

For *Stewardship*, it's about being accountable for what we do. We have to be accountable for the taxpayers' dollars. We have to be accountable, both as an agency and individually, for how we manage our organizations and people.



Q: Where do you see the areas of success in meeting our strategic plan milestones one year later?

A: I think we have had quite a bit of success. For instance, we have certainly had successes in hiring people. What the agency has done to hire people to support the reestablishment of the cost and price function within the agency has been remarkable. We have also reenergized our intern program through the use of the Section 852 funding source. We are hiring more journeymen. Now, it is about getting those people in the right places as we realign the organization. That was absolutely priority number one, and I think we have been successful in moving down that path. We have also made sure we consider diversity in our hiring practices and everything we do.

Q: Where do you see areas for improvement?

A: I am optimistic about where we are heading, but we are not where I would like us to be. For example, while we have done a remarkable job in bringing people into the agency, having enough people isn't good enough. You have to have the right people with the right skills and competencies to do the work. Along those lines, training is one of those areas that we need to get better at faster. Honestly, we're just not moving fast enough. I am very interested in looking at how we ensure we have a learning organization, and we are thinking right now through this concept and developing a model that allows us to exemplify this in a consistent way.

Also, I am still not pleased with our ability to produce analytical results and predictive information. I think there is a whole lot of work that can be done, and our new alignment is starting to allow us to get there. We need to do this to enable and support the decisions of our acquisition executives.

In addition, we need to do better on our end of the contract value chain. This is primarily in the area of forward pricing rates. We simply have to be better at rate negotiations. We have to really think through that whole process — along

“DCMA is not a singularly focused organization; it operates within a much larger enterprise.”

— Charlie Williams, Jr., Defense Contract Management Agency director

with the department, the services and the Defense Contract Audit Agency — to make sure we are doing the best we can to negotiate rates and recognizing that they affect a significant part of the cost/price on a contract.

Q: How do you see the strategic plan evolving from here?

A: I plan on going to our next off-site and looking at where we go beyond this current plan. We need to look at the priorities that we have laid out for ourselves and the execution plans against those priorities and determine where we have been successful. Which ones can we say, “Yep, done it and got it nailed down,” and where do we move from here? We can't say everything we did up to this point was good, let's just keep doing it. Let's relook at what we said we wanted to do and see if the current environment says we should be doing something different.

This is not an overnight trip. This takes us a while to get to where we need to be. It's a journey. We have to stay on the path. We have to stay true to our mission, vision and the strategic plan that guides our steps. I think if we do those things and have open communications and strong leadership throughout the agency, we will be successful on getting to where we need to be from the perspective of our strategic plan and from what we said we were going to do. ☐

To read over the agency's strategic plan, visit: https://home.dcma.mil/Command/strategic_plan/index.cfm.

You can always amend a big plan, but you can never expand a little one.
I don't believe in little plans. I believe in plans big enough to meet a situation which we can't possibly foresee now.

— President Harry S. Truman

(Photo courtesy of the Library of Congress)

Eastern Region Offices Discuss Accomplishments, Challenges Since Strategic Plan Implementation

Ann Jensis-Dale | DCMA Public Affairs

Last September, the Defense Contract Management Agency senior leadership team developed the agency's strategic plan, focusing on several key areas to include: policies and process, acquisition enterprise, human capital and stewardship.

In a message sent to agency employees shortly after the implementation of the

plan, Charlie Williams, Jr., DCMA director, stated the plan is to provide a clear path forward into the future for the agency while providing employees with a “big-picture” perspective of the challenges the agency faces.

A year into the strategic plan, two Eastern region contract management offices, DCMA Sikorsky Aircraft Stratford

and DCMA Garden City, discuss their accomplishments, challenges, lessons learned and future goals since the plan's implementation.

Accomplishments

DCMA Garden City views their early implementation of stages of the DCMA strategic plan as an opportunity to return

“The strategic plan identifies four perspectives, or quadrants, of the DCMA Balanced Scorecard: acquisition enterprise, policies and processes, human capital, and stewardship.”

— Betty Monroe, Defense Contract Management Agency Garden City director

to basics and focus their attention on the entire DCMA enterprise.

“The strategic plan identifies four perspectives, or quadrants, of the DCMA Balanced Scorecard: acquisition enterprise, policies and processes, human capital, and stewardship. We focused on three quadrants — acquisition enterprise, policies and processes, and stewardship — for changes at DCMA Garden City,” said Betty Monroe, DCMA Garden City director.

DCMA Garden City focused on the strategic plan polices and processes, initiative number two, developing and documenting policies, processes, competencies and training needed to drive effectiveness and efficiency in its mission and support its business processes. Their first step was to develop a Quality Council that reviews all quality assurance defect data generated by the CMO’s Integrated Quality Database Management System. IQDMS includes material review boards, defect rates, corrective action reports, first pass yield as well as customer quality issues.

“Once the Quality Council completes the review of the various data, they determine whether a Quality System Evaluation should be performed or a focused audit of a specific issue should occur,” said Neil Mintz, DCMA Garden City deputy director.

According to DCMA Garden City, the implementation of the strategic plan provided employees the opportunity to participate in many integrated process teams that covered performance

indicators. Also, DCMA Garden City strengthened and reinvigorated their Performance Improvement Council, which provides a peer-level review of CMO performance. Although chaired by a supervisor, the council members consist of performance advocates and representatives from tertiary CMOs.

“The PIs allowed us to focus on the enterprise and put the emphasis back on basic contract administration,” said Monroe. “One of our strengths is, and always has been, the ability to get to the root cause of the red and yellow PIs and understand the problems associated with each indicator.”

DCMA Sikorsky cites great success in the human capital area of the strategic plan — specifically, aggressive recruiting initiatives at local colleges and universities. “We have ramped up our recruiting efforts by personally visiting colleges to attract potential candidates,” said Navy Capt. Louis M. Borno III, DCMA Sikorsky Aircraft Stratford commander.

A rotational assignment with local DCMA geographic offices is another unique recruiting incentive offered to potential DCMA Keystone interns. “Our memorandum of agreement with the local geographic CMOs provides a broader experience for our keystones [interns], allowing them to work both at a geographic and plant office,” said Borno.

Challenges

The one critical aspect DCMA Garden City learned to appreciate is that making adjustments to the plan while moving forward is not a bad thing. Adjustments to the plan are almost a necessity for success.

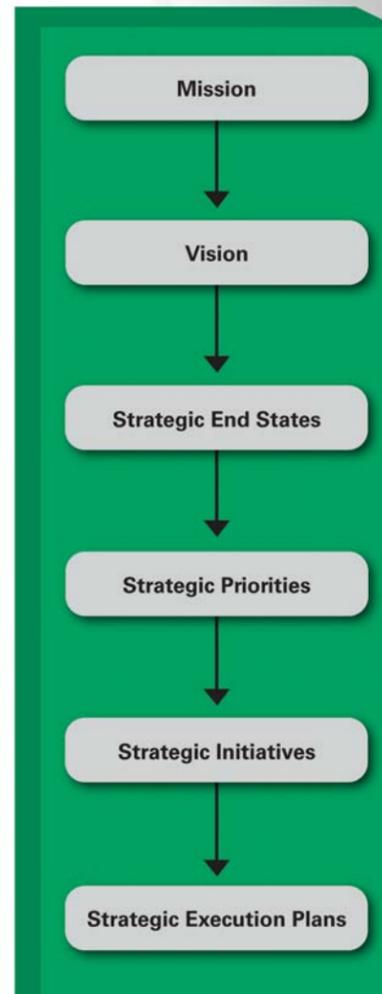
“While we are not green in all the metrics, we have a good understanding of the issues and are making changes to make improvement,” said Mintz.

Although recruiting efforts are helping, DCMA Sikorsky still faces some challenges due to personnel shortfalls. DCMA Sikorsky administrative contracting officers do not have a dedicated staff (contract administrators and procurement technicians), so they must share these limited resources. “This is an innovative way of doing business,” said Borno. “We have tried to find a better way to use our limited resources more efficiently.”

Lessons Learned

DCMA Sikorsky Aircraft Stratford said the greatest lesson learned is the strategic plan is not a static document, but, rather, it is a constantly changing and adapting plan to address agency requirements.

“It was [President Dwight] Eisenhower who said, ‘Plans are nothing; planning is everything,’” said Borno. “The strategic plan demonstrates that DCMA is engaged in planning to better serve all its stakeholders.”



Meghann Silverthorn, Defense Contract Management Agency Lockheed Martin Denver, poses for a picture at the contract management office. Silverthorn manages the performance indicator metrics for the office.

Process Drives Success

Sam Rousso | DCMA Public Affairs

Metrics — it’s a term frequently used in the business world. Metrics are tools to identify key performance areas and track how successfully an organization does its job. In the Defense Contract Management Agency, at the contract management office level, leaders have found that strong processes yield accurate measurements and keep the organization on target with the agency’s strategic plan.

In the Western region, two CMOs with strong processes in place, DCMA Santa Ana and DCMA Lockheed Martin Denver, shared how they’ve been able to establish and maintain strong processes through organizational change and implementation of the agency’s strategic plan.

Carlene Cooks, who handles the management process, and Troy Olsen, who handles the management analytical process, work the metrics at Santa Ana, Calif. At Lockheed Martin Denver, Meghann Silverthorn is the key individual.

“When the agency changed from performance-based management to performance management, DCMA Santa Ana managers and functional subject-matter experts immediately met to identify the performance goals and expectations and then developed and executed strategies to achieve them,” Cooks said.

Cooks said they were initially concerned with the number and types of some of the performance indicators and how they flowed to the CMOs. However, “As the process

began to mature, we were pleased the agency council took a strong look at the PIs and reduced the number for which CMOs were responsible from 89 in June 2009 to the current number of 47,” said Cooks.

“Exchanging information is critical to reducing error and ensuring consistency by generating comments in a standard format for entry into Metrics Studio.”

— Meghann Silverthorn, Defense Contract Management Agency Lockheed Martin Denver

Santa Ana also has 11 metrics for three Acquisition Category I programs it monitors.

Lockheed Martin Denver's process evolution was similar, Silverthorn said. "We developed robust PI processes that began with the indicator matrix, which clearly delineates which metrics apply to CMOs," she said. "Pairing with Metrics Studio, [the system used to monitor and analyze PIs], the indicator matrix shows valuable information such as the latest metadata sheet for each established indicator."

Silverthorn said every PI in Metrics Studio was assigned a local indicator owner. Each indicator owner then received individualized attention from the performance improvement officer on the process of indicator maintenance.

The owner reviews a metadata sheet to understand the requirements within the scope of their individual expertise and to learn how to duplicate the data collection methodology, filtering criteria and computation. Local owners are encouraged to contact the agency-level owner with specific questions and concerns so they can build working relationships and gain direct understanding of agency intent regarding their specific metrics.

Communication has been paramount to success, especially with the recent changes the office has gone through in performance methodology, evolving from performance-based management to performance management, as well as the agency realignment, Olsen said.

"Exchanging information is critical to reducing error and ensuring consistency by generating comments in a standard format for entry into Metrics Studio," Silverthorn said.

The comments include items, such as the PI number and the method of data entry, to assist viewers with little knowledge of the indicator matrix.

Other internal strong points, according to Silverthorn, have been the office's standardization in using the comments field in Metrics Studio. This allows the office to capture its burn down plans and corrective action plans. The office has also used the "reports" tab to link its portal project files to include any follow-on data necessary. "By storing the files on the portal, access to the information is easier," Silverthorn said.

Cooks pointed out that Santa Ana's PIs are continually being reviewed. "We also educate our constantly changing workforce to help them understand the agency's performance management philosophy and expectations and how their individual performance can impact organizational performance either positively or negatively," she said. "This is keenly needed to influence and improve CMO performance through workforce achievement."

Santa Ana's Olsen emphasized this point. "Other internal strong points have been our standardization in utilizing the 'comments' field in Metrics Studio, which captures our burn down plans and CAPs where necessary," Olsen said. "We also utilize the 'reports' tab in Metrics Studio to link our portal project files to include any follow-on

data necessary. By storing the files on the portal, anyone outside of our CMO can access the information without logging in to the telework terminal server first."

Both CMOs acknowledge there have been times when things didn't go as planned, and weak points were identified and resolved. "The due date for presentations was too close to the established date for the joint metric status meeting, causing no read-ahead charts to be available. DCMA Lockheed Martin Denver fixed this by changing the due date and allowing more time for problems to be addressed and for supervisors to come to the joint meeting well-prepared," Silverthorn said.

Another issue was the concentration of certain manufacturing and electronic data systems metrics with one industrial specialist. Silverthorn said other weak points were identified in areas outside of their control, such as a lack of Metrics Studio data inputs or the varying availability of agency-level PI owners needed to address questions and concerns.

Olsen said his office encountered similar issues. "At times, it has been difficult to get questions appropriately addressed by the indicator owner listed on the various metadata sheets. Ownership of the metric starts from the top and is a necessary process for the flow of data to reach all parties timely and accurately," said Olsen. "As a result, we have had several months where the data posted manually into Metrics Studio was a best guess since we couldn't resolve some of the issues at hand."

"We educate our constantly changing workforce to help them understand the agency's performance management philosophy and expectations and how their individual performance can impact organizational performance either positively or negatively."

— Carlene Cooks, Defense Contract Management Agency Santa Ana

performance plans to focus on critical metrics that may be underperforming and in-house training on the relevant software.

At Denver, supervisors became fluent in metrics and gained a solid understanding of the processes being measured. The CMO, with improved collective insight into the PIs, is now positioned to advocate for improvements to the performance management process agency-wide.

"As DCMA Lockheed Martin Denver's management team has grown to understand the metrics and what the agency is trying to measure, its members can generate new ideas and best practice solutions for other agency activities," said Silverthorn. "They can also provide appropriate recommendations and opportunities for improvement. In short, we can be at the forefront of generating excellent performance management benchmarks — or at the very least, active participants in current and future conversations."

Success or failure, strength or weakness — process improvement remains the goal. "We will continue to manage and measure our performance monthly during our performance reviews, maintain and update milestone and burn down plans, address the metrics process during our quarterly functional roundtables and evaluate on a monthly basis our performance against the agency goals," Cooks said. ☑

Cooks echoed the other two responses. "The current weak point or challenge is that of total workforce execution, which is needed for the organization to be successful in achieving performance goals. This can be the result of slowness of workforce adaptation to change, inexperience due to constant employee turnover, time required to adequately and successfully train new employees or poor performance," Cooks said.

Identifying and working problem areas led to enhancements and success in key areas. At Santa Ana, these included standardization of roles and responsibilities via published operation instruction, adjusting individual



Troy Olsen, left, and Carlene Cooks, Defense Contract Management Agency Santa Ana, pose for a picture at the contract management office. Cooks handles the office's metrics management processes, and Olsen handles the metrics management analytical processes.

"Ownership of the metric starts from the top and is a necessary process for the flow of data to reach all parties timely and accurately."

— Troy Olsen, Defense Contract Management Agency Santa Ana

Defense Contract Management Agency Santa Ana and DCMA Lockheed Martin Denver say having strong processes in place has been key to implementation of the agency's strategic plan. (Photo courtesy of iStockphoto.com)





The Keystones contracts solution team at Defense Contract Management Agency Twin Cities works on a root cause analysis of performance indicators 18 and 19 as part of their implementation of the agency's strategic plan. The team was successful in developing an executable plan while also bringing the team together to tackle an agency-wide issue.

Central Contract Management Office Commanders Discuss Strategic Plan Implementation

Jo Adail Stephenson | DCMA Public Affairs

Defense Contract Management Agency Twin Cities Commander Air Force Col. Rebecca N. Seeger and DCMA Dayton Commander Air Force Col. Douglas E. James were recently polled on their respective contract management offices' progress, success, strengths and best practices since implementation of the agency's strategic plan last November.

Progress

Using the agency's balanced scorecard approach to management, Twin Cities conducted a self-assessment gap analysis

from March 30 to April 30, 2009, identifying areas within each of the strategic plan's four perspectives needing special attention within the CMO. They used the newly refined management review team guidance as a framework for conducting the gap analysis.

Following the gap analysis, they developed corrective action plans to address gaps. Developing local standard operating procedures, compliance instructions and management instructions was a major part of their overall corrective action strategy.

"We've done an outstanding job over the past several years in implementing a more customer-focused approach, and now we need to add more discipline and compliance focus to our processes," Seeger said. "That shift in emphasis comes with a need for more structure and definition on how we conduct our work to ensure we are getting consistent results for our customers across the acquisition system."

DCMA Dayton cited progress in developing long-range objectives and outlining strategies to clearly define the CMO's goals and objectives to meet the

strategic plan. "Our strength is in our employees and their dedication and drive to achieve the performance indicators," James said. "While we have experienced two of the four important challenges — loss of personnel and increased customer demands for DCMA-specific skills — we have been successful at minimizing the erosion of current employee skills and have utilized our resources to maximize our efficiencies."

Success

Twin Cities accomplishments:

- Developed effective SOPs that are reviewed regularly and updated or rescinded as necessary. The SOPs are being used by the workforce, resulting in a consistent CMO approach to accomplishing work.
- Put deliberate CMO focus on the perspectives and DCMA director's focus items in the strategic plan. On a monthly basis during CMO staff meetings, each competency area, such as contracts, engineering and quality, along with the management support office, briefs their status and corrective action on the initiatives in each of the perspectives. They then brief their progress on the PIs, focusing on the CAPs and burn down plans.
- Achieved significant success in implementing Human Capital Initiative #5 on leadership development programs at the CMO level. In addition to maintaining a strong Tier II Leadership Development Program, Twin Cities established two forums to develop leadership skills across all echelons of the organization. The first is a day-and-a-half nonsupervisory leadership conference focused on nonsupervisory leaders such as administrative contracting officers, senior quality assurance specialists (formerly known as acquisition technical leads) and program integrators. The second is a monthly brown bag lunch leadership series with facilitators from across the CMO using commercially available leadership courses and locally developed courses.
- Got buy-in from workforce on CAPs. For PI 18, proactive delay notices, and PI

"Our strength is in our employees and their dedication and drive to achieve the performance indicators."

— Air Force Col. Douglas E. James, Defense Contract Management Agency Dayton commander

19, revised delivery forecast, Twin Cities commissioned an integrated product team of four keystones to accomplish the root cause analysis, CAP and burn down plan. Two ACOs were part of the team to mentor and advise, but the IPT had full authority to develop the plan on their own. The team was very successful in developing an executable plan, but an even greater success was bringing the keystone team together to tackle an agency-wide issue.

Dayton accomplishments:

- Tracked QA surveillance plans during individual reviews prior to implementing the strategic plan. The CMO had never rolled up the results to determine overall health. When the metadata sheet became official, Dayton looked at different approaches to measure this using current systems and tools at their disposal. They adopted an approach that enables a quick tally each month based on adding a column in the CMO's standard QA workload report. They also standardized a way of documenting the surveillance plans, which has recently been updated to meet the requirements of the new QA processes.
- Reduced number of overage undefinitized contract actions, increased the number of reportable audits closed on time, reduced the number of overage reportable audits and reduced the number of overage contracts. Dayton's number of 180 days past final delivery date or contracts had continually grown for a couple of years. This was a measure they had on their control panel but had downplayed because most were surveillance criticality designator C

contracts. Once the metadata sheet was finalized, they slowed down the growth and pinpointed the low-hanging fruit, resulting in already surpassing the target for reduction in fiscal 2010.

- Improved proactive delay notices in the industrial specialist area. They participated in a tiger team with the PI owner and other CMOs to help validate the level of accuracy of the current data set. Despite data issues, they pressed on and continue to show improved numbers for each month reported.

Strengths

Both commanders talked about their CMOs' strengths in implementing the strategic plan and tracking the 47 strategic indicators in Metrics Studio.

"I believe [our strength] is the disciplined approach we are taking to institute performance management as our philosophy in the way we manage our business and to address the perspectives in the strategic plan and our monthly review of all PIs to assess the progress and quality of our applicable CAPs," Seeger said.

"We took a proactive approach populating Metrics Studio with proposed measures, where possible, giving Twin Cities the opportunity to review and develop our strategies early in the process. In some cases, this gave us a four- to six-month jump on the issue before the indicators were finalized and posted by DCMA Headquarters to Metrics Studio," she said.

Another strength cited by Seeger was using the skills and abilities of all CMO members to address deficiencies. "We have contract administrators as process owners for some PIs; we had keystones develop the CAP, etc. This sends the message to the CMO that we are all responsible for making improvements and strengthening the CMO not just the supervisors and leaders," she said.

For Dayton, James said, "We just had to make a few minor tweaks to how we were capturing the data in order to match the official metadata sheets. We also broke out the 47 indicators into the functional areas, which made it much easier to view/manage in Metrics Studio."

James said another Dayton strength was being able to recognize that some PIs were going to be tougher to accomplish than others. “To meet the goals, we were not going to be able to just do business as usual. Many of the manufacturing industrial specialist metrics fell into this category,” James said.

Dayton brought together the whole CMO industrial specialist community by video teleconference to go over the metadata sheets and answer questions about the PIs. This gave the group a better understanding of the reasoning/intent behind the measures and an opportunity to share ideas of how to improve. They had the agency indicator owner attend the meeting and share information about his indicators.

Best Practices

The two commanders cited processes they have in place to assist them in effectively and efficiently managing their CMOs.

Twin Cities

- Compliance working group — This group actively manages the CAP for their gap analysis regarding the four perspectives and DCMA director’s special focus items. It is run by the deputy and consists of the CMO executive board.
- Monthly PI review — After the data is posted to Metrics Studio, they review each red or yellow PI and the CAP during CMO staff meetings. This ensures proper focus on the PIs,

provides the entire leadership team with insight into how they are progressing as an organization, allows for discussion on CAPs as to their effectiveness and gives them an early look at PI trends.

- Surgical IPTs — Twin Cities developed IPTs where they have significant issues or the issues cross competencies. They also provide opportunities for the workforce to engage in developing solutions.

Dayton

- Monthly management reviews — Conducted with group and team leaders from both primary and streamlined commands. They review the 47 indicators and corresponding CAPs, any open CAPs from staff assistance visits, mission review

teams, self inspections, management internal control reviews, resource reviews, etc., plus specific program status on the programs for which the Dayton commander is lead commander.

- Team meetings — Team leaders meet with their teams once a week to review the delivery schedule manager workload report, PI CAP status, etc. These meetings have helped tremendously to focus their efforts to improve proactive delay notice coverage and issuance of revised delivery forecasts.

The commanders had similar approaches to color-coding their progress. “One thing we need to guard against is focusing only on the red and yellow PIs and ignoring the green PIs. We are in the process of developing sustainment plans for the green PIs to ensure we keep them green,” Seeger said.

James said, “Dayton takes a look at all metrics: green, yellow, red or gray. We look at trends. Even if we have been green for a year, we analyze, and questions are raised when an anomaly appears in the data. We require CAPs for those metrics where we are red or yellow. As part of the CAP, a burn down/up plan is included, and the PIs are briefed at the MMR against the goal and burn plan.”

“Additionally, we have begun to track the PIs where we may be green against our goal of annual percent reduction or improvement but are still a major PI driver for the agency overall. In those cases, we can help improve the overall agency’s PIs if we are aggressive in exceeding our goals,” he said.

Twin Cities also uses management forums to give them a compliance-based focus using Metrics Studio, the PIs and their internal gap analysis as the driver for issue resolution and resource decisions. When they do have a resourcing issue, they manage it at the group level, thus ensuring the most effective and efficient resolution to manage the workload successfully without one team failing while another succeeds.

“Team leaders have to stay closely involved with their functional specialists in reviewing, analyzing, investigating and discussing PI results. Regular meetings and communication are a must. We hold

“The biggest challenge we see now is integrating the new organizational gains to the CMO into the CMO way of doing business.”

— Air Force Col. Rebecca N. Seeger, Defense Contract Management Agency Twin Cities commander

weekly team leader meetings to review/discuss the status of all PIs, corrective action and burn down plans,” James said.

In addition, each team leader has a weekly meeting to discuss and review the status of their PIs. They review team performance with the team and make adjustments as needed.

Looking Ahead

“The biggest challenge we see now is integrating the new organizational gains to the CMO into the CMO way of doing business. This will truly require the development of a disciplined culture across the CMO and will also require a significant change to legacy cultures. Change is not easy, but it is necessary. We have to effect the change while not negatively impacting the morale and enthusiasm across the organization,” Seeger said.

Dayton is encouraged with the direction the strategic plan has taken. “In a year where the agency is realigning both functionally and geographically, both

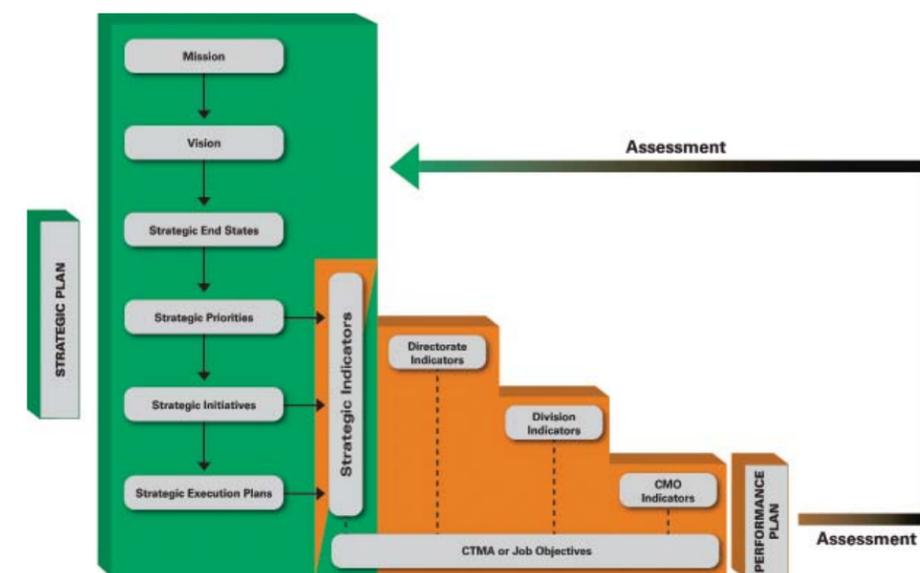
of which will improve efficiency and effectiveness in our opinion, performance management implemented through the strategic plan has given us the ability to compare ourselves with our peers with a consistent set of data,” James said.

Additionally, the new set of PIs provides CMO senior leadership with a toolkit to determine how the CMO is performing and where to spend scarce personnel resources. “As more processes and procedures become standard across the agency, knowledge transfer among our workforce members will be improved. With our aging workforce issues, this will become more important in the years to come,” James said. ☐

To see further responses from the two commanders about their implementation of the strategic plan, go to the DCMA Express website at <http://home.dcma.mil/express>.



Employees at Defense Contract Management Agency Dayton’s Mission Support Office pose for a picture inside their office. Dayton leadership says their office’s strength is in their employees’ dedication and drive to achieve the agency’s strategic plan performance indicators.



Air Force Officer Meets Heroes

Ann Jensis-Dale | DCMA Public Affairs

It's a rare occasion for a person to meet one of his or her heroes, and it's even rarer to be able to present an award to them. But, for Air Force Maj. Deirdre Gurry, that's exactly what happened.

Gurry, a government flight representative at Defense Contract Management Agency Aircraft Integration and Maintenance Operations – Kelly in San Antonio, recently met five of her heroes — women aviators who served in the Women Airforce Service Pilots during World War II.

“These women blazed a trail that later allowed me to climb into the cockpit of everything from a tiny T-37 Trainer to the huge C-17 Globemaster,” said Gurry. “Five of the most amazing women in U.S. military history sat across from me in their Santiago blue uniforms,” continued Gurry.

Gurry presented the Congressional Gold Medal to Mary Reineberg Burchard for her service as a test pilot for the WASPs. Burchard's daughter, Eileen McDargh, asked her friend Kenneth Coolidge, father of Air Force Col. Michael Coolidge, DCMA Boeing Long Beach commander, to have the award presented by a military member.

“Her daughter and my father are friends, and she thought it was most appropriate to receive this award from the military instead of a local politician,” said Michael Coolidge.

An official ceremony was held in Washington, D.C., in March to present medals to the other four WASPs. Burchard was unable to attend that event due to health issues. McDargh was determined to bring the award celebration to her mother at the assisted care facility in California where she was living. Working together, Michael Coolidge and McDargh pulled off a memorable event for family, friends and her fellow WASPs, Bev Beesmyer, Delores Lamb, Mary Lamy and Vi Cowden.



Mary Burchard proudly wears her newly awarded pilot wings presented during her graduation in 1942 from Women Airforce Service Pilots training.

Air Force Maj. Deirdre Gurry, Defense Contract Management Agency Aircraft Integration and Maintenance Operations – Kelly government flight representative, presents Women Airforce Service Pilot Mary Burchard with her Congressional Gold Medal. Gurry said being able to give “one of the most amazing women in U.S. military history” her Congressional Gold Medal was a moment she will never forget. (Photo by Elizabeth Brady)



“Now, in the military, women fly as true equals [to men] because of the will and determination of this group of true pioneers.”
 — Air Force Col. Michael Coolidge, Defense Contract Management Agency Boeing Long Beach commander



Left: Mary Burchard gets familiar with her new office, an AT-6 Texan, in the fall of 1942. Right: Mary Burchard proudly wears a replica of her original WASP flight suit at the Congressional Gold Medal ceremony after party. (Photo by Eileen McDargh, Burchard's daughter)

“These women blazed a trail that later allowed me to climb into the cockpit of everything from a tiny T-37 Trainer to the huge C-17 Globemaster.”

— Air Force Maj. Deirdre Gurry, Defense Contract Management Agency Aircraft Integration and Maintenance Operations – Kelly government flight representative

“Between the two of us, we set up the program, agenda, order of presentation, etc. I acted more as the emcee for the event and had Maj. Gurry present the Congressional Gold Medal,” said Michael Coolidge.

Michael Coolidge selected Gurry to present the award because he felt her accomplishments as a pilot in the Air

Force today were made possible by the groundbreaking path paved by the WASPs.

“The room was alive with smiles, and as I walked in, I was immediately met by Bev Beesmyer. I couldn’t believe I was face-to-face with one of my idols,” said Gurry.

The women enlisted in the WASP program to serve as civilian volunteers flying domestic military missions, releasing male pilots for combat duty during WWII. Initially, the WASP’s mission was limited to testing and accepting aircraft at the factory and delivering planes to flying units in the continental U.S. and Alaska. The WASP’s role later expanded to include flying simulated strafing, night bombing and navigation missions. All five women shared their WASP stories with vivid details from more than 60 years ago.

Burchard received her WASP wings at 28 and was assigned as a test pilot for the new AT-6 Texan, an advanced training aircraft at Marana Air Base, Tucson, Ariz. Her job was to perform test flights on

aircraft, including challenging aerobatic maneuvers, to ensure they were ready for delivery to the male pilots. Burchard served until the WASPs were deactivated Dec. 20, 1944.

Fellow WASP Beesmyer served as a tow target pilot. Her mission was to fly around training grounds towing aerial targets simulating enemy aircraft. Anti-aircraft gunnery trainees fired 50-caliber bullets at her to practice hitting moving targets. Beesmyer recalls several times hearing shells hitting or whizzing by her aircraft. She said that although that “got her attention,” she still loved flying enough to keep climbing into the cockpit every day.

Cowden told Gurry how she was able to talk the U.S. Army Golden Knights into taking her parachuting at 89. Her next adventure — at 91 — was to fly a standard WWII mission with a fellow pilot in a restored WWII fighter. After completing the flight, Cowden said she was happy she didn’t have to fly those types of missions any longer.

“How did I ever do that back then?” said Cowden.

Although Burchard was the only one receiving her Congressional Gold Medal during the ceremony, the event paid tribute to all five women.

“Now, in the military, women fly as true equals [to men] because of the will and

determination of this group of true pioneers. These heroines served proudly, boldly and silently. They took risks and showed the world that they were just as capable as their brothers,” said Michael Coolidge. ☐

Some information and story idea provided by Air Force Maj. Deirdre Gurry, DCMA AIMO Kelly



Mary Burchard poses for a picture outside her barracks at Marana Air Base, Tucson, Ariz., before a flight in the winter of 1942.

History of Women Airforce Service Pilots

The WASP program was formed in 1942 with civilian volunteers for domestic military flying, releasing male pilots for combat duty. A total of 1,113 women came from every corner of the United States to serve their country. After years of ferrying aircraft, flying tow targets and testing aircraft, they were deactivated in 1944, and their service was deemed confidential.

Thirty-eight women died in the course of duty, but because they were not officially military, there were no benefits or military honors. It wasn’t until 1976, when women were finally being accepted into Air Force pilot training, that the WASPs made their voices heard. They had long since been forgotten and, although they had worn uniforms and attended military-style training, they were never recognized as military pilots.

In 1977, Congress acknowledged their contribution to the country and granted them veteran status, which led to honorable discharges in 1979. On July 1, 2009, President Barack Obama signed the bill awarding the WASPs the Congressional Gold Medal, and on March 10, 2010, more than 200 attended the ceremony in their honor in Washington, D.C. The WASPs of WWII became the 142nd recipients of the Congressional Gold Medal, joining the Navajo Code Talkers and the Tuskegee Airmen in recognition of their pioneering military service and exemplary record.

Boot Camp: Sharpening Intern Contracting Skills

Ann Jensis-Dale | DCMA Public Affairs

Mention boot camp to a service-member and you're likely to hear stories about getting up before dawn, being yelled at by drill sergeants, endless marching and training, and being indoctrinated into a new way of life. Defense Contract Management Agency's boot camp may not be as physically demanding as the military version, but the training is pretty intense, and the focus is on building a competent and highly skilled workforce.

The Contract Closeout Boot Camp is attended by DCMA employees who are part of the Keystone Program. The Keystone Program is DCMA's internship program; it was established in 1997 as part of DCMA's succession plan to adjust to the demographics of a retiring workforce, principally in the key areas of acquisition and contract management. Attending the boot camp is a graduation requirement for Keystone Program participants, or Keystones.

Contract Closeout Boot Camp is a 90-day program covering a variety of topics in classroom and on-the-job settings. During the first two weeks, classes are taught by subject-matter experts in property, electronic data warehouse, Wide Area Workflow, contract receipt and review, and the Mechanization of Contract Administrative Services system. Mentors work with Keystones to provide practical hands-on training and assistance. Mentors schedule specific times to meet individually with each Keystone to review specific workloads, discuss problems and assist with additional training.

Liz Colarik, DCMA Baltimore Contracting Keystone said, "The Boot Camp was the most focused one-on-one training I have had. It was very helpful to

have two people whose position it was to guide and monitor my progress, as well as answer any questions I had as I went through my workload."

Contract closeout is a key focus area for DCMA, since its coverage contract backlog has risen significantly over the past several years. As of December 2009, there were 17,622 Physically Complete Overage Contracts across DCMA. These are contracts where performance has been completed and payment and closeout are pending. DCMA contract management offices in Manassas, Va., Baltimore, and Hampton, Va., accounted for 63 percent of the agency's total overage.

DCMA Baltimore was the agency's first CMO to implement the Overage Contract Closeout Team, or Contract Closeout Boot Camp, concept. Joyce Blais, DCMA Business Operations Center director, Marcy Parish, DCMA Baltimore contracts director, and Kathy Blauvelt, DCMA Operations Contracts Directorate contract specialist and Boot Camp program manager, developed the prototype program. The boot camp is conducted by a team that includes a supervisor, administrative contract officer and a procurement technician to ensure consistency.

Blauvelt said that it was a team effort to lay the groundwork for the training. She worked closely with Brian Gerst, DCMA Baltimore Contracts team supervisor, to outline the current state of the contract closeout process, determine the desired end state and then set obtainable goals.

"The first goal is to provide on-the-job training, which will allow Keystones to become proficient in closing out

"The Boot Camp was the most focused one-on-one training I have had."

— Liz Colarik, Defense Contract Management Agency Baltimore Contracting Keystone

various types of contracts. Second, use the Keystone workforce to drive down the number of overage contracts at the three pacing offices," said Gerst.

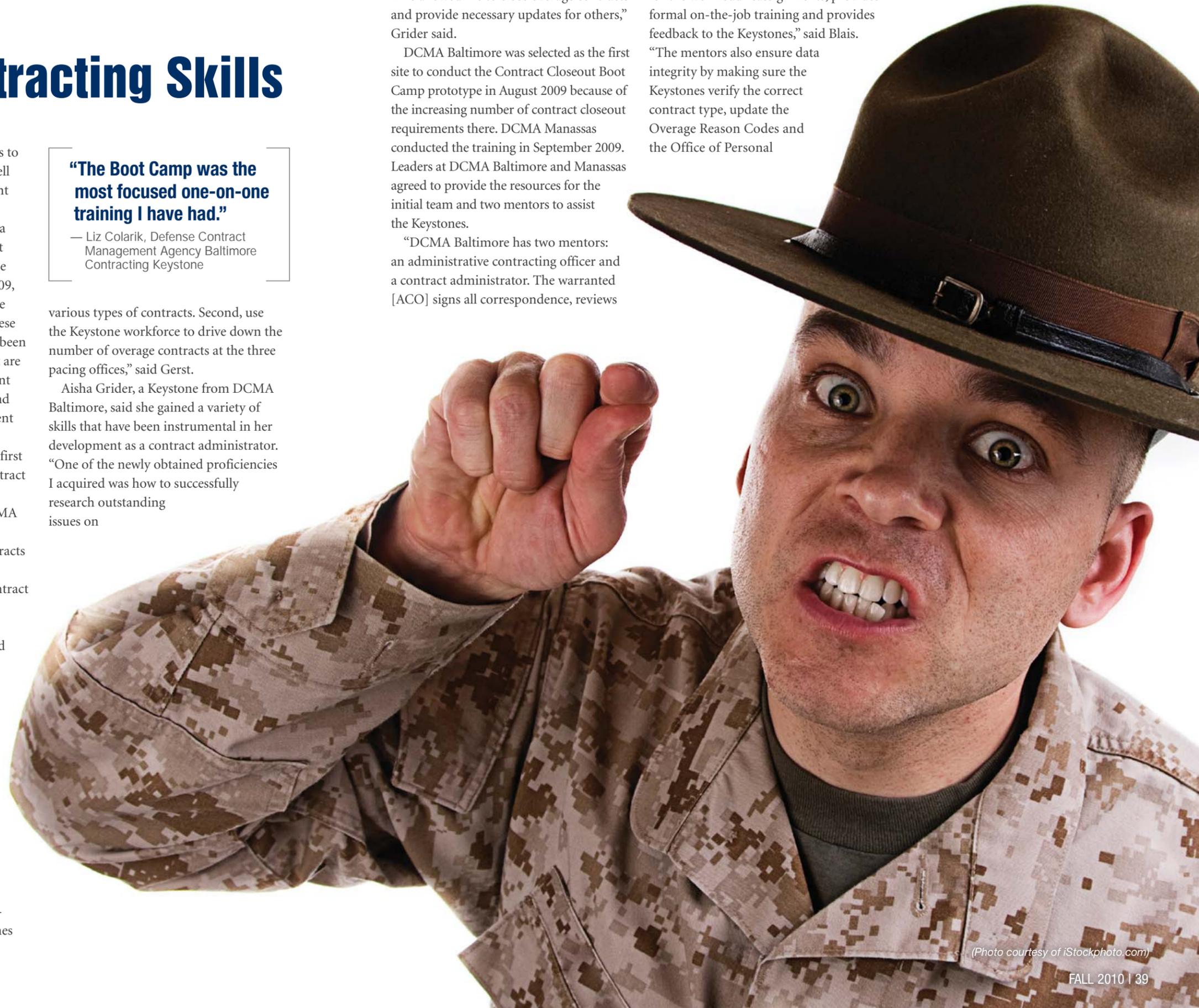
Aisha Grider, a Keystone from DCMA Baltimore, said she gained a variety of skills that have been instrumental in her development as a contract administrator. "One of the newly obtained proficiencies I acquired was how to successfully research outstanding issues on

contracts with various complexity levels. This allowed me to close overage contracts and provide necessary updates for others," Grider said.

DCMA Baltimore was selected as the first site to conduct the Contract Closeout Boot Camp prototype in August 2009 because of the increasing number of contract closeout requirements there. DCMA Manassas conducted the training in September 2009. Leaders at DCMA Baltimore and Manassas agreed to provide the resources for the initial team and two mentors to assist the Keystones.

"DCMA Baltimore has two mentors: an administrative contracting officer and a contract administrator. The warranted [ACO] signs all correspondence, reviews

all workload, makes recommendations for the workload reassignments, provides formal on-the-job training and provides feedback to the Keystones," said Blais. "The mentors also ensure data integrity by making sure the Keystones verify the correct contract type, update the Overage Reason Codes and the Office of Personal



(Photo courtesy of iStockphoto.com)

Responsibility Codes. These codes identify the reason for the overage and the office responsible for the closeout action. Importantly, the mentors ensure all correspondence to the contractor, Defense Contract Audit Agency, Defense Finance and Accounting Service or other entities are correct, well written and reflect the professionalism of DCMA.”

Brian Grundy, DCMA Burlington Keystone, said he benefited from the training.

“I learned to keep better track of what is going on with each individual contract; it makes life easier when going back,” Grundy said. “Also, it was very helpful to see all the different systems — MOCAS,

WAVE, [Electronic Document Workflow] — and how they work together.”

DCMA Contract Closeout Boot Camp graduated three teams and has another in progress. The three teams successfully closed out a total of 6,793 contracts in a one-year period.

“Contract Closeout Boot Camp’s immediate focus is to close contracts and reduce the backlog, but the larger goal is to build a knowledgeable enterprise-wide future workforce for DCMA,” said Dave Ricci, DCMA Contracts executive director. 📍

“Contract Closeout Boot Camp’s immediate focus is to close contracts and reduce the backlog, but the larger goal is to build a knowledgeable enterprise-wide future workforce for DCMA.”

— Dave Ricci, Defense Contract Management Agency Contracts executive director



A group of Defense Contract Management Agency Keystones and their mentors pose for a picture during the recent Contract Closeout Boot Camp.



Faces of DCMA



My name is:

Charles “Chuck” Moore.

I am:

The facility management specialist for Defense Contract Management Agency Forward, Virginia.

Describe your job in a sentence.

I assist employees with their supply, mailroom and basic facility needs.

How long have you worked for DCMA?

I have been with the organization for eight months.

What’s your favorite thing about working for DCMA?

I love the opportunity to meet and work with such a diversified workforce.

What’s your best memory of working here?

I have been given the opportunity of starting my job at DCMA Forward with a blank canvas — organizing and completing the setup of the supply room/mail room here.

How do you make a difference in the agency?

I make a difference in the agency by providing employees with the supplies and mail service they need to do their jobs day in and day out.

These are services I try to provide to the best of my ability each and every day.

Charles Moore





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