

# Aeronautical Systems Division: Passionate Professionals at DCMA Boeing St. Louis, DCMA Seattle, DCMA Wichita and DCMA Mesa



by Ms. Ann Jensis-Dale, Congressional and Public Affairs Advisor, DCMA  
 Aeronautical Systems and Naval Sea Systems Divisions

*“Passion is not necessarily something we have, it is something we choose.”*

— Susan Scott



Passion and love of work are evident at DCMA Boeing St. Louis, DCMA Seattle, DCMA Wichita and DCMA Mesa. This common theme was prevalent when I had the opportunity to meet with and speak to a variety of DCMA employees in the Aeronautical Systems Division. Let me introduce you to a few of our teammates in Aeronautical and the work they do for our customers every day.

Mr. Charles Banks has been a program integrator (PI) with DCMA for almost 30 years. The best way he describes his day is “hectic, putting out all kinds of fires,” but that is also the most rewarding part of his job. “Those kinds of days are when I feel that I earn what they pay me. I help people, make the right decision and make something happen. When it hits the fan, I have the opportunity to make it better — that is where I get my satisfaction.” said Mr. Banks.

Mr. Banks is responsible for the Joint Primary Aircraft Training System (JPATS), which is a training aircraft used by the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Navy to train entry-level students in the fundamentals of flying so they can

transition into advanced training. Once the training is completed, students can qualify as military pilots, navigators and Naval flight officers.

The importance of this program was evident in a recent training flight performed by a student pilot. During the flight, the student and instructor simulated an engine failure and landed the aircraft safely. However, while conducting a second test flight, the engine suffered a real failure when one of the engine blades cracked and exited out the side of the engine. “So the pilot who just completed the simulation then had to do the real thing,” stated Mr. Banks. A decision had to be made to either eject out of the aircraft or land the plane safely. They landed and saved the aircraft. “I was tasked to work with the experts on this aircraft to investigate what happened and to ensure those planes are safe,” said Mr. Banks. “I worked with a variety of experts who are all-important to the process. What is humbling to me is that they chose me. They have the confidence in me to work an issue and get a solution.”

**Passion and love of work are evident at DCMA Boeing St. Louis, DCMA Seattle, DCMA Wichita and DCMA Mesa.**

Mr. Banks has been with the JPATS program since the initial contract was awarded 10 years ago. “I have been the PI for the life of the program, which began in February

**(Above)** Sitting on an Apache AH-64D Longbow at Boeing’s facility in Mesa, Ariz., from left: Army Master Sgt. Allan Holcombe, Army Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class Jason Sheer, Army Chief Warrant Officer 5 Peter Lautzeheiser, Army Chief Warrant Officer 3 Edward Ollila, Army Chief Warrant Officer 3 Paul Kiszely and Mr. Terry Kennemer. (DCMA staff photo)

*“DCMA Mesa has delivered nearly 500 Apache helicopters and never once missed a production or delivery schedule. That is exciting and memorable.”*

1996,” he said. “I have also had the opportunity to have the same quality assurance representatives [QARs], Mr. Richard Duggan and Mr. Bob Harper, work with me since the start of the program,” Mr. Banks added.

Last April, Air Force Brig. Gen. Greg Feest, deputy director of Air, Space and Information Operations for Flying Training, accepted the 300<sup>th</sup> production T-6A (JPATS) aircraft in a ceremony at Raytheon Aircraft, Wichita, Kan. Mr. Duggan and Mr. Hopper were selected to provide the keys and deliver the aircraft to Brig. Gen. Feest. “Our QARs were chosen since they have made significant contributions to this program,” said Mr. Banks. “They are the ones who ensure it is right, sign [for] and deliver the aircraft day in and out for the life of the program.” He added, “You have a tremendous opportunity to make a difference in your work. I know the training will continue; we will keep training pilots, and I am contributing to the mission.”

From training to flying, the Aeronautical Division mission continues. Army Chief Warrant Officer 5 Peter Lautzeheiser is the Flight Operations chief at DCMA Mesa, Ariz., for the Apache AH-64D Longbow attack helicopter. As an Army pilot, he stated he has had a few close calls but never had a significant accident. He has three DCMA pilots assigned to his team. “DCMA Mesa has delivered nearly 500 Apache helicopters and never once missed a production or delivery schedule. That is exciting and memorable,” said Chief Warrant Officer 5 Lautzeheiser. “[Per month], we deliver eight helicopters, test fly three and perform about eight acceptance flights,” he continued.

An acceptance flight of an aircraft includes a test of every one of its systems. It is a lengthy process that begins well before the flight with various ground checks. In addition to the ground tests, checks are performed on the emergency functions on the ground and during flight. A check is made of all fire extinguisher systems for various parts of the aircraft and the ability to continue with the flight.

**(Above)** DCMA Boeing Mesa employees, standing, from left: Ms. Jenny McClain; Army Chief Warrant Officer 3 Paul Kiszely; Army Lt. Col. Robert Marion; Mr. Terry Kennemer; Mr. James Denzien; Mr. Carl Crane; Ms. Mary Jo Beaver; Army Lt. Col. Rodney Williams; Mr. Paul Griffin; Mr. Kent Schvaneveldt; Mr. Larry Phelps; Ms. Ellen Yoachum; Ms. Kathy Cross; Mr. John Edwards; Ms. Jill Gordon; Mr. Mike Dion; Mr. Steve Frader; Mr. James Van Houten; Ms. Susan Burke; Mr. Ron Dedalis; Ms. Barbara Borlongan; Mr. Patrick Harris; and Mr. Ron Hardy. Employees on aircraft, from left: Army Master Sgt. Allan Holcombe; Mr. Ron Trejo; Ms. Kathryn Swanson; Ms. Mary Seeman; and Army Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class Jason Sheer. (Photo by Mr. Mike Goettings)

DCMA Mesa will fly Apache Longbow #487 soon and looks forward to the scheduled delivery of aircraft number 500 on Aug. 9, 2006.

In addition to working for DCMA, what is the common thread that holds this team together besides the commander? The answer is the deputy commander, Mr. Gene Foster.

Mr. Foster has over 36 years of government service, 32 years with DCMA and four in the U.S. Army. He has served as a deputy commander continuously for the last 12 years, approximately four years each at DCMA McDonnell Douglas, DCMA Southern Europe and DCMA Boeing St. Louis. According to Mr. Foster, the deputy is the commander’s alter ego and the continuity of the organization. “The commander may not have the history, all the information, but the deputy does. He has been down that road before,” he said. “I had been very fortunate to have worked with great commanders who all have been different and held a variety of talents. The relationship with the commander must be a close one,” he continued.

According to Mr. Foster, the greatest strength of the Aeronautical Division, and DCMA in general, is its people, a sentiment echoed by the DCMA employees I interviewed. As stated by Ms. Nadra Boulanger, “The essential conditions of everything you do must be choice, love and passion.” We have a variety of skills and knowledge combined with the passion to work together and get the job done.



# Ground Systems & Munitions Division: A Happy Realignment Story for DCMA Phoenix



by Mr. Sam Rousso, Congressional and Public Affairs Advisor, DCMA Ground Systems & Munitions and Space & Missile Systems Division

**A**t DCMA Phoenix, an organization that exemplifies the best of the Ground Systems & Munitions Division, the realignment story includes losses and gains, all the usual plot elements. But this story also includes elements of care and consideration and extensive planning.

Realignment at DCMA Phoenix is a two-part story. First, there was the loss of DCMA Boeing Mesa, where Apache helicopters are remanufactured and updated, which was realigned to DCMA Boeing St. Louis. Prior to this realignment, there was careful planning: the Agency checklist was downloaded and reviewed. Training was developed and conducted, as DCMA Boeing Mesa personnel would be facing decentralization of certain business processes, and they would have to input data on certain forms.

Army Col. Peggy Carson, DCMA Phoenix commander, explained that certain business processes, such as document input, were done centrally at DCMA Phoenix but would be decentralized when the DCMA Boeing Mesa

personnel were realigned under DCMA Boeing St. Louis. "There were some workarounds we had to develop on the fly," she said, "but everything worked and everyone got paid."

In the second phase of its realignment, DCMA Phoenix absorbed one team from DCMA Houston and, temporarily, one part of DCMA Dallas' workload. The Houston team is comprised of six people, who were realigned to either DCMA Phoenix or DCMA Dallas. Their realignment to DCMA Phoenix went relatively well. However, their movement left a shortage of property administration personnel for DCMA Dallas. As a temporary solution, the realigned property administration personnel spend a small percentage of their time on work for DCMA Dallas.

**"There were some workarounds we had to develop on the fly," she said, "but everything worked and everyone got paid."**

The DCMA Houston team deals with the contracts of Kellogg, Brown and Root (KBR) with primary contract focus on the Logistics Civil Augmentation Program (LOGCAP), or non-combat support for our troops in Iraq, Afghanistan and other nations in the Middle East. Although Col. Carson feels that the KBR contract workload is now properly adjusted, for several months change has loomed large on her agenda, and preparing for and dealing with



**(Above)** Army Col. Peggy Carson (right), with the newest additions to DCMA Phoenix, the KBR (LOGCAP) team in Texas, from left: Ms. Beverly Cheney, Ms. Olivia Carter, Ms. Maria McNamara, Mr. Jerry Conry, Ms. Patti Avery-Bangert and Ms. Sandra Guidry-Morris (DCMA staff photo)

*“In developing the training, we visited [DCMA] Houston and saw what their workload was like. We wanted to make sure that nobody felt that it was a sink-or-swim situation.”*

change can be difficult. “The good thing about it is that no one has felt orphaned,” Col. Carson said. “When Boeing Mesa left, we made sure they knew that we’re here if they need us.” Ms. Carmel Burke, chief, DCMA Phoenix corporate support team, said bringing the KBR team to DCMA Phoenix was the more challenging of the two transitions. She explained that although her team had to prepare DCMA Boeing Mesa to input their own data into the Electronic Data Warehouse, the Phoenix team had to become familiar with procedures for the LOGCAP contract in order to be able to assist the KBR team.

In making the changes, it helped that the numbers were so small — approximately 35 people were involved in the DCMA Boeing Mesa switch, six of them in Houston. Also facilitating the change were the members of the DCMA Phoenix transition team led by Ms. Burke and Ms. Kathy Eikren and including Ms. Cathy Schroeder, Ms. Beth Harris, Ms. Kelly Schreiber, Mr. Rex Wilson, Mr. Ben Richardson and Mr. Jim Treadwell in Houston.

The transition team developed training sessions to familiarize employees with new processes and procedures, and the sessions received rave reviews. “The approach we took was welcome



and appreciated,” Ms. Burke said. “In developing the training, we visited [DCMA] Houston and saw what their workload was like. We wanted to make sure that nobody felt that it was a sink-or-swim situation.”

With intensive effort and a conscious desire to ensure that no one felt abandoned or isolated, the DCMA Phoenix realignment story turned out to have a happy beginning, middle and ending. Isn’t that what good stories are all about?



**(Top)** The lunar lander, which is being worked on by DCMA NASA products operations as part of NASA’s Project Constellation, nears the Moon in this artist’s concept. (Image courtesy of NASA/John Frassanito and Associates)

**(Above)** The RS-68 engine, which is being developed by Pratt and Whitney at their Canoga Park, Calif., site, pushes the Project Constellation spacecraft from the Earth to the Moon. (Photo courtesy of NASA)

**(Left)** The Project Constellation spacecraft begins Trans-Lunar Injection in this artist’s concept. (Image courtesy of NASA/John Frassanito and Associates)



# International Division: Taking Care of Soldiers' Life-Support Systems at DCMA Southern Iraq



by Ms. Dianne Ryder, Public Affairs Specialist, Office of Congressional and Public Affairs

**N**avy Capt. Walter Melton, DCMA International Division director, chose DCMA Southern Iraq as the CMO that most exceptionally demonstrated successful implementation of performance-based management principles and achievement of positive customer outcomes.

In addition to providing Contingency Contract Administration Support for Operation Iraqi Freedom, DCMA Iraq also supports Iraq's humanitarian and reconstruction efforts, performing contract administration services for the Army's \$5.8 billion Logistics Civil Augmentation Program (LOGCAP). LOGCAP provides life support, supply and transportation services for the 150,000 U.S. and coalition forces at 80 forward operating bases (FOBs), of which DCMA Southern Iraq supports 30.

DCMA Southern Iraq, commanded by Army Lt. Col. Kevin Pope at Camp Slayer, consists of 17 employees (one commander, one operations officer, five administrative contracting officers (ACOs), nine quality assurance representatives and one property administrator.

Mr. Nick Nguyen, 4th Infantry Division (4ID) and Special Forces ACO at Fire Base Bennett said, "The best way to serve customers is for me to become part of their team. ... I have come to know their operational tempo and intricate needs by establishing a good rapport and a trusting working relationship."

According to Mr. Nguyen, the biggest challenge of serving customers in a contingency situation is being able to provide the best support within the legal

boundaries of the contractual requirement. "You have work within the framework that is provided in the statement of work, [which] serves as a guideline requirement but can be restrictive. Sometimes I need to be resourceful in order to serve our customers and still maintain the integrity of the contract."

Air Force Maj. Allen K. Martin, an ACO in DCMA Southern Iraq, agreed: "Some of the unique challenges are you can't just jump in a car and visit an FOB. Since I travel by BLACK HAWK helicopter, it takes planning and cooperation from the weather for a successful visit. Another challenge is customers' expectations. Customers expect an instant 'fix' to their problems. I constantly remind them it is a process and sometimes the process can be rather lengthy." And "lengthy" is a relative term. In a peacetime environment, "lengthy" can be weeks and months; in this war zone it could be days and hours." He added, "My main customer is the 4ID. The way I best serve them is by going to different outlying FOBs to check on projects. The customers are very appreciative that the ACO takes time to visit and support them. I feel it's my responsibility as an ACO, [since] I'm the person who takes care of the soldiers' life-support areas so they can focus on the fight."

Air Force Capt. Kevin R. Hobbs is an ACO whose primary customers are in the Multi-National Division-Central South (MND-CS), which includes military forces from Armenia, Denmark, El Salvador, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Mongolia, Poland, Romania, Slovakia,

**"The best way to serve customers is for me to become part of their team."**

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Ukraine and the United States. “Two unique challenges of serving MND-CS are communication and avoiding the perception of preferential treatment. [Most] customers are from countries other than the U.S. Some speak English well and others don’t. Sometimes it’s necessary to get a translator involved to ensure there is no communication breakdown! The other challenge is to avoid preferential treatment. MND-CS is made up of many different coalition partners, and it’s important

that each partner receives the same quality of services under LOGCAP. It’s imperative that ACOs ensure their decisions and scope determinations are consistent and fair. If you authorize something for one national element but not another, you lose credibility and potentially create an incident that becomes very political.”



*Supporting your customers in Southern Iraq is really no different than supporting your DCMA customers back stateside. At the end of the day, we are still required to oversee the contract and ensure quality control of the contract. The only real difference here is it is very hot, [improvised explosive devices] are a constant threat, you seem to work all the time and you are away from friends and loved ones. ... The contract we manage here in theater is the Logistics contract for the Army, so we really are supporting the warfighter right here on the front lines and trying to ensure that the troops are taken very good care of.”*  
 – Air Force Capt. Loyd Childs, ACO, Logistics Support Area Adder, Iraq



**(Above)** Current members of the DCMA Southern Iraq team, from left: Mr. Bill Reines, property administrator; Air Force Capt. Shaun Hunt, administrative contracting officer (ACO); Mr. Gary Rusich, quality assurance representative (QAR); Army Lt. Col. Kevin Pope, DCMA Southern Iraq commander; Mr. Larry Burson, QAR; Air Force Maj. Allen Martin, ACO; Army Lt. Col. Brent Carey, LOGCAP support officer; Army Maj. Donna Williams, LOGCAP support officer; Air Force Capt. Trinie Harrington, operations officer (DCMA staff photo)

# Space & Missile Systems Division: A Strong and Solid Bond Among Employees at DCMA NASA Product Operations



by Ms. Eleanor Arredondo, Office Automation Assistant,  
 DCMA NASA Product Operations

**M**any offices within the Department of Defense (DoD) have experienced geographical realignments in the last year. Although these changes can be challenging, at DCMA there are many success stories that showcase

the vision and values of these reorganizations. The leaders and employees at the Space & Missile Systems Division’s DCMA NASA Product Operations (NPO) exemplify the integrity and dedication that results in exceptional working

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relationships and efficient customer service to accomplish mission goals.

In April 2005, DCMA NPO, formerly known as DCMA San Antonio, relocated to the Army base at Fort Sam Houston, Texas. Despite the months of coordination required among DCMA District West and the NPO Mission Assistance Group, employees demonstrated their willingness to participate in and assist with this transition. The cooperation, patience and honest communication among the teams that offered to help with the move benefited everyone.

The DCMA realignment resulted in a truly transcontinental organization. The merger involved part of the former DCMA San Antonio and included DCMA Pratt & Whitney (Canoga Park, Calif.), DCMA ATK Thiokol (Brigham City, Utah), DCMA Johnson Space Center (Houston), DCMA Kennedy Space Center (West Palm Beach and Orlando, Fla.), and the DCMA Michoud/Marshall/Stennis Support Center (New Orleans and Mississippi). For DCMA NPO, the result is 15 teams and 379 dedicated employees. With the reduced product line, predominantly related to the Space Shuttle, DCMA NPO still has 230 contracts with a face value of nearly \$48 billion. This CMO is also working on the future human spaceflight initiatives.

Overall, Air Force Col. Jeffrey Brand, DCMA NPO commander, stated that the reorganization and realignment went smoothly. Although there were a few minor issues, notably the need to appoint timekeepers for teams without a management assistant, Col. Brand said, “It was a fairly common problem and one that was relatively easy to work around then fix.” The staff volunteered to perform the timekeeping duties to ensure no delays with payroll.

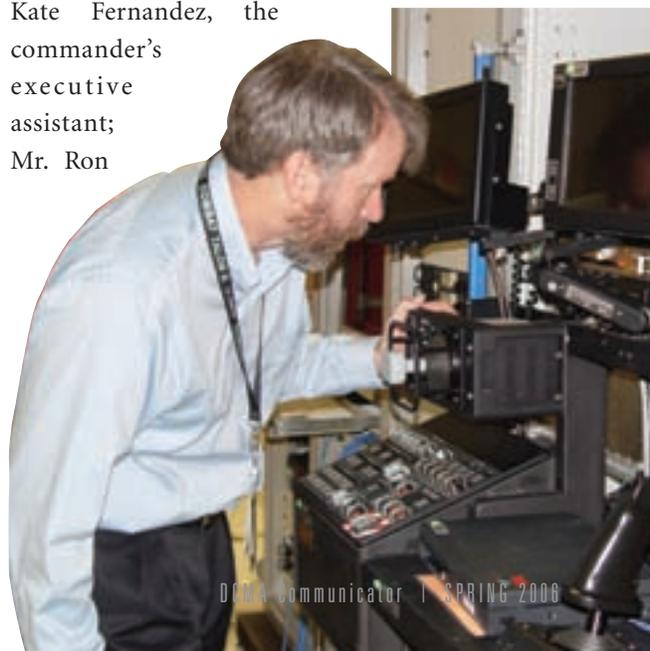
**(Right)** Mr. Greg Stefanvoic, at work DCMA Johnson Space center (DCMA staff photo)

Another problem a few activities reported was that some employees with specialized skills were realigned, and there were no backups to perform the same work at the losing activity. Even though a few offices are still dealing with this issue, the usual solution has been a “sharing” of the resource or skill.

Later, another challenge would impact the larger geographical region that now encompassed DCMA NPO. It was a test of duty, teamwork, loyalty and, more importantly, personal courage that occurred when NPO was impacted by the destruction of Hurricane Katrina. Although everyone watched the television daily, notification confirmed that many team colleagues at the Louisiana, Mississippi, Texas and Florida locations were affected by the hurricane. The sincere concern among fellow employees who wanted to help with relief efforts resulted in reassurance for so many associates who had lost their homes and personal belongings.

Col. Brand and the DCMA NPO deputy commander, Ms. Susan Jackson, began coordinating a team of associates to help with immediate relief efforts. On board to assist were Ms. Kate Fernandez, the commander’s executive assistant; Mr. Ron

**The cooperation, patience and honest communication among the teams that offered to help with the move benefited everyone.**



*The outcome of this experience is how the NPO teams have remained united as a family and a community. It's evident that the bond among these professionals has remained strong and solid.*

Stephenson, the management support administrative officer; Mr. Grady Reynolds, the tertiary commander for the Marshall/Stennis Space Group; Mr. Albert Guzinski, Web designer; and Mr. H. Douglas White, the safety specialist.

Mr. White contacted the American Red Cross to begin the task of locating his associates. He also contacted other disaster relief organizations for additional guidance to advise supervisory personnel on available emergency services. Mr. Guzinski designed an emergency Web site to keep lines of communication open and available to any employee who needed to contact the organization. Mr. Reynolds worked tirelessly to locate his employees and remains as the heart and soul behind Marshall/Stennis. Ms. Fernandez assisted with payroll and Mr. Stephenson ensured other administrative assignments were accomplished.

Ms. Jackson also remained in constant communication with area supervisors and invested countless hours daily to personally help and reassure affected employees. There was also a tremendous response from NPO employees who volunteered to help with numerous tasks: some employees offered their homes to lodge associates, and others assisted in compiling a list of employees who were located and safe. Updates were continuously provided to the commander and deputy commander.

Although this was a stressful and sad time for everyone — Col. Brand said that “the damage was tremendous; there still is no housing in much of the disaster area” — the organization persevered. Employees continued to comfort team colleagues who had to rebuild their lives. In time, associates returned to work, but the tragedy of the devastation made an impression no one within NPO can easily forget. The outcome of this experience is how the NPO teams have remained united as a family and a community.

It's evident that the bond among these professionals has remained strong and solid.

As the anniversary of last year's hurricane approaches, Col. Brand and his staff are applying the lessons learned. There is also reason to look forward to the future with anticipation. NASA has announced that the Space Shuttle, an example of 1970s technology, will cease flying in 2010. DCMA NPO is already working with the customer on the Shuttle's replacement, which is expected to be online by 2014.

Another major initiative now under way is the planned return of astronauts to the moon, and work has already begun at the two propulsion contractors, Pratt & Whitney Rocketdyne and ATK Thiokol. The designs that brought the first men to the moon almost 40 years ago will be upgraded. The CMO is also working on the Extended Expendable Launch Vehicle program.

Overall, the realignment of DCMA NPO has had a positive effect and made DCMA NPO a strong member of the Space & Missile Systems Division. According to Col. Brand, “The realignment has improved our ability to react and support the customer. Our new alignment has helped customers and our people by better enabling us to reach customer-based outcomes.”



**(Above)** From left: Mr. Alan Brewer, NASA's manager of test equipment in the Sonny Carter labs; Ms. Lindy Bayer, DCMA Liaison to NASA, Johnson Space Center; and Mr. Greg Stefanvoic, software quality assurance specialist, DCMA Johnson Space center (DCMA staff photo)

# Naval Sea Systems Division: DCMA Virginia's Culture of Contrast



by Mr. Tom Gelli, Chief, Congressional Affairs, DCMA Headquarters

**H**eadquartered in a small business park just a cannon shot from the historic Manassas battlefield, DCMA Virginia continues to shrug off the persistent suggestion that it is a first among equals. Nonetheless, as the contract management office (CMO) closest to the Headquarters flagpole, and one flanked by the many Defense industry corporate offices that dot the Washington beltway, DCMA Virginia might well be justified in accepting that distinction.

Comprising five secondary-level field offices, including two in North Carolina, DCMA Virginia features an operational mosaic of experience and youth, city and country, high-tech giants and mom-and-pop enterprises. As such, it should come as no surprise that DCMA Virginia's customers include all the military Services, though almost two-thirds of the work done on its nearly 42,000 contracts is in support of the Navy, a fact that places it under the Naval

Sea Systems Division on the Agency's recently reconfigured organizational chart.

Among the big-ticket programs benefiting from DCMA Virginia's oversight are the Zumwalt-Class Destroyer, the Littoral Combat Ship, the Marine Corps Expeditionary Fighting Vehicle and the Army's Future Combat Systems. The CMO's list of 1,500 contractors under its purview include all those perennially found on the Department of Defense's top ten, as well as hundreds of lesser-known ones that fill a variety of specialty niches.

"In many respects, our workload differs from that of other CMOs," says DCMA Virginia Director Ms. Anita Sharninghouse. "Traditionally, we have had an enormous contract close out workload. But today that's just one of many work drivers. We're now pulled in many other directions, including engineering development, software development and system design."

Ms. Sharninghouse, who formerly headed DCMA Orlando, finds that commanding

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**(Above)** DCMA Virginia Director Ms. Anita Sharninghouse, flanked by Technical Operations Group Chief Mr. Victor Dias, at the CMO's headquarters in Manassas, Va. (DCMA staff photo)

*Though its predecessor organization, DCMA Manassas, was known as the “contract-closeout capital,” today’s DCMA Virginia, with unliquidated obligations hovering around \$8 billion, is spinning many plates, of which closeout is just one.*



a CMO in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area comes with its own set of challenges. “The high concentration of corporate offices around the Washington beltway contributes to a heavier-than-typical per-capita workload,” she says. “That, combined with the high cost of living in this region, tends to cause higher-than-average attrition and gives rise to personnel-recruitment concerns in the highly competitive Washington job market.”

“Every day our people find themselves confronting the non-routine, the ad hoc and the unprecedented.”

“It’s the ‘double d syndrome’ — difficulty and diversity of work,” offers Ms. Donna Albrizio, DCMA Virginia deputy director. “Our daily work ledger includes

nearly every functional element of contract management. Every day our people find themselves confronting the non-routine, the ad hoc and the unprecedented.”

But all that does little to curb the vigor and drive of the 252 individuals who rise each workday morning to face the challenges emanating from mid-rise corporate offices in northern Virginia, high-tech “skunk works” in central North Carolina and lunch-pail production facilities on the shores of the Chesapeake Bay. Though its predecessor organization, DCMA Manassas, was known as the “contract-closeout capital,” today’s DCMA Virginia shows no resemblance to a one-trick pony. With unliquidated obligations hovering around \$8 billion, DCMA Virginia is spinning many plates, of which closeout is just one. Of particular note is the increased involvement in pre-award analysis and reviews, as the CMO’s pricing analysts, engineers and administrative contracting officers work closely with buying-activity officials in formulating solicitations and scrutinizing contract proposals. “And if the buying activity asks us to do so, we’ll even serve on source selection boards for large programs,” offers Mr. Victor Dias, chief of the Technical Operations Group.

Also notable is DCMA Virginia’s extensive work forging Forward Pricing Rate Agreements. “These agreements make it possible for a buying activity to use pre-negotiated pricing rates we’ve hammered out with contractors on their respective proposals,” says Ms. Theresa Beatty, former chief of the Contracts Operations Group.

**(Above)** Contract Operations Supervisor Mr. Brian Mazanetz directs a team that works on 5,900 contracts, most of which belong to the Navy. A degreed industrial engineer, Mr. Mazanetz has been a member of the DCMA Virginia family for close to 23 years. (DCMA staff photo)

*Even in the face of a growing workload and nagging staffing shortfalls, life in DCMA Virginia is hardly a humdrum affair.*

“This saves considerable time — time that otherwise would be needed to go in and examine each labor category and agree on a rate for each.”

Yet despite its diversified nature, the mission of DCMA Virginia is firmly tethered to and driven by a common principle: performance-based management (PBM). With CMO officials leading the charge, DCMA Virginia has waged a fervent campaign to develop individual performance plans that link to desired customer outcomes within the PBM framework. “This is a must-do endeavor,” offers Ms. Sharninghouse. “We must have every employee understand what needs to be done to help the customer be successful. By the same token, we are embracing PBM as a tool that enables us to tell the customer what to expect from DCMA in terms of resources, strategies and performance levels for their programs. And we are committed to giving proper attention to all programs, not just ones falling within the purview of the Naval Sea Systems Division.”

Even in the face of a growing workload and nagging staffing shortfalls, life in DCMA Virginia is hardly a humdrum affair. With a relatively low (for DCMA) workforce median age of roughly 40, DCMA Virginia takes dead aim at any possibility that life there could become all work and no play. Holiday parties, bowling competitions (with the losers footing the bill for sundaes for all), summer outings, golf tournaments, pizza lunches and team-building social events are well-woven into the CMO’s cultural fabric. In fact, at the CMO’s Manassas headquarters, the Wednesday morning bagels-and-muffin klatch has become an honored tradition on the second floor of the v-shaped, two-story building DCMA shares with the Federal Probation Office and a commercial realty firm.

To the extent allowed by the work demands, employees may avail themselves of flexible work schedules, telework options and management-sanctioned fitness and health programs. Though the official workday for the 115 employees at the Manassas location can start as early as 6 a.m. for early risers, there is a contingent of folks who routinely arrive thirty minutes earlier in order to beat the traffic. Others prefer a later schedule that ends no later than 6 p.m. All this, as well as an abundance of cross-training and career-development opportunities, has helped DCMA Virginia fashion a particularly good rapport with the union. “It’s a true partnership,” says Mr. Dias, describing management’s relationship with the union. “Issues rarely surface, but when they do, they are usually resolved fairly, objectively and with little rancor.”

But even an amicable work environment is not enough to shield DCMA Virginia from the heavy fallout of today’s human-capital crunch. Currently, the CMO is operating with 30 — or about 11 percent — fewer people than authorized. The understaffing is particularly evident in the contracting and technical disciplines. And this tussle with attrition — the contemporary Battle of Manassas, if you will — is destined to be more than just a passing skirmish, as DCMA Virginia employees seek what they believe are greener pastures with other federal agencies in the metropolitan Washington area. Others simply seize career opportunities in lower-cost-of-living locations. And, of course, there are those who get conscripted into service just down the highway at Agency Headquarters.

Moreover, because of its proximity to the Agency head shed, DCMA Virginia is often selected to be the test site for Headquarters-devised initiatives and pilot projects. Of late, the CMO has served as the proving ground for International Trusted Agents Training, the

*DCMA Virginia — from Roanoke to Raleigh — is indeed a bellwether in the Agency's transformation to a customer-focused, performance-based organization.*

Customer Relations Management Tool and the e-Tools Training Pilot Program. Though the role of testee can further pinch the CMO's already-crammed work log, it usually places DCMA Virginia in the vanguard for most new programs, as was the case with Metrics Manager, for which DCMA Virginia remains a recognized pacesetter.

Despite the heavy and varied workload, the personnel-management challenges and the occasional nettles endemic to a metropolitan backdrop, DCMA Virginia — from Roanoke to Raleigh — is indeed a bellwether in the Agency's transformation to a customer-focused, performance-based organization. As the hard-

working and adaptable members of the DCMA Virginia team are quick to point out, it is, after all, just a simple matter of culture.



**(Above)** Contract Operations Support Supervisor Ms. Carol Spinner, who has been with DCMA for 17 years, coordinates the work of a diverse cadre of 16 specialists scattered throughout Virginia and North Carolina. (DCMA staff photo)

## Special Programs Division: What Do You Need to Know?



by Ms. Dianne Ryder, Public Affairs Specialist, Office of Congressional and Public Affairs

**S**pecial Programs South is the contract management office (CMO) chosen as the best at meeting the challenges of performance-based management (PBM) within the Defense Contract Management Agency Special Programs (DCMAS) Division. DCMAS has been providing contract management and administration support across the country since it was established by Department of Defense Directive 5205.7, paragraph 5.2., in 1983.

Mr. Philip Yacovoni, deputy director, DCMAS South, informed me that much has changed over the past year and a half. In July 2005, the group was formally acknowledged and recognized as a DCMA Division, reporting directly to DCMA's director. "Our customers requested this change, and it also affords us the opportunity for better collaboration with mainstream DCMA Divisions/CMOs and their leadership. We have the same type mission that DCMA does ... and we still follow the [Federal

*“We have the same type mission that DCMA does ... however, we operate differently in some areas and have some unique challenges,”*

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Acquisition Regulations/Defense Federal Acquisition Regulations Supplement], engage in PBM and have the same [Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act] requirements as everyone else; however, we operate differently in some areas and have some unique challenges,” said Mr. Yacovoni. “Our main customers are the Services and other agencies. We’re chartered to perform technical, logistical and contract administration tasks associated with Special Access Programs.”

The South CMO’s success in PBM stems from the active involvement and support of its leadership team. From the CMO director down to the first line supervisor, everyone is engaged and fully embraces the principles of PBM — it is not something that is merely talked about. When a team

leader requests additional resources, he or she must articulate to the CMO director or the deputy what customer outcomes and which customer-DCMA Memorandum of Agreement Metrics/Standards the resources will support. Additionally, the leadership of the CMO visits various team locations and has the teams present mini Command Operational Briefs. Based on the results, additional PBM training is tailored and given on-site by the CMO leadership during these visits. This approach demonstrates to employees the commitment of the CMO leadership and the value of PBM.

The obstacles and challenges of implementing PBM in DCMAS work are fairly obvious: lack of free-flowing information and the inability to easily replace employees. “Not everyone who is briefed on the programs can share information freely, and not everyone is briefed to all programs; everything is compartmentalized,”

said Mr. Yacovoni. “We are required to use multiple computer systems and always must be mindful that we are using the proper system for the information being transmitted.” The nature of the work requires that it be done in approved program spaces and through secure channels. Program-approved space is defined as not only an area where secret information can be discussed and stored but one with alarm/surveillance systems, high-level locks on doors, redundant security checks and unique storage requirements. “Due to the fact we work in an enhanced security environment, even Web-based applications are not permitted,” Mr. Yacovoni explained. Another significant challenge is the length of time it takes for employees to get the necessary security clearances. This can create personnel shortages as hiring authorities wait on the clearance process. In Mr. Yacovoni’s words, “In locations where we are one deep,” and this can cause significant temporary duty obligations.

DCMAS is an exciting Division in which to work. “Our employees get the opportunity to work on programs involving the development of cutting-edge technology. We have offices across the country and look for experienced personnel who can hit the ground running and work independently,” Mr. Yacovoni said. “Because of the nature of the work, some of our positions are higher graded and can offer excellent promotion opportunities.”

The employees at DCMAS South are certainly of the highest quality and collectively provide an excellent representation of DCMA’s Special Programs Division.

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