

MDA, DCMA Partner to Man

By Julia Wyant, DCMA Public Affairs

Former U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld issued guidance on the execution of the U.S. Missile Defense program in January 2002. Under Rumsfeld's direction, the Ballistic Missile Defense Organization was renamed the Missile Defense Agency. MDA was then tasked with managing all existing BMDO programs under one umbrella — a task that would eventually be undertaken through a partnership between MDA and the Defense Contract Management Agency.

Although May 2005 marked the beginning of the MDA-DCMA partnership through the delegation of authority for quality assurance support, it was not until Jan. 22, 2008, that DCMA Director Keith D. Ernst and MDA Director Air Force Lt. Gen. Henry A. Obering III signed an overarching memorandum of agreement between the two agencies.

MDA's Quality, Safety and Mission Assurance group was charged with drafting the memorandum of agreement and having it available for review by Dec. 31, 2007. Karen Cushenberry, MDA acquisition quality manager, and Fred Lundy, lead general engineer, DCMA Space and Missile Systems Division, became team leads for the agreement project. Other core members included Richard Florez, Kim Taylor, Mike Bath, Mike Harris, Keith Korzec and Chuck Kirch.

The MDA-DCMA partnership provides oversight of and insight into BMDO throughout the supplier chain as well as more boots on the ground. As part of the agreement, DCMA has been delegated full contract management authority and responsibility for all BMDO programs. In addition, the DCMA program support teams perform their services in support of the following MDA customer outcomes:

- Prime contractors must meet program financial objectives and scheduled goals throughout the period of performance
- Program element prime contractors will meet or exceed performance, cost and schedule goals
- Property managers will manage property to minimize negative impact to cost, performance and/or schedule requirements.

Performance against these outcomes and directed activities will be reported to MDA quarterly in an executive summary and performance commitment scorecard. Customers will also be able to evaluate DCMA performance through the scorecards. In addition, performance commitments will be linked to DCMA employees' National Security Personnel System performance objectives. "This was not an easy task. We had a short suspense with the holidays approaching, so it was critical to have a team with the right skill sets to make this happen," Florez said. It was only through the dedication of the team members that we were able to meet the mission requirements."

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Large BMDO Programs

Some of the memorandum of agreement's goals include ensuring consistent policy and process implementation and providing the widest distribution of lessons learned and best practices, as well as providing a uniform application of acquisition and logistics framework across BMDO. The agreement also establishes the responsibilities of and the relationship between MDA and DCMA for BMDO.

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The memorandum of agreement promotes cooperation and mutual understanding and defines operations and interfaces between MDA program element offices and DCMA personnel to ensure a consistent and effective BMDO-centric approach throughout the

supply chain. The agreement also presents a clear understanding of customer expectations and how they relate to supporting activities. By clearly defining customer expectations, there is a more consistent approach to how DCMA provides surveillance and applies resources across MDA programs. Additionally, in support of the MDA mission, DCMA will develop and implement surveillance strategies to influence achievement of the MDA customer outcomes and the related overarching performance commitments.

To keep the agreement accurate and current, MDA and DCMA will review the memorandum annually and update it as appropriate. Overall, the agreement will help to drive consistent performance across the BMDO with a performance-based management approach, making this partnership even stronger. **C**



Back row, from left: Barney Klehman, contracts, Missile Defense Agency; Fred Lundy, lead general engineer, DCMA Space and Missile Systems Division; Patricia Kirk-McAlpine, director, DCMA Space and Missile Systems Division; Karen Cushenberry, acquisition manager, MDA; Randolph Stone, quality, MDA. Front row: Keith D. Ernst, director, DCMA, signs the MDA-DCMA overarching memorandum of agreement.