

Security Workshop 2006

by Ms. Katherine Crawford, Staff Writer

The Defense Contract Management Agency's (DCMA's) Security office recently held its 2006 Security Workshop. The approximately 65 employees who attended were security specialists from the DCMA Security Center and security representatives from DCMA's contract management offices (CMOs) within all six Agency divisions. They convened to focus on their mission of ensuring the security and force protection of Agency facilities, personnel and resources. As Mr. Keith Ernst, DCMA acting director, noted in his address to workshop attendees, Security has a unique mission-critical position within DCMA: "Without security clearances, without physical security, without facilities' security and everything that's done, we couldn't execute our mission."



workshop. As the Agency implements and enhances performance-based management, Security is following suit with its own processes. "We have both internal and external customers," explained Mr. Patrick Wright, director, DCMA Security Center, "but our main focus is on our internal customers, which are the division and CMO commanders. Our job is to meet their outcomes — that's why the Center exists." To do this with maximum effectiveness and efficiency, attendees worked to streamline and perfect the Security Services Memorandum of Agreement, which lists the customer outcomes, services and products the Security Center will provide to commanders and directors. These outcomes, services and products are then negotiated and adjusted based on the needs of each individual commander and director. "Our goal with customer-centered security is ... to work with commanders and directors to say, 'OK, how do we meet your outcomes and at the same time meet the intent of the various executive orders, [Department of Defense] regulations and standards that we've placed on ourselves as an Agency?' ... It's a balancing act," said Mr. Wright.

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The workshop, held in Lansdowne, Va., June 6-8, included guest speakers from the National Reconnaissance Office and Army Intelligence and Security Command; presentations by employees; three breakout sessions on the topics of communications security, anti-terrorism and personnel security; one specialized breakout session for senior Security Center personnel to work on the Center's strategic plan; and focused training seminars in all the security disciplines — information security, counterintelligence, antiterrorism, personnel security and communications security — and some functions of the Security budget. The objective was to provide the representatives with the latest security training techniques and initiatives as well as an opportunity to network with one another.

Attendees also focused on customer-centered security, which was the theme of this year's

(Above) DCMA Acting Director Mr. Keith Ernst addresses Security Workshop attendees. (Photos by Ms. Carolina Woods, BRTRC)

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The workshop itself was an overwhelming success, and there was excellent feedback in the form of positive comments and suggestions provided from the post-workshop attendee surveys. Mr. Wright is extremely pleased with the outcome and is eagerly planning improvements to make next year’s event even better. One of the most significant changes will be increasing the workshop’s frequency. The workshop, which has historically been held every two years, will occur annually beginning in 2007. “The attendees actually recommended that because there’s just too much information that passes within a two-year period in the Security community,” Mr. Wright stated. An annual workshop will better provide the Security representatives with “the training they need to support the commanders in meeting their missions,” he added.



Mr. Wright would also like to expand the number of attendees. This year’s budget only allowed for security representatives from the larger CMOs. “My goal is, next year, to allow all of them to attend; basically, that’s what we’ve budgeted for,” he said. Whereas being a security specialist is a primary duty, being a security representative

is a collateral duty; thus, the workshop is crucial for providing security representatives with the basic security training they need. “They’re having to take on all this knowledge and trying to learn the security discipline with limited training,” said Mr. Wright. However, with the annual training, “we [can] ensure that specialists and representatives maintain a high level of proficiency,” he noted.

(Above) Ms. Becky Allen, DCMA deputy chief of staff, addresses Security Workshop attendees.

(Right) Mr. Patrick Wright, director, DCMA Security Center, at his office at DCMA Headquarters in Alexandria, Va.

In addition to expanding the number of attendees, Mr. Wright is also considering extending the duration of the workshop from three days to a week based on comments from attendees, who stated that they really enjoyed themselves and felt they were receiving a lot of beneficial information but that there wasn’t enough time. The additional time would also allow for more breakout sessions, the most popular event according to the post-workshop evaluations. Consequently, Mr. Wright plans to add more breakout sessions next year that will encompass a wider variety of topics, including information security.

With the 2006 Security Workshop having such success, Mr. Wright is looking forward to 2007. The DCMA Carson, Calif., office will be compiling a list of possible venues, and then the various Security sectors will select their top choices; a final decision will be made based on feasibility and a cost analysis. Wherever the workshop is held, Mr. Wright and the other attendees are looking forward to their next opportunity to meet with one another in person. “I think the next workshop is going to be great and, again, the networking is going to be one of the most important functions,” Mr. Wright stated. “By the surveys that came back, that was an item that every attendee enjoyed ... because these people are constantly talking to one another worldwide but just never see each other. I think that brings credence to things, when you see somebody face-to-face and have the opportunity to ask the questions that you normally would not ask [of someone] 1,000 miles away.”

