

QA checks for A Tight Fit

Jo Adail Stephenson | DCMA Public Affairs



The hands of B.L. Boyd, Defense Contract Management Agency Dallas quality assurance specialist, examine an entrenching tool pouch to ensure the tool going into it will fit correctly. (Photos by Jo Adail Stephenson, DCMA Public Affairs)

Personal face-to-face involvement with the contractor whenever possible is an important way of conducting business to B.L. Boyd. “This type of communication stresses to the contractor how concerned we are that the product they are providing to our troops is in fact contractually sound.”

The Defense Contract Management Agency Dallas quality assurance specialist said it’s important to personally convey to the contractor they are not alone in their endeavors and have avenues to take when contractual and technical questions or issues arise. “We want to provide answers

in a timely manner to help avoid costly decisions from being made.”

When a quality assurance issue comes up, he discusses it personally with the contractor. “I believe in always attempting to handle any and all issues on the spot when possible. Details tend to get forgotten when you don’t.”

Boyd also interacts with the customer any time there are additional requirements to the basic contract or if any questions arise that cannot be answered locally.

“I am a firm believer in picking up the phone when questions absolutely need to be addressed and answered and advise my contractors to do the same,” he said.

“A sense of frustration and desperate need for an answer can easily be lost via a slow moving electronic form.”

Systemic or more serious deficiencies that cannot be handled on the spot get documented in the form of a corrective action request, or CAR. “I always convey to the contractor if they are upset or disagree with my stance on a matter, I do not take offense if they wish to contact the procuring contracting officer directly. It is always an option at their disposal. I stress the ‘buying activity’ is my customer too, and my job in total is to assure the contractor is fulfilling their contractual wishes.”

At the Dallas Lighthouse for the Blind facility, Boyd's quality assurance responsibilities involve performing both in-process and final inspections on both piece parts and final product and reviewing material certifications/test reports, in-process and final inspection records, packing/preservation/marketing and invoices.

The Dallas Lighthouse for the Blind staffs a manufacturing and sewing facility with blind/visually impaired employees who produce products for both commercial customers and government agencies, including the U.S. military.

For this contract, the contractor's work involves planning, contract review, purchasing, spreading, cutting, sewing, hardware assembly, packing/preservation/marketing, in-process and final inspection on the entrenching tool pouches, which hold the foldable entrenching tools.

The contractor manufactures approximately 5,000 pouches per month for the Army.

The end result is "the warfighters getting high quality and reliable products they can use to stay safe and healthy and succeed in whatever mission they may be engaged," he said. "To the warfighter, I'd say I am honored, even if in the smallest way, to have played any role in keeping you and our country safe. Thank you for all your efforts, stay safe and God bless." 



Once the entrenching tool is inside the pouch, B. L. Boyd, Defense Contract Management Agency Dallas quality assurance specialist, checks the clearance for closing the pouch.



A close-up view of an entrenching tool pouch shows the area where B.L. Boyd checks to make sure an entrenching tool pouch fastens and closes properly.