



NewsBLAST

U.S. Army Contracting Command

Vol. 3, No. 8
March 7, 2012

“Providing global contracting support to warfighters.”

Dempsey: military contracting costs must shrink

By Karen Parrish
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON – Contracted operational support to the military – essentially, wartime contracting – has expanded from a ratio of six troops per contractor during the Revolutionary War to fewer than one service member per contractor in Afghanistan, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff said today.

Speaking at the fifth annual Joint Operational Contract Support Leaders Conference held at the Women In Military Service for America memorial here, Army Gen. Martin E. Dempsey said “it can’t keep going that way.”

Dempsey said large defense budgets over recent years have contributed to the rise in contracted employee numbers, while the military services also rely on contract support for several logistics and life support functions service members used to perform.

The Center for Strategic and International Studies’ Defense-Industrial Initiatives Group analyzed what DOD spent on contracting from 1990 to 2010. In a report released last May, the group noted defense contract dollars more than doubled from 2001 to 2010.

“Contract spending far outpaced growth in other DOD outlays,” the report noted. “This growth was concentrated in products and services, which experienced a compound annual growth rate of 8.4 percent and 9.4 percent, respectively, compared to the [research and development] category’s 5.4 percent annual growth.”

See DEMPSEY, page 4.

Fort Benning contracting office tackles demanding mission

By Daniel Elkins
MICC Public Affairs Office

FORT SAM HOUSTON, Texas – Found at one of the largest training installations in the Army responsible for training infantry and armor Soldiers, experts at the Installation Contracting Office-Fort Benning, Ga., remain focused despite having one of the busiest missions in the Mission and Installation Contracting Command.

“We never lose sight of our mission to provide the Soldier with what he or she needs to do their job,” said Brenda Clark, deputy director.

That attention is also reflected in the ICO’s maxim: “Supporting Soldiers is what we do. We also write contracts.”

Made up of 40 civilian professionals and nine military members, Clark anticipates the ICO to keep pace with its emergent

mission with the addition of a quality assurance specialist and six additional contingency contracting officers, or CCOs, from the 639th Senior Contingency Contracting Team at Fort Bragg, N.C.

Its mission is as dynamic as its customer base. Contracting for the U.S. Army’s Training and Doctrine Command, Forces Command and Special Operations Command among many others, the number of people and customers supported is always a moving target. Fort Benning trains more than 108,000 Soldiers a year in 61 courses.

“Not only does Fort Benning provide a significant portion of training for the majority of the Army,” said Clark of the 52 percent of all Soldiers who will train there, “but also it provides a platform for combat units to train and deploy.”

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Photo by Kristian Ogden

Jo Price offers contracting advice to Maj. Michael Watson as part of her mentoring duties at Fort Benning.

Spotlight on...



Sgt. 1st Class Lascelles Cuff

By Giselle Lyons
ACC Office of Public & Congressional Affairs

Sgt. 1st Class Lascelles Cuff may not have the contracting background like many of his fellow Expeditionary Contracting Command's Soldiers, but he does possess a Combat Action Badge, something that most of his peers do not.

Cuff, a native of Hartford, Conn., who enlisted in the Army in 1996, is the ECC's chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear/training non-commissioned officer.

Cuff received the CAB during Operation Iraqi Freedom as part of the initial offensive surge to move across the Iraqi border. The CAB is the non-infantry equivalent to the Combat Infantry Badge which is awarded to infantry Soldiers for engaging or being

engaged by the enemy.

Cuff received the award as part of the 3rd Infantry Division. He deployed to Kuwait in 2003 as part of the initial offensive to cross the Iraqi border. At the time, he was the company CBRN NCO/operations center noncommissioned officer in charge and was responsible for collecting and disseminating critical information from the infantry platoons to ensure the commander had a complete situational awareness.

When his unit crossed the border, they came into contact with enemy combatants that were moving through Al Najaf and the Karbala Gap toward Saddam International Airport. At one point, his company lost five Soldiers in less than 24 hours. Also trained as an alternate gunner on the Bradley Fighting Vehicle, Cuff and another Soldier engaged an enemy that was trying to infiltrate their company assembly area.

"Being awarded the CAB meant a lot to me," said Cuff. "It validated the sacrifice that my unit and I made during Operation Iraqi Freedom."

Though he is not a 51 Charlie contracting NCO, Cuff's experience allows him to work within ECC seamlessly.

At ECC, he is the command's CBRN/training NCO. He coordinates and tracks the mandatory military and civilian training for both the Army Contracting Command and the ECC headquarters. He also advises the command on CBRN issues such as training and equipment.

"I get to hone my skills as a training coordinator and instructor as a part of a general staff," said Cuff. "Working with the people in ECC only strengthens these abilities - my experience here will be invaluable as I lead and mentor Soldiers."

Sgt. 1st Class Lascelles Cuff
Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear/Training NCO
Headquarters,
Expeditionary Contracting Command



NEWCOMERS WELCOMED - (L-R) Headquarters, Army Contracting Command welcomes Erin Kirkpatrick, government purchase card management specialist, Resource Management Directorate; Vicki Vandermier, procurement analyst, Contracting Operations Directorate; Mary E. DuBose, strategic human capital specialist, Human Capital Directorate; Patricia Vail, contract specialist, Army Materiel Command Contracting Support Element; and, Andy Williams, engineer, Headquarters, Expeditionary Contracting Command Installation and Logistics Directorate.

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the Army and this command.

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ONE FOR ALL, ALL FOR FUN!

ACC employees run in pursuit of health, happiness

By Liz Adrian

Army Contracting Command – Rock Island, Ill.

ROCK ISLAND, ILL. – For three Army Contracting Command – Rock Island employees, the pursuit of competition is the equivalent to the pursuit of happiness.

Contract specialists Jennifer Paul and Stephanie Migawa, along with procurement analyst Amy Knutson, are active runners, regularly participating in road races and training between races.

All three have been active in sports the majority of their lives. Knutson played softball and basketball in high school and turned to running in college. Migawa played volleyball, basketball and ran track in high school, then continued to run track through college. Paul began running as a high school freshman.

On any given workday the women can be seen running, chatting, smiling, and pushing each other to go farther, providing invaluable motivation. “There are days that

All three are mothers to young children and feel it is crucial to set a good example for their kids.

I’m tired and don’t feel like going, but then I feel guilty if I miss a workout with them,” said Knutson. “You actually do feel better and more awake in the afternoon after you go work out.”

The hard work and training pays off for

each of the women in different ways. All of them consistently run the smaller races around town and in the Illinois/Iowa area, but they have larger accomplishments under their belts.

Migawa has run the Arizona Half Marathon four times. Paul says finishing the 2011 Quad City Times Bix seven-miler in 41:52, 14th in the women’s female division has been her biggest running accomplishment. Knutson has completed the Quad Cities Marathon in less than four hours.

“It was really hard, but it was such a great accomplishment, so I was glad I did it,” said Knutson. “I finished in just under four hours, which was my goal. Toward the end of the race, I saw my time approaching four hours, and somehow I got the speed to finish better than I wanted.”

They don’t typically run alongside each other on race day. Migawa and Knutson can hold their own and finish very well, but Paul consistently places at the head of the pack. “After we finish the race we’re watching for each other,” said Migawa. “Jen finishes so far ahead that she’s usually doing her cool down, or sometimes she’ll see me and then runs the last 100 meters again with me trying to motivate me to finish.”

In addition to work, racing and constant training, all three have an even more important reason for keeping healthy. All three are mothers to young children and feel it is crucial to set a good example for their kids.

“I do it for myself, for sure, but I want to make sure that my kids grow up knowing that there isn’t an alternative,” said Migawa. “You need to be healthy and active. I don’t expect my kids to be runners by any means, but there’s no reason we can’t go out for family walks or out for bike rides.”

An overarching spirit of challenging oneself is common to all three women.

“Through the years I have continued to run because I enjoy setting goals and working hard to achieve them,” said Paul.



Photo by Liz Adrian

ACC-RI employees (L-R) Amy Knutson, Jen Paul and Stephanie Migawa regularly use their lunch hour to run in order to maintain their healthy life style.

DEMPSEY

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Now, as the services reshape for waning conflicts and shrinking budgets, there is an opportunity to determine what level of contract support the military needs, the chairman said.

“You can see where the trend line is going,” he said, noting that the trend cannot keep moving in that direction. Contractors are part of the total military forces, Dempsey said. As with active and reserve component service members, he noted, it’s important to identify both the right number of employees and the essential skills they must have.

“We’re shrinking back to what we can afford” in the number of troops, Dempsey said. The 2013 budget request reduces overall troop numbers 5.5 percent over five years, mostly through cuts to the Army and Marine Corps.

Defense contract spending dollars must shrink as well, he said. Such cuts must reflect the experience gained over the last decade’s conflicts, so “the body of knowledge we didn’t have [before Afghanistan and Iraq]” won’t be lost in future conflicts.

Dempsey said the Defense Department’s goal should be to use contracted support to provide key options, and to balance the uniformed services’ capabilities, while never forgetting to ask, “What can the nation afford?”

The chairman acknowledged the military



Photo by Glenn Fawcett

Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, takes questions while testifying on the President’s fiscal year 2013 budget request before the Senate Budget Committee in Washington, D.C., Feb. 28.

needs to get better at contract oversight.

There is a broad variety of kinds and costs of contracted support, and often similar tasks are priced far differently, he said.

“There’s no doctrine I’m aware of that would help me make sense of [cost variance],” the general said.

The military must take responsibility for better oversight, and will need “input to close those gaps,” he said.

Dempsey noted defense leaders now accept that even company commanders need the skills to supervise contract support, and the Army, for example, is teaching captains some of those lessons during their branch career courses.

“When resources become scarce, we have to start thinking,” he said. “My message is – this is an opportunity.”

MISSION

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In addition to the student population, ICO-Fort Benning contract support extends to the garrison, installation directorates, two Army Ranger battalions, a continental United States replacement center, three FORSCOM units, the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation responsible for training soldiers from Central and South America in infantry methods and tactics, as well as tenant units on the installation.

“In addition to training requirements, we also support combat forces for two operational units with different missions, both of which often require rapid response to requests,” Clark said. “Contract support must be flexible and ready to meet the different challenges of a wide variety of customers.”

In fiscal 2011, members of ICO-Fort

Benning processed 2,110 contract actions for a total obligation of more than \$315 million, making it the top contracting office in obligated dollars for the MICC. That included contracts for logistics and base operations valued at \$71 million, dining facilities valued at \$38 million and more than \$22 million in government purchase cards obligations.

“The (directorate of logistics) effort is the largest for Installation Management Command, and the dining facility contract is the largest food service budget in the Army, serving more than 10 million meals a year,” she said.

Helping offset the increased workload are the nine CCOs, of which three are deployed, who are fully incorporated into ICO-Fort Benning.

“This arrangement yields a multitude

of benefits,” Clark said. “First, it gives CCOs actual experience with real-time requirements from inception to close-out. Second, customers in uniform have responded better to dealing with other Soldiers, and the level of trust and cooperation has increased with some of our more challenging and high-maintenance customers.

“Soldiers trained in acquisition have contributed greatly to our customer education training by communicating and affirming with other Soldiers what is being taught since they have now seen ‘both sides of the fence.’”

Clark added the fresh viewpoint gained by developing a teaming relationship with Soldiers benefits not only the ICO-Fort Benning, but reaffirms its motto of supporting Soldiers.



ACC in the News

These articles include mention of the Army Contracting Command.

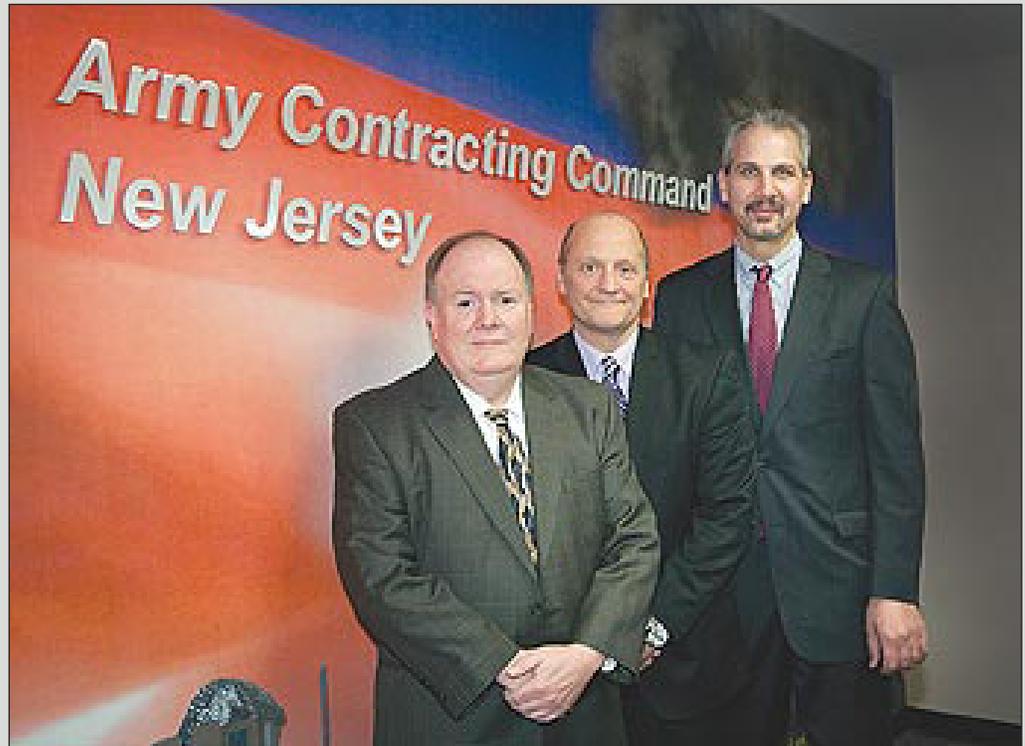
Picatinny Army Contracting Command expands

New Jersey Herald

ROCKAWAY TWP. – The operations of the Army Contracting Command-Picatinny have expanded to include an ACC contracting activity at Fort Dix, creating a new organization officially established in October called the Army Contracting Command-New Jersey.

The mission of ACC-NJ is to plan, direct, manage and execute the full spectrum of contracting, acquisition support and business advisory services.

These activities support major weapons, armaments, ammunition, information technology and enterprise systems for the Army and other Department of Defense customers.



Pictured from left are Contracting Command executive officers: Bruce Berinato, executive director; David Banashefski, director of mission and enterprise operations; and Paul Milenkowic, deputy director.

<http://www.njherald.com/story/17077355/picatinny-army-contracting-command-expands>

Contracting experts help build future acquisition leaders

By Daniel P. Elkins
MICC, Public Affairs Office

Uniformed contracting officers (KOs), training at the U.S. Army Contracting Command (AAC) pre-deployment readiness exercise Joint Dawn 2012, benefited from a growing role by civilian contracting professionals.

The exercise, conducted Jan. 19-Feb. 3 at Fort Bliss, TX, is designed to develop the Soldier acquisition skills

necessary to meet mission needs in a Joint environment downrange, in a ramp-up to a deployment supporting the U.S. Central Command. Of the more than 250 participants in the exercise, 45 members from throughout the U.S. Army Mission and Installation Contracting Command (MICC) worked alongside their counterparts from the U.S. Army Expeditionary Contracting Command (ECC) and sister services in roles ranging from leadership positions to mentors and policy experts.

<http://live.usaasc.info/access-contracting-experts-help-build-future-acquisition-leaders/>

