

ACC TODAY

U.S. Army Contracting Command

Fall 2011



Change of leadership

*ACC welcomes new executive director,
command sergeant major*

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View from the top

ACC-RI closing out contracts in Iraq and Afghanistan

Supporting more than just the warfighter



VIEW FROM THE TOP

Director's Note

ACC: Proud of our past – confident about the future

By Carol Lowman
Executive Director, Army Contracting Command

I am proud to have been selected to lead this great organization as we continue to meet the challenges of tomorrow. I've been blessed to have been a part of the Army Contracting Command family since its inception in 2008 and I am very pleased with the growth of the command and its monumental accomplishments.

The Army Contracting Command's mission is two-fold mission -- to provide our customers with a substantial return on investment by obtaining goods and services on time and at the lowest total ownership cost for our Soldiers; and to provide career management for over 5,700 military and civilian contracting professionals. We are proud of what we do. We are an important part of the force generation process.

Our former director, Jeff Parsons, ensured this command had a rock solid foundation on which to grow. He championed the cause of the contracting career field for both military and civilians. Whether it was seeking additional training opportunities or acknowledgments for our dedicated team or addressing members of Congress on the virtues and merits of military contracting, he remained at the forefront of advancement of, and the genesis in, the development of today's military contracting.

Our response to world disasters and the support provided to operational commanders in the field has not gone unnoticed. Our senior leaders know and appreciate what Army contracting professionals bring to the fight. We will continue transforming Army contracting to ensure we meet the needs of our Army today and in the future.

We will move forward with our efforts to ensure that Army contracting becomes more agile, efficient and transparent. We will forge ahead to meet the needs of our Army and of our combatant commanders. We will work hard to provide better stewardship of our taxpayers' dollars. I will continue to champion the cause of establishing contracting as a core competency of our Army.

Our actions have direct impact on the quality of life of the Soldiers and civilians both within the command and the Army. It is an honor and an awesome responsibility to lead an organization that does such important things for so many important people.

Together we will continue to build the Army Contracting Command and the next generation of Army contracting professionals. ♦

ACC TODAY



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Cover—Carol Lowman accepts the Army Contracting Command colors from Gen. Ann Dunwoody, commanding general, U.S. Army Materiel Command. (U.S. Army photo by David San Miguel)

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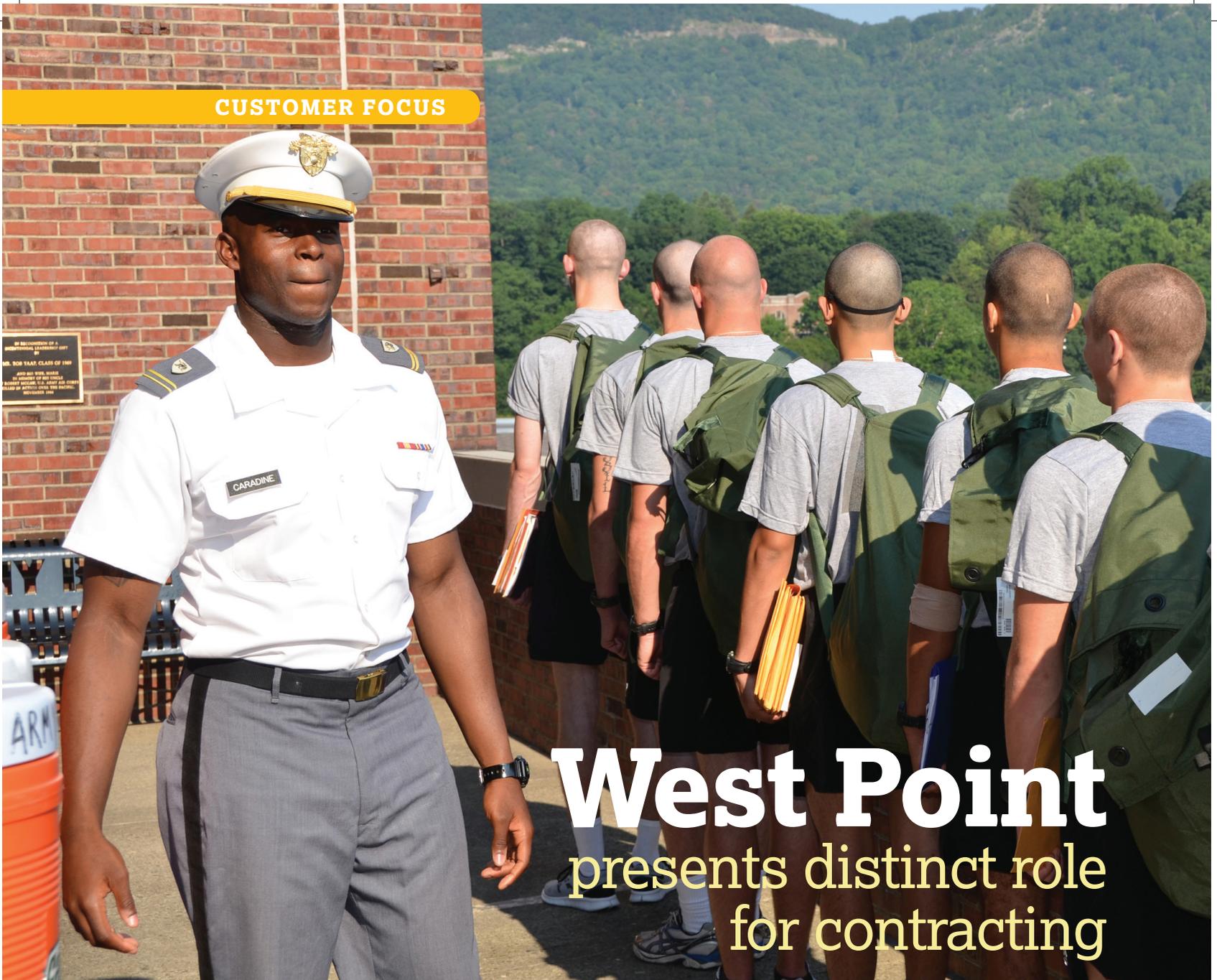
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Correction: In the Summer 2011 ACC TODAY edition, the article on page 4 was written by Maj. Hurchel L. Williams, 412th Contracting Support Brigade, Fort Sam Houston, Texas.



West Point

presents distinct role
for contracting

by Daniel Elkins
Mission and Installation Contracting Command Public Affairs
Fort Sam Houston, Texas

WEST POINT, N.Y.—As the oldest continuously occupied military post in America, West Point creates an extraordinary workload for contracting professionals here who harmonize the post's modern needs with its rich history.

Contract actions by the Mission and Installation Contracting Command staff take into consideration the need to preserve a history dating back to the Revolutionary War while incorporating the latest state-of-the-art equipment in support of

the post's 4,000-strong cadet corps, 25 intercollegiate athletic teams and premier performing arts center.

Taking on this challenge is the 35-member staff of the MICC Installation Contracting Office-West Point, responsible for planning, integrating, awarding and administering contracts in support of the academic dean's office, corps of cadets, garrison, department of public works, directorate of logistics as well as other installation customers and nearby 2nd Aviation Detachment at the Stewart Air National Guard Base.

"We have phenomenal employees," said Annemarie Kopko, ICO director. "We're in our own little corner of the world here, so it's pretty amazing that we're able to attract the people we do to work here. They're smart, motivated and excited about work; and I'm talking about people that have been here more than 20 years and those who just walked in the door."

Dave Bugger, the MICC ICO-West Point former director, agreed and commended his staff's work ethic at a time when its workload is

“I remember when I first came here, one of my first procurements was to buy a wind tunnel. We also buy lasers and all kinds of test equipment to support academic research.”

example of the length to which the post leaders attempt to preserve its history.

“It used to be the military police station until it was renovated in the mid-1990s,” he said. “The engineer who ran the project said if we would have just knocked it down a new building would have cost less. We preserved the shell of the building and basically gutted the inside.”

Kopko said the MICC ICO-West Point is presently administering a \$9.2 million construction project in-house as part of a multiple award task order contract through the Facilities Sustainment, Restoration and Modernization program. The program aims to keep the inventory of Defense Department facilities in good working order by addressing day-to-day maintenance requirements as well as fund the restoration of aging facilities.

The number of contract actions and modifications for the office remained constant from 2006 to 2009 but jumped by more than 35 percent to 3,358 in 2010. The amount of dollars obligated has also seen a recent spike from \$122 million in 2006 to more than \$144 million in 2010 and cover the gamut of acquisitions.

“I remember when I first came here, one of my first procurements was to buy a wind tunnel,” Kopko said. “We also buy lasers and all kinds of test equipment to support academic research.”

Contracting experts also played a major role in the renovation, lighting and sound system of West Point’s Eisenhower Hall Theater, which annually hosts national entertainers from stage and music and served as the setting for President Barack Obama’s 2009 address to the nation concerning the surge in Afghanistan.

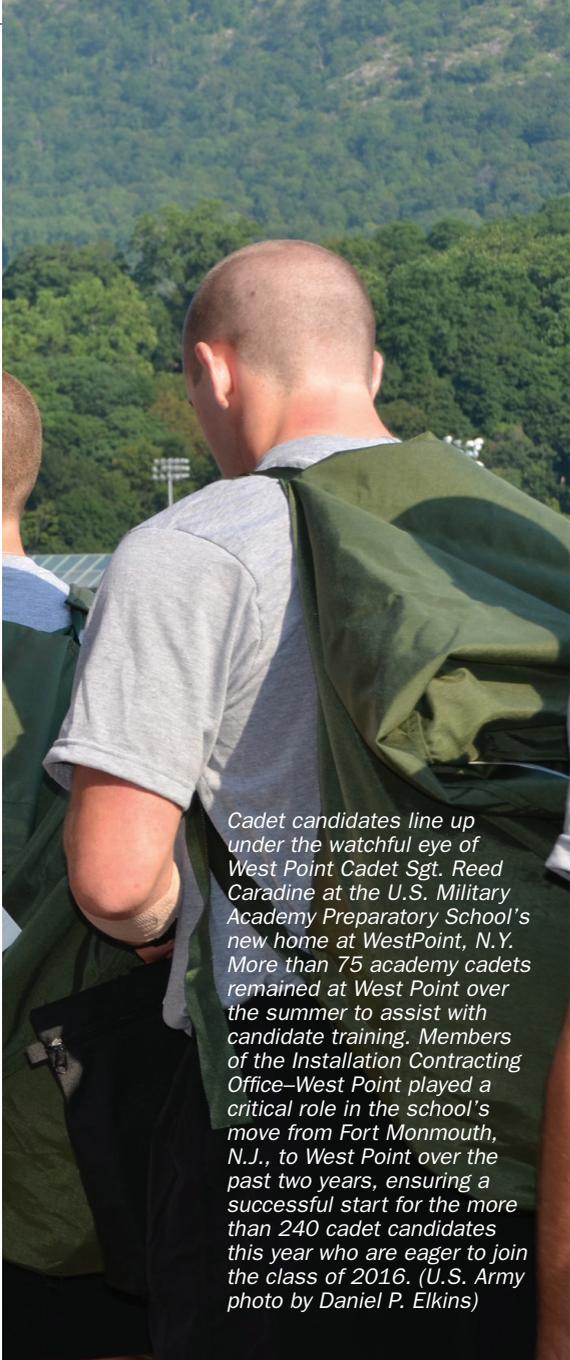
“It’s the second largest performing arts theater on the East Coast, next to Radio City Music Hall, offering a Broadway-caliber venue for performing arts and attracting some of the biggest artists,” Bugger said.

From the stage to the sports field, contracting professionals constantly find themselves having to become experts on subjects they’ve never dreamed of, including football stadium turf.

“We have NCAA-caliber athletic teams here, so it’s important that the fields these teams play on meet NCAA standards,” Bugger said.

“Following a change in technology to Astroturf to reduce injury, West Point’s Michie Stadium was one of the first to install the new surface.”

“That took a lot of research, and we worked with the football coach and officials from Giants Stadium. The sample proposals we received looked like something for a science project in a clear plastic box with a crosscut of dirt and turf,” Kopko added. “Some procurements are very complicated but interesting, and you always walk away learning something.” ♦



Cadet candidates line up under the watchful eye of West Point Cadet Sgt. Reed Caradine at the U.S. Military Academy Preparatory School’s new home at West Point, N.Y. More than 75 academy cadets remained at West Point over the summer to assist with candidate training. Members of the Installation Contracting Office–West Point played a critical role in the school’s move from Fort Monmouth, N.J., to West Point over the past two years, ensuring a successful start for the more than 240 cadet candidates this year who are eager to join the class of 2016. (U.S. Army photo by Daniel P. Elkins)

going up and a new major customer has just arrived at the post. The ICO was instrumental in the move of the U.S. Military Academy Preparatory School from Fort Monmouth, N.J., to West Point in time for the July arrival of the first 246 cadet candidates.

Having served as director since 2006, Bugger’s stint with the ICO-West Point began in 1990 and wrapped up in September with his retirement. He points out that the very building in which the contracting office resides is a classic



410th Contracting Support Brigade supports U.S. Army South at PANAMAX 2011

by Lt. Col. Vernon Myers
916th Contingency Contracting Battalion
Fort Sam Houston, Texas

PANAMAX 2011 provided the 410th Contracting Support Brigade, Fort Sam Houston, Texas, the opportunity to train as it will fight as they provided contingency contracting support defending the Panama Canal.

“Fuerzas Aliadas” PANAMAX 2011 is an annual U.S. Southern Command-sponsored exercise that focuses on ensuring the defense of

the Panama Canal and the Central American region by a multinational, combined/joint task force and allows the brigade members to hone their contingency contracting skills and to prepare for the next major contingency operation.

One of the largest multinational training exercises in the world, PANAMAX 2011 was conducted August 15-26, with personnel operating off the coast of Panama, in the United States and other overseas locations. This year more than 3,500 person-

nel and 22 vessels from 17 partner nations participated.

The Army is designated as the combatant command support agent. Within that authority, the 410th provides expeditionary contracting support to the U.S. Southern Command’s area of responsibility and provides direct support to U.S. Army South. The 410th supported the exercise by embedding contracting liaison officers within U.S. Army South’s operation cell to serve as business advisors and to respond to

“Learning RCO operations up front will allow new 51Cs to relate the contracting skills they learn in the next year into a contingency context and help them prepare for downrange operations.”

requests for exercise-related contracting support.

“PANAMEX 2011 was a great training opportunity where we were able to introduce newly assessed and school-trained 51Cs to regional contracting office operations in a contingency environment,” said Maj. Jarrett Moffitt, commander, 677th Contingency Contracting Team, Fort Sam Houston, Texas. “Learning RCO operations up front will allow new 51Cs to relate the contracting skills they learn in the next year into a contingency context and help them prepare for downrange operations.”

The 410th capitalized on the training opportunity by focusing on the brigade’s mission essential tasks list. The unit concentrated on preparing contingency contracting officers and emergency essential civilians for the next humanitarian relief operation by reviewing and incorporating contracting lessons learned from Operation Unified Response Haiti, Joint Task Force Pakistan and the tsunami in Japan.

Elements of the 410th command and staff and the 916th Contingency Contracting Battalion deployed to Camp Bullis, Texas, in order to replicate forward deployment in support of operations. The 410th formed the nucleus of a joint theater support contracting command. No contracting support brigade has executed this task in a real-world operation.

The commander’s intent was to use this exercise to identify the key tasks and decision points necessary to transition from separate regional contracting offices to a more robust theater-focused joint theater support contracting command.

The brigade focused on establishing a command and control headquarters, integrating with joint partners, executing contracting operations, reporting, and information management. The 410th also tested the Expeditionary Contracting Command’s early entry module communications. This package consisted of a medium-sized satellite system that provided Internet and telephone connectivity for the headquarters and contracting offices.

The 916th incorporated an alert/emergency deployment readiness exercise, followed by establishing a notional regional contracting center in Buenaventura, Colombia. The 677th Contingency Contracting Team and the 682nd CCT, both located at Fort Sam Houston, established notional regional contracting offices in Cali and Medellin, Colombia.

Whether CCOs find themselves operating in South or Central America or the Caribbean, the lessons learned during PANAMAX 2011 will help them provide better contracting support to warfighters operating throughout the U.S. Southern Command’s area of responsibility. ♦



(Left to right) Sgt. Maj. Vincent Fontenot, 410th Contracting Support Brigade senior enlisted advisor, Chief Warrant Officer 2 Derrick Sands, Expeditionary Contracting Command network technician, Col. William Sanders, 410th CSB commander and Lt. Col. Gerard Henry, 410th CSB executive officer, discuss the capabilities of the Early Entry Communications Satellite Module. (U.S. Army photo)



ACC-RI now responsible for closing out contracts in Iraq and Afghanistan

By Larry D. McCaskill
Headquarters, U.S. Army Contracting Command

Army Contracting Command-Rock Island will close out thousands of Iraq and Afghanistan contracts at the Rock Island Arsenal. (U.S. Army photo by Liz Adrian)

The Army Contracting Command has been asked to step in to help close out the current backlog of contracts supporting the efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Prior to that decision, the responsibility for closing out those contracts belonged to the U.S. Central Command's Contracting Command. The ACC has directed its ACC-Rock Island contracting center to now execute this mission.

"ACC-RI was already providing acquisition support to the U.S. Central Command via our Reach-back Division," said Joan Wysoske, ACC-RI. "There was an existing memorandum of agreement and that had to be modified slightly to add the closeout mission."

Originally, the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army (Procurement) created the Contract Closeout Task Force Office in San Antonio, Texas, to eliminate an estimated backlog of 25,000 contracts. That estimate quickly grew to more than 105,000. In May 2010, the commanding general of the U.S. Central Command Contracting Command made the decision to move the closeout mission to ACC-RI.

In order to get the task at hand accomplished some additional staff was needed.

Since this is an additional mission, ACC-RI is providing some staffing and DASA (P) will also continue to provide funding. The ACC-RI personnel have been in place since October 2010 and the first DASA (P) funded personnel came on board in June 2011. DASA (P) provides funding for 25 persons (as they did for the San Antonio facility) and is also funding nine personnel through Ability One, National Industries for the Blind and the Chicago Lighthouse, not-for-profit agencies that are committed to providing jobs for people with disabilities. Currently there are 31 personnel working the closeout mission at ACC-RI with six more in the process of coming on board, according to Wysoske.

According to the Government Accountability Office, it's uncertain how many contingency contracts are still open from FY 2003-2010 but Wysoske thinks they can identify some of the contracts using the systems that helped create them.

"The use of contract writing systems, such as PD2 (Procurement Desktop-Defense) and PADDs (Procurement Automated Data and Document Systems), will be instrumental in identifying open contracts eligible for closeout (for those contracts awarded after 2008). The systems

were not available to deployed personnel prior to 2009 when contracts were written with word processing software and statistics were gathered manually," she said.

To work their way through the contracts, Wysoske said each contract file reviewed will be inventoried and confirmed as closed. If not closed, documentation will be researched to determine that the goods or services contracted for were delivered, accepted, and paid for; and the contract will be closed. Any excess funds will be de-obligated.

"If we do not identify and de-obligate excess funds before they expire, that money may not be used for other needed goods and services," Wysoske said. "And secondly, if payment issues are not resolved in a timely fashion, unpaid contractors are less likely to want to provide competitive bids and offers for future business with the U.S."

For Wysoske and her team, success can be measured in dollars and sense.

"Closing the 15,000 contracts in inventory from FY07 before the FY07 dollars expire will be considered success," she said. "Doing that while the ACC-RI Closeout Branch will also be working payment issues, claims issues and newer contracts as well is the best approach and will show results." ♦



CUSTOMER FOCUS

A Soldier patrols the detainee area at the Guantanamo Bay facility. The Regional Contracting Office-GTMO supports the joint task force and contributes to the safe, humane, legal and transparent care and custody of detainees. (U.S. Army photo)

Contracting office provides capitalist support in Cuba

*By Maj. Peter Stammersky,
Regional Contracting Office -
Guantanamo Bay, Cuba*

GUANTANAMO BAY, Cuba—Christopher Columbus landed here at Fisherman's Point in 1494 and from that point forward the bay has remained a vital harbor for many countries.

The United States took control of the bay in 1898 during the Spanish-American War when U.S. Marines landed at Fisherman's Point on June 10, 1898, and were able to squash Spanish resistance with naval support and help from Cuban scouts. This invasion helped support actions to the west, where Col. Theodore Roosevelt and his "Rough Riders" formed the 1st U.S. Volunteer Cavalry.

On Feb. 23, 1903, then-President Roosevelt, realizing the strategic importance for a coaling and naval station at Guantanamo Bay, signed the first known contract written for GTMO. It was for a perpetual lease of the 45 square miles of land and water around the bay. The lease was agreed to by Tomas Estrada Plama, the first president of Cuba, and was later incorporated into the Cuban Constitution under the Platt Amendment. In 1934 the lease was reaffirmed under the Avery Porko Treaty and the lease payment was modified from \$2,000 in U.S. gold coins per year to the 1934 value of \$4,085 in U.S. dollars and made the lease permanent.

After the Cuban Revolution in 1959, President Dwight Eisenhower insisted the status of the base remain unchanged, despite new Cuban leader Fidel Castro's objections. Since then, the Cuban government has cashed only one of the rent checks from the U.S. government, and even then, according to Castro, only because of "confusion" in the early days of the leftist revolution. The remaining checks made out to "Treasurer General of the Republic"—a title that ceased to exist after the revolution—have not been cashed.

The United States argued that the cashing of the single check signified Havana's ratification of the lease, and that ratification by the new government rendered moot any questions about violations of sovereignty and illegal military occupation.

Today a 17.4-mile fence line surrounds Guantanamo Bay Naval Station, the only U.S. base operated in a communist-led country. It has been home to Joint Task Force Guantanamo since Nov. 4, 2002.

Since 2004, the 410th Contracting Support Brigade, headquartered at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, has had the responsibility of providing support to the JTF and the Office of Military Commissions. The 410th's Regional Contracting Office-GTMO, provides direct support to the command. The mission of RCO-GTMO is to plan and execute contingency

contracting actions in support of Joint Task Force – Guantanamo forces, to serve as the forward-deployed planner for migrant operations and to serve as the business advisor to the JTF commander on contracting support requirements.

RCO-GTMO's main customers are the JTF and the Office of Military Commissions. The office procures many items ranging from personal protective equipment, containerized living areas, office furniture, information and technology products and services, to library services for the detainees, an Islamic advisor that reports directly to the JTF commander and surveillance camera installation and maintenance in each of the five camps.

The office staff also provides contracting officer representative comprehensive training to new CORs and assists customers with various tasks including performance work statements and justification/approval reviews. The office has conducted numerous actions throughout the past three years with 86 contract actions in fiscal year 2008 for almost \$8 million, 51 contract actions in fiscal year 2009 for more than \$9.5 million and 76 contract actions in fiscal year 2010 for more than \$19.3 million. ♦



Delores Peshoff is a Deployed Cadre Program member currently stationed in Afghanistan. With her are (left to right) Kip Ryan, Staff Sgt. Michael McCue, Maj. Blain A White, U.S. Air Force Master Sgt. Christopher Klaasen and U.S. Air Force Capt. Clinton T. Minor (Photo courtesy of Delores Peshoff)

Supporting more than just the warfighter

*By Ann Jensis-Dale,
Headquarters, U.S. Army
Contracting Command*

Civilian and military contracting specialists are increasingly in demand to support critical contracting requirements around the world. Whether it's military operations, counterinsurgency, life support systems or emergency disaster relief, contracting specialists will always be needed. As these requirements increase, the Army Contracting Command is poised to provide critical support.

The ACC Contingency Support Center was established in April 2011 to resource and coordinate command support for contingency operations within the U.S. and overseas.

"ACC has been increasingly asked to provide contract management support for the warfighter and the Army in missions that are beyond the scope of the command's

“The most successful endorsement of the program has been the sincere pride of service for ACC employees currently serving.”

day-to-day mission and operations,” said Jack Cunnane, director, ACC Contingency Support Center.

The ACC CSC is the command’s resourcing focal point for all contingency operations overseas and natural disaster relief in the U.S. The backbone of the CSC is the Deployable Cadre Program whose mission is to provide the immediate capacity to deploy contract management personnel support when needed. “The command must be prepared to respond quickly and effectively with highly qualified personnel at a moment’s notice. These people must be ready to deploy when called,” said Cunnane.

To establish a standing roster of personnel, the center actively promoted the benefits of serving in the DCP through Army command information and social media outlets and channels.

“The most successful endorsement of the program has been the sincere pride of service for ACC employees currently serving,” Cunnane said. “Program members’ stories were featured in the ACC Spotlight and publicized throughout the command and on Facebook. Employees described their experiences, challenges and unique situations encountered in a contingency

environment. Most notably, they described what it was like to work and serve alongside the warfighter,” Cunnane continued.

“The program has offered me an opportunity to take risks and develop my skill set in a contingency environment. I was ready to explore another facet of the 1102 (contracting specialist) career field and the cadre program helped me take that first step,” said Kathy Valentine, contracting officer, serving with ACC in Afghanistan.

“The Soldiers we work with as cadre members versus permanent party civilians appreciate that we understand what they are dealing with here in Kuwait. We are a part of getting the mission done and ensuring the warfighters get what they need here and downrange,” said Deborah Doyle, division chief, special projects, serving with ACC in Kuwait.

“I have the deepest respect and admiration for the warfighter. Working alongside them in a contingency environment has given me a new perspective on their day-to-day job,” said Lynn Roberts, contract specialist, serving with ACC in Afghanistan.

In less than six months, the ACC Deployable Cadre Program developed a standing roster of ACC

qualified employees ready to deploy at a moment’s notice. Due to this overwhelming response, ACC was able to support more than just its initial requirements. ACC reached out to the Defense Contract Management Agency to provide deployment opportunities for ACC acquisition personnel to support DCMA’s burgeoning operational contracting mission. DCMA Director Charlie Williams accepted ACC’s offer of support.

ACC and DCMA signed a memorandum of agreement in late April 2011 citing ACC will support seven DCMA Afghanistan positions on an enduring basis as volunteer pools and Army contingency tasking allows. The seven positions consist of three contract specialists, two property specialists and two quality assurance specialists for 179 days to perform duties in DCMA Afghanistan. As of September, ACC provided DCMA with 11 employees currently performing contingency contracting duties for DCMA as well as supporting ACC contingency requirements.

The ACC Contingency Support Center continues to recruit for the Deployable Cadre Program. For more information go to www.armyhire.com/volunteer. ♦

Innovation required during Mongolian mission

By Ed Worley

Headquarters, U.S. Army Contracting Command

ULAANBAATAR, Mongolia—Three Expeditionary Contracting Command contracting officers had to “adapt, improvise and overcome” to support a multinational exercise here.

Maj. Lisa Carter, Maj. Michelle Lewis and Master Sgt. Eunice Haynes provided expeditionary contracting support to Khaan Quest 2011 from June 15 to August 16. The training exercise, hosted by the Mongolian armed forces, was designed to strengthen the capabilities of U.S., Mongolian and other participating nations’ forces in international peace support operations and civic outreach programs worldwide.

The trio, assigned to the 650th Contingency Contracting Team, Yokota Air Base, Japan, executed engineering and medical capabilities projects including leasing equipment and contracting for interpreters, laundry and internet services, showers, toilets, food, water and beds, according to Col. Frederick A. Puthoff, 411th Contracting Support Brigade commander. The 650th CCT is a subordinate unit of the 411th CSB, headquartered in Seoul, South Korea. He said the team had to exercise a great deal of flexibility to meet customer needs in an austere environment.

“The biggest hurdle was leasing modern equipment that meets customer needs and can accomplish the mission,” Puthoff said. “Meeting a savvy customer’s needs with modern, serviceable equipment in Mongolia was indeed a challenge. Working with the (Marine Corps, executive agency for the exercise)

“I was impressed with our team’s adaptability and flexibility in an austere location.”

mantra of ‘adapt, improvise and overcome,’ we were able to work with what was available locally and still accomplish the mission.”

He cited a requirement for an electric lawnmower as an example of the team’s challenges.

“This is simply not available in Mongolia,” he explained. “We did notice that our USMC colleagues were able to exercise a great deal of flexibility when it came to balancing requirements with what is on hand. We will take that as a lesson learned and add it to our own repertoire of contracting tools.”

Jeff Parsons, then Army Contracting Command executive director; Brig. Gen. Joe Bass, ECC commanding general; Vincent Faggioli, Army Materiel Command command counsel; Command Sgt. Maj. John Murray, ACC and ECC command sergeant major, observed the contracting team in action during a visit to the exercise.

“I was impressed with our team’s adaptability and flexibility in an austere location,” Parsons said. “That’s the nature of expeditionary contracting. Our contracting officers gain

tremendous experience by participation in exercises such as Khaan Quest.”

The contracting team also supported the construction of a medical facility by procuring goods and services for the engineering and medical personnel. They also procured construction materials and leased equipment. Puthoff said the team’s support directly contributed to the successful construction of the medical facility.

He said the contracting officers’ performance was “superb” and that the exercise was a great teaching and learning experience for inexperienced team members.

“Khaan Quest allowed us to hone individual and team skills in a joint environment,” he said. “It also reinforces the contract learning that happens in the garrison environment.”

The 411th CSB is geographically poised to respond to any contingency in the Far East. With seven contingency contracting teams available to respond, the 411th provides flexibility and expertise in the Asian area. ♦

Lt. Col. Michael Harris, G3 training officer, checks the site picture on his M4 rifle during the unit's semi-annual weapons qualification. (U.S. Army photos by Lt. Col. Martha Brooks)

ECC Soldiers on target with weapons training

By Lt. Col. Martha Brooks
Expeditionary Contracting Command Public Affairs Officer

FORT MCCLELLAN, Ala.—Expeditionary Contracting Command Soldiers locked and loaded their M4 assault rifles on the Pelham Training Range here Nov. 3 to complete their annual weapons qualification and conduct select combat skills training.

Pelham Training Range afforded the Soldiers several scenarios in which to practice their combat skills. The range provided various environments including desert landscapes, mountain ranges and urban settings.

“We need to ensure that we provide training that is relevant, engaging and challenging,” said Sgt. 1st Class Lascelles Cuff, ECC’s training and chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear noncommissioned offi-

cer. “We want to provide Soldiers experiences that will help them remain proficient in the basic warrior tasks necessary for combat readiness.”

“The range served as a challenging, team-building opportunity,” said Col. Tim Strange, ECC chief of staff. “In addition, the training enhanced the Soldiers’ battlefield survival skills capabilities.

“Training not only sharpens the tools Soldiers need on the battlefield, it also increases esprit de corps in the unit,” Strange said. “The reason we have a strong Army is because we are an army that trains as it fights. As Soldiers with an expeditionary mission, ensuring that we remain combat ready is essential.” ♦



Sgt. 1st Class Lascelles Cuff, G3 training NCO, demonstrates how to evaluate a casualty using the “look, listen, feel” technique during the Expeditionary Contracting Command headquarter’s warrior training.

Small directorates accomplishing **big feats**



Ray Gray, transportation manager, Army Contracting Command Deputy Chief of Staff for Installations, Logistics and Commandant Services, inventories items in the ACC warehouse area. (U.S. Army photos by Larry D. McCaskill)

*By Larry D. McCaskill
Headquarters, U.S. Army Contracting Command*

Procurring everything from paperclips to facilities for Army Contracting Command elements worldwide, the command's Deputy Chief of Staff for Installations, Logistics and Commandant Services' tentacles of support extend to every corner of the globe.

The directorate, designated as the G4, has the mission of providing policy and solutions in regards to the command's supply and logistical programs, facilities and installation support and headquarters commandant services. Covering the

command's more than 115 locations is no easy task for the 18-member staff. Moreover, the G4 is a dual hatted staff that provides support to both the Army Contracting Command and the Expeditionary Contracting Command.

"I think of things like dedication, professionalism and determination when I think about the personnel in the G4. We tasked them to do something just short of impossible and they accomplished that and more. Think about what we asked them to do. Move the two headquarters and oh

by the way, we can't stop the mission. Team members like the G4 make it easier to accomplish the mission," said Carol Lowman, executive director, Army Contracting Command.

"We're a small, efficient and effective multi-functional organization that does big business," said Stephanie Lopez, director, G4. "We continue to strive to provide seamless support and critical capability to the Army Contracting Command and its subordinate commands around the world. I am proud to be part of the G4 team that focuses on exceptional

“I think of things like dedication, professionalism and determination when I think about the personnel in the G4. We tasked them to do something just short of impossible and they accomplished that and more.”



Lt. Col. Monica Robinson (standing) and Stephanie Lopez, Army Contracting Command Deputy Chief of Staff for Installations, Logistics and Commandant Services, discuss planning documents.

customer service and providing logistical solutions.”

Big business equates to providing oversight for nearly \$725 million (\$200 million in real property; \$133 million in sustainment, restoration and modernization and \$392 million in eight military construction projects) in facilities and \$11 million in logistics supply support and property accountability.

Headquartered at Redstone Arsenal, Ala., the staff is divided into four divisions: Logistics Support and Services; Installations and Environmental; Logistics Policy, Plans and Compliance; and the Office of the Commandant.

While all the G4’s missions are important, none was more visible as its effort to move the ACC and ECC headquarters’ staffs from Fort Belvoir, Va., to Redstone Arsenal.

“Moving two general officer level headquarters while they are support-

ing two areas of operations was a major accomplishment.”Lopez said. “It was a busy time for everyone. After months of preparation and planning, I can say that the G4 team accomplished something phenomenal. It was an amazing feat when you stop and consider that many individuals at ACC and ECC embraced the move. Even more impressive is how individuals accepted the changes and challenges throughout the command while never missing a beat in supporting the day-to-day operations. At the end of the day it is all about providing world class customer support and that is exactly what G4 does. It is 18 fantastic individuals and one super team.”

For Lopez and her crew, the move from Fort Belvoir to Huntsville was the opening act. It will be a couple of years before they can close the show when the command moves into its permanent facilities. ♦



Karla Lloyd, supply technician, Army Contracting Command Deputy Chief of Staff for Installations, Logistics and Commandant Services, inventories items in the ACC warehouse area.



A Soldier from 1st Battalion, 157th Infantry Regiment, Colorado National Guard, helps a Kazakh soldier prepare to fire an M4 rifle during a familiarization fire exercise as part of exercise Steppe Eagle at Camp Illisky, Kazakhstan, Aug. 9, 2011. Steppe Eagle is an annual multi-lateral exercise that focuses on the specific skills needed to work with coalitions and gives participating nations a unique opportunity to gain experience working together. Third Army / ARCENT has participated in Steppe Eagle since it was first hosted by Kazakhstan in September 2003. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Mylinda DuRousseau, Third Army /ARCENT Public Affairs)

Providing contracting support to Steppe Eagle 2011

by Maj. Stephen R. Tautkus,
408th Contracting Support Brigade, Qatar

The 408th Contracting Support Brigade's support to Steppe Eagle 2011, conducted in the vicinity of Almaty, Kazakhstan, was a bit different from previous years. This is the first year the Qatar-based unit executed all of the exercise's commercial contracts including those for life support, food service, transportation services and a significant amount of micro-purchases.

The aim of the exercise is to improve the battle readiness and peacekeeping operations involving international forces.

During the pre-deployment site survey, the 408th performed market research to find and establish a vendor base in the vicinity of the Iliskiy Training Center that included veterinary medicine and food inspectors to validate food vendors for sanitation and ensuring the vendors could support the additional capacity. The survey also helped solidify requirements for solicitations and gave contracting personnel a better understanding of what was available in Kazakhstan. Generally, contracting teams tap into the U.S. Embassy's procurement section to help with vendor source lists. In this

case, however, the embassy is about 11 hours away in Astana and its list consisted primarily of vendors from the Astana area.

Based on the short time between contract award and mission execution, the contracting team deployed immediately. Aware that there would be language barriers, the team set up meetings with each vendor prior to the period of performance start date to review the terms and conditions of the contract and allow for introductions of the contracting officer representatives and key personnel. The post-award conference allowed vendors a chance to ask questions and clarify contract content. Having an interpreter well versed in English was essential at all meetings and conferences.

The contracting team on the ground arrived several days before the start of the contract. By getting on the ground early, the team was able to ensure vendors were briefed on life support requirements, transportation plan and food services. Having the pay agent on the ground with cash funds in hand gave the team more latitude coupled with the ability to purchase from any vendor.

Without a pay agent, the unit would be limited to using a government purchase card which would have limited purchases to only vendors with credit card machines. Kazakhstan is still a cash society outside the larger metropolitan areas.

Once the contractors started their work, supervision was required. The contracting officer representatives and contracting officer ensured contract oversight was established. Upon a mutual understanding by both parties the COR's provided contract surveillance verifying the contractor was performing according to the terms and conditions in the contract.

When the team departed Kazakhstan, they conducted a final vendor conference on invoicing and payment procedures and additional correspondence was accomplished through an interpreter. The better informed the vendor was on proper invoicing procedures, the more promptly they received payment. At this point the team could re-deploy to Kuwait and provide reach-back contracting support. The unit CORs remained forward to interact with the vendors until the contract's period of performance ended. ♦

ACC welcomes new executive director, command sergeant major



Gen. Anne Dunwoody, Army Materiel Command commanding general (left), Carol Lowman and Jeff Parsons stand at the ready at the beginning of the Army Contracting Command change of responsibility ceremony Sept. 27 at Redstone Arsenal, Ala.

By Giselle Lyons
Headquarters, U.S. Army Contracting Command

REDSTONE ARSENAL, Ala.—September was a month of change for the Army Contracting Command as it welcomed a new executive director and a new command sergeant major within a week.

Gen. Ann Dunwoody, Army Materiel Command commanding general, officiated at the Sept. 27 change in responsibility ceremony welcoming incoming ACC Executive Director Carol Lowman before an audience of nearly 300 at the ACC campus on Redstone Arsenal.

Jeffrey Parsons, the departing

executive director, served as ACC's leader since the command was activated in March 2008.

Dunwoody complimented Lowman by saying the command "couldn't have asked for a better successor. She's been there throughout the journey with Mr. Parsons and knows what it takes to run a global enterprise. She is the right kind of leader who puts people first."

"It is such an honor to be trusted to lead our amazing folks," said Lowman who has served as ACC's deputy director since November 2009. "They are an important part of generating the force and impacting their way of life."



Command Sgt. Maj. John L. Murray stands ready to serve the Army Contracting Command workforce as its new command sergeant major. He assumed the position Sept. 20. (U.S. Army photos by David San Miguel)

A week earlier Parsons welcomed Command Sgt. Maj. John L. Murray as ACC's new command sergeant major. Outgoing Command Sgt. Maj. Tony L. Baker had served with ACC since Dec. 2008 and was the command's first command sergeant major. Baker will serve as the base command sergeant major at Headquarters International Security Assistance Force (Afghanistan).

Parsons spoke highly of the command sergeants major, saying "both make taking care of Soldiers a priority...both are leaders who have had a hand in the significant growth of Soldiers in contracting."

"I am excited to be the next ACC command sergeant major," said Murray. "I believe that 'passion plus professionalism equals performance' and that is what I promise to deliver."

Murray has served as the Expeditionary Contracting Command's command sergeant major since Jan. 2009. ECC is a subordinate of ACC also headquartered at Redstone Arsenal. Murray will continue to serve as the ECC command sergeant major until his replacement arrives. ♦



Keith Magaw, contracting specialist with Aberdeen Division D, takes a break from work to enjoy an office visit from his son, Deegan. (U.S. Army photos by Betsy Kozak)

Flexibility and commitment at Maryland-based contracting center

By Betsy Kozak
Army Contracting Command – Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md.

Diversity is the key word when discussing the Army Contracting Command-Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md.'s mission, wide-ranging customer base, dispersed site locations and varied contracting actions.

"The center has a comprehensive mission that spans 12 different locations, serves 25 major customers and provides contracting services in support of warfighters worldwide," said Bryon J. Young, ACC-APG executive director and principal assistant responsible for contracting. "In fiscal year 2011, ACC-APG completed more than 48,500 contracting actions valued at more than \$18 billion with \$2.9 billion of this amount going to small businesses. We provide sustained expertise in all areas of contracting including research, development, engineering and testing,

production, installation and base operations, systems and system support, foreign military sales, grants, cooperative agreements, and other transactions."

The base realignment and closure decision to relocate the former Communications Electronics Command Contracting Center from Fort Monmouth, N.J., to APG Maryland resulted in two centers in the same geographic location. An operational order was issued to consolidate the two and on April 1, the former Research, Development and Engineering Command and CECOM Contracting Centers merged, forming the ACC-APG with an organizational structure of 15 contracting divisions.

The divisions provide primary contracting services to support the missions of several program execu-

tive offices. "We make it possible to quickly get mission-capable equipment into the hands of soldiers when and where they need it," Young said. "We play a major role in providing the warfighter with intelligence, electronic warfare, and target acquisition capabilities to enhance survivability and lethality. Through our contracting support, Soldiers have the required computer systems, radios and networks to enable communication and interoperability. These divisions also provide full service contracting in supplying the warfighter with chemical and biological defense equipment along with medical countermeasures."

There are six divisions located at APG and in addition to supporting the PEOs, they support RDECOM, CECOM and the joint requirements

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of the command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance. This support also includes foreign military sales requirements as well as numerous other organizations.

The ACC-APG Installation Division provides base operations contracting to the APG garrison and its 68 tenant organizations. This division also trains contingency contracting teams from the Expeditionary Contracting Command in BASOPS contracting to ensure team member preparedness for deployment.

ACC-APG's acquisition support also extends to the Denver, Adelphi, Md. and Tobyhanna, Pa. with divisions at each location. This support includes research, chemical disposal and the repair of electronic equipment.

There are two divisions at Fort Huachuca, Ariz., the Southwest Division and Desert Division that provide contracting services in support of worldwide communication systems and information technology acquisitions.

The main focus of the Belvoir Division, located at Fort Belvoir, Va., is to direct and control acquisition planning, contract execution, and contract administration for supported organizations and PEOs.

Located in Massachusetts, the Natick Contracting Division manages integrated acquisition from basic research through production providing contracting support for major Soldier support systems ranging from uniforms to air drop delivery, and from force protection items to traumatic brain injury research.

The Research Triangle Park Division in Raleigh, N.C., provides a full spectrum of contracting services and cooperative agreements in support of its primary customer, Army Research Laboratory's Army Research Office.

"Although ACC-APG has a diverse organizational structure and customer base, the divisions all work toward one common goal to provide innovative and tailored acquisition solutions in support of the Soldier," Young concluded. ♦



Harriett McMullen, purchasing agent, and Terry McBee, contract specialist, review documentation on a shared work project. Both employees are from Aberdeen Division D, Army Contracting Command-Aberdeen Proving Ground.



Tim Yingling, procurement analyst from the Army Contracting Command-Aberdeen Proving Ground, lifts a chair onto the moving truck platform as part of a furniture pick-up. This pick-up is in preparation for the delivery of conference room furniture from Ft. Monmouth, N.J., which closed recently due to base realignment and closure.

ACC-APG executive director on transition

By Bryon J. Young
Executive Director, Army
Contracting Command –
Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md.

Recent history has seen a fundamental shift in how American forces are utilized in support of worldwide contingency operations. This evolution has necessitated nontraditional adaptive methods to equip and supply the force.

The Army Contracting Command-Aberdeen Proving Ground plays a critical role by providing a full spectrum of contracting support to the global materiel enterprise.

Responsive support to the needs of the warfighter must remain our central focus in this endeavor. ACC-APG has developed and continues to support a variety of contracting mechanisms which can be engaged to meet a specific end-user requirement.

While ACC-APG maintains the capability to solicit traditional competitive procurements, we have also structured a variety of responsive contract mechanisms to address the immediate needs of the warfighter. We have been an innovator in providing rapid support to urgent warfighter needs by developing a suite of task order-based contracts.

With this arsenal of contracting mechanisms, ACC-APG continues to support the traditional material acquisition needs of multiple program executive offices based on the structured requirements analysis process. At the same time, the task order-based contracting inspired by the Federal Acquisition Regulation Part

16 allows ACC-APG to be responsive to the requirements derived from joint urgent operational needs statements and rapid fielding initiatives.

The rapid fielding operations have inspired ACC-APG employees to challenge their expertise and explore alternate methods for streamlining acquisitions. ACC-APG has a contracting presence in Iraq, Afghanistan and Kuwait with members currently deployed to support overseas contingency operations and many more with recent theater experience.

Our ability to support requirements derived from recent combat operations allows ACC-APG to engage the contractor community quickly and efficiently, allowing current and evolving technologies to be brought together in a rapid prototyping environment to produce effective solutions. This prototyping model provides for adequate performance validation and quality assurance necessary to assure a premium product. Prototype development has long been a part of the research and development phase of an acquisition model, but this innovative approach allows prototyping to be an end unto itself producing a solution.

Application of new technologies, both foreign and domestic, has necessitated new thinking in terms of the logistics and sustainment of these systems. The traditional logistics concept of stocking parts and depot-level support, while important



to mainstream acquisition, can't be readily adapted to meet the needs of a newly fielded system. A forward fielding concept places the sustainment solution in easy reach of the deployed system and its users. This has been a major challenge of the sustaining activities fully supported by ACC-APG. Our Tobyhanna Division has significant experience in providing forward support services to the contractor depot maintenance mission for forward repair activities.

Maintaining equipment for operational readiness is influenced by the implementation of an effective sustainment strategy. A shift to a sustainment focus environment has been necessary for managing long-term program costs and ensuring adequate product support. As part of the acquisition life cycle sustainment process, ACC-APG collaborates with program management teams to establish an effective plan for maintenance, sparing item replacement and disposal. By providing life cycle strategy input and sustainment contracting, we are instrumental in achieving adequate product support with a cost-effective approach. When it comes to the implementation of innovative contracting techniques, our warfighters deserve nothing but our best. ♦



Command Sgt. Maj. Bentura Fernandez delivers his speech during his appointment ceremony on Oct. 6 in Kaiserslautern, Germany. Fernandez is one of the first noncommissioned officers from the acquisition, logistics and technology contracting career field to receive an appointment to the position of command sergeant major. (U.S. Army photo by Rachel Clark)

Fernandez appointed to command sergeant major

*By Rachel Clark
409th Contracting Support Brigade, Kaiserslautern, Germany*

KAISERSLAUTERN, Germany—The military contracting profession appointed one of its first command sergeants major from the ranks of the acquisition, logistics and technology contracting career field.

Sgt. Maj. Bentura Fernandez, senior enlisted advisor, 409th Contracting Support Brigade, was appointed as one of the first 51C command sergeants major Oct. 6 in a formal ceremony joined by friends, family, staff, fellow command sergeants majors, general officers, as well as the noncommissioned officers that serve the 409th CSB.

During the ceremony, Fernandez reflected on Army life and all the support he's gotten through the years. "I want to say a special thank you to my wife, Antonnete, who has been with me through multiple deployments, as well as two wars. She has raised our children, maintained our home, and I couldn't have done it without her," commented Fernandez.

"This appointment is a testament to the Army's support for growing

this career field," said Command Sgt. Maj. John L. Murray, Army Contracting Command, command sergeant major. "Command Sgt. Maj. Fernandez's appointment is another step forward in the advancement of Soldiers in this new and exciting career field."

Fernandez is one of the few senior NCOs in contracting. He began his military career in automated logistics when he joined the Army in 1985. In 1999, as a sergeant first class, Fernandez was picked to be a purchasing agent for an assignment in Qatar, thus making the move into the world of contracting.

Fernandez never knew this would be his path, or that he would be one of the first 51Cs appointed as a command sergeant major.

"It has amazed me to watch the changes in contracting over the years, and how the evolution has reflected on NCOs," commented Fernandez. "Today's NCOs are more educated, and as it stands today, most NCOs make a conscious decision to join the

contracting profession. I think contracting has come a long way."

The acquisition, logistics and technology contracting military occupation specialty for NCOs is a fairly new field, with its inception in 2006. Prior to being an MOS, contracting positions were embedded into different military specialties.

Rising to the position of command sergeant major is no easy feat. While the position is a lateral move for a sergeant major, a rigorous selection program carried out by the Army determines which sergeant majors will receive the title.

"The senior enlisted advisor for a contracting organization requires a depth of experience required for planning operations, creating policy as well as providing contracting guidance to commanders and contracting officers," remarked Col. Debra D. Daniels, 409th CSB commander.

Having acquisition NCOs in senior enlisted advisor positions will allow those NCOs the opportunity to service the Army at a higher level.

"They will have obtained the experience, expertise and knowledge as they climbed the contracting ladder through garrison and contingency contracting commands throughout their career," stated Fernandez.

"The Army acquisition force will benefit from a command sergeant major with an acquisition background. We are truly better for having Sgt. Maj. Fernandez as part of our team," remarked Daniels. ♦

ACC Soldiers, employee honored at annual Acquisitions Corps awards banquet

Headquarters, U.S. Army Contracting Command

Four current and former Army Contracting Command individuals were honored at the 2011 U.S. Army Acquisition Corps Annual Awards banquet Oct. 9 in Alexandria, Va.

The ceremony paid tribute to the uniformed and civilian professionals who work tirelessly behind the scenes to provide combatant commanders and their Soldiers the weapons and equipment they need to execute decisive, full-spectrum operations in support of contingency operations.

The ceremony honored those selected to receive Secretary of the Army level awards for excellence in contracting. Heidi Shyu, Acting Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology, presented the awards.

Master Sgt. Sandra Williams, formerly of the 409th Contracting Support Brigade, Kaiserslautern, Germany, received the Contracting Noncommissioned Officer Award for Contracting Excellence. Williams was instrumental in accomplishing the presidential mandate to draw down

U.S. forces and contractor personnel in southern Iraq. She managed 12 contingency contracting personnel, 233 field ordering officers, and contracting officer representatives separated across 60,000 square miles in Iraq. As the brigade's operations NCO in charge, Support and Requirements Directorate, she successfully assisted in developing and establishing the brigade contracting officer training program.

Lt. Col. Carol Tschida, 900th Contingency Contracting Battalion, Fort Bragg, N.C., was selected as the Ac-



Heidi Shyu, (right) Acting Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology, presents Master Sgt. Sandra Williams with the Contracting Noncommissioned Officer Award for Contracting Excellence.



Heidi Shyu, (right) Acting Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology, presents Lt. Col. Carol Tschida with the Acquisition Director of the Year at the Lieutenant Colonel Level Award.



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quisition Director of the Year at the Lieutenant Colonel Level. Tschida, the 900th CCBn commander, led the largest battalion in the Army Acquisition Corps for the first battalion-level deployment to Southwest Asia, served as the principal contracting support for the 18th Airborne Corps, and led the premier joint, multi-component, pre-deployment contracting exercise in the Department of Defense.

Col. Jeffrey Gabbert, the current ACC chief of staff, was selected as the Acquisition Director of the Year

at the Colonel Level for his work at the Defense Contracting Management Agency, Arlington Heights, Ill., as the Central Region commander. Gabbert led an aggressive production of Mine Resistant Ambush Protected All Terrain Vehicles, from 45 to 1,000 a month within six months of contract award. He synchronized the workload, priorities, and resources of three separate commands responsible for the major subcomponents of the MRAP-ATV, ensuring 100 percent on-time delivery and a deficiencies-per-unit rate of less than

two per unit, including numerous zero defect vehicles.

Dorothy Bell, Mission and Installation Contracting Command, Installation Contracting Officer Fort Carson, Colo., was the recipient of the Individual Sustained Achievement Award. As a contracting officer, Bell was instrumental in stimulating the local Iraqi economy which had a significant impact on stabilizing the region, developing and training a contract close-out team that closed out more than 5,000 contract awards. ♦



Heidi Shyu, (right) Acting Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology, presents Col. Jeffrey Gabbert with the Acquisition Director of the Year at the Colonel Level Award.



Heidi Shyu, (right) Acting Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology, presents Dorothy Bell, Mission and Installation Contracting Command, Installation Contracting Office Fort Carson, Colo., with the Individual Sustained Achievement Award.



Sandra Tillman, a contracting officer, pulls a file for review at the Fort Belvoir, Va., mission contracting office. Tillman, along with other contracting professionals throughout the Mission and Installation Contracting Command, will soon receive training on the Acquisition Milestone Agreement process.

New process offers dynamic shift in acquisition tracking

by Daniel P. Elkins
Mission and Installation Contracting Command Public Affairs Office
Fort Sam Houston, Texas

FORT SAM HOUSTON, Texas—Mission and Installation Contracting Command officials here are shifting their strategic approach to Army acquisitions by incorporating a meticulous planning process to improve communication, standardize the development of milestones and increase accountability.

Implementation of the acquisition milestone agreement process across the MICC is set for January 2012. It will rely on a cooperative partnership between contracting experts, requiring activities and Army leaders to ensure efficient and effective acquisition strategies are executed to meet the mission critical need dates of customers, according to officials.

“The AMA process kicks off the teaming arrangement early in the acquisition,” said Kimberly Wentrcek, the Fort Meade, Md. Installation Contracting Office acting director who is leading the integrated process team during the implementation phase. “The AMA process invites our customers to play a more active role earlier in the acquisition process, which results in better working relationships and customer buy-in.”

The change is a result of a number of missed milestones that resulted in the need for sole-source contract actions to continue services, which increased costs and placed MICC customers’ missions at risk.

Wentrcek said the IPT found that under the previous methodology, the teaming did not typically begin until receipt of an acquisition package at the contracting office, which led to a disconnect between the acquisition strategy and evaluators’ perceptions.

“Our efforts resulted in a strategic shift in how the MICC conducts business by not waiting for acquisition packages to arrive in contracting, but rather proactively plan and team with our customers to generate better acquisition strategies that meet customer mission need dates and reduce costs,” she said.

The agreement marks a significant departure from previous procedures by bringing parties to the table much sooner for a back-to-basics approach in developing and managing procurements.

“The AMA process defines expectations for all parties, provides expert assistance, and identifies and alleviates stumbling blocks to meeting milestones,” Wentrcek explained. “It symbolizes a culture shift from reactive to proactive contracting while leveraging the resources of the MICC and our customers.”

The change calls for initiating a communication and tracking measure much earlier in the process. Contracting experts will create and coordinate the agreement as part of a kickoff meeting that documents the

customer’s understanding of responsibilities in the acquisition process.

The agreement will then serve as a binding document with agreed-to procurement milestones thus creating joint accountability between mission partners. Any changes in milestones would require concurrence by both the MICC and requiring activity.

The AMA process will help maintain the MICC’s commitment to ensuring that requirements are developed and tracked in a disciplined manner supporting the warfighters’ needs by including an in-progress review.

“In-progress reviews are a major component of the AMA process,” said Jennifer Hastedt, a MICC procurement analyst and IPT member. “Contracting officers and specialists will brief both the contracting approval authority at the appropriate level and equivalent manager at the requiring activity. This will ensure the MICC and requiring activity management knows the procurement status and identifies issues that could develop into delays.”

The transformation from the milestone tracking report to the AMA process began in January 2011. The IPT identified requirements and developed tools used for the new process. A successful beta test was conducted this summer at Fort Eustis, Va., Fort Bragg, N.C., Fort
(continued on the bottom of page 25)

Alternate procurement method means additional savings



By Betsy Kozak
Army Contracting Command-Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md.

Acquisition professionals throughout the Department of Defense are under constant pressure to establish greater efficiencies in an effort to reduce spending. Contracting officials are no different as they strive to achieve savings and streamline procurement processes.

The Army Contracting Command – Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md. has turned to an alternative procurement method in an effort to improve efficiency through the use of electronic commerce. The electronic commerce tool, also known as reverse auctioning, has enabled ACC-APG to achieve significant savings through its use.

Reverse auctioning is an acquisition tool to procure goods and services from suppliers using Internet-based technology to create a competitive bidding environment. The tool allows vendors to bid anonymously against each other often driving prices down. A reverse auction is where there's one buyer accepting bids from a group of sellers.

"In fiscal year 11, the ACC-APG conducted 164 reverse auctions for a total savings of approximately \$1.4 million," said Bryon J. Young, ACC-APG executive director. "Although this savings is significant, the greater benefit is this cost savings coupled with the time savings the tool affords. Reverse auctions ease the burden of routine transactions and enables

contracting officers and purchasing agents to focus on more complex actions. This tool allows the contracting community to get goods and services to the warfighter faster and save time and money in the process."

An auction is established once the requesting activity submits its requirements to ACC-APG. The purchasing agent inputs data into a website identifying the goods/service for auction. A synopsis/solicitation is prepared through the website requesting vendor quotations. Registered vendors place their bids electronically. Vendors are not able to see each other's bids but the system does inform the vendor who has the leading bid in the auction.

"Using a reverse auction tool is definitely a time saver," stated Martha Mitchem, ACC-APG's chief, Installation Division. "On average, the input time to initiate an auction is approximately 5-10 minutes. The time allotted for the actual auction varies and attracts quotes from a larger vendor base. The ease of the online format offers a user-friendly approach for businesses that may be intimidated by other bidding methods. In addition, I have seen reverse auctions produce a significant savings to the government."

Currently, ACC-APG uses two systems to conduct reverse auctions: the government's Virtual Contracting Enterprise and a commercial prod-

uct that offers automated processes to acquire simple commodities or commercial goods/services. The system is fully automated, and notifies monitors at the competition and documentation stages of an acquisition and providing sourcing, helpdesk and other support services.

"If the buyer needs a complex statement of work or subjective descriptors for the goods/service to be procured, then this reverse auction tool would not be appropriate."

The Army Contracting Command's VCE is a Web-based procurement system for paperless contracting operations which includes a reverse auction module. The VCE tool is available for DOD-wide use and is free of charge.

The VCE tool allows buyers to initiate and monitor a reverse auction and normal procedures are followed to conduct market research, synopsis, solicitation preparation/posting and vendor qualification. The VCE reverse auction tool is recommended for acquiring items with technical data or drawings and large commercial type items. A VCE support staff is available to provide training for buyers/sellers and help desk support. The VCE conducted three reverse auctions in fiscal year 2010 resulting in a savings of \$122 million, according to Matthew Meinert, chief, VCE Operations and Emerging Solutions Division, ACC. ♦

(continued from page 24)

Carson, Colo., Fort Bliss, Texas, and Yuma Proving Ground, Ariz.

"The test went very well," Hastedt said. "The MICC test sites provided positive feedback and

constructive comments to improve the AMA tools."

MICC officials believe implementation of the AMA will also help meet the government's fiduciary responsibility.

"It shifts the mindset from simply meeting a date to working as a team to create documents that meet all of the stakeholders' needs," Wentreck said. ♦

Telling the Army contracting story through social media



by Beth Clemons
Headquarters, U.S. Army Contracting
Command

REDSTONE ARSENAL, Ala.—The U.S. Army Contracting Command and several of its subordinate organizations have embraced social media to help tell the ACC story.

According to Art Forster, director of the ACC Office of Public and Congressional Affairs, the command began experimenting with social media in 2009. Since then, web and social media have become a vital part of ACC's public affairs strategy.

"Ten years ago, websites were the latest and greatest in communications tools. Today we've shifted our philosophy – rather than trying to get the public to come to us, we go to them. Statistically, social networking sites are where people spend most of their online time. Utilizing social media, we are able to share our news and information with both our folks and the general public," said Forster.

The wide reach of social media is apparent:

- Twitter has 200 million registered users and adds nearly 500,000 users a day. On an average day there are 190 million tweets.
- LinkedIn users have created more than 100 million professional profiles and 1 million company pages.

- Facebook has 800 million users worldwide, is available in 70 languages and the average user spends 15 hours a month on the site.
- YouTube has 490 million first-time users who visit every month and users upload more than 24 hours of video every minute.
- Flickr hosts more than 5 billion images and members upload more than 3,000 images every minute.

"We owe it to the American public to be candid, and honest, and approachable, and there is no better way that we know of to be as accessible to so many people in such a convenient way," said Maj. Juanita Chang, director, Online and Social Media Division, Office of the Chief of Public Affairs, Headquarters, Department of the Army.

According to Forster, the use of social media has become such an important part of the command's communication strategy that ACC hired a social media manager earlier this year. With a dedicated public affairs specialist who populates, monitors and maintains the ACC social media, sites have seen a significant increase in traffic. For example, ACC Facebook users have increased by 79 percent, content has been viewed and/or shared 691,812 times and visitors have provided feedback 1,725 times – up 5,464 percent from last year.

The popularity of social media sites is spreading throughout the command: Carol Lowman, ACC executive director (@carolowman); Harry Hallock, ACC deputy director (@harryhallock); ACC's Command Sgt. Maj. John Murray (@CSMMurray) and Brig. Gen. Joe Bass, the Expeditionary Contracting Command commanding general (@JoeBass) have joined Twitter, and the Mission and Installation Contracting Command recently established a Facebook page.

The ACC Office of Public and Congressional Affairs works closely with the command's information technology directorate to keep abreast of the latest social media trends to leverage these unique communication capabilities. Earlier this year, ACC's public website, www.acc.army.mil, and recruiting website, www.armyhire.com, were made available in mobile format, providing easy access from a smart phone. Mobile applications for the websites are also being developed.

"The U.S. Army Contracting Command is responsible for billions of taxpayer dollars each year. Our goal is to utilize every available resource to highlight ACC's mission, operations and people. Social media platforms provide us with unique opportunities to reach our key stakeholders," said Forster. ♦

ACC employees endure Arizona wildfires

QUALITY OF LIFE



A wildfire, dubbed the Monument Fire, burns through a wooded area near Fort Huachuca, Ariz., and left a path of destruction. (Photo by Suzette Avetian)

By Betsy Kozak
Army Contracting Command
Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md.

The June 2011 wildfires in Arizona disrupted the lives of 14 Army Contracting Command – Aberdeen Proving Ground members at Fort Huachuca, Ariz.

“The first reports of the fire were issued and that afternoon a representative from the sheriff’s office gave me a pre-evacuation notice,” said Gloria M. Golden, an ACC-APG contracting officer, who lives 20 miles from the fort and was closest to the fire and the first to receive the pre-evacuation notice. “At that point we began preparing for a possible move and watched the local news for information. I was dog sitting for a neighbor so I moved her dogs to a safe haven.”

The next day as the fire continued to rage, Golden finished packing her necessities as planes continually flew over dropping slurry, a chemical fire retardant that contains fertilizer that helps slow the fire. Day three did not see any improvement of conditions. In fact, they got worse.

“The sherriff’s office notified me that I needed to evacuate,”

recalled Golden. “My belongings were packed but as we drove away, I couldn’t see more than 20 feet in front of me due to the thick, dark smoke. I wondered if I would see my house again.”

Two days after evacuating from her home, the sheriff’s office contacted Golden and asked her to report to the school for an update on her neighborhood where Golden and many of her neighbors received good and bad news.

“You could tell who received the bad news,” Golden said. “I was lucky – my house was safe. I was relieved that my house was spared but was saddened for those who lost their homes. Out of the 55 houses in my neighborhood, 15 houses remained standing.”

Simultaneously, seven miles away in Carr Canyon, ACC-APG contract specialist Regan T. Alexander, was preparing for the worse.

“My husband called me home from work to prepare for the evacuation; we were hoping that the fire would be put out before it reached our area,” Alexander said.

“I tried to assess what I would need if I were in an apartment for a year and had to start over. Police

officers came to our house at 10 p.m. to let us know that the fire was expected to crest the mountain and that a mandatory evacuation was in place for 9 a.m. the next morning.”

Seeing the fire at the top of a near-by mountain, Alexander and her husband couldn’t sleep so they continued to pack their three vehicles. They then moved each of the vehicles safely across the containment line and evacuated the area by 8 a.m.

The Alexanders stayed at a recreational vehicle park 60 miles from the fire. Each day her husband drove back to the containment line to watch the fire unfold.

From the containment line, Alexander’s husband called to say that Carr Canyon was on fire and it looked like the mountain northwest of her house was burning, which meant that the fire had passed over their house.

“At this point I thought my house was gone,” she stated. “I was at the mercy of the fire and it was 100 percent out of my control.”

Fortunately, the fire did little damage to the Alexander’s property.

Alexander’s and Golden’s houses were spared and they returned home once they received clearance. Both families dealt with the loss of power and cable lines, melted from the heat. Electricity was restored relatively quickly.

“What I will remember most about this ordeal was the outpouring of friendship and concern by my co-workers,” stated Golden. “I work with an impressive group of people. Despite the challenges the team kept the mission going – they’re amazing.” ♦

2nd Lt. Christopher Duncan makes his way through the obstacle course during Phase 2 of his officer candidate training. (U.S. Army photo by Betsy Kozak)

Duncan's uphill struggle ends with bars of gold

By Betsy Kozak
Army Contracting Command
Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md.

Every month Christopher R. Duncan transforms into a lean mean fighting machine as 2nd Lt. Duncan, New Jersey Army National Guard.

Duncan, a security specialist with the Army Contracting Command-Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md., joined the Guard on Feb. 18, 2010 as an officer candidate then two days later reported to Sea Girt National Guard Training Center, N.J., to begin phase zero of his training.

Officer candidate school is divided into four phases during an 18-month period. Phase zero is a two-month, weekend preparatory phase to prepare a candidate for the OCS commissioning process.

"At the start of phase zero, the environment immediately changed to a stricter climate," Duncan recalled. "There weren't any more full nights' sleep and no more address-

ing others as 'yo.' We went right into physical training and at the time a two-mile run was a big accomplishment for me. I pushed myself to the extreme and as a result I almost PT'ed myself to death."

By the end of the first weekend he was in physical pain but attributed it to sore muscles from the physical fitness training sessions. He continued training but became concerned when his urine was black and thick like motor oil, according to Duncan. After immediately contacting a doctor, he was diagnosed with rhabdomyolysis, a condition which damaged muscle cells are released into the body causing potential harm to the kidneys. Duncan was hospitalized for five days.

"I was told that if I had waited one more day before seeking medical help that my heart would have stopped," stated Duncan. "I was scared because the hospital staff discussed possible kidney transplants with me. Fortunately, I had no last-

ing damage from the ordeal but the doctor advised me not to continue with my OCS pursuit. I was stubborn and had to continue."

When Duncan left the hospital, he was physically drained and had difficulty walking due to weakness. He had just four weeks until his next drill weekend to be ready for the PT test. Prior to transitioning to the next phase he had to pass this test—the pressure was on!

"The anxiety was the worst part," Duncan commented. "I was most concerned about my upper body strength and passing the push-ups. It was the first event and when I passed I knew I could handle the rest. Although I received a low score, I did pass the test to the surprise of my instructors."

In the summer of 2010, Duncan reported for phase one of OCS at Camp Rell, Conn. During this phase he received land navigation and leadership training conducted under demanding mental and physical

conditions. It was the hardest 15 days of his life, according to Duncan. During this time he continued to be plagued by health issues.

"I had a cold when I arrived for phase one and it developed into pneumonia," stated Duncan. "I was having difficulties breathing and was ordered to see a doctor. I was treated with a respirator to clear my lungs and again I was encouraged to go home. I took two ibuprofen and returned to training, determined to continue."

At the end of this phase, Duncan's feet were covered with blisters from the continual running through the land navigation course. He was tested in both day and night navigation and he passed both events. Duncan demonstrated that he was ready for phase two.

Phase two was the longest phase and was conducted once a month for a 12-month period at Sea Girt. The emphasis was on tactical and small unit leadership skills. The classroom instruction consisted of ethics, leadership, logistics, military intelligence, fire support, communications and tactics. "Progressively during this phase the instructors assumed more of a mentor role," Duncan said. "The training also transitioned from physical to more leadership-focused."

The summer of 2011, Duncan advanced to phase three which was the final step in the OCS commissioning process that consisted of 15-days of training at Fort McClellan, Ala. Phase zero began with 40 candidates. By the beginning of phase three, 17 remained. As one of 17, Duncan prepared for the final challenges of his training, leadership skills and tactical operations.

"When it was over I was proud that I accomplished what I set out to do. I was also nervous. I knew that I was now responsible for leading Soldiers in an infantry environment," said the newly commissioned second lieutenant. ♦



QUALITY OF LIFE

Nickole Jackson, an information technology contract specialist, 409th Contracting Support Brigade, skates down the hall at the Theater Contracting Center in Kaiserslautern, Germany. Jackson plays on a roller derby team and goes by the stage name 'Queen Kole Bra.' (U.S. Army photo by Rachel Clark)

Jackson keeps on rolling with the bumps and bruises

*by Rachel Clark, 409th Contracting Support Brigade
Kaiserslautern, Germany*

KAISERSLATERN, Germany—By day Nickole Jackson is ordering computers, printers and equipment for the Acquisition work force; by night she's busting up the ladies as a pushing, shoving roller skating derby queen.

Jackson, an information technology contracting specialist with the 409th Contracting Support Brigade, is a roller derby enthusiast in her spare time. Roller derby is an American-invented full contact sport. Its current incarnation is predominantly played by all-female teams. The game is based on formation roller skating around an oval track by two teams for points.

Unlike roller derby of the past, contemporary roller derby has strict rules and strong safety precautions. There's no rehearsed violence to create entertainment value as in the 1960s and 1970s; all the injuries you see are real.

"I've sported some pretty deep bruises, scrapes, and a few broken nails," states Jackson, "but it's all part of the fun. I'm getting into shape, getting out my aggression, and there is so much team building that we are like a family."

All the girls have stage names as part of their mystique.

"One thing people seem to really like is that the girls wear fish nets and have provocative names," chuckled Jackson, also known as Queen Kole Bra. She took up the sport while living in Kaiserslautern because she thought it would be a great way to get in shape. She plays in the number four position which is the first line of defense against the jammer/scorer.

She skates with a group that is part of a private organization that supports the military, civilian and German communities. Her team is part of a European league that has regular bouts with other teams from Sweden, England and France.

The sport even supports teamwork across the league. "When we travel as individuals, we have the opportunity to skate with the various teams in the league around Europe," stated Jackson. ♦

AROUND ACC



Members of the 904th Contingency Contracting Battalion Headquarters, the 631st and 632nd Contingency Contracting Teams visited the Woodland Elementary School in Radcliff, Ky., in September as part of the school's Sept. 11 remembrance ceremony. Soldiers joined with local policemen, firemen, and elected community representatives to take part in the ceremony. "The children seemed to really enjoy us being here and our Soldiers really felt welcomed by everyone," said Sgt. Major Dennis Richardson, 904th senior enlisted advisor. "It's important for Soldiers to make a difference in our communities and because this event involves the children, it is extra special."



Col. Debra Daniels, commander 409th Contracting Support Brigade, Kaiserslautern, Germany, reviews and signs the command's property book hand receipts. The property books were presented for signature with 100 percent accountability, the results of two Lean Six Sigma projects initiated to overhaul the supply process within the 409th. (U.S. Army photo by Rachel Clark)



Chaplains Maj. Jose Herrera (left) and Lt. Col. Charles "Chip" Fields recently reported in to the Expeditionary Contracting Command and the Army Contracting Command. Herrera has the distinction of serving as the ECC chaplain and as the senior Catholic chaplain of the Redstone Arsenal faith community. Fields, a former Marine, has a master's of Theology from Princeton Seminary.



Renovations continue at the future home of the Mission and Installation Contracting Command as well as other contracting entities at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, Long Barracks. Renovations began in September 2009 and MICC officials anticipate occupancy of the barracks in 2012. Located in the historic area of Fort Sam Houston, Long Barracks, measuring 1,084 feet in length, consists of a series of buildings including the three-story Bldg. 613, originally constructed in 1887. The barracks will serve as a contracting campus to the MICC headquarters, Fort Sam Houston's Mission Contracting Center and Mission Contracting Office as well as the 412th Contracting Support Battalion. (U.S. Army photo by Ben Gonzales)

The Stripes You Wear

10 Points to Remember

By Command Sgt. Maj. John L. Murray
Headquarters, U.S. Army Contracting Command

- 1. Your stripes are symbols of authority.** This is an important privilege that must be exercised with good common sense and maturity. These are qualities that your superiors and the Army believe you possess, and it is up to you to prove that their trust has not been misplaced. Never do anything that will discredit your rank and position.
- 2. Set the example.** You must prove by your own actions that you deserve subordinates' and superiors' respect and confidence. Actions do speak louder than words. Everything you do or don't do is the example that you display to others. Displaying a good example for others to emulate is part of your responsibility as a NCO.
- 3. Don't be afraid to get your hands dirty.** Come to work and do your job; don't sit back and wait for other people. You need to be and stay technically and tactically proficient. The only way to remain proficient is to stay current with the policies and procedures and continue to work. Don't be that person that thinks that now that I am a supervisor, my job is to sit back and watch others. If you stop working you will lose your proficiency and relevancy.
- 4. Remember where you came from.** Don't ever forget what it is like down in the trenches doing the daily tasks of the organization. You were once there, doing those tasks that may seem meaningless but are important and must be done. If you think you are too good and valuable to go and visit and talk with subordinates, you will become detached and lose the pulse on what is really happening. Don't forget to give someone a simple thank you for those little things that just seem to happen.
- 5. Be and look like a NCO.** Your posture, the appearance of your uniform, your physical condition, and your reaction to the incidents of military life all convey an impression to others. You must demonstrate to others by what you say and do that you are a master of your job and your emotions. Subordinates must feel they can rely upon you in an emergency, that you are a competent NCO and an individual who habitually uses sound judgment when they are faced with a problem. You must be a leader, not simply a supervisor. Subordinates will follow a leader because they want to, but will follow a supervisor because they have to. You must draw upon your inner resources of personal character—courage, initiative, ingenuity, and common sense. You must be able to instill in people a desire to follow you. Your vehicle in doing this is leadership.
- 6. Take responsibility for your actions.** Demonstrating proper leadership indicates full acceptance of responsibility. This acceptance involves many things. Personal efficiency and unselfish attention to the comfort and well being of your subordinates, respect for their rights and an honest attempt to understand their problems. You must accept the fact that you are always on duty 24 hours a day; that everything your unit does or fails to do is your concern. If you make an honest mistake, accept responsibility and learn from your mistakes.
- 7. Loyalty is first among the qualities that make a Soldier.** Loyalty to our nation we take for granted, but we must also be loyal to our superiors and to our subordinates. True loyalty is more than obedience. It demands complete cooperation with the spirit as well as the letter of every order. So, regardless of your private opinions, give your superiors your full support. Do not criticize them nor tear apart their orders in conversation. As you react toward your superiors, so will your subordinates. Constant griping is a form of moral sabotage. It weakens your authority and in time can rot away the discipline of the organization.
- 8. Do routine things routinely.** Continue to do those small things that everyone expects from a leader. Showing up on time, looking like a Soldier, displaying confidence and enthusiasm, accomplishing tasks that are given to you are all routine things that you should do routinely. Your superiors expect you do those things routinely. Once you start slipping you will lose the confidence your superiors have in you.
- 9. Make yourself important.** Find something that needs to be done in your organization and do it. Show everyone that you can make a difference. Once you become an important member of the team, you will find that you will be the one that others come to for answers. Don't sit back and think just because you wear stripes that you now know and have done everything.
- 10. Passion plus professionalism equals performance.** Be passionate about your job. Love it and do everything you can to be the best every day. Be professional in everything you say and do. If you are going to do something do it right or don't do it at all. If you are passionate and professional about your job, you will get great performance.



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