

U.S. Army
Contracting
Command

ACC TODAY



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Training our military contracting professionals

BY BRIG. GEN. JOE BASS
COMMANDER, EXPEDITIONARY CONTRACTING COMMAND

Like most military personnel, I tend to focus on training since it's the cornerstone of all Army operations and it's how we prepare Soldiers to fight. In the contracting career field, training is especially critical to what we do. In contracting, we rely heavily on our civilian professionals to train our military and provide that valuable experience which enables us to be successful when we deploy.

I don't consider what we are doing on a day-to-day basis as traditional military training. What I am really talking about is gaining experience in the contracting field. So how do we gain such experience? In contracting, we receive our initial training from the Defense Acquisition University or the Army Logistics University. It is the hands-on experience we receive on a day-to-day basis working in the Army Contracting Command's Directorates of Contracting and Contracting Centers that is critical to our ability to deploy and conduct contracting operations in contingency environments.

As I travel around the world visiting the various organizations within ACC, I always make a point to discuss the extraordinary training and experience that I received early in my contracting career. My initial 'contracting' assignment was at the Fort Campbell, Ky., Directorate of Contracting. During this assignment I was privileged to work with civilian professionals like Leslie Carroll who trained me in the "art of contracting." Leslie and many other outstanding civilians integrated me into the day-to-day contracting operations and provided the basis of the experi-

ence I have used throughout the last 19 years as I have deployed or moved on to higher levels of responsibility.

This in-depth level of experience cannot be obtained by sitting through a class or receiving instructions...it is hands-on and involves working contracting actions every day and gaining experience in all facets of contracting operations...all those things that we continue to build on with career progression and increasing responsibility.

The first couple of years of experience are so critical that there is a memorandum from the Military Deputy to the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics, and Technology that directs us to spend a year in garrison before becoming eligible to deploy as contingency contracting officers. I recall a young captain arriving at Fort Campbell in early 1991, during Desert Storm, who thought he was ready to deploy after having just completed his contracting basic course. The captain didn't know what he didn't know. Luckily, he was surrounded by civilian contracting professionals that knew precisely the training and experience



Brig. Gen. Joe Bass, Commander, Expeditionary Contracting Command (Photo by Larry D. McCaskill)

that he would need before he was ready for deployment.

I would like to thank all of our civilian contracting professionals in ACC for the great job you are doing in providing such valuable experience to our military as we grow an incredible capability for our Army. As I often say to the civilian personnel that I meet in ACC, you all are training your future commanders and command sergeants major, just like Leslie Carroll and the folks at Fort Campbell did almost 20 years ago and continue to do today!

Engaged, Capable, Committed...
HOOAH!! ♦

“Hands-on experience is critical to our ability to deploy and conduct contracting operations in contingency environments.”

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Cover photo—Members of the Rock Island Contracting Center's Reachback Division assist deployed contracting officers by taking on some of the non-complex work from Soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan.



Strategic initiatives outline command's path forward

(Left to right) Curtis Smith, Regina Foston, Kathleen Cole and Denise Price, Commanders' Action Group members, discuss changes in strategies during a staff meeting. (Photo by Larry D. McCaskill)

BY DENISE PRICE, COMMANDER'S ACTION GROUP
U.S. ARMY CONTRACTING COMMAND

Strategic Initiatives are designed to provide a roadmap toward a more efficient and effective future for ACC.

Major objectives, missions, and lines of operation sound like something from a classic espionage movie. In reality, they are documents used as part of the Army Contracting Command's strategic planning process.

These documents provide strategic guidance for our leaders as they ensure the organization's ability to provide sustainable contracting services for our Warfighter community in the execution of our global mission in the 21st century. One of the outputs of the strategic planning process is a set of strategic initiatives.

Strategic initiatives provide a roadmap for ensuring the most effective use of the organization's resources. They focus resources on key priorities, thereby improving the efficiency and effectiveness of our contracting service operations.

“Every employee should align themselves to our strategic priorities as their own personal mission,” said Jeff Parsons, ACC executive director. “We need to look at each priority and initiative and determine how to use them in our own teams and in our own workspaces.”

From the Army Campaign Plan’s major objective, “Transform the contracting enterprise to support the Army’s 21st century procurement requirements,” ACC’s senior leadership team works with the Army Materiel Command to refine the strategic guidance from higher headquarters into executable initiatives. The Senior Leader Team (SLT) is comprised of the command group, the contracting center directors and the commanding generals of the Mission and Installation Contracting Command and the Expeditionary Contracting Command. They meet semi-annually to consider the future path of the organization.

“Strategic Initiatives are designed to provide a roadmap toward a more efficient and effective future for ACC,” said Tony Incorvati, ACC contracting

operations director. “They describe our long-range objectives and lay out the various strategies that we will employ to achieve them. They also leverage our capabilities as a single enterprise.”

The strategic initiatives developed by the SLT, utilizing the big picture provided by the Army Campaign Plan, AMC’s lines of operation, and ACC’s strategic priorities, are broken down into executable tasks or measurable elements. These lay out the challenges we face, the goals we must achieve, and how we—individually or collectively—can support the enterprise and our customers. The strategic initiatives don’t cover everything we do but help us to focus on the most critical things we need to do where we have the greatest need for change or the most opportunity for improvement.

“Each strategic initiative is assigned an owner who is accountable for ensuring its execution,” said Kathleen Cole, director, ACC Commander’s Action Group. “Depending on the scope and duration of the initiative, there may be an entire program office supporting the implementation and

monitoring progress. Focusing the organization on a finite number of initiatives assures that these programs are effectively resourced and managed.”

Achieving the objectives of these long-range initiatives will require the active involvement of all ACC personnel. It will require each employee’s personal interpretation on how best to employ the guidance in their work processes and the work environment. Employees can participate by: helping attract, recruit and develop a high-performing and diverse workforce; fostering a culture of mentorship across the organization; finding ways to execute the contracting mission more efficiently and effectively; embracing digitization and standardization through the implementation of the virtual contracting enterprise; improving customer satisfaction and developing a methodology for measuring customer satisfaction accurately; implementing the enterprise dashboard for measuring and managing performance of our processes; and using Lean Six Sigma management methods to enhance operational performance. ♦

What are the Strategic Priorities?

- Priority #1:** Grow and develop a professional civilian and military workforce.
- Priority #2:** Maintain superior customer relationships.
- Priority #3:** Standardize, improve and assure quality contracting support, business processes and policies across the organization.
- Priority #4:** Obtain and maintain needed resources.
- Priority #5:** Enhance working environment and quality of life.





Staff Sgt. Frederic Cureton (far right) monitors fellow ECC Soldiers as they begin plotting on terrain maps prior to a land navigation session.

Contracting warriors sharpen their military skills

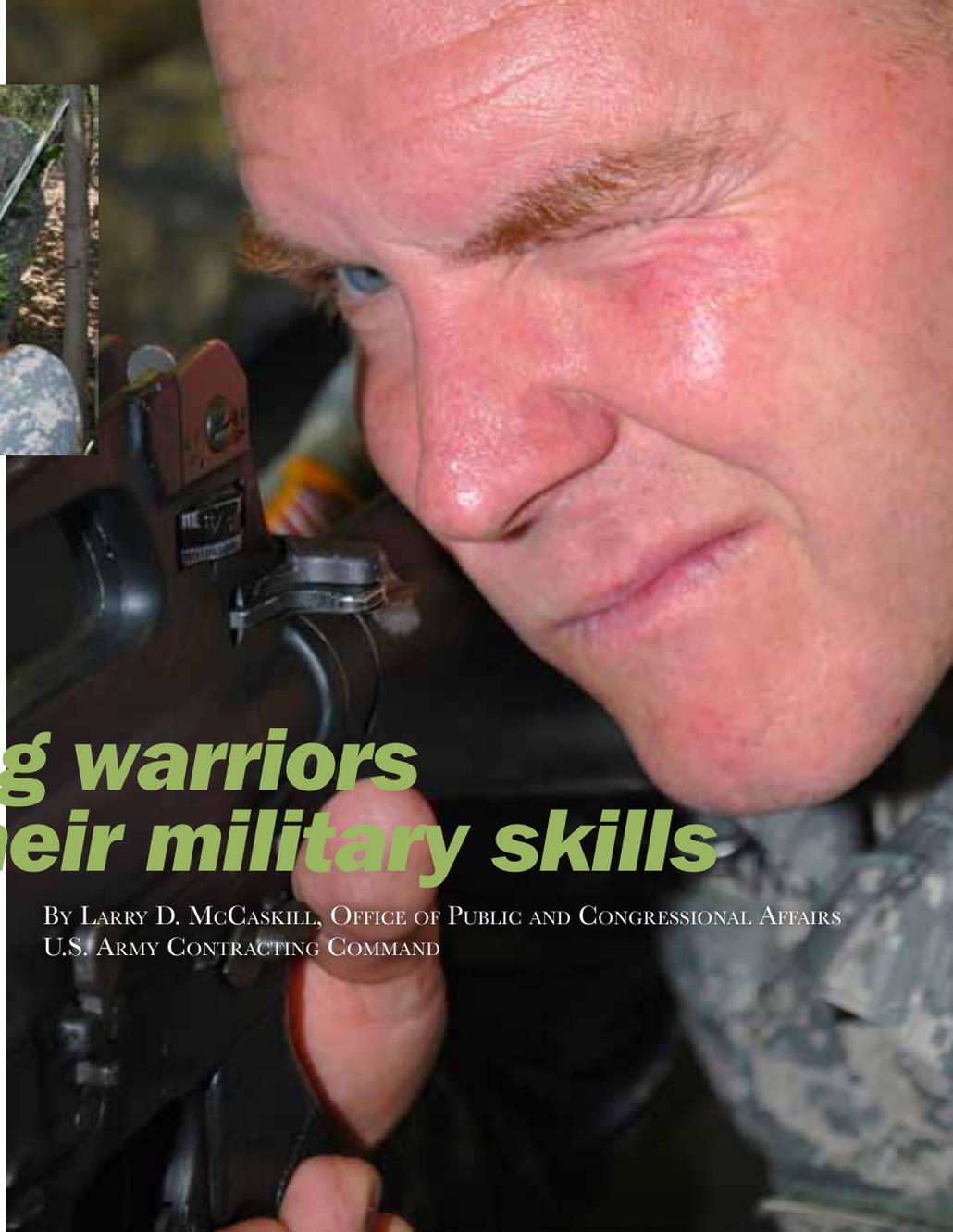
By LARRY D. McCASKILL, OFFICE OF PUBLIC AND CONGRESSIONAL AFFAIRS
U.S. ARMY CONTRACTING COMMAND

It was anything but fun and games as members of the Expeditionary Contracting Command Headquarters conducted warrior task training recently at Fort Belvoir, Va.

“Training is one of the most important aspects of soldiering,” said Brig. Gen. Joe Bass, ECC commander, who participated in the day long training session. “In order to execute a mission, a Soldier has to be competent in his or her actions. That’s what training is all about – instilling the knowledge and confidence in one’s ability to get the job done.”

The day started out with ECC soldiers rolling up their sleeves and participating in an Army combative training session.

After a morning of tussling and tumbling, the ECC warriors gathered at one of Fort Belvoir’s indoor firing ranges for small weapons familiarization. The contracting warriors assembled and disassembled 9mm hand guns and M16 rifles.



Lt. Col. Timothy Strange, Expeditionary Contracting Command training officer, peers through the scope of a M16 rifle during warrior training. (Photos by Larry D. McCaskill)

“Training is the foundation of soldiering,” said Sgt. 1st Class Antonio Ruffin, ECC Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear NCO and NCO-in-Charge of the training session.

“It’s important for Soldiers to remain proficient in the military occupational specialties but it is equally as important to maintain the basic soldiering skills that could one day save your life.”

Next up was weapons training at an indoor firing range.

The day ended with navigation training. Squads were sent out to locate designated points in the wooded terrain of Fort Belvoir’s training area.

“By and large, the entire training session went well,” Ruffin said. “We’re a deploying headquarters and it is essential that we ensure all our Soldiers are maintaining their basic soldiering skills and contracting expertise.” ♦

1902nd CCT assists in Kosovo school renovation

BY RACHEL CLARK,
409TH CONTRACTING SUPPORT BRIGADE,
KAISERSLAUTERN, GERMANY



Capt. Travis Dennis, 1902nd Contingency Contracting Team, stands in front of a new chalk board installed at the Zhur school in Kosovo. Dennis and his team assisted with contracting support to move the renovation of the school. (Photo by Rachel Clark)

CAMP BONDSTEEL, Kosovo—Members of the 1902nd Contingency Contracting Team used the A-B-Cs of contracting as part of a humanitarian project enabling more than 1,400 students in Zhur, Kosovo to enjoy simple comforts in their school for the first time in many years.

The 1902nd CCT is a Pennsylvania National Guard unit deployed to Kosovo for a year and is under the operational control of the 409th Contracting Support Brigade.

The school recently underwent major repairs with the assistance of Army Kosovo Peacekeeping Force teams from Camp Bondsteel and the U.S. Embassy in Pristina, Kosovo.

The school, grades 1-9, is located in a more than 50-year-old building. When the project was first reviewed for consideration, reports showed the school was in severe need of repair.

“The building itself was a run-down facility with holes in the walls and few working lights,” said contracting officer Capt. Travis Dennis of the 1902 CCT.

In 2009 the school was one of the several projects nominated for the humanitarian assistance program. After the project received approval, a contract was awarded to renovate the school. Renovation included repairing eight classrooms, fixing the damaged portion of the roof, and installing tiles in the hallways.

“After the final site visit, we realized there was so much more to be done to bring this school to a condition that promoted a safe and secure environment where the students would be able to learn,” Dennis said.

The engineer working as the contracting officer’s representative on the project, 1st Lt. Felix Reyes, 92nd Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, identified several additional areas that could be renovated quickly before the students returned for the fall semester.

“I can’t promise anything additional will be approved, but if the legal office says we can only do one thing, what would you choose? The principal said lights. The kids can’t learn if they can’t see,” said Dennis after talking to the principal about additional renovations.

The contracting team was able to utilize the remaining balance of the funds to further improve the school.

So far, repairs to the school include a new roof, new floors, painted walls, 13 new doors, 300 new overhead lights, 120 electric outlets and switches, eight

chalkboards and construction of a retaining wall.

The school renovation has had great impact on the community.

“This restoration has supplied many jobs to the local small businesses, as well as contributing to the local social economic development,” said Lt. Col. Pete Reynierse, chief, 1902nd Contingency Contracting Team, Balkans Regional Contracting Office.

The Balkans Regional Contracting Office also supports many other projects that cover the entire Balkans region. The territory includes Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro, Croatia, Macedonia and Serbia, among others.

“This is a great start for this school, and I am looking forward to seeing this project to completion.” Dennis said.



Sahit Kurtaj (left), the principal of the school in Zhur, Kosovo, and a former student and teacher, talks with Sgt. Maj. Bentura Fernandez of the 409th Contracting Support Brigade about the history of the school. (Photo by Col Debra Daniels, 409th CSB)



Contracting officers' ethics invaluable in stopping crime

By LARRY D. McCASKILL, OFFICE OF PUBLIC AND CONGRESSIONAL AFFAIRS
U.S. ARMY CONTRACTING COMMAND

The value of government contracting specialists extends well beyond their expertise in developing contracts that are fair to both the government and the supplier. They are also the watchdogs for contracts in place and are entrusted with ensuring the performance of the contract is ethical and legal.

Each year, government contracting specialists, Soldiers and civilians identify unlawful practices and save the government millions of dollars.

“The Army acquisition workforce, like all government procurement officials, bears an enormous responsibility to safeguard the sacred trust as stewards of public funds and to ensure that the government receives the best value and most effective goods and services required by the warfighter,” said Robert Williams, ACC deputy command counsel. “An ethical base to the acquisi-

tion workforce is essential to maintaining this public trust. This ethical base is established and maintained by proper screening of acquisition workforce accessions; initial and periodic training on the Joint Ethics Regulation, the Procurement Integrity Act and other ethical topics, and fair and consistent treatment of irregularities within the procurement process. To a government employee hoping to build a successful career in the contracting field, one’s professional reputation for scrupulous competency should be above reproach and jealously guarded at all times.”

“Contracting officials are the front line of defense against possible instances of contractual abuse. Besides being a general expert in the contracting process, they are the specific subject matter expert on the contracts they manage,” said U.S. Army Criminal Investiga-

tion Command Special Agent William J. Stakes Jr. “As such, the contracting officials have insight on methodologies that could be used to commit fraud and abuse within that contract. While most contractors perform outstandingly throughout the performance of the contract, there is that percentage who will attempt to personally benefit at the detriment of the government.”

And that is what happened to Mark Young, a contracting officer with the Communications and Electronics Command. During a routine post award audit, Young noticed discrepancies with a company’s financial reporting documentation. He uncovered information indicating that the company had engaged in violations of the False Claims Act in its billings to the government. Working through his legal office, the discovery was turned over to the



Government contracting officers have assisted law enforcement agencies in reducing corruption and other criminal activities.

Army's CID criminal investigators and the Department of Justice. In the end, Young's alertness saved the government more than \$700,000.

"The Army CID's Major Procurement Fraud Unit has actively engaged with ACC in providing fraud awareness briefings, sharing lessons learned and teaching how to identify these red flags or indicators of fraud. Contracting officials can help facilitate the identification instances of fraud by endorsing a culture of compliance," said USACIDC

Special Agent Donald Lamberth. "Promoting fraud prevention, providing training on how to identify fraud within the organization and by educating personnel associated with the acquisition process on how to report suspicious fraudulent activity without repercussion (are ways of decreasing incidents)."

Unfortunately, there is a small minority who attempt to use their position for personal gain. When they are caught, and they do get caught, the penalty for abusing the public trust is harsh and exacting.

One high profile scheme that went awry involved U.S. Army Major John Cockerham and three of his family members. They were caught and sentenced for participation in a bribery and money laundering attempt related to bribes paid for contracts awarded in support of operations in Iraq. For their greed, they received a combined total of more than 26 years in prison and were required to pay restitution of more than \$19 million.

In a career field where ethics is as critical as technical knowledge, it's not unheard of for contracting officers to be offered bribes.

The president and chief executive officer of a defense contracting firm in New York was recently arrested and charged with offering a \$100,000 bribe to a Department of Defense contracting officer at Fort Monmouth, N.J.

After being offered what he felt was a bribe, the contracting officer contacted officials at Fort Monmouth. Soon the contracting officer found himself assisting in gathering evidence against the would-be briber. The accused faces a maximum penalty of 15 years in prison and a fine of three times the value of the bribe, \$300,000.

"Across the Army acquisition enterprise each year, dozens of allegations of various types of procurement fraud may arise," Williams said. "Each allegation is thoroughly investigated. Such investigations may include allegations against incumbent and potential suppliers of goods and services of collusive bidding, defective pricing, improper use of source selection information, and the use of bribes or other improper influences upon government officials, among other illegal or deceptive practices. Each investigation is then adjudicated on the merits of the facts revealed by the investigation. Remedies allowed to the government include contractual remedies, such as the termination of contracts, designating certain companies and their proprietors as ineligible for award of future government contracts, as well as other financial and criminal penalties."

"If approached with an illegal offer, such as a bribe to improperly influence a particular procurement, the offer should be neither accepted nor refused after the initial contact," Williams said. "The government official should take no further official action on the procurement, but should inform their supervisor and the Criminal Investigation Command, Major Procurement Fraud Unit, of the possible illegal offer. Criminal investigators may wish to monitor the approached government official's response to the illegal offer in order to enhance the efficacy of any subsequent prosecution." ♦

In a career field where ethics is as critical as technical knowledge, it's not unheard of for contracting officers to be offered bribes.

Improving Army Contracting Command business practices

BY CHRISTOPHER PRAWDZIK,
FAIRCOUNT PUBLISHING

Looking to standardize business practices throughout the Army Contracting Command enterprise, ACC's Contract Operations is compiling best practices and processes gathered from throughout the command in what is being called the "Deskbook."

"The Deskbook's primary function is to attempt to standardize business practices and processes across the ACC enterprise," said Tony Incorvati, ACC, Contracting Operations director. "Contracting is really difficult – it has lots of rules-oriented functions."

The challenge in creating a collection of best practices is establishing standard operating procedures that fit across the board in organizations providing similar services to a variety of customers.

Working with the ACC contracting centers, the Expeditionary Contracting Command and the Mission and Installation Contracting Command, Incorvati and his team pushed to find the common ground upon which to develop procedures common to all and common to the contracting process.

The Deskbook is a living document that changes to adjust to current conditions across ACC to ensure the best problems and issues are met with the best practices.

No small task.

"If we had 11 centers and subordinate commands at ACC, we had 12 processes," he said. "It was incredible."

Areas addressed in the book include source selection processes and procedures, the processing of justification and approval and warranting contracting officers.

"The Deskbook makes the process more efficient and allows ACC to execute smarter, faster, more efficient contract documents," Incorvati said. "The Deskbook attempts to include as much as possible about as many practices as possible so that, through a collaborative effort, the best practices rise to the top and become standard for ACC across the board."

More than an inch thick after 18 months of work, the initial development of the book moved along pretty quickly. Multiple teams worked simultaneously over the last 18 months to create the first iteration.

"My guidance has been to make things as standard as possible, while still allowing enough flexibility for each of those centers to add in their little bits and pieces and parts," he said.

Even with a strong foundation for internal business practices established with the ever-evolving Deskbook, ACC has developed other tools to help those who want to do business with ACC and improve practices across the board.

One of the most comprehensive tools is ACC's Web site, www.army.mil/info/organization/unitsandcommands/commandstructure/acc/, which covers everything from career opportunities to technologies out there to help partners work best with the command.



A living document, the ACC Deskbook is an online publication that is updated quarterly.

At the heart of this effort is not only establishing business practices across the board that standardize efforts of ACC through the iterative Deskbook, but also reaching out to businesses and providing them the material and resources to ensure their best practices become a tight fit with ACC's efforts. The goal is to effectively support troops fighting a war in Afghanistan or Iraq or performing relief missions to places such as Haiti, when time is of the essence.

"We are working toward making it better," Incorvati said. "And every day we do make it better." ♦

(This article is an edited version of an article found in the AMC 2011 Annual Publication and is reprinted with permission. Christopher Przewdzik is a writer with Faircount Publishing)

The Deskbook's primary function is to attempt to standardize business practices and processes across the ACC enterprise.

408th CSB supports Pakistan humanitarian assistance relief efforts

BY EXPEDITIONARY CONTRACTING COMMAND



A U.S. Army Soldier watches as locals unload supplies from a CH-47 Chinook in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. The flood affected nearly 20 million Pakistanis, forcing many from their homes. (U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Joshua Kruger courtesy of 55th Combat Camera)

The Expeditionary Contracting Command recently exercised its expeditionary capabilities in support of humanitarian relief efforts in Pakistan. The command deployed its contracting warriors to support military operations assisting the country since devastating floods there have displaced millions of Pakistanis.

The 408th Contracting Support Brigade, Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, quickly responded to the call for contracting capability and deployed two contracting officers from the ACA-Kuwait office. The 408th CSB provides contracting support in the Central Command area of responsibility.

This mission is the pinnacle of events for contingency contracting offi-

cers – a real-world contingency mission. Maj. Reese Hauenstein and Maj. Ron Blanch received the call just 72 hours prior to their required departure. This represents the new paradigm shift in the expeditionary nature of Army contracting, which now provides contingency contracting teams in response to contingency missions versus the world-wide individual augmentation method.

The 408th CSB team continues to provide the day-to-day sustainment support for the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines that are fulfilling vital humanitarian assistance support to Pakistan. They will remain in the region until the crisis response effort is complete. This initial response capability is vital to the forces enabling human-

itarian assistance efforts because units in support of crisis events rarely deploy with all their organic assets to sustain themselves. Essential resources such as food, water and hygiene maintenance, if not taken care of, can quickly incapacitate personnel and hinder the vital support they provide, making the unit operationally inefficient.

The 408th CSB will continue to be on the leading edge of these missions in the future and continues to posture itself for full spectrum contract support by remaining “focused and determined.” ♦

(Lt. Col. Americus Gill, 408th Contracting Support Brigade, Maj. (P) Maria Schneider, headquarters, Expeditionary Contracting Command, and Maj. Ryan Ocampo, 904th Contingency Contracting Battalion, contributed to this article.)



Contracting support during Eager Light exercise

By MAJ. ROBERT S. MATHEWS AND MAJ. CHRISTOPHER L. CENTER
619TH CONTINGENCY CONTRACTING TEAM, FORT DRUM, N.Y.

Contingency contracting support for ongoing exercises requires significant mission analysis and coordination with the supported unit, host nation vendors and, when applicable, the United States Embassy within the host country.

In January the 412th Contracting Support Brigade, Fort Sam Houston, Texas, in partnership with the 408th CSB, Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, tasked the 900th Contingency Contracting Battalion, Fort Bragg, N.C., to support the U.S. Army Central Eager Light exercise 10-01. The Eager Light exercise is a U.S. Central Command-directed Third Army/ARCENT executed, bien-

nial training exercise in the country of Jordan. It is a joint coalition exercise, which provides U.S. and Jordanian armed forces with brigade-level battle staff training. The training presents unique contracting support challenges that were overcome through a shared vision between the key stakeholders of ARCENT, the U.S. Embassy and the tasked leaders from the 608th and 619th Contingency Contracting Teams from Fort Drum, N.Y. A shared vision in exercise contracting support enabled mission accomplishment for all stakeholders.

Upon receipt of the Eager Light exercise tasking, the assigned contingency contracting officers completed a

(From left to right) Army Master Sgt. Robert Greenlief, 3rd Medical Deployment Support Command training non-commissioned officer/quota manager; Navy hospital corpsman Petty Officer 1st Class Jeremy Franco, Defense Medical Readiness Training Institute; and Army Master Sgt. Kenneth Pennock, 8th Medical Brigade intelligence/operations NCO; guide three Jordanian soldiers as they simulate an evacuation drag during a combat lifesaver seminar held at the Peace Operations Training Center in Zarqa, Jordan. Similar training was conducted in Jordan months later in support of the Eager Light exercise.

mission analysis focused on the assigned tasking. The analysis enabled the contingency contracting officers to directly coordinate with the 408th CSB, which granted their warrant authority for this exercise and would provide reachback support. It also enabled the CCOs to evaluate support during previous exercises, and what actions should be replicated. The analysis also identified areas where the contracting and operational timeline could be better synchronized, ensuring that ARCENT received all required support on time, contractors were paid by the U.S. Embassy, and contracts were closed out at the conclusion of the exercise.

ARCENT fully integrated the CCOs into their exercise planning and resource management efforts. Attendance at the main planning conference in February allowed time to conduct detailed market research in Amman, Jordan, and to meet key personnel at the U.S. Embassy. The meetings conducted at the embassy lead to the CCOs understanding of Jordan's force protection considerations. The U.S. Embassy's General Services Office provided a list of vetted contractors who had been cleared by CENTCOM force protection teams.

As ARCENT's business advisors, the 412th CSB assisted in developing statements of work for exercise support that addressed all of the GSO's force protection concerns. This assistance ensured the CCOs fully understood requirements for lodging, communications and transportation, and could solicit quotes effectively to ensure that contractors were vetted and could responsibly support all contracted requirements.

ARCENT and the supporting CCOs attended the final planning conference in June, a critical point at which operational and contracting timelines must be synchronized. ARCENT finalized the operational plan for exercise execution with the U.S. Embassy and the Jordanian army. Concurrently, the CCOs notified the successful contractors verbally of the awarded contracts.

A post award conference was executed with the successful contractors to ensure that transportation, communication and lodging contracts would be synchronized with the arrival and departure of U.S. Army personnel through all phases of the exercise. The post award conference is essential in this type of tasking due to force protection considerations.

During the final planning conference the nominated and appointed contracting officer representatives received the standard U.S. Army Contracting Command training package.

The 900th CCBn motto is "First in, last out," and the tasked CCOs

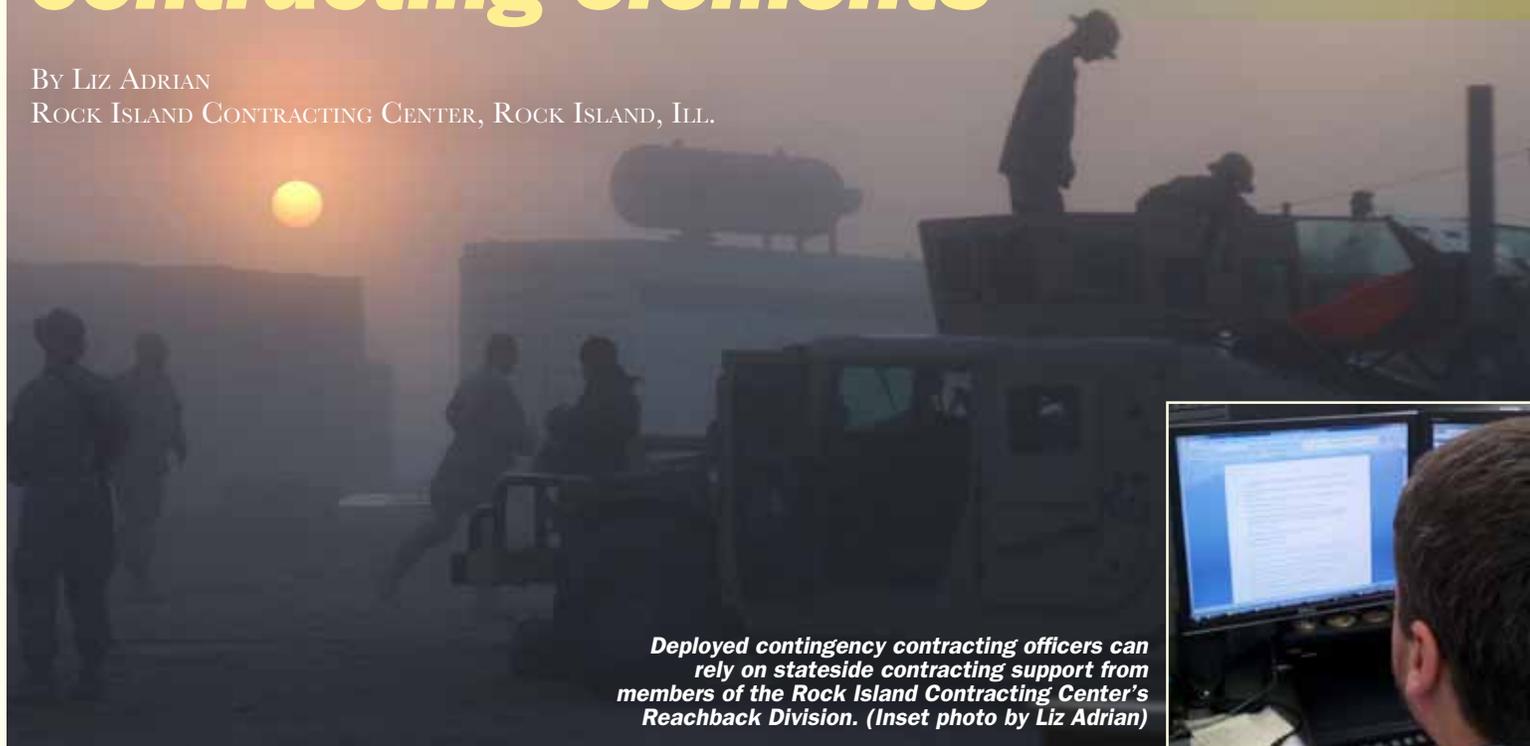
embodied this motto in the execution phase of Eager Light. The CCOs were the first to arrive in Jordan in July and the last Eager Light 10-01 personnel to leave in August. During the execution period of the Eager Light exercise the appointed contracting officer representatives proved to be critical enablers in the CCOs mission. Quality assurance surveillance plans executed by the CORs ensured that ARCENT received excellent contract support, and allowed the CCOs to focus on administrative duties for the contract closeout phase at the conclusion of the exercise.

Upon completion of the exercise, all contracts were closed out, vendors were paid through the U.S. Embassy - Jordan, and the tasked CCOs provided out-briefs to the 408th CSB in Kuwait. Eager Light 10-01 was successful due to a shared vision of stakeholders. Synchronization through all phases of the exercise with the contracting and operational plans maintained this shared vision. ♦

**The 900th CCBn motto is
"First in, last out," and the tasked
CCOs embodied this motto in the
execution phase of Eager Light.**

Providing stateside support to deployed contracting elements

BY LIZ ADRIAN
ROCK ISLAND CONTRACTING CENTER, ROCK ISLAND, ILL.



Deployed contingency contracting officers can rely on stateside contracting support from members of the Rock Island Contracting Center's Reachback Division. (Inset photo by Liz Adrian)

Military units in Southwest Asia can trace their contracting support back to an island in the middle of the Mississippi River. The Reachback Division of the Rock Island Contracting Center, located on Rock Island Arsenal, Ill., provides contracting support for those in theater.

"In three years, the division has grown from an eight person cell focused on one contracting office in Kuwait to a division of 62 people, including Air Force and Army personnel, with a worldwide focus," said Mike Hutchison, acting executive director of the RICC. "We've grown faster than any contracting organization I know of and I believe that is a reflection on our focus of good customer support."

The division currently has four branches handling Afghanistan, Iraq, Kuwait and Qatar, and transportation.

The division's beginning can be traced back to a 2007 memorandum of agreement establishing a contracting cell in the continental United States to support the 408th Contracting Support Brigade in Kuwait. "We could not have addressed the contracting issues in Kuwait without the reachback support from the RICC," said Brig. Gen. Joe Bass, commander of the Expeditionary Contracting Command. He commanded the 408th CSB in 2007 and 2008.

In December 2008 the U.S. Central Command's Joint Theater Support Contracting Command contacted the RICC because it wanted additional support. That command executed a memorandum of agreement in February 2008 for the division to execute complex procurements on their behalf.

In a year's time, as the mission continued to grow, the RICC made the

decision to split the reachback branch in two – one for Iraq and one for Afghanistan.

Recently C-JTSCC approached the RICC regarding a possible stand-up cell of Air Force personnel to support some of their non-complex procurements – purchases that fall under the simplified acquisition threshold. The branch stood up in December of 2009 and five Air Force members reported in January of 2010.

"The purpose of the cell was to alleviate non-complex work from their mission in Iraq and Afghanistan in hopes of relieving workload," said Susan Phares, acting chief, Reachback Division. "This was done on a trial basis to see how the work could be

handled here in Illinois and have fewer people in theater.” The trial basis was 6 months. “The trial was deemed a success and we now have a new group of Air Force personnel executing that mission.”

“At that same time we received five Army personnel who were contingency contracting Soldiers serving the Expeditionary Contracting Command’s 620th Contingency Contracting Team,” said Phares. “They are here executing both complex reach-back as well as non-complex reach-back in support of C-JTSCC.

“I think the biggest thing that makes reachback unique is the variance in the mission that makes literally every day different,” said Amber Caulkins, acting branch chief of Reachback’s Transportation Division. “When you support customers from multiple time zones that cross all branches of the Armed Services and different agencies, you have to quickly learn and apply the best possible business practices for each particular customer, region and requirement.”

The division currently provides services for the U.S. Army Central, U.S. Forces Iraq, U.S. Forces Afghanistan and the U.S. Army Surface Deployment and Distribution Command.

Although Reachback is CONUS-based, its support is wide-reaching – Reachback contracting is providing support to the Army’s commands around the world. This global focus gives employees the opportunity to see how their contracts directly impact the Soldier and continuously offers them the opportunity for professional growth.

“The Reachback Division is staffed with many people who have deployed to theater and understand the requirements and the customer mission,” said Caulkins. “In addition, we travel and operate in a manner that provides for optimal customer service. We are staffed by military, seasoned civilian contracting professionals, as well as new employees and interns.” ♦

916th CCBn activates at Fort Sam Houston

BY LORI NEWMAN, U.S. ARMY GARRISON PUBLIC AFFAIRS
FORT SAM HOUSTON, TEXAS

A ceremony was held Sept. 16 activating the 916th Contingency Contracting Battalion at Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

“The activation of the 916th is the result of the Army’s leadership vision to streamline contracting organizations to create more agile and responsive mission-focused units,” said Col. William Sanders, commander, 410th Contracting Support Brigade, Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

“This new command will bring the forces of acquisition, logistics and technology to bear where it matters most, on the battlefield. Even though we are officially activating the 916th CCBn, teams are already executing missions around the world.”

The 916th CCBn consists of five contingency contracting teams in support of the 410th CSB and U.S. Army South. Three CCTs are located at Fort Sam Houston and the remaining two teams are located in Miami, Fla.

The 916th CCBn is a subordinate unit of the 410th CSB, the primary provider of contingency contracting support to ARSOUTH in support of Army and Joint Operations throughout the Southern Command area of responsibility.

Their mission is to provide responsive contingency and mission contracting support by rapidly preparing, soliciting and awarding critical supply, service and construction contracts at the point of need in support ARSOUTH and joint warfighters across the full spectrum of military operations.

“The Army has selected the right command team for this job, and both individuals are very familiar with being pioneers in contingency contracting,” Sanders said.

“I have watched this command team grow and I am confident that they will cultivate a unit of highly-skilled, disciplined, committed Soldiers and civilians. I expect the 916th CCBn to be a force multiplier to Army Acquisition Corps, to our warfighters and to our nation for many years to come.”

“This is truly a great day for the Soldiers of the 916th. An activation ceremony is special because it represents an opportunity to create an Army unit from the ground up,” said Lt. Col. Vernon Myers, the new commander of the 916th CCBn.

“We have the opportunity to build, model and shape this organization into the premier contracting battalion in [the Expeditionary Contracting Command],” Myers said. “We will do this by focusing on three things. We will be mission focused; we will be ready to deploy worldwide in support of contingency operations by training on the basics of contracting and getting the basics right; and we will focus on taking care of our Soldiers, civilians and their families.”

“Mission, training and people; if we get those three things right, we will be successful,” Myers concluded. ♦



410th Col. William Sanders (right), commander, 410th Contracting Support Brigade, and Master Sgt. Eiliceer Quintero Jr., the unit’s senior enlisted adviser, uncased the 916th CCBn colors as Lt. Col. Vernon Myers (left), the new commander, looks on. (Photo by Lori Newman)

ACC, ECC headquarters continue migration to Huntsville



By LARRY D. McCASKILL, OFFICE OF PUBLIC AND CONGRESSIONAL AFFAIRS
U.S. ARMY CONTRACTING COMMAND

With less than 12 months before the Army Contracting Command officially raises the command colors at its new home at Redstone Arsenal, Huntsville, Ala., ACC employees have begun their southern migration.

The first group of ACC employees to report to Redstone Arsenal found themselves in warehouse facilities provided by the RSA Garrison. With the recent arrival of temporary office buildings, ACC personnel are beginning to occupy semi-permanent facilities in their own compound area.

"The first staff trailer is now operational," said Gene Duncan, ACC, strategic initiatives director and the senior ACC forward staff member at Redstone Arsenal. "We've moved 12 folks from ACC's personnel, security, information technology and resource management staffs who were in Building 7437 (also known as the warehouse) into the trailer and all are now operational with phones and computers. The rest of the staff in Building 7437 will remain there until the other trailers come online, but the new hires reporting in now will go directly into the trailers."

Duncan said as people leave Bldg. 7437, everyone gets a new 256-955-7XXX phone number. Video telecon-

ferencing equipment has been installed. Transition team and staff meetings connecting back to the ACC headquarters at Fort Belvoir, Va., are being conducted from conference rooms in the staff trailer.

"From my perspective things have been going well," Duncan said. "We've been limited on space so we have been bringing folks on slowly. Now that the relocatables are becoming available we are expecting a much greater influx of folks. Right now we have less than 60 people here at RSA but we expect to be up to approximately 120 folks by the end of December."

With an influx of new people to the area comes the most frequently asked question: Where is the best place to live?

"The short answer is that there is no single best place. It all depends on what you are looking for," said Duncan, who made the move to Alabama from the Washington, D.C., area in 2007. "There is a wide variety of housing options ranging from apartments, townhomes and condos, to restored 19th century houses in historic districts, to suburban living in subdivisions, to country estates and farms all within a 30-45 minute commute from Redstone. We also get lots of questions about schools. The transition team has done a good job of putting a lot of the information on the transition Web site."

The command is doing a better job of getting the word out on repeat-

able processes that are in place to help people acclimate themselves to the area and become productive as soon as possible, Duncan said. In order to get people up and running quickly there has to be a lot of communication about who will be arriving at RSA and when.

"We're still getting a lot of last minute changes in reporting dates and that is causing a lot of scrambling, espe-



John Bertsch, an Army Contracting Command procurement analyst (left) and Gene Duncan of the Army Contracting Command's forward staff look over a map of Redstone Arsenal. Duncan, the ACC Strategic Initiatives director, moved to Huntsville in 2007 and has been instrumental in implementing procedures for a successful migration of the ECC and ACC headquarters to Huntsville, Ala.

cially for the G6 information technology team. They need to coordinate information management actions at Fort Belvoir and Redstone Arsenal to ensure network accounts, e-mail access and file backup don't cause delays," he said.

Arriving in Huntsville in August, Sandra March, director, Internal Review and Audit Compliance Office, Expeditionary Contracting Command, said the most pleasant surprise has been the quiet.

“It’s a stark contrast from Northern Virginia and it certainly reduced my stress level. I know we sleep better feeling safer and more secure,” March said. “I now recognize we were living at a high stress level there and didn’t take the time to enjoy things around us. I was raised in a large metropolitan area in Texas, so I didn’t mind the traffic, police sirens, airplanes, helicopters and neighbors. The absence of noise has been a very welcomed difference.”

Another surprise for March is the new ACC and ECC employees arriving to Redstone Arsenal. “New people are arriving here every day,” said March.

“They’re coming from all over...Germany, Rock Island, Virginia ... and from the local area. They have positive attitudes and appear ready to start a new chapter in their work and personal lives.”

The command transition team has put together several packages of information for personnel to review prior to departing their home stations to help them be more prepared to settle in when they arrive in Alabama. A ‘Know Before you Go’ binder has been developed that captures basic information on the RSA area and explains the permanent change of station process and entitlements. The second package is a ‘To Go’ kit that

covers more specifics on what a person needs to do when they out process, when they arrive at their new duty station, where to check-in, etc.

“The two biggest things that we’ve seen that people sometimes forget to bring with them are copies of their medical records and paper copies of their car titles, which are required to register their vehicles in Alabama,” Duncan said.

“We’d like to get that type of information and general information packages on the area to people as soon as possible,” Duncan said. ♦

Huntsville, here we come

By Fred Biestek, Office of Public and Congressional Affairs
U.S. Army Contracting Command

After two decades of maneuvering my way through the Washington, D.C., beltway I decided it was time for a change and that meant switching jobs and locations. Soon I found myself in a new position with the Army Contracting Command and a gateway to southern living.

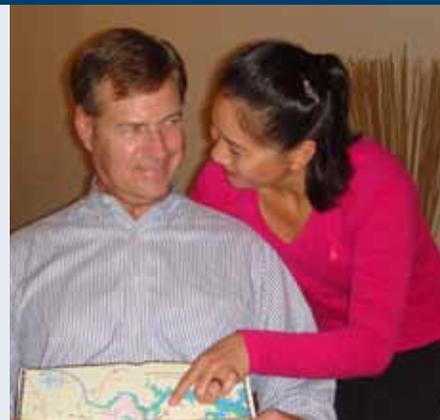
As soon as I accepted the position, I began looking forward to the move to Huntsville, Ala. I had been a visitor to the south for years, but never lived there. So, now someone from New England had a real opportunity to experience southern hospitality first hand.

My wife Snow had never been in the south and was excited about moving. So, we soon jumped on a plane to Alabama and begin looking for a new home.

What we found was paradise lost. It’s a much smaller metropolitan area, the pace is more relaxing and traffic, considering where we currently live, was nonexistent.

We focused on finding a house in a nice community that was close to Redstone Arsenal. We spent lots of time on-line before the trip and saw lots of houses while there. Sure enough, we found a home that was priced right in a great community and near one of the main traffic routes so the commuting time to work will be lots less.

There are a lot of things to do and see there. I didn’t know they had a minor league baseball team and my wife fell in love with the museums, botanical garden and the mountain views. She plans to grow her own flower and vegetable garden at our new home.



Excited about their pending move to Huntsville, Ala., Fred and Snow Biestek plot the general location of their new home on a local map.

Undoubtedly though, we were most impressed with the genuine kindness of everyone we met while there....from the people working at the small airport and at the hotel to folks in the stores and working at Redstone Arsenal, we experienced Southern hospitality first hand.

I didn’t have any hesitation about the move before, and now that I have visited Huntsville and found my home, I’m looking forward to the change even more. (Not to mention the fresh vegetables.)

Armyhire.com provides window to job opportunities

BY FREDERICK POOLE, OFFICE OF PUBLIC AND CONGRESSIONAL AFFAIRS
U.S. ARMY CONTRACTING COMMAND

Many people want a career that has opportunities for growth, responsibility, and a chance to make an impact in the organization. The U.S. Army Contracting Command's Web site, Armyhire.com, is a portal for those interested in starting a career as a contracting specialist with the command. Armyhire.com is the tip of the spear of ACC's recruitment initiatives. The site is written without much of the governmental jargon and terms found on sites with .gov and .mil extensions so that those interested in government jobs, but not familiar with government terminology, can easily comprehend.

The target audiences include non-governmental contracting professionals and college graduates seeking career opportunities in Army contracting. College students can join ACC's future acquisition student training program which is a two-year, paid intern program designed to develop future contracting and acquisition leaders.

"A large part of our recruitment effort is focused on entry-level Department of the Army intern positions," said Valerie Ward, human resources specialist, ACC G1 (Personnel), Redstone Arsenal, Ala. "Since the command stood up in 2008, we have brought on board more than 850 interns."

Government and non-governmental professionals, and recent college graduates can browse the Web site for job postings for procurement analyst, contract specialist and supervisory con-

tract specialist positions. The site also includes links to www.usajobs.com.

An award-winning initiative, Armyhire.com is listed as a featured employer on www.usajobs.com and has seen its number of unique site visitors increase each month during 2010. Links to www.armyhire.com can also be found on Army Civilian Personnel Online, ASmartPlace.com, and the web pages of various chapters of the National Contract Management Association.

The Web site also has information for current government contracting professionals looking for employment with ACC as well as contracting opportunities in the U.S. Army Central Command. Armyhire.com visitors can look up information on intern, mid-level and senior level contracting specialist positions within the command. ♦



WWW.ARMYHIRE.COM, a big part of the ACC recruitment strategy, is now available as a mobile application for iPhones, Blackberrys and similar devices.

Joanne Fleming, Technology, Automation, and Industrial Analysis Division, CECOM Contracting Center, signs onto her computer during the middle of setting up her cubicle. Fleming and other contracting center employees began moving into the new facilities on Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md., in October. (Photo by Sean Kief)

lence. This is a national problem that resulted from years of sparse hiring,” said Edward G. Elgart, executive director, CECOM Contracting Center. “As a result, the entire federal government competes for a very limited talent pool. Growing new contracting officers in-house to fill these positions is a four-to-10 year process. The good news is that there is tremendous talent in the pipeline that will get us back to the expertise we need.”

Elgart said that years of downsizing led to more generalization in the contracting career field. As a result, pricing capability diminished.

“Reconstituting that from scratch is a major challenge. Fortunately we have been able to hire from the industry sector as well as DCAA (Defense Contract Audit Agency) people who possess those skills,” Elgart said. “Partnering them with Army contracting individuals who volunteered to become price analysts, we are well on our way to creating a vibrant, talented pricing sector.”

“Our building will also house a state-of-the art training room which will be used for our intern institute and continued workforce development. The campus offers a plethora of new dining facilities which were not previously available to the workforce at APG.

Collaborative desk spaces and close proximity to customers will provide greater synergy with the C4ISR community,” Newton said.

“The CECOM Contracting Center at Aberdeen Proving Ground is a brand new state of the art facility. We have tremendous opportunity for hard charging people with great attitudes who want to be part of a world class team. This is a unique opportunity to reshape business processes and help develop the future workforce. There are tremendous challenges and great rewards in helping to provide the best C4ISR equipment and capabilities to our warfighters,” said Elgart. ♦

Monmouth employees begin move to their new Maryland facilities

By LARRY D. McCASKILL, OFFICE OF PUBLIC AND CONGRESSIONAL AFFAIRS
U.S. ARMY CONTRACTING COMMAND

Years turned into months, months turned to weeks, and weeks will soon turn into days for the CECOM Contracting Center employees moving in November to the Center’s new facilities at Aberdeen Proving Ground.

“The new C4ISR (Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance) campus gives us the ability to work together toward a common vision,” said Christopher J. Newton, CECOM Contracting Center management analyst, Human Capital Group. “The C4ISR community brings cutting edge technology to the Warfighter, so it is only fitting that we operate in a campus-like atmosphere to encourage creative thinking and collaboration be-

tween functional parties. This is a very exciting time to be an Army employee as an investment like this happens only once in a lifetime.”

The moves started in October and will be completed in November. The contracting center will occupy three floors of the Headquarters East Building on the C4ISR campus.

The CECOM Contracting Center’s facilities are part of an approximately \$477 million construction project encompassing more than 1.5 million square feet of office, lab and administrative space

As they move into the new facilities, the center will address some familiar challenges. “Finding qualified contracting officers is always a chal-

Soldiers' path to a career in Army contracting begins with the basics

BY FREDERICK POOLE, OFFICE OF PUBLIC AND CONGRESSIONAL AFFAIRS
U.S. ARMY CONTRACTING COMMAND

There's more to military contracting than signing paperwork. To conduct effective military contracting, Soldiers receive extensive training in all aspects of military contracting.

Preparing these warriors in the fine art of expeditionary contracting is in the trusted hands of the Army Logistics University and Lackland Air Force Base staffs.

"We are a combat multiplier for the commander in wartime and peacetime," said Lt. Col. Craig Gardunia, director of the Army Intermediate Contracting Course and the Army Intermediate Contracting Laboratory at

Army Logistics University, Huntsville, Ala. "We augment the commander's logistical support. The items he can't get through normal supply channels we procure for him."

Planning and executing effective contracting support for the U.S. Army service component commanders in support of Army and joint operations, the Expeditionary Contracting Command is staffed with military contracting specialists prepared to deploy worldwide to provide assistance.

"51C officers volunteer for the job and are selected by a formal selection board managed by the Acquisi-

Army Logistics University instructor Jeff Hardin, (second on the right) reviews class material with (left to right) Henry Atchley, Adina Peyton and Sgt. 1st Class Christopher Field.



To conduct effective military contracting, Soldiers receive extensive training in all aspects of military contracting.

tion Management Branch, Human Resources Command,” said Lt. Col. Timothy Strange, Expeditionary Contracting Command, chief, Training division, Fort Belvoir, Va. “Once selected, their AMB assignment officer schedules their initial institutional training and their follow-on initial contracting assignment.”

“The process for NCOs entering the career field is slightly different. They submit a reclassification request to the U.S. Army Acquisition Support Center, the 51C contracting proponent,” said Strange. “After selection for reclassification, the NCO is scheduled for training and their follow-on initial contracting assignment.”

Officers and NCOs receive contracting training at two locations; ALU and at the Mission Ready Airmen Contract Apprentice Course, Lackland Air Force Base, Texas. MRAC is an eight-week long course strictly dedicated to teaching NCOs contracting fundamentals, demo-performance of tasks, and the use of purchase actions.

“The 51C officer’s initial courses are held five times per year and last 14 weeks while NCO initial courses last seven weeks,” said Strange.

Gardunia says NCOs and 51C officers both start out taking the five-

week Army Acquisition Basic Course and learn program management and contracting; afterwards, their training paths differ.

“Upon completion the NCOs and officers will have their level one certification in contracting and program management,” said Gardunia. “From that point on, the NCOs and officers take a different path. The NCOs next course is the Army Intermediate Contracting Laboratory, while officers take Intermediate Program Management, Army Intermediate Contracting, and then the same lab course NCOs previously completed.”

In addition to their classroom training, there is now a 51C Level One Proficiency Guide available to further prepare Soldiers to become professional contracting officers.

This guide was developed by ECC training officials and focuses on acquiring commercial items, simplified acquisition procedures, procurement of supplies, services and minor construction, contract planning, and contract closeouts.

“This proficiency guide contains basic tasks that all ACC 51Cs should be proficient in. It also applies to all ACC 51Cs and their assigned senior warranted civilian contracting officer

mentors,” said Strange. “The guide is applicable to all ACC 51Cs from staff sergeant through lieutenant colonel, with the exception of senior enlisted advisors at the brigade level.”

“After the initial training, both officers and NCOs are placed into a (military) contracting office to complete 12 months of contracting proficiency training,” said Command Sgt. Maj. John L. Murray, ECC command sergeant major. “Their purpose is to gain the experience necessary to write and administer contracts in a combat zone.”

Gardunia said his students need to be prepared to handle contracting business but to also make certain that the customer is well aware of how contracting works.

“One of the biggest challenges we face is educating the customer. They need to know what we bring to the table and understand how we can augment his or her logistical trail or operations,” said Gardunia. “Soldiers need to pay more attention because it’s about applying different formulas to various problems then explaining it to the customer. It is important to know what formula applies to the problem.”

AAICC requires its officers to read the following documents to properly prepare for the course; Bio-Sensor Virus Detector Program, Influenza Background Information Market Research Data for the BSVD Program, and Bio-Sensor Purchase Request.

“Here at ALU we want our enrolled officers functioning as contracting specialists and to be able to use all the tools that are available to them, as well as understanding the Army contracting process,” said Gardunia. ♦

Small staff equals big support



Air Force Staff Sgt. Bethany McClain (standing), Soto Cano Regional Contracting Office, conducts field ordering officer training for (left to right) Yesica Valladares, Roberto Aviles, Air Force Tech. Sgt. Daniel Carpenter and Berilda Medina.

PROVIDED BY THE SOTO CANO REGIONAL CONTRACTING CENTER

The regional contracting office at Soto Cano Air Base, Honduras, is part of the U.S. Army Expeditionary Contracting Command, reporting directly to the 410th Contracting Support Brigade, Fort Sam Houston, Texas. The office staff consists of less than 10, but don't assume the small staff size equates to small support.

During fiscal year 2009, the Soto Cano RCO obligated more than \$17 million and managed a contract portfolio valued at more than \$33 million. The office also administered 15 service contracts; running the gamut from the \$3.5 million base operations supplies and support contract, to commercial phone service, Spanish instruction and line haul services. The base operating support services contract authorized contracting officer, Air Force Tech. Sgt, Daniel Carpenter, 2nd Contracting Squadron, works closely with base lead-

ership and the contractor to provide both daily and emergency services in support of Joint Task Force-Bravo's 24-hour operations.

In June, JTF-B supported disaster relief efforts in Guatemala following Tropical Storm Agatha and the eruption of the Pacaya volcano. Both Air Force Staff Sgt. Bethany McClain, 2nd Contracting Squadron, Barksdale Air Force Base, La., and Air Force Senior Airmen Angel Galindo, 14th Contracting Squadron, Columbus AFB, Miss., provided immediate and lasting contracting support. As a direct result of their efforts, JTF-B transported 152,000 pounds of relief supplies to 14 Guatemalan communities in need.

Not to be overlooked is the support JTF-B provides through medical readiness training exercises. Under the supervision of U.S. Southern Command, these exercises bring medical aid to needy rural areas and populations in the region. Typical MEDRETEs include medical, dental and some-

times veterinary treatment, and have a tremendous positive impact on the educational and medical infrastructures of an area. Contracting is again on the forefront, typically securing rental vehicles, hotels and any equipment necessary to facilitate the care.

"This is my third deployment and unlike anything I have ever done," said McClain who serves as a field ordering officer. "Honduras provides a unique opportunity to work humanitarian operations. My piece is to train the FOOs (field ordering officers) who go out on MEDRETEs to Hondurans who otherwise would not have any medical or dental care."

Honduras is known for its amazing natural beauty and rich cultural treasures. Its central location, coupled with the longest runway in Central America, makes it an ideal spot to respond quickly to contingencies in Central America, thus keeping the RCO pretty busy.

"My first knowledge of our mission in Honduras was when (in 2004) I received six month deployment orders as a DoD (Department of Defense) civilian to support the contracting of office," said current director of contracting, Rodney P. Prickett. "I was assigned as an administrative contracting officer for the base contract. After a short time I came to realize the important role our government and the contracting office provided in the region."

"One of my motivations for returning was the hard work and dedication the employees here provided to the mission," said Prickett, who returned in 2009. "I have been here for one year, and look forward to my next year's tour. I continue to be aware of the importance of our mission, which I continue to want to be part of."

While the work may not receive the attention of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, the efforts do not go un-

(CONTINUED ON P.26)

Contracting team helped make Jackal Stone 10 a success

STAFF SGT. SHELIA L. SLEDGE, 13TH PUBLIC AFFAIRS DETACHMENT
FORT HOOD, TEXAS



Maj. Jeyanthan Jeyasingam, left, contracting officer assigned to 643rd Contingency Contracting Team, Grafenwoehr, Germany, and Polish Lt. Col. Miroslaw Krupa discuss contractual issues and concerns during their daily meeting as part of the Jackal Stone 10 exercise. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Shelia L. Sledge)

For the more than 1,100 participants attending the Jackal Stone 10 exercise, the first day rigors of deployment were significantly reduced. Jackal Stone 10 is a multinational special operations forces military exercise conducted in Poland and Lithuania.

Upon arrival, coalition members were quickly in-processed, bussed to their barracks and treated to a hot meal at the dining facility. Later that night, they were able to clean up in one of the many portable showers and crawl into a bed complete with blankets and linen placed neatly on top.

All of this was made possible by four Expeditionary Contracting Command Soldiers who worked aggressively behind the scenes, without fanfare or recognition.

Making it their personal goal to ensure delivery of the basic necessities, Maj. Jeyanthan Jeyasingam, Sgt. 1st Class Jerry L. Dysick and Staff Sgt. Derrick L. Reynolds from the 643rd Contingency Contracting Team, Grafenwoehr, Germany and Staff Sgt. Carlet A. Clark, 411th Contracting Support Brigade, Camp Humphreys, Korea, dealt directly with Polish and Lithuanian vendors to make sure the exercise ran smoothly.

Jackal Stone is an annual multinational special operations forces exercise co-hosted this year by Poland and Lithuania and coordinated by U.S. Special Operations Command Europe. In addition, the exercise included participants from Croatia, Latvia, Romania and Ukraine.

Exercise planning began nearly a year earlier when the contracting team was assigned to the exercise to solicit and award contracts for accommodation of personnel, food, missions, and life support amenities.

During initial meetings with SOCEUR logistics planners, Jeyasingam discussed the legal parameters of awarding contracts to vendors based on what the command had identified for services. Once the planning started and the first meeting was over, Jeyasingam knew what had to be done in order to get each contract awarded.

“We had our first meeting in early January with SOCEUR J-4 logistics planners,” Jeyasingam said. “At that time, we came up with our contract support integration plan, and this provided the baseline for all contracting actions put in place for the exercise.”

According to Master Sgt. Greg Green, SOCEUR J-4 noncommis-

sioned officer in charge, the relationship between the contracting team, also known as KOs, and the SOCEUR planners was critical to the logistical planning of the exercise.

“In that initial meeting with the contracting team, it is up to us to make sure they completely understand the Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force requirements,” Green said. “We plan for all the logistics of the CJ-SOTF and solicit for all the services we need through the contracting team.”

Green mentioned some of those services include rental cars, buses, dining facility support, internet service, fuel, portable toilets and showers just to name a few. He also mentioned that the most important aspect of the KO’s duty is ensuring the legality of all the contracts that SOCEUR procures during the exercise.

“We have a great relationship because they keep us out of trouble and they let us know if we’re going over our budget,” Green said. “Although something we request may be legal, the KOs will let us know that we have only so much money and they will advise us whether we should or should not procure that service.”

The team has written about 16 contracts in both Poland and Lithuania to support the exercise, but the process was not instantaneous. They made sure that the contracts were in place weeks prior to the arrival of participants.

(CONTINUED ON P.26)

“We have a great relationship because they keep us out of trouble and they let us know if we’re going over our budget.”

— Master Sgt. Greg Green, SOCEUR J-4

Frequent visitors to Capitol Hill, the Army Contracting Command's Congressional Affairs Team of Fred Biestek (left) and Todd Waltemyer serve as the communication conduit on congressional matters. (Photo by Larry D. McCaskill)

Behind-the-scenes look at Congressional Affairs operations

BY OFFICE OF PUBLIC AND CONGRESSIONAL AFFAIRS
U.S. ARMY CONTRACTING COMMAND

Many people are unaware of the mechanisms of congressional affairs or the behind-the-scenes effort of meeting and hearing preparation as well as handling congressional inquiries; yet the Army Contracting Command's Congressional Affairs Team performs each task exceptionally well.

The congressional affairs staff, part of the ACC Office of Public and Congressional Affairs, helps tell the ACC story by connecting leadership with congressional members and key staffers. They facilitate the flow of information between the ACC, Army and Congress on items of interest. Other responsibilities include supporting congressional hearings, responding to congressional inquiries, and coordinating meetings with congress.

Todd Waltemyer, ACC, chief, congressional affairs, has been in congressional affairs for more than 17 years, many of them with an Army Materiel Command organization. Fred Biestek, the newest congressional affairs specialist, is no stranger to Capitol Hill having worked in the field for more than 15 years including as a congressional fellow in the office of Sen. Joseph L. Lieberman, I-Conn.

"Occasionally the ACC's senior leadership is called to Capitol Hill for hearings on issues and programs of interest," said Waltemyer. "The congressional affairs team coordinates the entire mission from logistics of the

engagement to coordinating preparations between subject matter experts and senior leaders to develop suggested communications strategies."

Jeff Parsons, executive director, Army Contracting Command, can attest to the professionalism and support the congressional affairs team provides.

"Providing accurate and timely responses to congressional queries is a top priority for this command," Parsons said. "ACC has done an outstanding job of telling our story during many congressional engagements. Perhaps the best measure of our success is that Congress continues to fully support the vital work we all do here."

The team resolved more than 370 congressional inquiries during fiscal year 2010. During that same time frame, they tracked almost 30 hearings on items of interest to the command and supported three hearings where the ACC executive director gave testimony. Waltemyer and Biestek are quick to point out that the success of the team is largely due to the strong support

provided by the command's leadership and professional staff.

Members of Congress regularly receive requests from constituents for assistance or information, Waltemyer said. If a constituent request involves a matter pertaining to the Army, the member's office normally sends a formal inquiry via letter to Headquarters, Department of the Army, seeking resolution of the matter. Once HQDA receives the request and determines which Army organization has propinquity, a formal tasking is issued. Since the ACC executes nearly 70 percent of all contracting within the Army, many congressional requests for information in this mission area find their way to the ACC congressional affairs team.

Congressional hearings are conducted by congressional committees who have been assigned a particular jurisdiction of oversight responsibility for a part of the federal government, Waltemyer continued. There are four main committees with jurisdiction over the Department of Defense; the House

"Perhaps the best measure of our success is that Congress continues to fully support the vital work we all do here."

— Jeff Parsons, ACC executive director



Armed Services Committee, the Senate Armed Services Committee, the House Appropriations Committee, and the Senate Appropriations Committee.

“During fiscal year 2010, we supported more than 40 congressional meetings,” said Waltemyer. “Twenty one of those meetings included direct participation by senior ACC leadership. Our team helped to prepare the ACC meeting participants for their appearances and we coordinated all of the engagement logistics.”

Waltemyer has supported the preparation of Parsons for hearings on the Hill numerous times.

“The best way to prepare for hearings is to gather as much reliable intelligence as possible and do your homework to anticipate what possible lines of

questioning may arise,” said Waltemyer. “Our congressional affairs team will research each member’s interests, review related hearing transcripts, past staffer inquiries, and media reports.”

According to the congressional affairs team, they will talk to staff at the Office of the Secretary of Defense, Department of the Army, Army Materiel Command, major subordinate commands and ACC subject matter experts to better understand the background behind the potential lines of questioning.

Lt. Col. Dean Vlahopoulos, member of Office of Chief, Legislative Liaison Office, routinely works with ACC’s congressional affairs professionals to coordinate the command’s relations with Congress. He and his office help ensure that the Army story

is communicated to and understood by members and staff on the hill.

“We work hand-in-hand with the ACC team as the Army conduits to the hill to make sure all Army issues of interest are presented in the best light,” said Vlahopoulos.

The congressional affairs team has recently completed the development of a command policy which details their procedures for handling congressional inquiries.

“We have a duty to be timely and to be accurate; often these two aspects are seen as competing with one another, but that does not have to be the case,” said Waltemyer. “Our primary goal is to provide timely and responsive information to members of Congress, congressional committees and their staffs.” ♦

Staff support

(CONTINUED FROM P.22)

noticed. The response capabilities and efforts of JTF-B and contracting all go a long way toward building true, lasting partnerships with Central American governments that are part of a larger effort to promote regional security, stability and prosperity. By forging partnerships, practicing teamwork and helping those who need it most, those assigned to JTF-B prove daily that an assignment here is more than a regular job. It's a chance to make a difference in the lives of the United States' neighbors and make a brighter future for those who live here. It's a life-changing experience the men and women of the regional contracting office will never forget. ♦

Jackal Stone 10

(CONTINUED FROM P.23)

"The contracts took a couple of months to award," said Reynolds. "Between the two of us [Jeyasingam and Reynolds], we attended all of the planning meetings in Stuttgart, Lithuania and Poland, and I believe it paid off."

The team was able to see the culmination of their hard work once they arrived to the exercise, with the portable showers, food and water already on site. As the exercise neared its end, Jeyasingam's contracting team still had work that needed to be completed. "Towards the end, our biggest role was to respond to last minute requirements and any other operational contracting support needs," Jeyasingam said.

Green is very complimentary of the foursome and spoke on behalf of the Jackal Stone participants in Poland and Lithuania.

"Everyone here had the basic necessities to enjoy their exercise 'deployment,' whether it was within the life support area or within the CJSOTF," Green said. "But none of it would have been possible without the effort of the contracting team." ♦

Around ACC...



Army Contracting Command executive director Jeff Parsons, center, looks on during a walk-through of emergency services operations at a base in Kuwait. Parsons and Brig. Gen. Joe Bass, commander, Expeditionary Contracting Command, were in country for a series of visits, reviews and discussions on contracting officer representative responsibilities in country. During their visit they recognized numerous civilians and Soldiers for their work. (Photo by Michael Holcomb)



Maj. Kevin Cline, 620th Contingency Contracting Team, reenlists Sgt. 1st Class Peter Miller, 408th Contracting Support Brigade, during a ceremony at Shaw Air Force Base, S.C. (Photo courtesy of the 408th Contracting Support Brigade)



Twenty six contracting interns from the National Capital Region Contracting Center toured the U.S. Capitol Oct. 20 as part of their training program. The Capitol Hill visit was designed to familiarize the interns with Congress and how it relates to contracting. The agenda consisted of a meeting with Andrew Hunter, professional staff member of the House Armed Services Committee; a tour of the U.S. Capitol; and a meeting with Tim Aiken, legislative director for Rep Jim Moran (D-Va.). The staffers explained their role, highlighted congressional interest in Army contracting, and answered questions. (Photo by Frederick Poole)

Maj. Robert Matthews, U.S. Army Expeditionary Contracting Command, and Patty Queen-Harper, U.S. Army Contracting Command Office of Small Business, advised attendees on how to do business with ACC at the Army Materiel Command display during the Association of the United States Army's annual meeting and exposition at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center in Washington, D.C., Oct. 25-27. (Photo by Larry D. McCaskill)



Master Sgt. Jason Pitts (center), 618th Contingency Contracting Team, Elmendorf, Alaska, accepts the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Acquisition, Logistic and Technology) Contracting Noncommissioned Officer Award for Contracting Excellence from Edward Harrington (left), Deputy Assistant Secretary for Procurement (ASAALT), and the Honorable Dr. Malcolm Ross O'Neill, the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology. (Photo courtesy of ASAALT)

Leslie H. Carroll (center) accepted the Association of the United States Army Joseph P. Cribbins Award this year's AUSA annual meeting and exposition at Walter E. Washington Convention Center in Washington, D.C., Oct. 25-27. Presenting the award are Army Lt. Gen. Retired Roger G. Thompson Jr., AUSA vice president, membership & meetings (left) and retired Army Gen. Gordon R. Sullivan, AUSA president and chief operating officer. Carroll is the director of contracting, U.S. Army Mission and Installation Contracting Command, Fort Campbell, Ky. (Photo courtesy of AUSA)





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