

A look beneath the surface of *naval optics*

Patrick Tremblay | DCMA Public Affairs

In a picturesque small town in central Massachusetts, more than two hour's drive from any deep water, Vin Mineo takes a close look at a marvel of modern optics – a Navy submarine periscope.


Mineo is a quality assurance lead from Defense Contract Management Agency East Hartford, Conn. For the past seven years he has been working on-site in Massachusetts at the birthplace of all Navy submarine periscopes and photonic masts. These high-tech devices allow sailors beneath the water to see, sense and know what is going on above them, and are critical to the success of submarine warfare.

Behind a non-descript door in the contractor's facility, Mineo and the rest of the DCMA team perform a full range of contract administration functions. From negotiating changes in contracts, to ensuring quality, to tracking on-time deliveries, the group provides an on-site presence for the customer. Like a periscope into the plant, the DCMA team lets the Navy customer see, sense and know what is happening with these contracts.

The DCMA quality team includes a specialist for each of the main products produced on-site. This includes traditional periscopes, evolved from those designed a century ago, and photonic masts, which join periscopes on some boats.

Ed Massa, DCMA Hartford quality assurance supervisor, said Mineo's team integrates well with the other agency functions at the supplier. "They all work well together as a team. Quality works with the industrial specialists and engineers for planning, and assists the contracts specialist with their work."

While the quality team is employing surveillance plans to monitor contractor



The crew of the Virginia-class attack submarine USS Missouri mans the rails and brings the boat to life as the periscopes and antennas are raised following its July 31, 2010 commissioning at Naval Submarine Base New London. (Photo by Navy Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Steven Myers)



Above: A small Defense Contract Management Agency team provides contract administration services on-site at a central Massachusetts facility that manufactures periscopes and sensors for Navy submarines. From left: Kevin Pietrowski, Rob Chauvin, Dave Pise, Ed Massa, Dave Dutton, Vin Mineo, Wendy Whalen, Jim Quill, Mike Barrick (Photo by Patrick Tremblay, DCMA Public Affairs)



Left: Wendy Whalen, a contract administrator at Defense Contract Management Agency Hartford, Conn., works on-site at a contractor facility that manufactures periscopes and electronic sensors for the Navy. (Photo by Patrick Tremblay, DCMA Public Affairs)

processes and controls, other DCMA employees are at work on the contract.

Wendy Whalen is a contract administrator who works with the customer, Naval Sea Systems

Command, on negotiations, an integral part of even minor changes to the contract. “Relationships built over the years with the customer, and contractor, are helpful,” she said.

Whalen came to DCMA from a corporate retail background through the Keystone intern program – a change she said she’s happy she made. “The contract management office empowers me to do my job, and respects me and my ability to do my job,” she said. “Every supervisor I’ve had has been supportive.”

Whalen is proud to be using her talents to support the warfighter. “The end product here makes a difference,” she said.

Jim Quill is an engineer who’s been with DCMA for about three years. Like Whalen, he came to the agency through the Keystone intern program following a

successful career in private industry.

After spending 30 years with a major firearms manufacturer, Quill looked to DCMA for a career change. Having industry experience has been important to his success. "It has allowed me to have meaningful exchanges with the contractor's engineers. I know where they're coming from, and they have respect for my experience," he said.

Quill said while engineering principles are the same whether the product is a handgun or periscope, he had to change his approach with his current role. "My job isn't solving problems directly, but observing problem solvers to make sure they're doing it right."

Dave Dutton, an industrial specialist, has been with DCMA for more than a decade. He started at DCMA Boston, then traveled as an itinerant IS to locations across New England, before joining the team on-site at the periscope facility.

Like many who work as an IS, Dutton's work is focused on on-time delivery. He understands the importance first-hand –

he deployed to Kuwait for a contingency contract administration services mission in 2009, and was activated for several years as an Air Force reservist following the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

Mineo, Whalen, Quill, Dutton and others on the team come together daily in a small office in the contractor facility. There they execute the DCMA mission, ensuring the quality, cost and on-time delivery of items essential to the customer.

Like a periscope providing critical information necessary for success, the DCMA team gives the Navy an eye inside the supplier's facility, helping to navigate the contract process. **C**

Periscope Fact

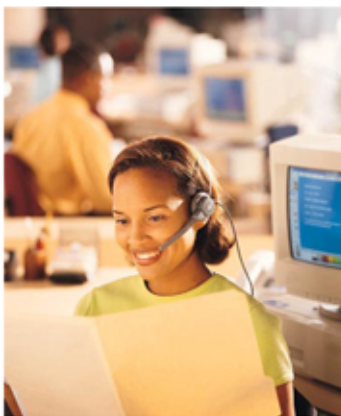
Around 1900, technology and a shrinking world led the Navy to get serious about sub-surface warfare. A major hurdle was obvious – underwater boats can't be seen, but can't see either, and when they surface their advantage is lost.

By World War I this problem was largely solved with the first workable periscope. Designed in Brooklyn, N.Y., by Frederick O. Kollmorgen, the scope was a tube with a series of lenses and mirrors that could, with the boat just under the surface, be raised to look around as inconspicuously as possible. The company that Kollmorgen started continues to make optics and sensors, with the Navy work being done largely in central Massachusetts.

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