

Special Programs brings new hires up-to-speed

Matthew Sablan | Staff Writer



Part of ensuring a continued, smooth growth for the Defense Contract Management Agency is training and educating new employees to help them become part of the team. Each directorate has unique challenges to integrate new team members. In Special Programs, one of those challenges is training new employees on how to operate in a secure environment.

“We realized the influx of new employees unaccustomed to working in a secure environment was a significant security issue we needed to address,” said Carl Workman, DCMA Special Programs deputy director. In response to overcoming this issue, several Special Programs staff members, representing the Special Programs Headquarters and their three Contract Management Offices, stepped up to create the DCMA Special

Programs New-Hire Boot Camp. The team is led by DCMA Special Programs’ Sarah O’Dell and team members Vonnetta Robinson, William Ramos, Kenneth Meyer and Jennifer Eckert, a graduate from one of the 2011 DCMAS New-Hire Boot Camp sessions.

The Boot Camp covers important topics over three days. The NHBC brings together Defense Acquisition subject-matter experts and those supporting the acquisition



A recent Defense Contract Management Agency Special Programs New-Hire Boot Camp class poses for a photo in front of DCMA Headquarters at Fort Lee, Va. The new-hire boot camp assists employees with their transition into working in a more classified environment. (Photo by Mark Woodbury, DCMA Public Affairs)




James Norris (left), Defense Contract Management Agency Special Programs executive director, presents Carlo Johnson, DCMA Special Programs East, with his certificate and dog tag for completing the Special Programs New-Hire Boot Camp recently. (Courtesy photo)

differently in Special Programs,” Workman said. Examples include workload acceptance, information and personnel security and other mission-related functions. The course also provides information on the agency’s organizational structure and how Special Programs interfaces with it.

During the boot camp, a DCMA Senior Executive Service member was available for a one-hour question and answer session, which helped reinforce another theme in the training: asking questions is welcome and accepted. “Boot Camp has helped calm new hires’ fears about joining Special Programs,” Eckert said. “It approaches those concerns in a non-threatening manner; when I finished it, I came away a lot more confident than I had started.”

“Security is vitally important for our organization,” Workman said, “But security is also a team sport, and our team has plenty of support along the way.”

The boot camps have proven successful, with Special Programs reporting reduced security incidents among new hires and higher retention rates. Since 2011, fifty two students have attended the DCMAS NHBC. 

community through information technology, security and financial and business operations.

“We absolutely wanted to make the security instruction come alive for the participants,” said Workman. To do this, Special Programs created a course that shows real world examples involving

special security requirements. The NHBC presentations and interaction are followed by a series of practical exercises that provide a cross-training understanding of contract management roles and responsibilities in Special Programs.

“We also wanted to address processes and procedures that are performed a little



Defense Contract Management Agency Safety and Occupational Health can assist in making your working environment a safer place to work by:



- Advising you on how to mitigate unsafe working practices within your workplace
- Educating you on what the Federal safety standards are for your particular working environment
- Assessing your working environment to ensure it conforms with Federal safety standards
- Investigating any mishaps, hazards, and potential violations that occur in your workplace



For more information on the Safety and Occupational Health Division, visit https://home.dcmahq/dcmahq/dcma_HC/dcma_HCO/index.cfm.



To have the Safety and Occupational Health Division assist you with any of your safety needs, email safetygroupinbox@dcma.mil.

