

ACC TODAY

U.S. Army Contracting Command

Summer 2011



**GANSLER COMMISSION
REPORT CARD**

Gansler Q&A

Jacques S. Gansler responds to questions about the Army Contracting Command and the state of military contracting practices

14

51C
Recruitment



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View from the Top

Pre-Deployment Contracting Planning

Aberdeen Assists Afghan National Police



VIEW FROM THE TOP

Director's Note

Welcome to Redstone Arsenal—the home of ACC

By Jeff Parsons
Executive Director, Army Contracting Command

The quote at right makes perfect sense when you think about the steps we've taken over the past three years to build the Army Contracting Command.

Our first step was to establish the command, address the issues raised in the Gansler Commission's report and move forward with aggressive actions to achieve the 22 report recommendations. Next was to focus on our mission while conducting a relocation of ACC and the Expeditionary Contracting Command headquarters from Fort Belvoir, Va., to our new home at Redstone Arsenal, Ala. We completed this move in 18 months, with our official uncasing ceremony on June 16. I applaud and extend my thanks to everyone on the ACC team and the local community for making this an outstanding success.

Now that the ACC foundation is finally established in Huntsville, we are ready to focus on our next priority – the ACC workforce. We have been very fortunate to staff ACC with experienced contracting professionals, not only from the Fort Belvoir and the Huntsville areas, but also with folks from across the United States and overseas locations. I must admit, I was initially concerned about recruiting and staffing for our new location. It has been a pleasant surprise to see how many people have been willing to relocate to Huntsville to become part of the ACC family. I believe this is a real testimony to what the Huntsville community has to offer for individuals and families.

All of us know the importance of the work we do across ACC. It is not just writing contracts; it is much more. In 2010, ECC supported 108 missions worldwide, over and above operations and Soldier support in Iraq and Afghanistan. We could not have accomplished this without providing our folks with the skills and training required to get the job done.

Our next priority is workforce development and training. We want to build the best professional acquisition workforce to support our customers. ACC will provide the necessary resources to accomplish this priority. Providing our employees with the right skills will lead to better customer support and service. Every one of us is a steward of taxpayers' dollars. To practice the art of contracting in the future, we need the skills and training today.

Now that the churn of transition is mostly behind us, we can turn our full attention to doing those things we were created to do: grow and develop a professional civilian and military workforce; maintain superior customer relationships; standardize, improve and assure quality contracting support, business processes and policies across the organization; obtain and maintain needed resources; and enhance the working environment and quality of life. Together, we'll make Army contracting even better.

“The only reason for time is so that everything doesn't happen at once.”

– Albert Einstein

ACC TODAY



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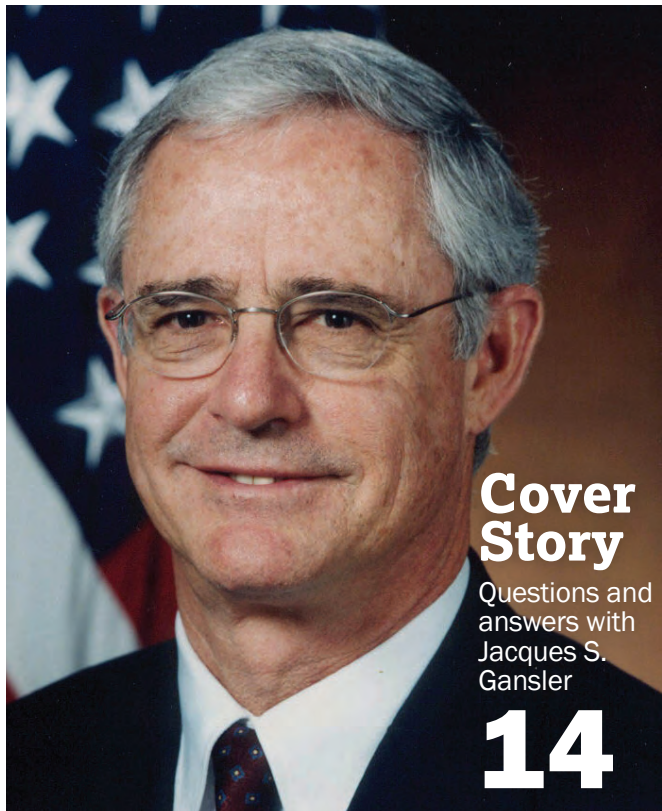
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WHAT'S INSIDE

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Cover Story

Questions and answers with Jacques S. Gansler

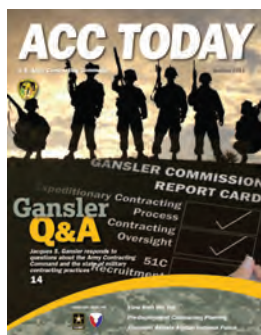
14



8



22



Cover illustrations—Almost four years after leading the Commission on Army Acquisition and Program Management in Expeditionary Operations, Jacques S. Gansler responds to questions on the state of military contracting.

Professional Workforce

- 4 Gansler Report findings help prioritize pre-deployment contracting planning
- 6 Providing full spectrum contracting and acquisition services at the tip of the spear
- 8 Career Program 15: Ensuring quality goods and services for the warfighter
- 10 ACC announces annual award winners
- 13 Developmental program helps train future leaders
- 16 Foreign national contracting officers bridge gap between U.S., foreign vendors
- 17 Shults named ECC NCO of the Year

Customer Focus

- 18 MICC assumes contractual support for Arlington National Cemetery
- 20 Working day and night for their customers
- 21 Contingency contracting support to CENTCOM nearly doubles
- 22 Aberdeen contracting center assisting Afghan National Police
- 24 Army, contractors forge partnership agreement
- 25 U.S. military contracting commands hold industry day with local Qatar businesses

Business Processes

- 26 MICC officials begin standup of mission contracting centers
- 27 409th conducts European contracting conference

Resources

- 28 Virtual contract filing project eliminates paper waste, storage and streamlines contract management
- 29 Around ACC

Quality of Life

- 30 April 2011 storm one for the history books

Gansler Report findings help prioritize pre-deployment contracting planning

Soldiers must focus on developing a basic understanding of contracting and how contracting, when incorporated into their plans, leads to successful mission accomplishment. (U.S. Army Photo)

*By Maj. Hurcel I. Williams,
412th Contracting Support Brigade
Camp Humphreys, South Korea*

Operational Contract Support is the ability to orchestrate and synchronize the provision of integrated contract support and management of contractor personnel to the joint force in a designated operational area. It is vitally important to all commands and staffs involved with planning and managing contracted support and contractor management while deployed.

Failure to have personnel adequately trained in contracting officer representative and commander's emergency response program related responsibilities hinders management and oversight of contracts and projects in support of operations, and results in the waste of taxpayer dollars.

Following the release of the Commission on Army Acquisition and Program Management in Expeditionary Operations Report, commonly referred to as the Gansler

Report, and several Government Accountability Office reports, the Army made OCS integration and training a priority in pre-deployment preparation. In December 2009, Headquarters, Department of the Army issued an execution order that outlined OCS pre-deployment requirements for deploying Army units. The goal was to ensure deploying units identify, nominate, and train an adequate number of COR and CERP personnel prior to deployment in order to efficiently support opera-

“What contracting organizations do and how they do it cannot be foreign to the warfighter. This is why the C2UT program is so vital.”

tional objectives and minimize the risk of fraud, waste, or abuse.

The order directed units to determine their COR in-theater requirements during pre-deployment site surveys with the unit they were replacing. For units that could not conduct a survey or were not replacing a unit, the order directed they plan on 80 CORs for a brigade, 25 CORs for a separate battalion, and 15 CORs for a separate company.

Although the Army went through the process of delineating a lucid road map for units to follow to successfully integrate OCS training into its pre-deployment preparations, many deploying units were either unaware of it, or simply ignored it. Units continued to deploy unprepared to execute their OCS mission.

The 412th Contracting Support Brigade, Fort Sam Houston, Texas, under its commander, Col. Jeff Morris, recognized this shortcoming and developed an OCS training program, contingency contracting unit training, commonly referred to as C2UT, which aimed to mitigate the number of units deploying from the continental United States without an adequate number of trained COR and CERP personnel. To demonstrate the importance of providing the training to the warfighter, the 412th incorporated it as a key part of the unit's mission statement—prepare CONUS-based warfighters to accomplish their operational contract support mission while supporting the development of contracting support plans. The 412th recognized the contracting community had a vested interest in the warfighter being pre-

pared to execute its OCS mission, and that it required taking a lead role to bring that to fruition.

The C2UT program focuses on training and educating commanders and junior leaders on determining requirements, translating those requirements into performance work statements, and then overseeing the work to include management of contractors. The program of instruction includes such topics as contracting basics, field ordering of officers, fraud, defining requirements, how to put together a performance of work statement, how to write a quality assurance surveillance plan, and familiarization and understanding of concepts of OCS. The overall end state of the C2UT program is to teach and train those who have been appointed to oversee contract support what rules they have to follow in order to maximize the support and to help them accomplish their mission with utmost efficiency.

Other key components of the C2UT program include: (1) reaching out and contacting each deploying unit; (2) sending contracting professionals with deployment experience to the warfighter's location to provide training; (3) coordinating with the Logistics Civil Augmentation Program, the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command, and resource management offices to have subject matter experts provide blocks of training; and (4) coordinating video teleconferences between in-theater contracting officials and deploying units' logistic shops. In fiscal year 2010, the 412th trained more than 2,500 warfighters to serve as CORs,

2,100 more to serve as FOOs, 1,900 as members of the CERP, and 1,200 for LOGCAP support and functions. For fiscal year 2011, the 412th is on pace to exceed the numbers trained from the previous fiscal year.

As the Army moves forward, the contracting community must focus on developing in the warfighter a basic understanding of contracting and how contracting, when incorporated into their plans, leads to successful mission accomplishment.

For example, in a recent installation, logistics and environment class consisting of 16 officers, many did not have a basic understanding of contracting and why OCS is important to mission accomplishment. Most associate contracting with the CERP-related agreements they themselves orchestrated in Iraq or Afghanistan. Moreover, few know that active duty officers and noncommissioned officers work in Mission and Installation Contracting Command contracting offices. What contracting organizations do and how they do it cannot be foreign to the warfighter. This is why the C2UT program is so vital. Not only does it prepare the warfighter to accomplish its OCS mission, it also educates the Soldier on military contracting structures, policies, and the capabilities we provide as a contracting community.

Properly managed, OCS can be a force multiplier, achieving more than the individual task or service required by a particular contract. Moreover, synchronized and coordinated OCS can reduce costs and provide strategic options and operational flexibility, while promoting unity of effort and enabling other capabilities. The C2UT program is an integral asset ensuring the warfighter is prepared to perform the OCS mission, as well as understands the importance of OCS and its link to successful mission accomplishment. ♦



Army Contracting Command-Picatinny employees Jeff Boyles (left) and Steve Talmadge. (U.S. Army Photo)

Providing full-spectrum contracting and acquisition services at the tip of the spear

Responsible for executing the contracting mission of the Joint Munitions and Lethality Life Cycle Management Command and other federal agencies, the Army Contracting Command-Picatinny prides itself on providing contracting support that places the tools of war directly into the hands of warfighters worldwide.

Located in a picturesque corner of New Jersey's Picatinny Arsenal,

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

the organization is one of the U.S. Army Contracting Command's six major contracting centers. "We provide the full spectrum of contracting and acquisition advisory services in support of the Army's firepower and lethality requirements, inclusive of weapons, armaments and munitions systems and subsystem components," said Bruce B. Berinato, ACC-Picatinny

executive director. "Execution of our mission includes contracting for all phases of research and development as well as initial and follow-on production and involves use of both FAR (Federal Acquisition Regulation) based contracts as well as non-FAR instruments such as cooperative agreements and other transactions."

"We continually strive to push the envelope in getting requirements awarded in expedited timeframes utilizing innovative

approaches,” said Paul Milenkowic, ACC-Picatinny deputy director.

One recent and noteworthy accomplishment for the team was the urgent fielding of the Accelerated Precision Mortar Initiative in Afghanistan.

“The technology within the round is a real game changer and our getting it awarded through the urgent material release process, fielded and delivered within a year is testimony to trying new approaches,” Milenkowic said.

Using everything from cooperative research and development agreements to transitioning to FAR-based production contracts to working the process in parallel layers—executing one phase while planning for the next—the Northern New Jersey team ensures they do everything they can to get items to the warfighter as quickly as they can. Berinato said surrounding himself with talented people makes him believe anything is possible.

“One important aspect is having talented people that are naturally curious and like to seek knowledge. We believe many of our associates have this attribute and are truly top notch. Communication up, down and across contracting and the acquisition community really is helpful, too. We have a high percentage of new associates in our center and they all quickly learn that they can’t be in a position to know it all,” he said. “So sharing and building a personal network becomes apparent and really important, no matter where you sit in the organization. The bottom line is listening, clear communication, reading, knowledge sharing and more reading.”

Like other contracting organizations within the government, it’s been a challenge for ACC-Picatinny to develop and retain contracting officers.

“We’re aggressive in getting our employees’ DAWIA-level (Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act) training accomplished on time and ensuring they are gaining good work assignments and broad experiences. The hardest part is trying to figure out how to accelerate an individual’s experiences as part of overall career development,” Berinato said. “We’ve started a rotational

developmental program involving assignments in a program management office and offices within the command. The end goal is to broaden some of our graduating interns’ experiences in acquisition, build relationships with our core customers and, based upon these experiences, help them become better educated buyers when they finish the assignment.” ♦

“One important aspect is having talented people that are naturally curious and like to seek knowledge. We believe many of our associates have this attribute and are truly top notch.”



Sean McAvoy, Kristen Kachur and John Swift (left to right), interns at the Army Contracting Command-Picatinny, spend time reviewing contracts as part of their development. (U.S. Army Photo)



Career Program 15: Ensuring quality goods and services for the warfighter

By Elynn Kocher
Headquarters, Army Contracting Command

On Nov. 1, 2007, then-Secretary of the Army Pete Geren accepted a report from an independent commission on Army acquisition and program management in expeditionary operations.

The commission—under the leadership of former Undersecretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics, Jacques Gansler—cited structural weaknesses and organizational shortcomings in the Army's acquisition and contracting systems. The commission's recommendations led to major changes within the Army acquisition structure, to include the stand-up of the U.S. Army Contracting Command Oct. 1, 2008.

As one of his first initiatives, ACC Executive Director Jeff Parsons established a training program for quality assurance experts, Career

Program 15, to provide oversight and ensure contract compliance for services and supplies procured through Army contracting.

The earliest incarnation of the training program began in 2009 at Fort Dix, N.J., where training continues today.

"Initially there were only five of us on staff at the time," said Jim Rodden, ACC quality assurance intern training manager, "and we stood the program up from scratch."

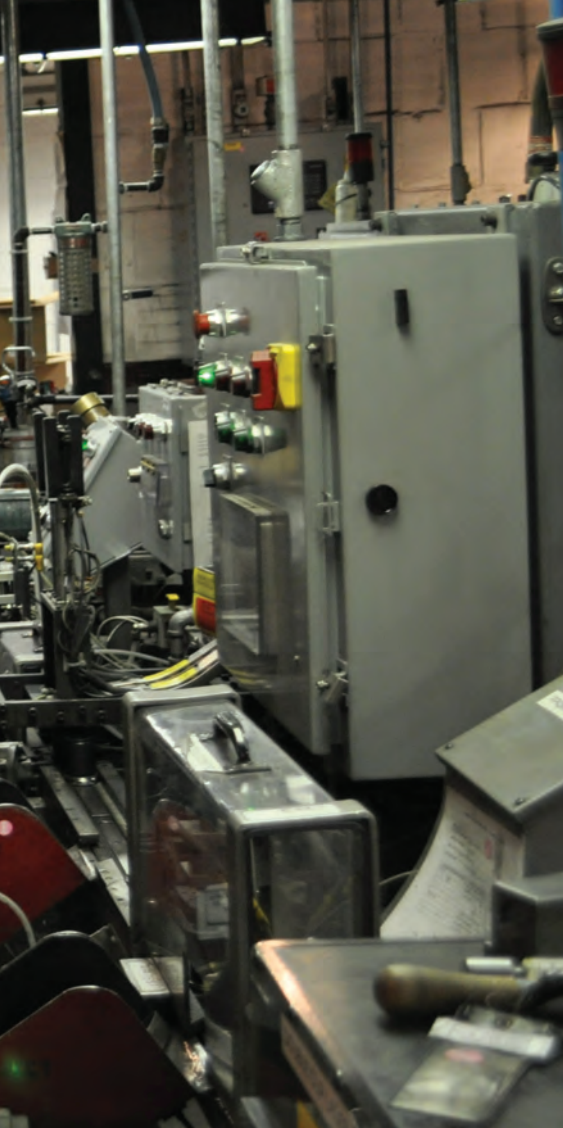
Rodden and Rochelle Riebau, the quality assurance division training chief, determined that Fort Dix would be the most cost-effective location for the program due to space shortages at other major ACC locations as a result of Base Realignment and Closure relocations, and because of the proximity to ACC's Mission Installation Contracting Command element at Fort Dix. They

located a classroom and equipment at low cost, and two permanent instructors—Rodden and Robert Di-Fazio—were brought on board, with ad hoc instructors added as needed.

Students take industry field trips to companies involved in military contracting, where they experience on-the-job instruction and scenarios. The curriculum also includes training in quality assurance practices, contracting, the DOD acquisition regulatory requirements, configuration management and contracting officer representative comprehension.

"Even though I have both military and civilian experience in quality assurance, I was still very impressed with the depth of effort that the government quality assurance specialists go to in ensuring that the products being built for our military forces are as good as they

Tom Nowell (left), quality assurance specialist for the Milan (Tenn.) Army Ammunition Plant government staff, describes the complex production processes to Brig. Gen. Robin Akin (right), 3rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) commanding general, during a recent tour. (U.S. Army Photo)



their duty locations, students earn their Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act Level 1 certification. At their duty location, they are placed in a quality assurance position and assigned a mentor who works with them for the next 18 months. After successful completion of all training and the mentoring period, the CP15 interns complete Level II certification and become QA journeymen.

“At my office, I was really able to hit the ground running combining what I learned [in the classroom] with what was already in place at

students and projects 28 students for the June 2011 class, made up of a demographic of recent college graduates and Army civilians from ACC and the Army Corps of Engineers. The program is attractive to career professionals and those looking to enter civilian service alike because of the accelerated promotion potential upon completion of training requirements.

“The CP15 program is a fantastic opportunity for students to jumpstart a career as an acquisition professional,” said Mohler.

According to Rodden, students

“Even though I have both military and civilian experience in quality assurance, I was still very impressed with the depth of effort that the government quality assurance specialists go to in ensuring that the products being built for our military forces are as good as they can be,”

can be,” said Charles Smeltzer, a quality assurance graduate intern at Fort Hood, Texas.

Mark Mohler, a recent graduate of the program and current intern stationed with the Expeditionary Contracting Command’s 413th Contracting Support Brigade at Fort Shafter, Hawaii, also appreciated the on-the-job training he received in his coursework.

“The program is a great way to start.” said Mohler, “You bring a group of people in who aren’t necessarily familiar with the Army, and the instructors do a really good job of covering all bases and getting us out in the real world, as well as using in-class exercises to [give students] an idea what to expect once we get in place.”

Upon completion of six months of classroom training and six months of on-the-job training at

the Regional Contracting Office-Hawaii,” continued Mohler, “and [our training] was beneficial to the receiving commands also, as we can bring new ideas and outside experience into our commands.”

Added Smeltzer: “I’ve got to admit I was surprised when several of the contracting officers told me how glad they were to see more QA people. They sometimes just don’t have the time to adequately interface with their contracting officer representatives. They really need us.”

ACC’s first CP15 class began its coursework in August 2010 and graduated in December 2010, producing eight graduates. The program currently boasts 11 full-time

enter the program in mid-level positions and normally are promoted to higher journeyman positions once they have completed Level II certification. Journeymen may be deployed to worldwide locations where acquisition overview is critical: Fort Polk, La.; Picatinny Arsenal, N.J.; and Fort Hood, Texas, to name a few; as well as many overseas locations such as Germany, Italy and Korea.

The CP15 program is a critical element to ACC’s efforts to improve the acquisition process initiated by the Gansler Report, and it doesn’t go unrecognized. “This program is Mr. Parsons’ initiative,” said Rodden, “and we’re very proud of the work we’re doing here.” ♦

Army Contracting Command Annual Award Winners

Headquarters, U.S. Army Contracting Command
Huntsville, Ala.

The U.S. Army Contracting Command presented 24 individual and six team awards at the second annual Army Contracting Command contracting awards ceremony in Huntsville, Ala., May 17.

“It’s an honor for me to recognize the recipients for their hard work and dedication,” said award presenter, Jeff Parsons, ACC executive director. “These contracting professionals exemplify the best of this command and are the type of individuals others can aspire to become.”

The awards are presented for excellence in acquisition, contracting and small business. Selectees were recognized for their outstanding achievements between October 1, 2009 and September 30, 2010. An awards panel comprised of representatives from ACC, the Expeditionary Contracting Command, the Mission and Installation Contracting Command and the ACC contracting centers reviewed more than 100 nominations before making the selections.



**Outstanding Contract Specialist
(Other than Major Weapon Systems)**

Martha Livsey

Mission Contracting Center–Fort Sill, Okla.
Mission and Installation Contracting Command



**Outstanding Active Duty Military Officer
(Other than Major Weapon Systems)**

Lieutenant Colonel Jeffery Phillips

901st Contingency Contracting Battalion, Fort Hood, Texas
412th Contracting Support Brigade
Expeditionary Contracting Command



**Small Business Program Supporter of
the Year**

Debbie Swindell

Mission Contracting Center–Fort Stewart, Ga.
Mission and Installation Contracting Command



**Outstanding Contract Specialist
(Major Weapon Systems)**

Harmony Hunsanger

Army Contracting Command–Warren, Mich.



**ACC Innovation (Other than Major
Weapon Systems)**

David Fieltch

Army Contracting Command–Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md.



**Outstanding Price Analyst
(Other than Major Weapon Systems)**

Angela Williams

Army Contracting Command–Rock Island, Ill.



**Outstanding Price Analyst
(Major Weapon Systems)**

Margaret Gunsiorowski

Army Contracting Command–Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md.



**Outstanding Intern of the Year
(Other than Major Weapon Systems)**

Michael DeBisschop

Army Contracting Command–Rock Island, Ill.



Excellence in Direct Sales Contracting

Debby Broyles

Army Contracting Command–Rock Island, Ill.



**Outstanding Procurement Analyst
(Other than Major Weapon Systems)**

Catherine H. Olvera

Army Contracting Command–Rock Island, Ill.



**Outstanding Intern of the Year
(Major Weapon Systems)**

David Hansen

Army Contracting Command–Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md.



**Outstanding Mission Support/Business
Operations
(Major Weapon Systems)**

Heather Yaworski

Army Contracting Command–Picatinny, N.J.



**Outstanding Procurement Analyst
(Major Weapon Systems)**

Jennifer Arber

Army Contracting Command–Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md.



Personnel Development Achievement

Jessica Dobbeleare

Army Contracting Command–Rock Island, Ill.



ACC Ability One

Pam Munoz

*Mission Contracting Center–Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash.
Mission and Installation Contracting Command*

PROFESSIONAL WORKFORCE



Small Business Specialist of the Year

Deanna Ochoa

Mission and Installation Contracting Command,
Fort Sam Houston, Texas



Small Business Champion

JoDeen Cuffe

Mission Contracting Center—Fort Knox, Ky.
Mission and Installation Contracting Command



Small Business Champion

Pete Hunter

Office of the Principal Assistant Responsible for
Contracting
410th Contracting Support Brigade, Fort Sam
Houston, Texas
Expeditionary Contracting Command



ACC Innovation (Major Weapon Systems)

Outstanding Workforce Development Individual

Tonya Wood

Army Contracting Command—Redstone Arsenal,
Ala.

(NOT PICTURED)

Outstanding Procurement Analyst (Other than Major Weapon Systems)

Sherrill King

Mission Contracting Center—Fort Jackson, S.C.
Mission and Installation Contracting Command

Outstanding Contracting Officer (Major Weapon Systems)

Marianne Shuster

Army Contracting Command—Picatinny, N.J.

Outstanding Contingency Contracting Officer (NCO)

Master Sergeant Sandra C. Williams

409th Contracting Support Brigade,
Kaiserslautern, Germany
Expeditionary Contracting Command

Outstanding Contingency Contracting Officer (Officer)

Major Stephen R. Tautkus

409th Contracting Support Brigade,
Kaiserslautern, Germany
Expeditionary Contracting Command

ACC Excellence in Acquisition Leadership (Other than Major Weapon Systems)

Mission Contracting Center—Fort Campbell, Ky.

Mission and Installation Contracting Command

ACC Excellence in Acquisition Leadership (Major Weapon Systems)

Bradley Definitization Team

Army Contracting Command—Warren, Mich.

Acquisition Change Advocate (Major Weapon Systems)

Apache Contracts Directorate

Army Contracting Command—Redstone Arsenal, Ala.

Outstanding Workforce Development

Rock Island Contracting Center Human Resources Team

Army Contracting Command—Rock Island, Ill.

Outstanding Mission Support/Business Operations (Other than Major Weapon Systems)

410th Contracting Support Brigade

Fort Sam Houston, Texas
Expeditionary Contracting Command

Customer Service Excellence

Orlando Team

Army Contracting Command—Aberdeen Proving
Ground, Md.

Developmental program helps train future leaders

By Frederick R. Poole
Headquarters, U.S. Army Contracting Command

Developed to help employees handle more responsibilities and improve their communication skills, the Army Contracting Command's developmental assignment program is for non-supervisor ACC employees interested in furthering their knowledge and experience in contracting.

Jennifer Funderburk, team leader for the Army Contracting Command workforce development (G1), says participants experience challenges that will engage them in tackling new and complex tasks. The program was created to provide challenging assignments for participants prior to their moving into supervisory positions.

"Examples of challenging assignments include starting a program from scratch or resolving a recurring issue or problem within an organization," said Funderburk. "Just having a challenging experience isn't enough. Participants will only learn from their assignment if they reflect on their experience and receive feedback on it."

Program assignments range from serving as a policy staff member to serving as an installation contracting office's deputy director.

Daniel Balizan, a contracting specialist with the Army Contracting Command-Aberdeen Proving Grounds, Md., Adelphi Contracting Division, was selected for a 90-day assignment with the ACC headquarters staff in Fort Belvoir,

Va. One challenge he was ready to take on was an attempt at strategic planning.

"As a contracting specialist, I mainly focus on requirements, statements of work, funding methods and procurement action lead times," said Balizan. "I am very task-oriented but working at the ACC headquarters provided me the opportunity to think strategically."

As a result he learned to develop solutions that benefited an office, a division and in the long run, the entire command. Balizan provided briefings to Jeff Parsons, ACC executive director, and met with key stakeholders across the command to develop new processes.

"This program will help me improve meeting customer needs, seeking input of stakeholders towards developing solutions, and to have a better understanding of procurement policy," said Balizan.

Funderburk says each participant in the program is assigned a mentor for the duration of their developmental assignment. Mentors provide the pupils with various tasks to assist them in developing their leadership skills in preparation for supervisor roles.

Recently, Curtis Smith, special assistant to the ACC executive director, supervised three participants during a six-month assignment and embraced his mentorship role.

"Participating in this program was my first official mentoring expe-

rience. Before the program I spent 17 years leading projects and being an informal mentor," said Smith.

Smith encouraged each participant to serve as team leader which included each employee giving Smith tasks to do as well.

"When I realized that all three individuals were younger than me, I decided to have them lead the team for a week so that each one would gain the experience of managing someone older with more years of experience," said Smith. "This approach gave me time to focus on creating and tailoring opportunities for each person to engage and interact with key leaders with ACC and Army Materiel Command."

Under Smith's supervision, the contract specialists interacted with key leaders in the ACC, AMC and the Department of the Army.

"All three came into the job with an open mind and an appetite to learn new skills," said Smith. "Others interested in the program should understand that they will be out of their element, yet they must be able to adapt to learning the business of contracting and what it takes to manage the ACC enterprise."

Applications should be submitted with an updated resume and an Acquisition Career Record Brief. For more information contact Funderburk at (256) 955-8535. ♦

Questions and Answers: Jacques S. Gansler

In 2007, the Commission on Army Acquisition and Program Management in Expeditionary Operations, led by Jacques S. Gansler, produced a report on military contracting operations that came to be known as the Gansler Report. Almost four years later, Gansler discusses the current state of military contracting.

1. The Army has had about three years to implement the recommendations made by the Gansler Commission. What is your assessment of the Army's progress towards implementing the recommendations?

Our final report lists four key elements to future success. Points one and two are well on the way to being completely implemented. Point three, with respect to providing training and tools, still needs further work. Point four with respect to obtaining legislative, regulatory, and policy assistance I believe is moving slowly and I don't feel there is sufficient push at the Army secretariat level.

2. The commission recommended that the Army should "establish a separate, centrally managed Contracting Corps for Army military and civilian contracting personnel." What's your assessment of the Army's efforts regarding this recommendation?

The purpose of this recommendation was to separate contracting from acquisition. The establishment of the Army Contracting Command was an extremely positive step. However, in terms of promotion boards, career paths, etc., I believe contracting is still part of the acquisition area and is not a "separate" corps. One of the purposes for recommending the establishment of a major general, director of the Army Contracting Corps was to get at this recommendation.

3. The Commission on Wartime Contracting is expected to release its report in the next few months. Your committee released its report more than three years ago. What have you observed during the past three years that you hope the CWC will include in its report?

The CWC incorporates into their report recommendations to com-

pletely implement "The Four Key Elements to Future Success" listed in our report. Also, as I stated in my recent testimony to the CWC, they should emphasize the importance of the government's contracting workforce, but not (as their interim report is titled) focus on "the risk" of contactors (who are an essential element of expeditionary operations).

4. An outcome of the Gansler Commission was the creation of the Army Contracting Command that includes the Expeditionary Contracting Command for support in contingency environments. What are your thoughts on how the Army Contracting Command and Expeditionary Contracting Command are doing?

In our report, we did not recommend that the Life Cycle Management Command acquisition centers be assigned to the contracting command. We recommended that the contracting command be given directive authority. The Army Materiel Command has assigned the LCMC acquisition centers to the contracting command. My concerns are that the issues involved with procuring major weapon systems dilute the contracting command's focus on contin-



gency/expeditionary contracting. During our deliberations this was a very contentious point on which we spent a lot of time before we agreed on the directive authority recommendation. This can be addressed with the current ACC approach, but only if there is equal attention to contingency contracting and weapon systems contracting; and, with the recent (Secretary of Defense Robert) Gates and (Under Secretary of Defense [Acquisition, Technology and Logistics] Ashton) Carter initiatives getting so much attention, I am concerned about this. Additionally, there is a big need to address services contracting (vs. goods), especially in expedition. Finally, in the Corps of Engineers, the contracting staff works for the districts vs. the chief of contracting; which is contrary to our recommendation.

5. What steps would you recommend be taken to sustain Congressional and DoD leadership interest and momentum towards "fixing" Army contracting?

I believe the question should also include Army leadership. The chief needs to also be in the loop and responsible. The then-vice chief's

words—“If I would have known about it I would have done something about it,”—are still relevant in my opinion. Additionally, to “sustain” interest and momentum, the Army should report out to both congressional and DoD leadership on the status of the implementation of our study. DoD leadership is already changing, and what we recommended will soon be overlooked or forgotten. When the CSA and the SECAR testify, their statements for the record should include status of implementation. If we don’t have enough certified contracting professionals, we should tell them.

6. Many people believe that the majority of the DoD’s focus is on the acquisition community (the PEOs and PMs) and less so on the contracting community (the “shop-pers”). This perception continues despite allocation of five additional general officer billets dedicated for military contracting professionals. What other steps would you recommend that the Army consider to elevate the stature of its contracting workforce?

As previously stated, separate them from the Acquisition Corps and establish a separate Contracting Corps reporting to the CSA. The argument against this has been that contracting and acquisition personnel are interchangeable. Since we now have the general officer billets, career opportunities are much better for contracting personnel, so they don’t have to be a program executive officer to be a general officer or senior executive service. Also, bringing in some “highly qualified experts” from industry (especially regarding services contracting) would be a big help.

7. When we compare the size of the Army’s annual budget at around \$160B versus the roughly \$120B that the Army spends contracting for goods and services, do you have any thoughts on how the Army can

The Gansler Report lists the four key elements to future success as:

1. Increase stature, quantity, and career development of contracting personnel, military and civilian (especially for expeditionary operations)
2. Restructure organization and restore responsibility to facilitate contracting and contract management in expeditionary and CONUS operations
3. Provide training and tools for overall contracting activities in expeditionary operations
4. Obtain legislative, regulatory, and policy assistance to enable contracting effectiveness in expeditionary operations

better ensure that \$120B in contracts receives adequate oversight and that the Army maximizes the public’s contracting dollars for the benefit of the Soldier?

One of the missions of the contracting command is do this oversight in conjunction with Defense Contract Management Agency, Defense Contract Audit Agency, Army Audit Agency, etc. These agencies need to share performance data and lessons learned. I don’t think we have a contract performance online information technology system that allows the contracting command to manage contracting and contractors. Modern information systems are available to do this, but I don’t believe it has begun its implementation in AMC. Additionally, as noted above, there needs to be more focus on services (which are more than 50 percent of all contract dollars).

8. We all recognize the likelihood that the DoD budget may see reductions as part of the nation’s need to adequately address our deficit/debt problems. Also, the military services may have personnel authorizations reduced as an outcome of the budget reductions. What do you foresee is the effect of those likely cuts on progress already made at increasing the stature of

Army contracting workforce—both military and civilian—and the Army Contracting Command?

With the focus on “doing more with less,” smart contracting becomes even more critical. The Army needs to continually make its case that it spends \$120 billion on goods and services and how many qualified people we need to do these procurements correctly. In the report it shows the seven times increase in actions and three times in dollars, with significant reductions in personnel. For our commission, we never knew if the 1992 baseline was correct. With all the data we have, the contracting command should be able to develop an actions-to-contracting-personnel guide. DCMA should be able to do the same. I think that trying to equate procurement dollars to contracting personnel required is not as powerful as equating contracting actions to contracting personnel required. If we don’t have a credible staffing guide, we need to develop it. The cuts will come and the contracting command will first have to convince the commanding general of AMC that there are more fertile areas to plow for spaces. The emphasis on “affordability” will help justify this action. ♦

Foreign national contracting officers bridge gap between U.S., foreign vendors

By Ed Worley
Headquarters, U.S. Army Contracting Command

For the average person, understanding the rules and regulations involved in securing a government contract can be a daunting task. Add understanding those rules and regulations and those of a foreign country and the challenge becomes twice as difficult.

That's where Expeditionary Contracting Command's foreign national warranted contracting officers and contracting specialists come to the rescue. ECC has 144 foreign national contracting officers and contracting specialists in Belgium, Germany, Italy, South Korea and South America, according to Dan Gallagher, ECC's director of contracting operations.

"For us, you really have to understand the laws and customs of each country we operate in," he said. "Every country and every state within a country has its own rules and processes. Our foreign national contracting officers know those rules and know who to contact to accomplish the mission."

Most of ECC's foreign national contracting officers support the 409th Contracting Support Brigade, Kaiserslautern, Germany. Tony Baumann, 409th CSB deputy director, said the brigade has just over 100 foreign national contracting specialists, and 26 warranted contracting officers, serving in Belgium, Germany and

Italy. Baumann said knowing the language is one key advantage.

"For example, in Germany, a significant amount of contracting is done for construction and utilities requirements where all documents are required to be in German," Baumann explained. "In Italy, many

"Every country and every state within a country has its own rules and processes. Our foreign national contracting officers know those rules and know who to contact to accomplish the mission."

vendor employees, like much of the Italian public, do not speak English. Although contracts in Italy are written in English with Italian translations, native Italian speakers are invaluable in bridging language barriers. U.S. civilians are at a distinct disadvantage due to language skills."

Baumann described how Marius Fara, a German national who serves as the only contracting officer managing acquisition cross-service agreements, helped negotiate an agreement with a Middle East country. ACSAs are country-to-country agreements for exchange of services in-kind or money for services.

"The 409th CSB was managing a high-profile regional security mis-

sion in a Middle Eastern country that required significant support services provided by the host nation," Baumann explained. "Mr. Fara traveled with 409th CSB contingency contracting officers to meet with the host nation and negotiate the ACSA. Despite having to be excluded from various meetings due to mission classification (as a German, he is not eligible for a U.S. security clearance), Mr. Fara was able to assess the information provided and develop the appropriate agreement.

"As no other 409th CSB contracting officer has ACSA experience, we could not have executed the mission without him, which would have jeopardized regional security and U.S. national interests."

Baumann said foreign nationals make up 55 percent of the brigade's

civilian workforce. They have an average of 24 years experience and "are the stabilizing backbone of our capability." They offer continuity in an environment where Army civilians serve normal tour rotations of three to five years. Foreign national employees have a better understanding of the local laws, applicability and consequences, he explained.

Gallagher said foreign national contracting officers must obtain the same Defense Acquisition University certifications and on-the-job training as U.S. contracting officers.

"It would be very difficult for us to accomplish our mission without them," Gallagher said. ♦



Command Sgt. Maj. John L. Murray, Expeditionary Contracting Command, command sergeant major (left) and Bryan Samson, ECC deputy to the commander (right) congratulate Staff Sgt. Matthew Shults on his selection as the 2011 ECC NCO of the Year. (Photo by Ed Dixon)

Shults named ECC NCO of the Year

by Daniel P. Elkins
Headquarters, Mission and Installation Contracting Command
Fort Sam Houston, Texas

Staff Sgt. Matthew Shults bested five fellow Soldiers, each representing the finest of their respective contracting support brigades, to be named the Expeditionary Contracting Command's 2011 NCO of the Year following two and a half days of competition in San Antonio, Texas.

A procurement noncommissioned officer with the 627th Contingency Contracting Team, 409th Contracting Support Brigade, Kaiserslautern, Germany, Shults was presented with top honors during an awards ceremony May 25.

"The most challenging part of the competition was the foot march," Shults said. "The terrain and humidity really made it tough. Frankly, I just focused on what I was taught and to just get it done."

The competition took place May 23-25 at Fort Sam Houston and Camp Bullis, Texas. Soldiers tested their warrior skills at events including an Army Physical Fitness Test,

weapons qualification and advance fire, urban orienteering, and day and night land navigation.

Also tested were the fundamental combat skills, also known as warrior tasks and battle drills, in which all Soldiers must maintain proficiency to fight and win on the battlefield. According to Command Sgt. Maj. John L. Murray, ECC command sergeant major, these skills make up the foundation upon which combat training is built and are the primary focus of tactical training for both officers and enlisted Soldiers.

"For the 51C NCO, there's a lot of concentration on contracting skills, but this competition affords them an opportunity to show their Army training as well," Murray said. "They have to perform all of the basic tasks that demonstrate not only to them and their units, but to the Army that they're still Soldiers and warriors."

Warrior tasks are common individual skills deemed critical to a Sol-

dier's basic competency and include weapons training, tactical communications, urban operations and combat lifesaving. Battle drills are group and collective skills designed to teach a unit to react and accomplish the mission in common combat situations such as an ambush or movement of wounded personnel.

The contracting Soldiers also had to meet a formal board and complete a written test and essay. The competition culminated with a six-mile foot march with the NCOs carrying a 35-pound rucksack.

This is the second year ECC has conducted the NCO of the Year competition. Last year's competition also took place at Camp Bullis.

Shults will go on to represent ECC at the Army Materiel Command NCO of the Year competition in July. He will also represent the command at various events over the next year. ♦



MICC assumes contractual support for Arlington National Cemetery

by Daniel P. Elkins
Headquarters, Mission and Installation
Contracting Command
Fort Sam Houston, Texas

Arlington National Cemetery attracts more than four million visitors annually. The contract to operate its visitor's center (above) was among those assumed by Mission and Installation Contracting Command last summer. (U.S. Army Photo by Daniel P. Elkins)

The transfer of management for critical contracted services to the Mission and Installation Contracting Command is allowing this nation's most active cemetery to continue functioning while ensuring world-class support for Soldiers and their families.

The start of contractor performance in April at the Arlington National Cemetery not only marked a shift in the management of contract support to the MICC but also a significant restructure in the administration of those agreements.

Contract experts from MICC headquarters, the Mission Contracting Center-Fort Belvoir, Va., and Arlington National Cemetery teamed together

over the past eight months to meet an aggressive deadline for rewriting and staffing new performance work statements as well as award contracts. The last of 16 contracts in support of the cemetery, which attracts more than four million visitors annually, was awarded April 27.

Due to the accelerated timeline and limited resources available at MCC-Fort Belvoir, an integrated process team was formed, bringing together MICC program management, contracting and technical expertise to ensure appropriate source selection.

Clay Cole, MCC-Fort Belvoir director, said the team effort allowed his staff to meet the compressed timeline for award of the contracts.

His staff received specific requirements at the end of December following consolidation of many of the existing 28 contracts. What he estimated would take six or seven months was accomplished in approximately 75 days.

"The flash to bang on actions that needed review couldn't have happened without the support between our folks and the headquarters," Cole said. "We were able to move staffing actions through the system in a short timeframe."

Cole added that the small business specialists at the MICC headquarters also played an integral role by helping MCC-Belvoir conduct market research and process re-

“We were able to move staffing actions through the system in a short timeframe.”

quirements through the Small Business Administration.

The 16 total contracts for Arlington National Cemetery reflect a concerted effort between members of the MICC at all levels who closely examined the original 28 contracts previously in place to identify duplication in scope. Valued at more than \$32 million, the contracts include turf and grounds maintenance, concrete grave liner installation, landscape and gardening, headstone placement and alignment, elevator and automatic door maintenance, tree and shrub trimming, uniform lease, burial, pest control, custodial services, public safety aides, and heating and air conditioning service.

Additionally, integrated process team members structured service contracts to include support for the nearby U.S. Soldier’s and Airmen’s Home National Cemetery.

Andrea Armstrong, the contract support liaison temporarily assigned to Arlington National Cemetery from MCC-Fort Hood, Texas, said consolidation of contracts provided an additional benefit for cemetery customers.

“Consolidating those efforts also lessens the footprint of contractors at different times of the day since Arlington is a very active cemetery,” Armstrong said of the operational effort needed to conduct approximately 25 funerals taking place each day.

Pat Hogston, chief of MICC Contract Support, Plans and Operations, said the IPT proved valuable from developing an acquisition strategy to award and administration.

“One of the (Army National Cemeteries Advisory) commission’s findings was a lack of surveillance in the performance of a contract,” Hogston said. “To address this, the senior quality assurance specialist at MICC headquarters met with contract officer representatives at the cemetery to conduct one-on-one training and ensure contractor surveillance plans were in place.”

The initial training was conducted at the end of April with follow-on training scheduled for June. Armstrong said that training includes the implementation of quality assurance surveillance plans, developing surveillance instructions and schedules, documenting results and non-conforming services, and conducting data analysis.

Contracting officials will continue to work closely with MCC-Fort Belvoir and MICC headquarters officials as the contract process shifts from award to administration. ♦

CUSTOMER FOCUS



Miguel Canales plumbs a steel rod to assist in aligning headstones at Arlington National Cemetery. Management of contracted services for the nation’s most active cemetery was assumed by Mission and Installation Contracting Command last summer. (U.S. Army Photo by Daniel P. Elkins)



Precise tree trimming at the mall leading to the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier is among the contracted services for Arlington National Cemetery. Management of contracted services supporting the cemetery’s more than 200 acres was assumed by the Mission and Installation Contracting Command. (U.S. Army Photo by Daniel P. Elkins)

Working day and night for their customers

by Maj. David Taylor
413th Contracting Support Brigade
Fort Shafter, Hawaii



gency operational plan. Including the 24 CSB contingency contracting officers, Holland and his staff synchronize contract support to 28 USARPAC bilateral exercises in 11 countries, three command post exercises and unplanned humanitarian/disaster relief efforts, such as Operation Tomodachi in Japan.

Pacific Command activated a joint task force to provide humanitarian assistance/disaster relief efforts to Japan after the March 11 earthquake and tsunami. The 413th validated their ability to provide operational contract support and command and control in support of Operation Tomodachi. For the first time since operational contract support doctrine was established, PACOM executed a joint requirements review board and a joint contracting support board format developed by Holland during coordination efforts between the Joint Chiefs of Staff's J4 (logistics) staff, PACOM J4, Army doctrine writers, and USARPAC. The 413th accomplishments provide the Pacific Army warfighter with joint acquisition capability and flexible solutions for full spectrum operations.

Now, and in the future, the 413th will continue to satisfy Army Pacific customers with acquisition solutions during the day, and provide full spectrum operational contract support during the night. ♦

Having awarded more than 6,000 annual contracts valued at more than \$620 million in less than two years is a considerable effort but it's the smaller portion of the 413th Contracting Support Brigade's workload that allows its customers to sleep better at night.

The unit's night job contributes to meeting the U.S. Army Pacific's theater security objectives. Since activating in September 2009, the 413th has developed relationships with federal Pacific contracting organizations, provided exercise contracting support for 61 theater events, and established operational contract support for deliberate and crisis action. These 'night' actions leverage joint

acquisition solutions for U.S. Pacific Command and expand the capability for USARPAC to rapidly plan, coordinate, and respond.

President Dwight D. Eisenhower said, "In preparing for battle I have always found that plans are useless, but planning is indispensable."

Lt. Col. George Holland, 413th support operations chief, has shaped the battlefield operational contract support task of contract management planning for USARPAC, assisting in the synchronization and integration of commercial sector support into PACOM operational plans. He and his staff developed an improved contract support integration plan for each contin-

Contingency contracting support to CENTCOM nearly doubles

By Ed Worley
Headquarters, U.S. Army
Contracting Command

The Army Contracting Command is almost doubling its support to the warfighter in theater this fiscal year, sending almost 100 contingency contracting officers to Afghanistan, Iraq, Kuwait and Qatar.

ACC's Expeditionary Contracting Command is deploying elements of three contingency contracting battalions and an Army Reserve contracting battalion to support the U.S. Central Command's area of responsibility. The first group of Soldiers deployed in February.

"This is a significant increase over our prior year commitments," said Jeff Parsons, ACC executive director. "This demonstrates our success in building the contingency contracting force."

Parsons conducted a site visit to the CENTCOM Contracting Command resulting in additional requirements for contingency contracting officer support, according to Col. Jerry C. Jones, ECC Operations (G3). Brig. Gen. Joe Bass, ECC commanding general, approved the additional requirements. Jones said ECC provided more than 50 contingency contracting officers to the CENTCOM theater last year.

ECC's support to CENTCOM will come from the 900th Contingency Contracting Battalion, Fort Bragg, N.C.; the 901st CCBn, Fort Hood, Texas; and the 902nd CCBn, Fort Lewis, Wash. Also deploying are Soldiers from the U.S. Army Reserve's 915th CCBn, Baltimore, Md. The 412th Contracting Support Battalion, Fort Sam Houston, Texas, will deploy

contingency contracting officers to ACC-Rock Island, Ill., to provide reachback support.

Jones said the mission objectives are improving command and control, and contract management, across CENTCOM contracting operations, providing additional resources to mitigate shortfalls at

"We are standing up and able to provide full spectrum contracting support to the combatant commander."

all critical nodes, leveraging both active duty and reserve component resources, establishing a contracting network that can be adaptive to the changing environment, and providing sustainable support for potential future requirements.

"We are standing up and able to provide full spectrum contracting support to the combatant commander," he said. "We're able to meet the increased requirement because we are at about 95 percent of our overall authorized strength."

Contingency contracting officers must have at least one year of contracting experience before deploying into a combat area of operations, Jones explained. The 412th facilitated a joint contingency contracting readiness training exercise, Operation Joint Dawn, at Fort Campbell, Ky., Jan. 24–Feb. 4. The exercise simulated field contracting conditions and was designed to assess and prepare more than 100 deploying active

and reserve component Soldiers and airmen on basic contracting and warrior tasks. Actual Operation New Dawn and Operation Enduring Freedom contracting scenarios were used to provide realistic challenges faced in the regional contracting centers that the participants will run. The group received warrior skills training and participated in expeditionary contracting operations, working in simulated regional contracting centers where they executed contracts and dealt with vendors, suppliers and customers.

Lt. Col. Carol Tschida, 900th CCBn commander, said Operation Joint

Dawn provided contracting officers and non-commissioned officers some of what combat units gain through pre-deployment training at the National Training Center, Fort Irwin, Calif.

"This training is very important for contracting officers because we don't have the opportunity to get together like this and practice for pre-deployment," Tschida explained. "This exercise is a culminating event. We're training on warrior tasks and contracting officer proficiency guide tasks. We put all that together in realistic scenarios of what CCOs can expect to see in theater so that they are prepared for realistic scenarios and for handling those situations when they happen."

Jones said the drawdown of U.S. forces in Iraq will not affect the contracting officers deploying there. He said a few CCOs will remain to support ongoing U.S. missions and contract close-out. ♦

Aberdeen contracting center assisting Afghan National Police

(U.S. ARmy Photo)

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

The Department of Defense turned to the Army Contracting Command–Aberdeen Proving Ground to initiate a contract that would provide funding for the training and mentoring for Afghanis enrolled in the U.S.-sponsored Afghanistan National Police training program.

Susan Greider, procuring contracting officer, and Russell Shockley, contract specialist and cost team lead, led the efforts to complete the contracting action. Neither team member knew this was the beginning of a demanding journey with many twists and turns. The team worked closely with the Department of State.

“The transition wasn’t easy moving from a DOS contract to a Department of Defense contract because the regulations and requirements are completely different,” stated Greider. “The DOD and DOS

inspectors general both followed the transition closely.”

They were finalizing requirements for the Afghanistan National Army when notified of the additional work for the ANP. Originally, the DOD Counter Narcoterrorism Technology Program had the lead on the ANP support effort, but the Government Accountability Office determined that the ANP requirement was not within the scope of contract selected. The DOD turned to the ACC-APG team to issue a contract for this additional ANP support. After eight months of preparation and working closely with both DOS and DOD, the contract was awarded on Dec. 20, 2010. It was a cost-plus-fixed fee contract with a two-year base period valued at \$717.4 million and a 120-day phase-in period to full performance.

Greider and Shockley began working on the project in April 2010 and were instructed that the contract

had to be awarded by the end of the calendar year. Greider relied on her 25 years of contracting experience to guide her. They immediately began developing the acquisition strategy. To gain approval, members of the team met with Shay Assad, director, Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Office of the Secretary of Defense-Acquisition, Technology and Logistics. They received approval in May 2010 and soon thereafter hosted an industry day with prospective vendors to obtain specific in-country information for Afghanistan. Approximately 45 vendors took part while Greider and other government representatives conducted one-on-one sessions with interested vendors.

“This exchange helps both the government and industry make more informed business decisions,” Greider said. “This forum allowed for open, frank discussions and the transfer of ideas that may not otherwise be possible.”

With the information gained at the industry day, they prepared the solicitation and the source selection strategy. As part of the strategy, they identified source selection evaluation factors as: technical, experience, performance, and cost. Technical was rated as acceptable or unacceptable and the experience required three years of recent and relevant experience. Performance was given an adjectival rating of low, moderate or high risk. They conducted a trade-off analysis between performance and cost for the offerors who were rated as acceptable in both technical and experience.

“Evaluation factors should be true discriminators in a best value source selection. Analyze what matters,” Shockley said. “Due to the criticality of this project, a contractor with proven experience, a successful track record, and a solid technical approach was needed. Of course, this same contractor has to execute at fair and reasonable costs. That was the construct for finding a best value offeror to accomplish this mission.”

The team prepared the request for proposal and members from the Office of the Secretary of Defense conducted a peer review prior to the release. They completed final revisions by mid-July 2010 and the RFP was announced.

“This was a stressful period in my life,” Greider explained. “I knew the work that I was doing was support-

ing an important mission to bring our troops home. The assignment also had personal meaning to me since my husband deployed to Afghanistan just as work began on this project.”

In September, the source selection evaluation board reviewed the eight offers received. The board consisted of military and civilian members to include participants from the Combined Security Transition Command Afghanistan. Many of the board members returned from Afghanistan and were in the U.S. for a month to analyze proposals. Prior to the selection, they held two rounds of discussions with each company in the competitive range, followed by proposal revisions. Vendors had one week to submit their revised proposals.

After the review of final proposals, the board briefed the source selection authority on its analyses. The SSA’s decision was based on the comparative assessment of the proposals against the source selection criteria. Greider and Shockley prepared the price negotiation memorandum which documented the agreed-upon price and a written account of the selection rationale

and decisions made during negotiations. After a peer review, the contract was awarded on Dec. 20, 2010, 11 days before the year-end deadline imposed by DOD.

“The training in Afghanistan focuses on how to plan, develop, implement and support/sustain defense and police organizations,” Greider said. “Initially the training will be based on a western model with modifications for adaptation by the Afghanistan government in order to achieve self-sufficiency and independent operations.”

In the meantime, the GAO reviewed protests filed by two of the unsuccessful offerors and in early April, denied both protests. The GAO determined that the offerors’ “mere disagreement” with the outcome was not grounds for sustaining either protest. The contract recently completed the 120-day transition period and is now in full performance.

“The key to our success was regular communication with all stakeholders throughout the entire process,” Greider said. “As a team we worked well together and we documented everything!” ♦



The team of Susan Greider, procuring contracting officer, and Russell Shockley, contract specialist and cost team lead, discuss contract details in support of the Afghanistan National Police. The duo from the Army Contracting Command - Aberdeen Proving Ground, led a Department of Defense initiative to establish contractor support for police training facilities in Afghanistan. (Photo by Sean Kief)



Army, contractors forge partnership agreement

by Brenda Clark
Mission Contracting Center-
Fort Benning, Ga.

Managing growth locally was the main subject during an April meeting between Army officials and their contract partners.

Officials from the Mission Contracting Center-Fort Benning, Ga., met in February with the Fort Benning U.S. Army Garrison's Directorate of Public Works and TIYA Support Services, LLC, a small disadvantaged Native American business, to develop a partnering agreement to provide facilities maintenance and repair at Fort Benning and Camp Merrill, Ga.

They also addressed additional challenges resulting from relocating the U.S. Army Armor School to Fort Benning from Fort Knox, Ky., and integrating the school with activities at the U.S. Army Infantry Center and School as part of establishing the U.S. Army Maneuver Center of Excellence.

Approximately 40 people attended the two-day meeting hosted and mediated by Columbus State University's Center for Leadership Development. The center provided training, presentations and team development exercises. Together, all participants developed a partnering agreement that included the vision and goals of the entire team.

"This was very beneficial because team members, both government and contractor, had ownership in the process and commitment to making the agreement work," said Virginia Turner, chief, facilities main-

tenance for MCC-Fort Benning. "It was worth the time spent in establishing the partnership because of the expected benefits of improved contract administration for a very complex effort."

Activated in October 2010, the U.S. Army Maneuver Center of Excellence is expected to reach full operating capability in September 2011, making Fort Benning responsible for training more than

"This was very beneficial because team members, both government and contractor, had ownership in the process and commitment to making the agreement work."

52 percent of the entire Army as warfighters.

Officials at MCC-Fort Benning said the contractor's responsibilities are closely connected with the maneuver center's mission to train the warfighter.

The formal agreement developed in this initial meeting resulted in a process for resolving problems at the lowest level possible to achieve effective and efficient administration of a very complex requirement.

Due to the success of this process in the first contract effort, Directorate of Public Works officials wanted to establish a partnering agreement with its new contractor, TIYA, in an effort to provide a seamless transition from one contractor to another, and to continue facilitating the administration of the contract and ensure mission success again.

"The best part of the meeting was the discussion where the air was cleared," said Kirk Ticknor, DPW operations and maintenance chief, of the relationship between the government and contractors. "The partnership meeting allowed all team members to address all issues in an open forum."

David Peckham, TIYA program manager, said the Fort Benning contract is a bit unusual in that it

involves a contractor assuming the prime role and the previous contractor assuming the role of a subcontractor.

"Because of the size and diversity, I felt that a partnering session to meld the various entities would be very beneficial for all concerned, and fortunately our government partners were of the same mind and, in fact, the initiators of the concept," Peckham said. "All in all, the partnering session was a very worthwhile and rewarding experience."

At the end of the partnering session, the group produced a formal document that listed the values and behaviors expected by every team member. Communication, trust, teamwork, commitment and planning were identified as the significant values with each associated and specific behavior identified. ♦



U.S. military contracting commands hold industry day with local Qatar businesses

By Capt. Brad Tweedy
Army Contracting Command–Qatar

Members of the Army Contracting Command–Qatar and the U.S. Air Force’s 379th Expeditionary Contracting Squadron conducted a Joint Industry Day at the Ramada Conference Center, Doha, Qatar, in February.

ACC–Qatar is located in the region on Camp As Sayliyah and the 379th is at Al Udeid Air Base. There were many reasons and facets for conducting the day-long event.

“First, the military contracting community hoped to broaden its collective vendor base by reaching out to identify new providers for required supplies and services,” said Lt. Col. Paul Davidson, ACC–Qatar

commander. “The second was to bring the vendors together for an overview of contracting procedures and orientation to our Web listings to explain in detail and encourage them in pursuing future opportunities. We also wanted to reinforce the fair and open practices of conducting business with the U.S. government operating in Qatar. Finally, we wanted to bring the Air Force and Army contracting professionals together to facilitate future collaboration and maximize our collective efforts here.”

Extensive planning for the event began in July 2010, including collaboration meetings with the

U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Embassy economic developers, U.S. Department of Commerce, and the U.S. Small Business Administration.

Advertising was identified early as critical to the event. Joint coordination with the Doha Chamber of Commerce and U.S. Department of Commerce at the U.S. Embassy provided for access to the widest audience, resulting in more than 300 local business professionals attending the event, a significant increase from the 50 who attended the previous industry day.

Contracting experts from both ACC–Qatar and the 379th briefed topics critical to conducting business with the U.S. government and answered questions in an open forum to ensure everyone in attendance understood the requirements.

Feedback indicated the event was a huge success.

“New vendors were identified and are eager to compete for requirements,” Davidson said. “The joint contracting community is closer and we are better postured for future collaboration and success.” ♦

MICC officials begin standup of mission contracting centers

by Daniel P. Elkins
Headquarters, Mission and Installation Contracting Command
Fort Sam Houston, Texas

The Mission and Installation Contracting Command is increasing its effectiveness and efficiency by transforming and restructuring its mission and installation contracting offices under newly established mission contracting centers. The first to be established is the Mission Contracting Center-Fort Eustis.

The Fort Eustis, Va., location is the first of eight mission contracting centers projected to stand up by the end of 2011 and comes as part of the continuing efforts to improve customer service and workload distribution as well as establish an effective span of control.

Aligned under MCC-Fort Eustis is the Fort Eustis mission contracting office and installation contracting offices at Carlisle Barracks, Pa., Jackson, S.C., Fort Lee, Va., Fort Gordon, Ga., and Fort Benning, Ga.

Headquartered at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, the MICC stood up contracting centers at Fort Bragg, N.C., and Fort Belvoir, Va., in June. Other MCCs projected to stand up later this year are at Fort Sam Houston and Fort Hood, Texas, Fort Leavenworth, Kan., Fort Knox, Ky., and Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash.

“Creating mission contracting centers, with each customer-focused, will allow us to not only better organize, but also incorporate contracting into the planning process of our customers,” said Pat Hogston, MICC Contract Support, Plans and Operations director. “It will also allow us,

as a command, to become more efficient and effective as it will help us standardize our processes.”

Each MCC will have approximately 15 to 20 employees, based on workload, and will be made up of a command and control element, contract operations, administrative operations and special staff. Hogston said each center will be aligned and focused on supporting a primary customer base. For instance, MCC-Fort Eustis and MCC-Fort Leavenworth will be supporting the Army Training and Doctrine Command. Other customers supported by the MICC include the Army’s Forces Command, Reserve Command, Military District of Washing-

Several considerations went into the team’s decision-making process to include the order in which the MCCs are stood up and continued support for the MICC’s major customers. Following that process, specific IPTs were established to address the actual execution of standing up each MCC.

The initial team benefited from existing contracting personnel at Fort Monroe, Va., and Fort Eustis who were impacted by the Base Realignment and Closure decision and had leadership assets readily available to stand up the MCC.

As the manager of nine installation contracting offices, Deb Emerson, MCC-Fort Eustis director, was involved in the day-to-day business

“Creating mission contracting centers... will also allow us, as a command, to become more efficient and effective as it will help us standardize our processes.”

ton, Human Resources Command, and Test and Evaluation Command.

Hogston said the standup of MCC-Fort Eustis went very smoothly and credited planning and its leadership.

“One of the keys was establishing an integrated process team that consisted of the G-staff and all the key players necessary to address issues immediately and at the proper level of expertise,” Hogston said. “The integrated process team developed criteria and utilized a strategic approach to prioritize the standup of each MCC.”

operation and acquisition mission for more than 50 percent of the offices now included in the MCC.

Emerson, along with deputy director Sue Gonser, have played a critical role in the transformation process by serving as advisors on individual working groups formed for each MCC. Emerson said MCC-Fort Eustis has served as a beta test for other centers. Lessons learned are shared during weekly communication between IPT members, which prove highly beneficial to the implementation timeline and reduces duplication of work.

“While each MCC will differ according to the mission set assigned, they will have many similarities in structure and authorities,” Emerson said. “We have identified many areas for which standardized procedures and processes will greatly benefit all and are developing these approaches through our working groups.”

Among the challenges the team tackles for each MCC is the recruitment of qualified personnel and sufficient facility space. Hogston said that because facilities are very tight on all installations, they are seeking available space as an interim solution with a long-term goal of creating a campus that incorporates all MICC contracting assets on the installation in the same building.

Emerson said the new level of management also offers a necessary reduction in the span of control for command and procurement authority.

“Maximizing delegable procurement authority optimizes efficiencies that reduce timelines, increases opportunities to make sound business solutions at the enterprise level, and improves the quality of our acquisitions,” Emerson said. “Powering down command and control to the lower level at the MCC enables us to move resources and assignments to balance labor and workload across the MCC. It also enables us to become one integrated team with our customers by achieving a more complete understanding of the mission role of our acquisitions in the Army generating force cycle, improving our execution.”

The MICC is responsible for planning, integrating, awarding and administering contracts in support of Army commands, direct reporting units, U.S. Army North and other organizations to provide the best value for the mission, Soldiers and their families. ◆



Contracting professionals from the 409th Contracting Support Brigade gather together from all over Europe to learn about contract administration at the 2011 European Contracting Conference, April 18-20, in Frankenthal, Germany. (Photo by 409th Contracting Support Brigade)

409th conducts European contracting conference

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

Army contracting professionals gathered in Frankenthal, Germany, April 18-20 for the European contracting conference dubbed EURCON 2011. The event was hosted by the 409th Contracting Support Brigade and marked the first time the brigade assembled its units in one area.

“It was really a tremendous experience to be able to put a face to so many of the names I have been working with, to enhance my knowledge on certain acquisition strategies and be made aware of the changes,” said Marieta Luna, a local national contracting specialist who has been in the Belgium regional contracting office for the last two decades. “It makes me proud to be a part of this brigade and to have the privilege of working for the U.S. government. It (the conference) was very interesting and informative and above all, an absolutely morale-uplifting event.”

The 409th, headquartered in Kaiserslautern, Germany, is a professional workforce of Soldiers, civilians and local nationals, all with a unique perspective of contracting for their respective area.

“I really enjoyed seeing all the new faces. As an acquisitions noncommissioned officer, it’s beneficial for me to be able to interact with the civilians and local nationals to see their outlook on contracting. This was a great opportunity and I hope to attend more conferences like this in the future.” said Master Sgt. Kimala Cox, 623rd Contingency Contracting Team, Vicenza, Italy.

The conference’s primary topic of discussion was contract administration and included the entire 409th staff, as well as various guests from agencies such as the Defense Contract Management Agency, U.S. Army Europe, Defense Finance and Accounting Services and Criminal Investigation Command.

“The most beneficial part of the EURCON for me was being able to experience the various levels of contracting knowledge that we have available in our command,” said Clifton Miller, contracting specialist, Theater Contracting Center, Kaiserslautern. “Contracting is always changing and to know that there are all these resources really helps me be more effective in my job.”

“Because of this conference, our workforce is better prepared to handle the changing climate of contracting,” said Tony Bauman, 409th CSB deputy director. ◆

Virtual contract filing project eliminates paper waste, storage and streamlines contract management

By Elynn Kocher
Headquarters, U.S. Army
Contracting Command



Shifting to a paperless process has enabled the Mission and Installation Contracting Command's Mission Contracting Center-Fort Riley, Kan., to reduce errors, increase cost savings and, as a by-product, save a few trees.

Fittingly, it was Earth Day, April 22, when Kim Holt, an MCC-Fort Riley employee on a developmental assignment at the Army Contracting Command headquarters at Fort Belvoir, Va., demonstrated the Paperless Contracting File, a virtual filing program adopted by MCC-Fort Riley that replaces traditional metal filing

cabinets and paper folder storage of contracting information.

MCC-Fort Riley was an early adopter of the paperless work environment and one of the first Department of Defense agencies to implement the concept nearly 10 years ago, explained David Wild, MCC-Fort Riley director. Wild and contract specialist Arnie Boyd led the innovative concept at that time, "with the help of Kevin LaChance as our forward-thinking legal advisor, [as well as] the like-minded principal assistant responsible for contracting staff analyst, Steve Hunnicut, who

has since retired," said Wild. "Together, we achieved success."

"After proving the principle with Fort Riley's job order contract, we built our paperless program incrementally by inducting all new work via the paperless method," Wild explained. "Over time, we built an e-culture and became completely paperless."

MCC-Fort Riley's launch of its PCF tool was deployed as a pilot project under the ACC Virtual Contracting Enterprise project office, which is led by Michael Thompson, project chief. The enterprise oversees multiple virtual contracting programs

AROUND ACC

designed to provide better visibility of projects and monitor project management in a digital environment. The PCF project is currently deployed at more than 30 ACC sites, with a variety of similar contracting tools in use at dozens more sites.

According to Holt, “the PCF has streamlined our workflow processes and increased accountability. [File] creators are also users, so it’s a process that makes sense to us.”

Ownership is critical to Holt and other pilot users. “With other online filing systems, users have a read-only or view-only perspective, with a manager who controls content. With PCF, the user is the manager. It’s already different in that it enables us to have ownership and to access [the system] from anywhere, since it is Web-based.”

Virtual accessibility makes it possible for users to check out, modify and share files that were previously stored in a literal filing cabinet in an office, requiring physical presence. With PCF, users can work remotely.

“The system has made it easier for us to see who last checked out a document and what has recently been done with it,” said Holt. “That way, work isn’t tied up waiting for someone who is on temporary duty or on sick leave to come back to work – we can work remotely, and we can share documents any time, from any place.”

All content is kept in virtual filing cabinets, which appear as a cabinet graphic on the user’s screen. All folders within the cabinet are labeled, with sub-folders by contracting subject matter or solicitation number, and further categorized by pre-award or post-award.

Approximately 30 employees are currently using the PCF system at MCC-Fort Riley, according to Holt, with more expected to be added soon. ♦



Command Sgt. Major Tony Baker (left) and Jeff Parsons (right), the Army Contracting Command’s command sergeant major and executive director, unroll the Army Contracting Command flag at a June 16 uncasing ceremony marking the command’s official transfer of its headquarters and the Expeditionary Contracting Command headquarters to Redstone Arsenal, Ala. “This is a very important next step for ACC and ECC,” Parsons said. “It not only signals the physical change of our headquarters operations, it’s another significant milestone in our growth as one of Army Materiel Command’s major subordinate commands.” (U.S. Army photo by Ed Worley)



Members of the 646th Contingency Contracting Team, Taegu, South Korea, provided cradle-to-grave contracting support to the 643rd Engineering Company, the 84th Engineering Battalion and the Washington Army National Guard Special Operations Detachment–Pacific, from May 22 through July 1 during Ayara Guardian 2011, a training exercise in Thailand. The team was in the Pran Buri District to fully support each unit’s training requirements for partner nations’ combined engineering civic action projects and command and control/engineering assistance responsibilities and their execution.



Air Force Staff Sgt. Kyle Capps (center), Army Maj. David Troutman (right), and Brandon Mc Alexander, the contracting officer representative, speak with local Afghans about a contracting project to help rebuild the area in Salerno, Afghanistan, June 6. All three are 903rd Contingency Contracting Battalion, Kaiserslautern, German team members in the Salerno, Afghanistan Regional Contracting Center. (Photo courtesy of 409th Contracting Support Brigade)

April 2011 storm one for the history books

(National Weather Service Photo)

By Ed Worley
Headquarters, U.S. Army Contracting Command

For nearly a week, local weather forecasters had been warning that severe weather approaching northern Alabama would be the worst weather the area had seen so far this year.

Those warnings were not hyperbole. The April 27 storm was historic, producing more than 50 confirmed tornadoes across the state, including a monstrous EF-5 funnel that ripped its way 132 miles from northwest Alabama, across north central Alabama to Franklin, Tenn. With winds in excess of 200 mph and wider than a mile, it claimed 70 lives and destroyed hundreds of homes and other structures in its path. An EF-5 tornado is the most severe tornado. The rating comes from National Weather Service experts and it classifies tornadoes based on the damage they cause.

The day's first tornado warnings for the Huntsville area sounded shortly after 6 a.m. The weather service didn't declare an "all clear" until after 8 p.m. By then hundreds of homes had been damaged or destroyed. Statewide, the death toll rose to more than 235 people.

Brooke Hyde, a contractor supporting the Army Contracting Command's Chief of Information Office (G6) in Huntsville, experienced the monster first hand.

"We were sitting in the dining room," she explained. "We could hear it getting louder."

She picked up her 23-month-old son, Dirk, and she and husband Luke headed for the bathroom in the center-most section of their log home. She said their ears were popping, like ears do on a flight. "My husband was sitting in front of the

bathroom door and the pressure was pushing the door open."

She said they knew they were "in the eye of the storm. It was incredibly loud, and then it got eerily quiet. I could tell we were in the middle of it. Then it got incredibly loud again."

When they felt safe to step out of their shelter, they were surprised at how little damage their home had sustained, but were concerned about their neighbors.

"I couldn't see their houses so I thought they were gone."

The Hyde's house proved to be a stalwart structure. It's a log cabin design, built in 1978. The builder used logs—most dating back to the 1840s—moved to Alabama from Pulaski, Tenn. Many of the house's fixtures are reclaimed building materials.

"It's got a lot of character but it stood up very well in the storm," Hyde said.

Their neighbors' houses had much more damage. The church across the street was destroyed. One house was lifted off its foundation and set back down. It was a total loss.

Charles E. Looney, a security specialist in Army Contracting Command Intelligence and Security (G2), also had a close call with the storms.

"As the first tornado approached, you could feel and hear the wind being sucked out of the house," he explained. "The sound of debris hitting the house and broken glass were soon accompanied by the steady roar of the storm."

Looney said he and his family also took shelter in a bathroom in the inner-most part of their house. "The vacuum was so strong; the tornado sucked all the water out of the toilet and closed any opened doors in the house."

When more storms approached, they hunkered down in a neighbor's underground storm shelter.

"During the second and third tornados, we noticed that the winds were not as severe, but the sky did get dark," he added. "We could hear the hail hitting the door of the underground storm shelter."

After the "all clear" Looney and his family spent the rest of the night checking the damage and checking on his neighbors.

"By the next morning, all you could see and hear was a sea of first responders and volunteers trying to clean up the mess," he said.

ACC's and Expeditionary Contracting Command's forward headquarters at Redstone were spared any structure damage. But the storm destroyed significant portions of

the power grid supplying the area, leaving more than 1 million people, including Redstone Arsenal, without electricity. ACC and ECC operations in Huntsville were down from just after noon April 27 until May 3.

Gene Duncan, ACC's director of strategic initiatives and the command group's senior representative at Redstone, said the loss of power across northern Alabama not only made it impossible for normal business operations, it significantly hampered the command's personnel accountability efforts.

"Accountability was a big issue," Duncan said. "No one had a firm grasp on how widespread the power outage was. Phones were out of order and cell phone coverage was sporadic at best. Some people had left the area and we didn't have a good way to know who was still here and who had left."

Duncan acknowledged that people who left town may have tried to contact their supervisors but were caught in the same communications breakdown as supervisors who were trying to contact their teams.

"The bright spot is no casualties," he said. "That's pretty amazing if you take a look at the pictures of the devastation."

He also noted how quickly the community pulled together to rescue survivors and begin the recovery process and that many ACC and ECC members volunteered while they were unable to report for work.

"It's probably going to take a while to recover," Duncan said. "The power situation will be fragile for a while. And these storms took their toll on people emotionally."

"It's something I hope to never have to live through again," Hyde said. ♦



626th Contingency Contracting Team, Huntsville, Ala., members Maj. Jonathan Spurlock (left) and Sgt. 1st Class Bonafacio Magdaleno help clear debris from the home of a Hopewell, Ala. resident in need of assistance after tornados ravaged the area April 27. (Photo courtesy of 626th Contingency Contracting Team)



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