

DEFENSE LOGISTICS AGENCY

MARCH - APRIL 2011

# LOGGLINES



DEFENSE LOGISTICS AGENCY

**A DoD Combat  
Support Agency**



# from the **DIRECTOR**

## Navy Vice Adm. Alan S. Thompson, SC, USN Director, Defense Logistics Agency

**A**t the Defense Logistics Agency, we often refer to ourselves as America's combat logistics support agency, but few of our customers know how important that phrase is to our ability to provide world-class warfighter support. Written into law in 1986, the combat support agency designation gives DLA a formal oversight relationship with the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and allows combatant commanders to request specific support from the agency.

The success of last year's troop surge in Afghanistan rests partly on DLA's shoulders, because as a combat support

agency, our team members had a seat at the planning table with the Joint Chiefs of Staff's logistics team. Having access during the surge's planning stages meant DLA team members could accurately forecast increased demand for supplies like food and force-protection items and ensure adequate stock was available to sustain the newly expanded force.

DLA's integration with warfighters doesn't stop at the planning stages. DLA support teams have deployed to Iraq, Afghanistan and Kuwait to speed critical resupply to troops operating in theater and to Haiti to help coordinate desperately needed aid. These small teams have tremendous power to tailor DLA support to the needs of battlefield customers.

At the combatant command level, DLA liaison officers work directly with commanders and serve as the local face

of the agency to customers in those geographic areas. These team members serve as vital links in the global supply chain and keep commanders aware of DLA's ever-expanding capabilities and how we can best meet their needs in changing operational environments.

Thanks to the close relationships we are fostering with customers, the military services have come to view DLA as a partner that deploys alongside them, wherever operations happen, to ensure crucial supplies are on hand to get the job done. Our inclusion on the Pentagon planning team, in addition to numerous requests for participation in other planning efforts, are proof DLA's military customers value our support and consider it integral to achieving mission success.

We are America's logistics combat support agency – We are DLA. ✪

## **LOGLINES**

Official Flagship Publication of the Defense Logistics Agency

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**Loglines** is prepared electronically, using desktop publishing applications; no commercial typesetting costs are involved. Photos not credited are courtesy of agency sources. Submissions and correspondence may be sent to the following address:

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# NO BOUNDARIES

Story by Beth Reece

**C**hris Stephens and Air Force Lt. Col. Jon Bradley asked a lot of questions while helping the Joint Staff's logistics team set the stage for the troop buildup in Afghanistan last year. How many more housing units would 30,000 additional troops need? How much more concertina wire and food? Were the airfields equipped to handle multiple air deliveries? And could industry meet these increased demands?

As the Defense Logistics Agency's liaisons to the Joint Staff's logistics team, Stephens and Bradley worked with officials from DLA's primary-level field activity to forecast requirements and give planners the information they needed to orchestrate the troop expansion and eventually sustain it.

DLA's inclusion on the Pentagon planning team – and the continual requests for DLA's participation in other planning efforts – is proof that military customers value the agency's support as it makes decisions that directly impact warfighters' ability to stay mission ready, Stephens said.

"They want to be aware of DLA's capabilities and services," he said. "And when there are problems, they want to know how DLA can help solve them."

While DLA is commonly referred to as America's combat logistics support agency, many customers and even some employees don't know that DLA was formally designated a combat support agency by Congress in Title 10 of the United States Code, section 193, when it was amended in 1986.

"This is significant because it means that, by law, we have a formal oversight relationship with the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and also we are responsible for providing direct support to the combatant commands," said Ruth Vetter, associate general counsel for DLA.

As a combat support agency, DLA must provide worldwide logistics support to the military services during peacetime and in war, as well as participate in joint training exercises to prepare for that mission. And while its primary focus is on supporting warfighters, DLA must also support other defense components and federal agencies during operations like disaster relief or humanitarian aid efforts.

DoD Directive 3000.06, Combat Support Agencies, establishes the relationship these agencies have with combatant commands. It gives combatant commanders the authority to request specific support from DLA, Vetter added. For example, in July, U.S. Central Command officials asked the agency to deploy DLA Distribution's expeditionary depot to Afghanistan to receive, store and issue materials needed by warfighters throughout the country.

The request originated at U.S. Forces-Afghanistan and went through USCENTCOM to the Joint Staff, said John Hall, deputy director of DLA

The aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt conducts a replenishment at sea with the Military Sealift Command fast combat support ship USNS Supply. DLA's status as a combat support agency requires it to provide logistics support to service members around the world.

Logistics Operations.

"The Joint Staff had to look at it from a global perspective to see, if we deployed this capability, would it impact on other operations?" he said.

He explained that while DLA

Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class Jonathan Snyder



frequently works directly with COCOMs, specific requests are filtered through the Joint Staff, then sent to the secretary of defense for final approval.

DLA maintains close contact with combatant commanders and the military services, placing DLA liaison officers in their geographic areas. These LNOs serve as the face of DLA, keeping commanders aware of the agency's expanding capabilities and reaching back to the agency when special requirements arise.

Navy Rear Adm. William Brown, director of logistics for U.S. European Command, rated DLA's LNO support as "highly dependable" and "vigilant" during a military training exercise in late 2009.

Inclusion and participation in planning efforts is proof that military customers value the agency's support in making decisions that directly impact mission readiness.

"DLA is written into all of our plans. Without them, there's a gap, a missing piece," the admiral said of the support he gets from Army Col. Derek Smith, who has double duty as the DLA Europe & Africa commander and the DLA LNO to USEUCOM and U.S. Africa Command.

"Whatever I need, I can go to my LNO, and he will reach back to DLA Headquarters in minutes, 24/7. I feel that I can be direct in contact with the director of DLA at a moment's notice," Brown

continued.

One advantage of having DLA provide direct support to all the COCOMs, he said, is it enables all the military services to share lessons learned, whether they be from humanitarian support or war-related operations.

New technologies and business practices that emerged in the late 1990s have also made it possible for DLA employees to deploy alongside warfighters and provide faster, personal





# A DoD Combat Support Agency

support right on the battlefield. DLA support teams have conducted six-month deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan since both wars started. They've provided material and contract management, fuel, disposal services, and asset visibility. As of January, about 130 DLA employees were deployed to Afghanistan.

"In the past, I think DLA was thought of as just a wholesale supply and procurement organization. I don't think the warfighter saw a link between DLA and what was happening on the ground," Hall said. "But the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have really shown that we're willing to extend ourselves far forward. Customers clearly see that we deliver food and fuel to forward operating bases and dining facilities in Iraq and that we have team members on the ground with them."

Warfighter support representatives like Jim Chaney, who works with units in Grafenwoehr and Hohenfels, Germany, are also embedded with units to provide direct support. Often the only DLA representative in their assigned geographic locations, WSRs train warfighters on DLA systems and ensure units have the supplies they need to perform their missions. For Chaney, that means contacting each unit at least once a week

Air Force Capt. Elberta Carter and Lt. Col. Ken Williams care for a 5-year-old Haitian boy during earthquake relief efforts Jan. 20, 2010, in Carrefour, Haiti. One of the Defense Logistics Agency's responsibilities as a combat support agency is to provide medical supplies in support of disaster relief.

and attending all maintenance meetings.

"I can also deploy if a unit requests it," he said.

"We've expanded well beyond just placing LNOs at the COCOMs," Hall added. "We have teams across Iraq, Afghanistan, Kuwait, and we also have teams ready to go elsewhere if needed. In fact, we sent a team to Haiti for earthquake relief efforts last year."

Immediately after the quake hit, DLA began working with U.S. Southern Command to assess the need for humanitarian relief, and deployed a team to assist Joint Task Force-Haiti within weeks. The team's logistics support was so effective, Hall said, that during an after-action review, the joint task force commander called DLA a key enabler that allowed the JTF to make quick, strategic decisions.

"The task force at USSOUTHCOM wasn't just looking at how we were going to support the U.S. armed forces there," Hall said, "but also how the Haitian economy was going to be able to recover and

Brandyn Hill



get fuel flowing back. At one point, they were considering activating the Offshore Petroleum Discharge System."

The system uses an offshore tanker to deliver petroleum products to areas where ports or terminal facilities are damaged or nonexistent. But based on information Michael Meacham, a quality assurance representative for DLA Energy, collected about inbound fuel shipments, DLA's support team recommended that USSOUTHCOM not activate the OPDS.

"This is a great example of the impact DLA has on warfighters' missions around the globe, and it shows that our support teams are able to contribute, to link with warfighters and give them valuable information that they need," Hall continued.

Another example of DLA's success as a combat support agency is its work on the Northern Distribution Network, a series of rail, road and water supply lines used to deliver supplies to troops in Afghanistan. DLA has worked with U.S. Transportation Command, the State Department and USEUCOM to establish the NDN at the request of USCENTCOM.

"These routes have proven invaluable as we supply the increased force," said

Army Lt. Col. Coll Haddon (right), with the Joint Program Office for Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles, points out unique features of the new all-terrain version of MRAP vehicles to DLA Director Navy Vice Adm. Alan Thompson during the admiral's visit to Oshkosh, Wis. DLA employees work closely with equipment manufacturers to ensure they are ready to help provide logistics support during war and peacetime.

Kathleen T. Rhem



Army Brig. Gen. Lynn Collyar, DLA Logistics Operations director.

AT USCENTCOM's request, DLA recently began building partnerships with local vendors in countries surrounding the NDN. Several DLA teams have traveled to Central Asia to explain how local companies can do business with DLA and the Department of Defense, allowing them to reap the economic benefits of supporting the United States' distribution of supplies into Afghanistan.

USCENTCOM has also requested that DLA expand distribution capabilities within Afghanistan.

"They gave us a list of requirements, things they need from DLA regarding distribution inside the area of operations, and they put it in mid-, near- and long-term ranges. It's pretty clear and pretty extensive what they're seeking from us," Hall said.

As a combat support agency, DLA must undergo a performance review from the Joint Staff every two years. The current assessment was in draft form in January and had positive remarks about the agency's performance, Bradley said. As a DLA LNO to the Joint Staff, he accompanied the team during interviews at each COCOM.

"Our LNOs were praised almost universally, and the Joint Staff gave us an 'attaboy' for how well we support the combatant commanders," he said.

Military representatives also stated that operations of today's magnitude would be impossible without DLA's contributions, according to the draft assessment, Bradley added.

Even without its designation as a combat support agency, DLA would probably still function as it does today, working to meet warfighters' needs wherever they're located, Hall said.

DLA is one of just seven organizations designated as combat support agencies. According to Title 10 of the U.S. Code,

Air Force Senior Airman Timothy Taylor



the designation can be granted only by Congress or the secretary of defense. Title 10 was amended to designate CSAs and outline their roles and oversight following the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986, which transformed the U.S. military command structure and gave operational authority to the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff instead of the service chiefs.

"I think being a CSA gives us more authority to do what we do and more

Air Force Airman 1st Class Koy Sauer secures a Mine Resistant, Ambush Protected all-terrain vehicle to a pallet in preparation for transport to Afghanistan. Representatives from DLA Land and Maritime partnered with officials at U.S. Central Command to forecast the need for repair parts for the vehicles.

leeway to operate in the way we do, as well as a direct relationship with the Joint Staff," Hall said. "But without that designation, I think we'd probably still be where we are today and COCOMs would still be including us in their logistics support plans." ★



## A DoD Combat Support Agency

Story by Jacob Boyer

**D**LA Logistics Operations' Army Service Team ensures that Soldiers on the ground in combat zones and elsewhere get the best possible service from the Defense Logistics Agency.


The team works a range of complex supply and distribution issues, from

# SUSTAINING VICTORY

DLA Supporting the Army







strategic-level policy issues to tactical-level assistance – all in support of deployed warfighters.

“We engage the Army to resolve logistics problems, collaborate on solutions and assist in clarifying DLA policy and procedure,” said Army Col. Betty Yarbrough, DLA’s Army national account manager.

“We work on top-level policy with Army G4 [logistics] and things like making sure we support [Army Materiel Command] and their priorities,” she said. “But if a Soldier calls me and needs some help at the tactical level, we call him back, find out what the issue is and help him work through it.”

DLA manages eight different supply chains, and its myriad missions – all of which center around its role as a combat support agency – can be difficult to navi-

gate for Soldiers dealing with unforeseen requirements when they are forward deployed, said Linda Greene, a customer account manager on the Army Service Team. She and the team’s other members act as conduits of information to help troops find the people and organizations they need within the agency to solve their problems.

“I think one of the team’s primary roles is to gather information – not only from our customers, but from entities within DLA – and help our customers maneuver through DLA to resolve their issues,” Greene said. “We engage customers and other stakeholders on a daily basis.”

One recent issue the team helped Soldiers in Afghanistan deal with involved helmets for Afghan security forces, Yarbrough said. The U.S. Army Security Assistance Command brought the issue to the service team’s attention, and the team made sure the command’s representatives were put in contact with the right organization to solve the issue – in this case, Foreign Military Sales, said Army Lt. Col. Joan Smith, the team’s Army G4 liaison officer.

As the team’s LNO to the top logistician in the Army, Smith deals more often with warfighter issues that are highlighted by senior leaders. She

regularly attends briefings that include senior field commanders so she can identify their concerns and issues and identify the DLA capabilities that can help resolve their problems.

The Army Service Team also plays a role in educating Soldiers before they deploy about the services DLA offers in theater.

“It’s extremely valuable, because you say, ‘This is DLA, and this is DLA in the area of operations. This is how many people we have over there. This is what we do for you. This is where we interconnect with you. This is how we interact with you,’” Yarbrough said. “It reassures those deploying Army units – many of which are reserve units that may not have had a lot of interaction with DLA – that they can leverage DLA capabilities to support their mission anywhere in the world. This is the power that DLA can bring.”

All of the team’s missions are important, from strategic policy reviews to making sure a commander on the ground knows where to go to get critical parts and supplies, like helmets for the local security forces his unit is training. Yarbrough said her team’s primary responsibility is ensuring Soldiers get the support they need from America’s premier combat logistics support agency and understand the full range of DLA capabilities available.

“Just talking them through the different supply chains we manage and the different assets we bring to bear helps make them successful,” she said. “That’s our job, and it’s what we do best.” ✪

Army Staff Sgt. Salvador Lopez (left) and Spc. Jeffery Lewis scan their sector of fire from a mountain ridge near Forward Operating Base Lane in Zabul province, Afghanistan. DLA’s Army Service Team ensures that Soldiers deployed globally get the logistics support they require to accomplish their missions.

— Photo by Army Staff Sgt. Adam Mancini



## A DoD Combat Support Agency

**E**ffective communications are just as important for Marines engaging extremists as they are for those communicating with their support elements – and they are vital in ensuring the Defense Logistics Agency keeps the Marine Corps prepared to fight.

“Our relationship with the Marine Corps is very solid,” said Michael Brletich, Marine Corps deputy national account manager for DLA. “DLA and the Marine Corps work very closely with each other.”

Ensuring communications flow is always a challenge, he said. Marines are on the front lines and focused on operations, and DLA Logistics Operations’ Marine Corps Service Team must make sure there is constant communication.

“We make sure that the Marine Corps knows what capabilities we bring to the fight, how to leverage those capabilities and how DLA can support them. Close and regular communication is the key to effective support,” he said.

As America’s combat logistics support agency, DLA provides the Marine Corps with logistics, acquisition and technical services. The agency sources and provides nearly 100 percent of consumable items Marines need to operate, and the Marine Corps Service Team communicates with the service’s leaders to ensure their needs are met.

The Marine Corps Service Team acts as a conduit between DLA and the Marine Corps, ensuring Marines’ interests are represented and their requirements are communicated within DLA.

“We’re deeply engaged with the Marine Corps on a day-to-day basis, with all the major commands like Headquarters Marine Corps, Marine Corps Logistics Command, Marine Corps Systems Command and most importantly the Marines in theater fighting the fight in Afghanistan,” Brletich said.

The Marine Corps Service Team makes sure that DLA understands what the Marine Corps’ requirements are and that those

requirements are satisfied, he said.

“If there are any issues with the support we provide, we make sure those issues are addressed and resolved at the right levels as responsively as possible,” he said.

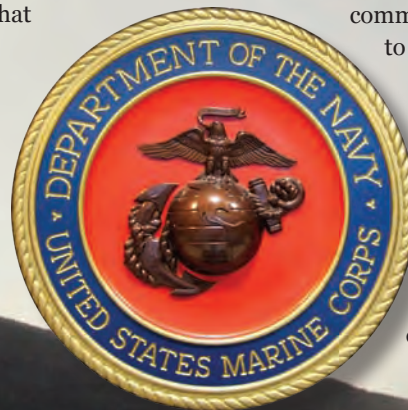
The team serves as the face of DLA to its customers and has four customer service representatives forward-positioned with Marine Corps major commands.

“CSRs are really our first line of defense,” Brletich said. “They are the folks on the ground with the very people we are supporting.”

The CSRs are embedded with the customers and most closely know what the issues and requirements are. They communicate those requirements to the larger DLA enterprise.

Another way the Marine Corps Service Team communicates with its service counterparts is by educating them about the team’s mission and capabilities.

“A lot of our customers don’t fully understand



# KEY TO COMMUNICATION

## DLA Supporting the Marine Corps

Story by Jonathan Stack



The Marine Corps Service Team makes sure that DLA understands what the Marine Corps' requirements are and that those requirements are satisfied.

DLA's role in supporting the Marine Corps," said Marine Corps Master Sgt. Derrick Washington, DLA Marine Corps readiness material superintendent.

Brletich, who has been on DLA's Marine Corps team nearly six years, said there is a lack of awareness about what DLA brings to the fight and how to best use those capabilities. That is one of the reasons team members travel to the Marine Corps' service schools and educate warfighters about who they are and what they do to help Marines accomplish their missions.

"The more we educate our customers, the better we can support them," he said.

Team members provide information to places like Pennsylvania State University, where there is a Marine Corps logistics education program, twice a year. The team also visits the tactical and advanced logistics operations courses at Quantico, Va., and briefs the Joint Logistics Course at Fort Lee, Va.

The Marine Corps service team also hosts several conferences throughout the year.

Two Marine Corps helicopters deliver food and supplies to Marines in Afghanistan. The Defense Logistics Agency sources and provides nearly 100 percent of consumable items Marines need to operate.

— Photo by Marine Corps Cpl. William Faffler

"There is a quarterly partnership council meeting where senior logisticians and leaders from DLA and the Marine Corps get together for a one-day conference to discuss the issues," Brletich said. "Both organizations candidly put issues on the table and work together to develop solutions for the way ahead."

DLA also conducts an annual Marine Corps/DLA Day conference, which is the biggest event the team participates in each year. The conference is designed to bring senior logisticians from throughout the Marine Corps and DLA together to discuss strategic-level issues of importance to both organizations. It is hosted by DLA Director Navy Vice Adm. Alan Thompson.

"We also visit both the Marine expeditionary forces to conduct pre- and post-deployment site visits with commanders and Marines who are about to deploy or just returned from deployment," Washington said.

Team members will travel to Camp Lejeune, N.C., in the near future to brief 2nd Marine Expeditionary Force on DLA's concept of operations and DLA support team capabilities in Afghanistan.

"It's a daily effort from many different directions, but it's all about making sure at the end of the day Marines understand what DLA brings to the fight and how they can leverage those capabilities," Brletich said. 🌟



A DoD Combat Support Agency

# THE NAVY MISSION

DLA Supporting the Navy



Story by Jonathan Stack

**U.S.** Sailors – both those at sea and those supporting operations on the ground – are constantly moving, which creates a unique mission for DLA Logistics Operations’ Navy Service Team to ensure they stay supplied.

The team, with personnel at DLA Headquarters and U.S. Fleet Forces Command, helps the Navy coordinate the delivery of items through DLA’s eight supply chains.

“The work our team does ensures

the Navy has the appropriate reach into DLA,” said Navy Capt. Mark Werner, DLA’s Navy national account manager.

Given the organizational structure of DLA and its myriad components, the service team enables Navy personnel to find out who to contact and directs them to a decision maker who can help get what they need, he said.

“The Navy is unique because ships are never in the same place. Warfighters on a ship or a Seabee in Afghanistan or Navy SEAL

in a theater are never in a place for very long,” Werner said.

This represents a challenge for the Navy Service Team in terms of getting the service what it needs at the place it needs it, he said. The team overcomes this challenge through communication.

“We have a very solid collaborative, working relationship with our counterparts



at Naval Supply Systems Command, Naval Air Systems Command, Naval Sea Systems Command, Fleet Forces Command and [the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations],” Werner said.

All the organizations work very closely together to resolve any Navy issues, he said.

“I think we have the right group of people,” he said.

The different organizations also come together to discuss issues at the annual Navy/DLA Day, hosted by DLA.

“Getting the senior leaders together to hash out issues and agree on a way ahead is always a good thing,” Werner said. “As with any large organization, you have to work timeliness against doing it right and proper, and making sure the gaps are identified and there’s a resolution to close those gaps.”

The Navy Service Team has also been involved with implementing the transfer of Navy warehouse operations to DLA. The transfer will reduce Department of Defense infrastructure

and operating costs, streamline warehouse operations and consolidate inventory by using the entire network to meet customer expectations.

The Navy Warehouse Transfer Initiative uses DLA’s distribution network to meet customer requirements and will allow the Navy to concentrate on delivering global logistics services to fleet and joint operational units, according to a memorandum of agreement between DLA and Naval Supply Systems Command.

DLA will assume responsibility for the warehousing and tactical distribution operations.

Under the agreement, 107 warehouses, representing more than 4.8 million square feet of warehouse space, and more than 400 personnel will be transferred to DLA Distribution.


“The Navy came to us to save money and wanted us to take over management of some of [its] warehouses,” said Bruce Nelson, Navy customer account manager. “This is something I think other services will adopt.”

Warehouse employees will be transferred from the Navy to DLA.

All the material in a particular warehouse will be loaded in the Distribution Standard System, the information technology backbone for distribution, and be consolidated, Nelson said.

The transfer of Navy warehouse operations falls in line with DLA’s goal of stewardship excellence, enabling the agency to manage processes and resources to deliver effective warfighter support at optimal cost, Nelson said.

“A lot of issues we’re working strike at the heart of stewardship and making sure the taxpayers get the best benefit for the dollars they spend,” Nelson said. 🌟



The aircraft carrier USS George H.W. Bush performs a refueling at sea with the Military Sealift Command fleet replenishment oiler USNS John Lenthall. Fuel is one of the items the DLA Navy Service Team helps the Navy procure from DLA.

— Photo by Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class Kevin J. Steinberg



# AIM HIGH

## DLA Supporting the Air Force



Story by Sara Moore

**T**he U.S. Air Force is engaged around the world, flying combat missions in a war zone, operating unmanned aerial vehicles, developing and maintaining satellites, operating advanced weapons systems, and conducting myriad other missions in support of combat operations, humanitarian assistance and homeland defense.

And wherever Air Force units are engaged, the Defense Logistics Agency is working behind and, in some cases, right alongside them to ensure Airmen have what they need to accomplish their missions.

Throughout its history, DLA has supported the Air Force in one way or another. Today, that support is all-encompassing, involving all the agency's supply chains and the active, National Guard and reserve forces, said Air Force Col. Rex Adee, the Air Force national account manager in DLA Logistics Operations.

"DLA, in some form or fashion, has

been entwined with the Air Force since its existence," Adee said. "The Air Force is a major customer of DLA."

The Air Force, in fact, is the largest customer of DLA Energy and also a major customer of DLA Aviation, Adee said. The service did more than \$7 billion worth of business with DLA Energy in fiscal 2010, with most of that being spent on petroleum, he said. And in the past year, the Air Force was responsible for 41 percent of the growth of DLA Aviation's business.

Adee and his team act as liaisons between the Air Force and DLA

In addition to dealing directly with operational customers, they work closely with Headquarters Air Force, Air Force Materiel Command, DLA's primary-level field activities and organizations within DLA Headquarters to resolve customer issues, answer questions and improve communication.


"We raise issues that we are told about

or that we reach out and find out so that we can — from an enterprise approach — be able to provide the support that the Air Force needs across all of DLA," Adee said.

The biggest issues the Air Force Service Team is currently working on are changes brought about by the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure legislation, including direct DLA support at the service's industrial centers and a new supply chain management approach, said Donald Virostko, an Air Force customer account manager in DLA Logistics Operations.

The Air Force is the first customer to receive

Air Force Tech. Sgt. Michael R. Holzworth



large-scale industrial retail support from DLA, so there have been some growing pains, he said. DLA and Air Force senior leaders meet regularly on the subject, and DLA Aviation has teams at air logistics centers working alongside Air Force personnel to improve and streamline logistics operations.

DLA Information Operations has also worked closely with the Air Force to develop new capabilities that are improving logistics operations, Virostko said. DLA's Integrated Data Environment staff members worked with their Air Force counterparts to develop a direct feed that provides near real-time information to the service's automated sourcing system.

Also, personnel from DLA Information Operations and DLA Logistics Operations were instrumental in helping the service design its new enterprise combat support system. DLA lessons learned should help the service with its Enterprise Resource Planning implementation and enhance its line of communication with the Defense Department's global

combat support system.

DLA also supports the Air Force in the distribution area, Virostko said. DLA Distribution provided warehouse space for the Air Force in Iraq, Kuwait and Afghanistan for storing its readiness spare packages, which are critical parts that used to travel with deploying units but can now be stored in theater, saving transportation costs. DLA also works with U.S. Transportation Command to expedite delivery of material within Iraq and Afghanistan, he said.

Adee also noted that DLA support teams are on the ground with customers in theater and can reach back to his team or other organizations within DLA to resolve problems.

"There are all those sorts of things that we're involved in, expediting or assisting the Air Force with its in-theater needs," Virostko said.

Having the Air Force Service Team at DLA Headquarters allows for a very dynamic support system, Virostko said. He noted an instance when the team was contacted by an organization in theater requesting an anti-icing product to inject into its fuel lines. The team was able to meet with Air Force petroleum personnel in DLA Headquarters and establish what

their requirements were, then work with DLA Energy and DLA Distribution to get the product to warfighters, and finally establish set levels for the product so it is always available in Afghanistan.

"It's not just getting stuff there, but enhancing the support we offer the Air Force," he said.

In addition to directly supporting the Air Force's operational needs, the service team spends a lot of time educating its military customers on the services DLA provides and how the other military services' requirements can impact theirs, Adee said. The whole Military Support Division in DLA Logistics Operations, which includes support teams for each service, works together to present an enterprise view to customers and promote information sharing in a joint environment, he said. He noted that the agency's We Are DLA initiative has been very helpful in promoting that enterprise view, as customers now have a clear idea of the services DLA provides.

"It's an entire team approach, but we happen to be a conduit for both DLA folks to talk to the Air Force or Air Force to come in and talk to DLA," Adee said. "Our whole purpose is 'How can we improve DLA support to the service?'"

*"We raise issues that we are told about or that we reach out and find out so that we can — from an enterprise approach — be able to provide the support that the Air Force needs across all of DLA."*

*— Air Force Col. Rex Adee*



A DoD Combat Support Agency

# NOT YOUR EVERYDAY ROAD MAP

Story by Emily Blubaugh

From its beginnings as a division of DLA Distribution that was transferred from the Defense Mapping Agency, DLA Distribution Mapping has evolved into a worldwide network of detachments that distributes nearly 13 million mapping products to customers around the globe.

DLA Distribution Mapping oversees nine retail detachments that serve the U.S. armed forces, allied countries and civilian agencies in seven countries, said Navy Cmdr. Robert Csorba, DLA Distribution Mapping commander. Located in Richmond, Va., the organization is

Emily Blubaugh is a writer for DLA Distribution Public Affairs



Air Force Staff Sgt. Christopher Boltz



responsible for the worldwide storage and physical distribution of all maps, charts and other navigational materials produced for U.S. government agencies and foreign countries.

The gradual globalization of DLA Distribution Mapping has allowed for continued responsive support to unified and joint commanders within their areas of responsibility and at designated local area installations, Csorba said.

“Our operation is focused on the warfighter, as they are the ones who rely on our product daily. In many cases, the forward-deployed DLA Distribution Mapping detachments provide troops with last-mile support,” he said. “Developing a map, ensuring its accuracy and generating enough for troops is a significant process, but none of that matters if you cannot get it to the customer.”

Most mapping products originate at the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency. DLA Distribution Mapping’s sister operation at DLA Aviation Mapping Customer Operations ensures that warfighters’ requirements are accurately identified, Csorba said. Finally, DLA Distribution Mapping ensures those products are transported or regionally positioned to provide immediate support to warfighters.

“We ship products all over the world via commercial parcel carriers, the United States Postal Service, Air Mobility Command and Less-Than-Truckload [Freight],” said Dave Gambrell, DLA Distribution Mapping operations officer. “Whether the product is going to a satellite office or directly to the customer, our team recognizes the importance of the product in protecting our nation’s Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines.”

Air Force Capt. Michael Minameyer reviews a map during a sortie flown from Eielson Air Force Base, Alaska. DLA Distribution Mapping ensures warfighters have the maps they need to accomplish their missions.



Csorba said it is important to note that these products are not comparable to traditional maps found in retail stores; rather, the maps carried by DLA Distribution Mapping are tailored to specific missions to support the nation’s warfighters.

“In movies, documentaries and historical recreations you often see images of senior military and civilian personnel hovering over a map debating the next move or contemplating where the enemy may lie in wait,” Csorba said. “Although romanticized, these depictions are a reflection of the fact that maps are indeed key to the military’s strategic, operational and tactical planning.”

DLA Distribution Mapping’s supplies include topographical maps, navigational charts, aerographical products and atlases. Csorba said these can all prove critical to warfighters in the field.

Customers echo this statement. A Naval Surface Force Atlantic staff member recently wrote in a survey, “[DLA Distribution Mapping personnel] distribute all our products and provide the proper training to the fleet on them. I do not know what we would do without them.”

DLA Distribution Mapping also plays a large role in global humanitarian assistance. The organization issued more than 60,000 map products to U.S. troops supporting earthquake relief efforts after the January 2010 earthquake in Haiti, Csorba said. In addition, in the aftermath

A worker at DLA Distribution Mapping moves stocks of mapping products at the activity’s warehouse in Richmond, Va.

of flooding in northern Pakistan that killed more than 1,800 people, DLA Distribution Mapping’s Bahrain detachment distributed more than 2,200 aeronautical and topographic products for use by troops providing humanitarian assistance to disaster-stricken areas.

Technology has also affected the mapping business, but not as quickly as expected, Csorba said. While the majority of DLA Distribution Mapping’s products are available digitally, many of the organization’s customers require that forces maintain hard copies of their maps in case an electronic product fails during an operation.

Processing nearly 1 million materiel release orders in fiscal 2010, DLA Distribution Mapping’s worldwide support has grown exponentially since its creation under DLA Distribution in 1999 and will continue to grow well into the future, Csorba said.

“We are proud of how the organization has evolved, and it’s a testament to the dedication of the employees to the mission,” he said. “Our detachments will continue to operate shoulder-to-shoulder with forces in the field in support of peacetime and crisis contingency operations to allow warfighters to operate safely at sea, in the air and on the ground.” 🌐



# MOVING FORWARD

Story by Jonathan Stack and Stacy Umstead  
Photos Courtesy DLA Distribution

**A** new asset in Afghanistan is improving supply operations for warfighters in that country. Defense Logistics Agency Distribution's Expeditionary Depot, set up by more than 40 DLA employees who have since redeployed from Kandahar, receives, stores and issues DLA and military service materials.

"We went to Kandahar at the end of July, ran [the depot] for six months and transitioned the mission to contract support," said Joe Faris, DLA Distribution Strategic Plans and Policy director. "It's still under the purview of DLA Distribution, but now the expeditionary personnel have redeployed and the contractors are in place."

The Expeditionary Depot is designed to allow a team to deploy, set it up, run it for a period of time and then transition its management to contractors, Faris said. The depot supplies military units with clothing, individual equipment, construction materials and repair parts. It also contains service readiness items, repair parts warfighters want nearby to repair and maintain weapons systems.

"Service readiness items are items the services believe need to be forward-positioned, but don't necessarily meet our demand criteria like we have for DLA material," Faris said. "It might not be something that you order every day. You only need it

when something breaks."

The depot's distribution capability became a reality July 28, when more than 515 types of supplies were arranged in containers, labeled with Distribution Standard System bar codes, and inventoried. The expeditionary unit then received its first materiel release order.

"Our expeditionary team hit the ground running in Afghanistan and didn't stop," said Navy Rear Adm. Thomas Traaen, DLA Distribution commander. "Their efforts significantly changed the logistics infrastructure in Afghanistan for the better."

During the next several months, the team continued to build the depot's distribution capability, including building portable shelters used for housing, administrative and warehousing requirements.

Since the first order arrived, the DLA Distribution Expeditionary Depot has processed about 7,000 items including repair parts, kit assemblies, subassemblies, clothing, and repairable consumable items required for maintenance of equipment and construction materials in theater. The depot primarily supports Army and Marine Corps customers.

"This capability became a huge enabler by reducing strategic airlift

A container of stock material is positioned for use by DLA Distribution Expeditionary Depot team members. The depot supplies military units with clothing, individual equipment, construction materials and repair parts.

Stacy Umstead is the public affairs officer for DLA Distribution.







## A DoD Combat Support Agency



Defense Logistics Agency Distribution Expeditionary Depot team members erect a portable shelter to house personnel, supplies and equipment in Afghanistan. The Expeditionary Depot is designed to allow a team to deploy, set it up, run it for a period of time and then transition its management to contractors.

and providing parts support across the country and has truly made a difference for the warfighter,” Traaen said.

This distribution capability is part of a long-term plan for a more permanent warehouse in Afghanistan, according to DLA Distribution officials. Military construction was approved for the

warehouse, and the contract to perform the mission has been awarded.

“This has truly been an evolution for our deployable capability,” Traaen said. “What was an idea many years ago, designed primarily to support humanitarian relief efforts inside the continental United States, has grown to a capability that strategic planners are strongly considering during operational and war planning phases and looking at DLA to provide.”

The team members who returned from Kandahar are currently at their home stations, preparing for the next

time they are needed.

“We are resetting them right now,” Faris said. “We’re taking a look at all the [combatant commanders] operation plans and looking at where [the team] is needing to be utilized, and then we’re looking at adding all those up to ensure we have the right force structure to support future requirements.”

Initially, the deployable depot was developed to support domestic disasters within the United States, and then it evolved into an international capability, Faris said. The Expeditionary



Depot offers a capability to combatant commanders that they can integrate into future planning or contingency operations.

“This capability was developed back after Hurricane Katrina, when the Federal Emergency Management Agency came to the DLA director and said they needed DLA Distribution’s assistance,” Faris said.

The roughly 100 personnel assigned to the deployable team supported several exercises to ensure they were ready for any mission at any time. The team started by attending Exercise Quick Deliver in September 2006 in Corpus Christi, Texas, according to information provided by officials at DLA Distribution.

The exercise validated wholesale distribution concepts following a disaster in the United States. The objectives at the exercise included validating the team’s deployment, reception, staging, and onward integration and redeployment concepts; conducting assessment team operations; establishing a distribution tactical operations center; and performing missions in support of mock disaster relief efforts, the officials said.

In May 2007, members of the deployable team took their operation overseas to South Korea, where they

Sailors prepare cargo for shipment to the DLA Distribution Expeditionary Depot in Afghanistan. The depot’s distribution capability became a reality July 28 when more than 515 types of supplies were arranged in containers, labeled with Distribution Standard System bar codes, and inventoried.

were part of a limited user evaluation for an advanced concept technology demonstration sponsored by the deputy undersecretary of defense for advanced systems and concepts, DLA Distribution officials said.

Performing theater consolidation and shipping point operations, the deployable team processed more than 140 trucks, eight seavan containers and almost 140 air pallets, the officials said. All told, those containers held more than 2 million pounds of cargo.

The deployable team went to Okinawa, Japan, in 2008 for a joint military user assessment, DLA Distribution officials said.

A forklift loads pallets containing material to be shipped to the DLA Distribution Expeditionary Depot. The Expeditionary Depot receives, stores and issues DLA and military service materials.

While there, the team was instrumental in opening up a detachment, now part of DLA Distribution Yokosuka, Japan, to support military customers on Okinawa, the officials said.

The DLA Distribution Expeditionary Depot’s first real-world domestic mission was during hurricanes Ike and Gustav in 2008, Faris said. DLA Distribution and its distribution centers provided support to the relief efforts by providing comfort kits, meals and water.

“Along with them, the DLA Distribution Expeditionary Depot team executed its first deployment to the affected region,” DLA Distribution officials said.

The team helped FEMA set up a national logistics staging area at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, as well as additional sites to distribute food, water, ice and other supplies. The Expeditionary Depot team processed more than 4,000 trucks full of supplies, including more than 30 million meals. ⚡



# Cutting Costs

Story by Beth Reece

**T**he Defense Logistics Agency's acquisition team has already saved millions of dollars in response to cost-cutting initiatives set in August by Defense Secretary Robert Gates.

During the quarter that ended Dec. 31, the agency saved \$102.3 million by negotiating reduced prices with suppliers on more than 20,000 items, said Glenn Starks, chief of DLA's Acquisition Programs and Industrial Capabilities Division.

"We started by looking at items that were good candidates for long-term

contracts, communicated our savings goals with industry, and put in place several efforts to improve our internal and external processes," he said.

Placing popular items on long-term contracts rather than buying them through a series of one-time purchases guarantees vendors business and improves the chance for lower costs.

"It gives vendors time to go out and work with their suppliers and leverage the benefit of that long-term business. When we can guarantee vendors a long-term, stable demand pattern, they can typically

keep our prices low," Starks continued.

Long-term contracting is just one of 18 initiatives that DLA's acquisition team will use to reduce costs by 10 percent during fiscal 2011. The team, which includes acquisition experts working across all of DLA's eight supply chains, will also

Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Francisco Hernden directs the placement of incoming supplies from fleet replenishment oiler USNS Walter S. Diehl during an underway replenishment in the Persian Gulf. The Defense Logistics Agency is working with commercial manufacturers to lower the costs of high-demand items such as those that need frequent replenishment aboard ships.



Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Elisandro Diaz

# REVERSING THE BUYING PROCESS

*A Look at Reverse Auctions*

## STEP 1



- DLA solicits bids from vendors for an item it needs to procure.
- Vendors bid against each other, which in turn reduces item pricing.

encourage increased competition among vendors, seek reductions in overhead costs, award suppliers and employees whose work leads to additional savings, and expand the use of reverse auctions.

Reverse auctions are another method that reduces material costs by increasing competition among suppliers who can meet the technical specifications of a particular item and are willing to charge less. Maybe the vendor has access to lower material prices or has a process that produces items at a more economical cost, Starks said.

The agency expects to save \$2 million

## STEP 2



- DLA reviews bids from vendors, selecting the bid with the best price.

through fiscal 2012 by increasing the use of reverse auctions, Starks said.

### Reducing Overhead Costs

An additional \$29 million in savings is expected from overhead price reductions with major manufacturers. After evaluating fiscal 2011 spending projections, officials at DLA Aviation estimated they could get reduced overhead costs from 20 major suppliers that are part of DLA's Strategic Supplier Alliance program. The program focuses on developing strategic initiatives with DLA's top suppliers by business volume. Reductions have also been estimated for seven major suppliers supporting DLA Land and Maritime, and DLA Troop Support officials estimate cost reductions with Ability One nonprofit agencies.

## STEP 3



- DLA awards a contract to the vendor, obtaining the lowest possible cost.
- The vendor gets the contract and is still profitable while maintaining long-term sales.

The Defense Logistics Agency has expanded the use of reverse auctions, which is expected to save \$2 million through fiscal 2012.

"Where there's high overhead, we're going to start negotiating with the vendors and say, 'We see the material cost is \$100, but your overhead is 25 percent. Why is it so high? And how can it be reduced?'" Starks said.

Not all suppliers break their prices out by item cost, distribution cost and administrative cost, he added, so asking them to itemize should help the agency target additional savings.

Acquisition professionals at DLA Troop Support also plan to work with prime vendors to ensure they have efficient purchasing systems that allow them to respond quickly to DLA's requirements. Savings achieved in this area are less quantifiable than in others, Starks said.

"It's an indirect savings passed through process improvements rather than direct savings tied to a specific item," he said. "Like here at DLA, we went out and bought the systems to run our Enterprise Business



Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Kevin S. O'Brien

Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus (left) speaks about new technology developments with commercial manufacturers at the Pacific 2010 International Maritime Conference in Sydney, Australia. The Defense Logistics Agency expects increased competition among manufacturers to lead to better prices.

System, and that made us more efficient and able to do things more [efficiently].”

### **Buying Bulk**

Purchasing items less frequently but in greater quantities might also yield savings.

“Say the price of an item is \$10 a piece if you buy 10. However, the price is only \$2.50 a piece if you buy 15. We’re exploring the possibility of buying greater quantities of items that our customers need on a continual basis to take advan-

tage of these lower costs,” Starks said.

DLA’s acquisition team is still weighing the pros and cons of this option. “If we buy too much, we’ll be holding it in our depots for a longer period of time, and therefore it’ll cost more to store, so we have to find the right balance,” he added.

Initial concerns that the Defense Department’s efficiency initiatives might conflict with the goals of DLA’s industrial partners have been unfounded, added Bernadette Whitehead, an acquisition programs specialist who has helped Starks outline DLA’s cost-savings initiatives.

“I really believe this is going to strengthen our relationships with suppliers, because I’m sure they want to reduce costs, as well,” she said. “I think

it’s also going to set the precedence for us to focus on even more savings as we move into the future.”

In fact, the Defense Department is only doing what companies have already done for years, Starks added.

“They’re always looking for ways to reduce their costs, to do things cheaper and get the most economical price. All we’re doing now is asking them to use the best commercial practices that they already employ and pass some of their savings along to the government,” he said.

Once reductions have been achieved, he continued, DLA will have to continue partnering with industry to ensure price reductions remain stable enough that military customers don’t find themselves balancing price fluctuations against fixed budgets.

“If you change the price of an item in January and you know that six months later it’s going back up again, you don’t want to fix that price in the system for the long term,” Starks said.

And some commodities, such as fuel and produce, won’t likely be good candidates for cost reductions because of unstable market conditions. The impact of freezing temperatures on produce in Florida this winter makes suppliers unlikely to drop prices, for example.

“We’re not just going to go through the system and start reducing prices for the sake of it,” Starks added. “It has to make sense, and it’s based on the commodity and the industry that we’re actually getting those products from.”

Officials are not targeting a specific amount of savings for fuel purchased by DLA Energy, but the activity is still



DLA will have to continue partnering with industry to ensure price reductions remain stable enough that military customers don't have to balance price fluctuations against fixed budgets.

working hard to help the agency save money, Whitehead said. Between October and early January, DLA Energy earned \$250,000 in rebates through its Fuel Card Program, and buyers are looking at additional cost-saving options.

### Rewarding Success

Two new incentives have been developed to reward employees and suppliers who help DLA reach its goals. A new quarterly award for DLA employees will recognize one pre-award or post-contract acquisition specialist who improves processes or changes his behavior in a way that leads to dramatic savings, Starks said. Each primary-level field activity will nominate one person.

"This isn't just about us asking vendors to reduce material costs. We have to improve how we do things internally, as well," Starks said.

DLA already honors industry partners who help the agency meet warfighters' requirements through the annual Business Alliance Awards Ceremony. But this year, a new award will be given to the supplier who reduces its material costs the most. The first award will be presented in June at the 2011 DLA Enterprise Supplier Conference and Exhibition in Columbus, Ohio.

Navy Rear Adm. Barry L. Bruner, commander of Submarine Group 10, tours Honeywell Aerospace, a manufacturer of civil and military avionics and other aerospace products. Overhead price reductions with similar major manufacturers is expected to lead to \$29 million in savings.

James Barnard, DLA Acquisition's deputy director, said the savings being realized are the result of balancing effectiveness and efficiency.

"We have adjusted the scale between making more timely awards and getting a better price for the things we buy," he said. "This is an enduring focus for the agency that will produce benefits for years to come through a renewed and continuous focus on improving processes internally and with our suppliers."

This is not DLA's first attempt at creating efficiencies, he continued, pointing to the Enterprise Business System and the recently launched EProcurement as initiatives specifically designed to make the agency's business processes more effective and economical.

Recent efforts, however, are designed to help the Defense Department redirect

Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class Scott Pittman



A Sailor pours fuel purchased by Defense Logistics Agency Energy into the gas tank of an aircraft tow tractor on the flight deck of amphibious assault ship USS Kearsarge.

\$100 billion in the next five fiscal years to the acquisition of new equipment and force modernization efforts.

"This is all for the benefit of our warfighters," Starks said. ✪

Navy Senior Chief Petty Officer Gary Ward



## On the Right Track

Story by Sara Moore

**W**hen the Defense Logistics Agency officially launched the We Are DLA campaign in July, the agency started its journey toward becoming a more unified enterprise that presents a single face to customers.

While the most obvious changes have already taken place, like the renaming of the primary-level field activities to clearly reflect their affiliation with DLA, work continues and will stretch through this fiscal year to fully transition the agency to its new naming conventions.

“The name change itself, when that went into effect, that wasn’t the end,” said Jeffrey Curtis, then director of DLA

Strategic Plans and Policy. “That was the end of the beginning. That was really just the start of the next phase.”

The agency is using a phased approach to transition the enterprise into We Are DLA, said Vicki Gingrich, the program’s lead in DLA Strategic Plans and Policy. The plan was laid out in the We Are DLA business rules approved by DLA Director Navy Vice Adm. Alan Thompson and calls for the complete implementation of the program to take a full year.

“It’s a process; it’s not just a flick of the switch and it’s over,” Gingrich said. “There are a lot of moving parts that people can’t see.”

In addition to the renaming of the field activities, such as the change from Defense Energy Support Center to DLA Energy, the business rules also call for updating agency websites and signs at all DLA locations; updating training materials, forms and publications; and formalizing policies for correspondence, flags and signs.

So far, the implementation has gone very well, with few problems, Curtis said. The change to the new DLA-specific names has been very successful, he said,

The Defense Logistics Agency’s We Are DLA initiative is designed to create a single-agency environment and present a unified face to customers. Implementation of the initiative is expected to continue through fiscal 2011.



and has already begun to achieve the director's intent of unifying the agency and informing customers of all the services DLA provides.

"We provide the warfighter with a huge capability that those customers often are not aware of, and by now having a unified name, they're actually saying, 'Wow, we did not know that we had this at our disposal.' So it's a win-win for everyone," he said.

The implementation of the program is being stretched over a fiscal year to ensure it is done with good stewardship in mind, Gingrich said. Instead of going through and changing all the signs and paperwork at once, DLA officials are planning the We Are DLA changes to coincide with regular updates, such as the updating of memorandums of understanding or other forms. By having the two changes coincide, DLA ends up incurring no extra cost from the change, because the regular update was already planned, she said. In the same way, she said, agency officials are planning to update website addresses at the same time as Defense Department-mandated changes, thus saving extra costs.

The biggest cost so far has been in changing signs at various DLA locations, Gingrich said. Part of We Are DLA is the adoption of a standard sign design that will result in cost avoidance over time as field activities begin using the standard design. In addition, the changes have actually given leaders at the field activities a chance to assess their current signs

Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Sarah Murphy



and determine which are actually needed and where they can remove some to save money, she said. She noted that leaders are also using this opportunity to look for ways to be more environmentally friendly.

As with the signs, the field activities are also using the We Are DLA implementation as a chance to review their websites and determine which pages are no longer needed and can be eliminated, saving upkeep and maintenance money, Gingrich said.

"I think everyone involved, from program management down to the team level, really took to heart the director's intent that this would be done with an eye toward stewardship and at the minimum cost to DLA customers and taxpayers," Curtis said.

So far, the We Are DLA implementation has made good progress, includ-

The We Are DLA initiative, which will be implemented through fiscal 2011, has so far been successful in uniting the agency and giving customers a better idea of what services DLA provides, such as providing the material these Sailors are loading.

ing the ongoing replacement of signs at primary headquarters for each activity, updating top-level websites and ongoing updating of lower-level websites, upgrading the active directory/global address list, and updating various publications, such as the DLA correspondence manual. Other actions that will stretch over this fiscal year include updating all exterior and interior signs at all locations, preparation of the We Are DLA annual report, updating agency Internet addresses, and formalizing policies related to the program.

"The plan's on track, but we want to stress that there's still a lot of work to do," Gingrich said. ★

# Ten Questions with . . .

# Army Command Sgt. M

DLA's Senior Enlisted Leader Discusses the Agency's Evolving Support to Warfighters Past, Present and Future

**1. In your role as DLA's command senior enlisted leader, what do you do to make sure warfighters engaged in combat operations are receiving the best support?**

Number one, I go out and visit our service components' senior enlisted leaders: Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps. I visit their camps, bases, posts and forward operating bases. I talk with them to get their concerns about DLA's products and services. Ninety-nine percent of those discussions are the good things that they appreciate DLA doing. However, there are a few challenges. One such challenge is everyone wants the latest and great equipment at the same time as we continue to modernize our force. If we're supplying a new type of body armor to the warfighters, it may be at Unit A, but Unit B wants it now, too.



Defense Logistics Agency Photo

Army Command Sgt. Maj. Otis Cuffee

That's one of the challenges. I link the warfighters' voice to us because we're responsible for the strategic and global support to those troops out there.

Here's a bit of information that most are unaware of: DLA is a combat support agency. A lot of people aren't aware of that fact. We have some Title 10 authority and responsibilities that are laid out by the secretary of defense that say we are a combat support agency. When I

talk about going to visit warfighters, I'm on the ground with them, and that's where DLA is. Our logistical support is there from the factory to the foxhole.

**2. How do you help make sure troops in the field are aware of everything DLA offers them?**

I inform the senior enlisted leaders from the different services and supply classes we're responsible for. I recently visited Marine Corps Logistics Base Albany, in Georgia. This is a location where we are supporting a Marine Corps depot to get their combat equipment ready to deploy. If you look at that facility and the leadership there, that's what this installation is concentrating on: getting combat equipment into the hands of their warriors. What

# aj. Otis Cuffee

they didn't know was some of the other services that DLA provides. We're responsible for energy: all the fuel in DoD comes from DLA Energy; mapping, which comes from DLA-Distribution; and medical, which is supported out of DLA Troop Support. I also made them aware of DLA Troop Support, which provides construction materials. I share what we bring to the fight with our warfighters by making them knowledgeable of the services and products that DLA gets to them.

A lot of folks look at DLA Disposition Services as a place to bring unneeded or unnecessary equipment, but it is also another source of supply. There may be a particular item an organization doesn't need and is in serviceable condition. Another unit can go on DLA Disposition's website, search for it by nomenclature, line number or stock number and locate that item. That gets them an item they needed that another unit didn't need. I share information like that with warfighters in the field when I'm out and about.

### **3. What is unique about DLA's role as a combat support agency?**

Our Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines, our DoD employees, and our DoD contractors are side by side with warfighters on camps, posts and forward operating bases. As our warfighters are engaged with the enemy, when they look to their left, right, front and rear, there is somebody there from DLA sharing that experience with them who has eyes on target to support what is needed. That's another little known fact. The services have been their own support elements. Today, from the initial link in the supply chain, we're right there at their sides.

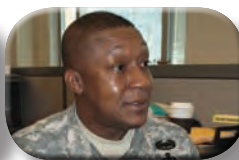
### **4. How does being at their sides make DLA better at delivering that support?**

Instead of trying to interpret what a commander needs on the ground, we have someone there providing that service and those

products. When a commander says, "I need this particular item," or, "I need this type of support," he has somebody there who can articulate exactly what is needed and assist with planning objectives to ensure a win-win situation.

### **5. You were involved in combat operations before coming to DLA. How did the agency support you and your troops when you were in a combat theater?**

I was deployed to both Iraq and Afghanistan. Afghanistan was an expeditionary mission. I really didn't know or understand what DLA did. There was no one visible there from DLA. Being a service component-centric Army, I just looked to my higher level of support within the Army chain for guidance. Since that time, DLA has taken a role doing what it's really supposed to do and that is deploy its personnel to base camps and FOBs to be side by side with warfighters and give them 100 percent support.



Shoulder-to-Shoulder Partner Rapid Acquisition Superb Support Team Integration

# Ten Questions with . . .

## **6. What are some of the issues you saw when you were deployed that have improved due to DLA's presence?**

Here's a little story: We're on a battleground at Bagram Airfield in Afghanistan. Some of our equipment required parts. DLA's responsible for consumable items, and we needed those items now. When we called DLA the requests went through the normal home-station type of requisition cycle, but we needed parts now in a combat zone. That has really changed. We have reps on the ground, so you don't have to reach back and worry about being in a requisition cycle that is based on a peacetime operation. You have a DLA representative at your location experiencing your challenges. This representative can get you the right part or service and get it in the right amount on time.

## **7. In your view, how has DLA's role evolved over the past decade of operations?**

I believe that we have become more of a strategic and operational partner, but also a shoulder-to-shoulder partner with our service components and other federal agencies. These partnerships are stronger than they have been in the past. Today, if a warfighter, diplomat or one of our allies deployed forward turns a corner and looks around, they will see a DLA representative there to support them.

## **8. Going forward, what are some of the things DLA is doing now to improve its support to warfighters?**

All of our field activities have hastened the acquisition process to meet the needs of our service components and other DoD agencies. When it comes to fielding an item and its sustainment components, normal acquisition can take anywhere from six months to a year. Today, our acquisition personnel have streamlined the process to where if a service component acquires a new piece of equipment, we will have the subcomponents for that item ready within 90 to 120 days to sustain it until it's out of the inventory. It's rapid acquisition at its best, and the warfighters appreciate it. Today, we're fielding things that in earlier times would have taken four or five years and now we are doing it in less than six months. Warfighters are thankful to DLA for providing this type of support and in the right amounts. They continue to thank us each and every day.

## **9. What are some of the changes DLA will be making in coming years to enhance its support?**

Every quarter, we spend time with one of our service components. We allow them to give us a review on how well we're supporting them and how strong our partnership is with them. That keeps DLA focused on our superb support. It lets us know how well we're providing what the combatant commanders need. At the same time, those service components

and COCOM commanders let us know what they're going to need from us in the future so we have ample time to plan that support for the coming years.

## **10. Is there anything else you'd like to discuss?**

There are a few areas that some people may not know that DLA does. For example, DLA is responsible for the training of our Joint Reserve Force personnel. This action is accomplished through monthly training venues and annual training exercises. DLA Energy provides fuel, helium and other alternative sources. There are many things we provide to our warfighters they don't always know about. DLA's ultimate goal is that combatant commanders should want for nothing. If we have to wait for a combatant commander to tell us to do something or ask for something, we haven't been doing our job. Combatant commanders should be able to turn around and know something is there and that DLA provided them with the resources they need to win.

One last thing: For those who aren't aware, an instruction from the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff states that E-9s working for a flag or general officer-led organizations are considered command senior enlisted leaders. The chairman changed it because he is emphasizing enlisted professional military education. Within a joint environment, you're considered a command senior enlisted leader. 🌟

*Team Integration Strategic and Global Support Planning Objectives Rapid Acqui*

## DLA Energy Partners with Industry on Historic Space Launch

**D**efense Logistics Agency Energy helped one of NASA's commercial space partners, Space Explorations Technology, known as SpaceX, achieve a major milestone in December.

The Dragon spacecraft launched into orbit atop a Falcon 9 rocket powered by propellants procured by DLA Energy's Aerospace Energy business unit from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Fla., Dec. 8. When it recovered the Dragon 3 hours and 17 minutes later, SpaceX became the first commercial company to do so following a spacecraft's return from Earth orbit, said Sharon Murphy, director of the Aerospace Energy business unit.

The Dragon orbited the Earth at

speeds greater than 17,000 miles per hour, re-entered the atmosphere, and landed less than 1 mile from the center of its targeted landing zone in the Pacific Ocean, she said. The successful flight marked a major milestone in NASA's Commercial Orbital Transportation program and paved the way for a new means of resupply to the International Space Station once NASA space shuttle is retired, officials said.

DLA Energy's Aerospace Energy business unit played a key supporting role by providing two propellants for the historic launch: dinitrogen tetroxide and monomethylhydrazine, Murphy said. The business unit also provided

post-recovery assistance. DLA Energy's support to SpaceX was authorized under the Commercial Space Launch Act, which promotes the development of the commercial space flight industry.

"As both NASA and the U.S. Air Force depend more and more on commercial spacecraft to launch their payloads, DLA Energy's support to commercial space launch companies like SpaceX is increasing exponentially each year," Murphy said. "It is not only a large part of our overall business, but a critical one that we take great pride in."

— Terry Shawn  
DLA Energy Public Affairs Office

## USAMC LOGISTICS SUPPORT ACTIVITY



### 2011 Worldwide Logistics Training Workshop

2-6 May 2011

Sparkman Center  
Redstone Arsenal, Alabama

The annual event provides a single forum where Soldiers, DoD Civilians, and contractors share both logistical challenges and successes. The workshop offers briefings and hands-on training classes on a broad range of topics, including the latest updates of LOGSA's Logistics Information Warehouse web-based application.

We invite you to visit our website for the latest information and updates  
[https://www.logsa.army.mil/wltw\\_2011/index.cfm](https://www.logsa.army.mil/wltw_2011/index.cfm)

# Money Matters



## Easy Learning

Story by Jonathan Stack

**D**efense Logistics Agency employees can now take more than 3,700 online courses from the comfort of their cubicles. DLA Human Resources and DLA Training have implemented an enterprisewide eLearning policy, offering employees courses through a SkillSoft catalog in the DLA Learning Management System.

The SkillSoft catalog includes courses on information technology, logistics,

project management, leadership and other business-related subjects. The new policy requires employees to search the SkillSoft catalog and complete any appropriate courses before going to other sources for training.

“Adopting this policy is viewed as a smart, efficient way to operate by leveraging the SkillSoft capabilities to deliver training to the desktop whenever needed,” said Brad Bunn, DLA Human

Resources director.

The policy came about as a cost-saving initiative that allows more flexibility in acquiring needed competencies, said Michele Mayfield, DLA Learning Management System program manager.

There are no additional costs to individual organizations and no per-course costs associated with the new policy. It will do away with travel and per diem costs, and because the cost of the contract



SkillSoft courses cost less than \$22 per user as compared to hundreds of dollars spent to bring training on site or to send employees elsewhere, officials said.

is already covered, there's no student fee for each course, she said.

Purchased as a bundle, SkillSoft courses cost less than \$22 per user as compared to hundreds of dollars spent to bring training on site or to send employees elsewhere, officials said. Further savings are gained by minimizing employees' time away from work.

"[SkillSoft courses] take people's work schedule into account versus being tied to a classroom on specific dates and times," said Roger Lee, DLA Workforce Development Program and Policy Implementation Branch chief.

Linda Adams, DLA Information Operations' Defense Travel System administrator, said she took advantage of the new policy by enrolling in courses on time management, diversity and communication skills.

"I have taken more than 50 classes and think they were very helpful overall," she said.

Adams said taking SkillSoft courses is better for her learning style, because she doesn't like to sit in a classroom for a very long time. Through SkillSoft, she can

and take a course at her convenience and not take a huge chunk of time out of her schedule.

"Sitting in class for eight hours and having a bunch of information dumped on me at once isn't a good way for me to learn," she said.

If SkillSoft training is not available in a particular discipline or further training is needed after completing what is available, other training may then be requested, officials explained.

DLA civilians and assigned military personnel can access SkillSoft eLearning training and record course completions through the DLA Learning Management System.

In addition to the SkillSoft courses, books on various topics are also offered for employees to reference.

"More than 16,000 books are available through SkillSoft Books 24x7," Mayfield said.

The books offered feature topics such as

business skills, project management, human resources, team skills and technology in business. It is cheaper for employees to use Books 24x7 than go to a bookstore and buy what they are looking for, Lee said.

"The books are available for people to read and review and come at a cost savings," he said. ☆



More than 16,000 books, including those above, are available through SkillSoft 24x7.

Information on how to identify SkillSoft courses in the LMS and add them to a learning plan is available at [www.hr.dla.mil/downloads/lms/InterskillsoftCourses.pdf](http://www.hr.dla.mil/downloads/lms/InterskillsoftCourses.pdf).

# Improving Involvement

Story by Sara Moore

**T**he 2010 Defense Logistics Agency Culture Survey found steady improvement in the agency's overall culture and an engaged workforce eager to voice its concerns.

The results of the survey, which ran from Oct. 18 to Nov. 5, have been released to DLA's senior leaders and the workforce.

Most notable in this year's results is the increase in the agency's overall

culture scores and the high employee response rate, said Laura Lippert-Jensen, the culture survey program manager in DLA Human Resources.

"We're moving in the right direction," Lippert-Jensen said. "By focusing on culture, we're improving our workforce and showing that this program really does matter."

DLA conducts culture surveys

about every 18 months to assess the agency's culture and look for areas that can be improved, Lippert-Jensen said. DLA uses the Denison Culture Model, which measures four traits of culture and leadership – mission, adaptability, involvement and consistency – and each trait has four indices to measure behavior for that trait.

In this survey, DLA's overall score



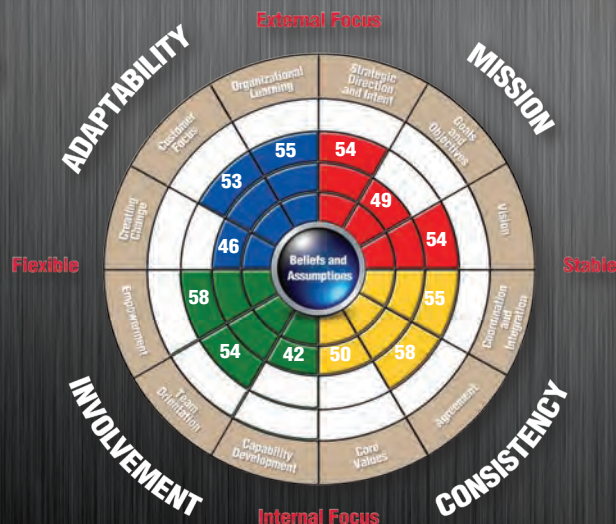
DLA Aviation

# DLA CULTURE SURVEY 2010

This Denison Culture Model graph illustrates the results of the 2010 DLA Culture Survey, which found improvements in all four traits measured by the survey:

**MISSION  
ADAPTABILITY  
INVOLVEMENT  
CONSISTENCY**

DLA conducts culture surveys every 18 months to measure the agency's culture and looks for areas for improvement.



scores in each trait and compare them to the last survey's results. Bunn encouraged leaders throughout DLA to take part in assessing the lower-level results and looking for ways to improve culture and operations.

All the culture survey results are benchmarked against the Denison's database of other companies and agencies. This means that if a unit received a score of 50 in one index, that unit scored higher than 50 percent of the businesses and organizations in the database. Denison works with more than 1,000 organizations in the areas of education, financial services, government, health care, manufacturing, retail, technology and others.

"Not only are we comparing our progress across several years, but we're comparing ourselves against other organizations," Lippert-Jensen said, noting that the companies Denison works with span many sectors, just as DLA is a very diverse organization with several different activities.

The culture survey program has been very successful over the years and has led to notable improvements in the agency's overall culture and performance, Lippert-Jensen said.

"It's not just about the score," Lippert-Jensen added. "The focus should be on what it's like to work in DLA and what can be done to help us more effectively meet our mission. The goal is not high culture scores, but a high-performing organization."

As with past surveys, each activity is required to put together an action plan based on its results, highlighting areas in which it is going to make improvements. These action plans are made public and updated regularly to show employees how their feedback is used. ☺

improved in all four key traits, with the biggest change in the "mission" area, DLA Human Resources Director Brad Bunn said.

"It means that our employees are gaining more clarity and more alignment with the direction in which the agency is going and how their roles and responsibilities fit in to make those goals and visions happen," he said.

DLA's overall average score for the culture traits has steadily risen since the Denison model was adopted in 2003, Lippert-Jensen said. For the first survey, the average percentile score was 34; for this survey, the average score was 52.

DLA has traditionally gotten a high response rate for the culture survey, Bunn said, and this year was no different. The agency's response rate was 68 percent, which is slightly lower than the last survey but still higher than comparable federal surveys, he said.

"That's a reflection not only of the workforce's dedication [and] commitment and letting your voices be heard, but also our leadership and our commu-

nication effort to encourage folks to tell us what they're thinking," he said.

DLA's agencywide scores showed some areas in which the agency is doing very well and others that need improvement, Bunn said. The survey consisted of 60 questions, and each question was scored based on employee responses. Among the highest scores were questions about employees' understanding of customer wants and needs and clarity of the mission, he said.

"We seem to be doing pretty well for our workforce to understand what our mission is and who our customer is," Bunn said.

Among the agency's lowest scores were questions about communication within organizations and goals set by leadership, Bunn said. He noted that the We Are DLA initiative was designed to help improve communication across organizations and build a sense of enterprise throughout the agency.

"That's just an example of the kinds of things we do at the enterprise level after reviewing these results," he said. "We look at what we need to do to make some improvements."

In addition to the agency's overall scores, the results are broken down into subsets for each directorate, field activity and work unit. Culture reports list a unit's

A DLA Aviation employee processes paperwork in Richmond, Va. The Defense Logistics Agency's culture survey program measures the agency's culture and leadership by looking at mission, adaptability, involvement and consistency at the agency, organizational and unit levels.



# I AM DLA

**My name is:**

Army Chief warrant officer 3 Erica N. Blanch

**I am:**

The Army readiness officer assigned to DLA Headquarters

**Describe your job in a sentence:**

I am the primary HQ DLA point of contact for Wholesale logistics Support for Army weapon systems and all issues impacting Army readiness.

**How long have you worked for DLA?**

An intensive, challenging and rewarding 6 months!

**What is your favorite thing about working for DLA?**

I enjoy working in this joint environment with daily interaction with Army, Air Force, Marine and Navy logisticians. Working at the national level helped me complete the picture in regards to supply chain management, revitalization, disposal and distribution. In past assignments as accountable officer for several Army supply support activities, I exercised more of an operational logistics approach, and it is refreshing to gain a broader understanding of the mechanisms at the strategic level.

**What is your best memory of working here?**

When I visited the Pentagon to introduce myself as the new Army readiness officer to the Army Logistics staff. It was a great experience to meet the key players and tell them I was only an e-mail or phone call away whenever there are any readiness concerns with DLA-managed items.

**How do you make a difference to warfighters?**

The Director's Evidence focus area of warfighter Support Enhancement focuses on the delivery of agile and responsive logistics solutions to warfighters. This, together with my engagement with DLA supply centers and support of DLA's field activities in monitoring DLA's support throughout a system's life cycle, drives my analysis of DLA's support throughout readiness for designated Army weapon systems. The DLA director has provided us his 2011 Director's Evidence, and we employ it as a roadmap toward optimizing our support to the services.

*Erica Blanch*

