

DEFENSE LOGISTICS AGENCY

JULY – AUGUST 2013

# LOGGLINES



## 10 YEARS LATER



from the  
**DIRECTOR**

**Navy Vice Adm. Mark Harnitchek, USN  
Director, Defense Logistics Agency**

**M**ore than 10 years have passed since the beginning of the agency's support to Operation Iraqi Freedom, and the lessons learned from that mission influence our work around the world every day.

This issue of Loglines focuses on the 10th anniversary of Operation Iraqi Freedom and the many ways DLA supported the war effort and follow-on diplomatic mission in Iraq.

From DLA Land and Maritime's support to fielding the Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicle to how DLA's relationship with U.S. Central Command grew and adapted to meet the needs of today's warfighters, DLA's shift to forward-located customer support evolved during OIF.

By positioning DLA specialists on the ground with customers in a war

zone for the first time, agency leaders consciously changed the way operations were supported.

DLA service members and civilians who deployed not only helped U.S. forces' supply personnel navigate the DLA system, but also were instrumental in setting up logistics policy for Iraqi forces rebuilding their military.

Since the military mission ended in Iraq, the State Department has worked to establish its own methods of support to the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad; DLA has helped with operational logistics planning and acquisition and financial management.

First and foremost, we seek to understand the needs of our customers when it comes to supporting warfighters, and our support during OIF is just one more example of that commitment.

We couldn't have done it without each and every team member giving it their all. Thank you for what you did then, and thank you for working with me every day to continue that outstanding level of support to our warfighters wherever they may be. 🇺🇸



# LOGLINES

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**DLA Director**  
Navy Vice Adm. Mark Harnitchek

**DLA Vice Director**  
Ted Case

**Chief of Staff**  
Renee L. Roman

**Director, Public Affairs**  
Douglas Ide

**Deputy Director, Public Affairs**  
Jack Hooper

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#### LOGLINES STAFF

Managing Editor: Kathleen T. Rhem  
Editor: Jacob Boyer  
Layout/Design: Paul Henry Crank

Writers: Beth Reece  
Sara Moore  
Amanda Neumann

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# SUPPORT

## 10 YEARS IN THE MAKING

Story by Sara Moore

**T**en years, tens of billions of dollars' worth of supplies and equipment, precedent-breaking business relationships and practices, and a mission forever changed and improved: Operation Iraqi Freedom was an epic military operation by any measure. And for the Defense Logistics Agency, it was game changing.

In February 2000, when war was on few Americans' minds, DLA sent a liaison officer to work with U.S. Central Command on logistics planning. For



more than a year, Bill Bennett worked alongside USCENTCOM logistics planners, helping craft plans for potential military engagements, like the defense of Kuwait, providing input on the capabilities DLA could bring to such operations. After the terrorist attacks of 9/11, those plans took on a new life, and Bennett found himself in a new role: the representative responsible for coordinating very real support to warfighters as the U.S. prepared to go into Afghanistan and later Iraq.

William Wheatley, the DLA Central chief of operations who was chief of the USCENTCOM logistics readiness center from 2001 to 2005, said he remembers the heady first days of the Iraq conflict as logisticians quickly transitioned to wartime operations and Bennett became a one-man hub for DLA support.

“It was very fast-paced. The logistics folks had to transition very quickly,” Wheatley said of the initial phases of OIF. “There were not enough folks to do all the jobs, so those who were here ended up

working extremely long hours doing double and triple taskings, the work of two or three people. Mr. Bennett himself, for DLA, was doing the work of an entire team, basically the equivalent of DLA Europe and DLA Pacific all wrapped up in one guy.”

Bennett, who is now the deputy

Army paratroopers prepare to board a C-17 Globemaster III before parachuting into northern Iraq in early 2003. Even before combat operations began, DLA personnel worked closely with U.S. Central Command to ensure warfighters would have what they needed to fight.



Air Force Photo by Tech. Sgt. Stephen Faulstich



## *Iraq: 10 Years Later*

This idea of positioning DLA specialists on the ground with customers in a war zone would end up being one of the most important lessons learned from Operation Iraqi Freedom, changing the way DLA thought about its operations.

commander of DLA Central, said he remembers the beginning of OIF as being exhausting, but also exciting as his mission greatly expanded and he began to see DLA's capabilities in action.

"It was at that point that I gained an understanding of how broad DLA's capabilities really were," said Bennett, who spent years in Army logistics before joining DLA. "We talk about our supply chains and we talk about the services that we traditionally offer, but it was at that point that I really gained a true appreciation for our ability to do more than just the traditional supply,

**Military Sealift Command ships unload cargo for Operation Iraqi Freedom in the port of Ash Shuaybah, Kuwait. DLA quickly transitioned to wartime operations as Operation Iraqi Freedom kicked off.**

distribution and disposal missions that we talk about."

With operations moving fast, it wasn't long before DLA leaders recognized the need for more support to USCENTCOM's missions and began augmenting Bennett with military and civilian employees from the Joint Logistics Operations Center, military officers from the DLA Joint Reserve Force, and even DLA liaison officers from other combatant commands, like U.S. Southern Command. Also at that time, agency leaders decided to send the first DLA support team, which at the time was called a DLA contingency support team, to the USCENTCOM area of operations.

This first team went into Kuwait staffed with DLA specialists who worked

closely with military customers to speed the delivery of critical supplies to warfighters on the front lines. DLA eventually moved an element of the Kuwait support team to Uzbekistan and later positioned another support team in Baghdad at Camp Victory. This idea of positioning DLA specialists on the ground with customers in a war zone would end up being one of the most important lessons learned from Operation Iraqi Freedom, changing the way DLA thought about its operations.

"As our mission expanded, we began to see why being co-located with the customer was so vital to improve DLA branding with the warfighters and the civilian contractors that were over there," said Jeffrey Gamber, who as a Marine lieutenant colonel was



Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class Eric L. Beauregard

one of the first commanders of the DLA support team in Baghdad. “Instead of waiting for an answer when [people in the continental U.S.] woke up, we were able to work issues and get answers to the customers. We established a very, very positive reputation.”

Gamber, who now works as a weapons system support manager in DLA Land and Maritime, said that the proximity of his team to the Multinational Force Iraq headquarters – they shared office space with the MNF-I deputy chief of staff for resource and sustainment – allowed him and his specialists to keep their fingers on the pulse of operations and provide quick, effective logistics support. He had a direct link back to leaders at each of DLA’s field activities, allowing the team to respond quickly to requests for things like food, water and uniforms and to provide timely updates to the military leaders about the status of supplies, he said.

“When you’re out there on the forward tip of the spear supporting the warfighter, you get treated special because you’re working issues 24/7, and any requirements that need to be resolved are worked very quickly with a high priority from leadership and managers that are working back here in the continental U.S.,” he said. “They just provide superior support to the warfighters, and that’s our primary goal; that’s what we’re here for.”

Key to the success of these support teams was not only having DLA personnel on the ground with warfighters, but also adapting the makeup of the teams to adjust to changing missions as the conflict continued, Bennett said. When U.S. forces first entered Iraq, DLA understandably was focused on troops’ primary needs, like food, water and shelter, so the DLA support team was well augmented with personnel from DLA Troop Support, he said. In fact, moving subsistence supplies was such a

high priority that the commander of the support team would personally drive to the port with a handheld radio frequency identification reader to identify which containers held these supplies so their transfer could be expedited.

As the conflict continued, however, DLA began to rely more heavily on the prime vendor program for subsistence support, he said. Another evolution of the support teams occurred as the teams’ commanders decided to further improve their support by positioning supply experts directly with military units. These experts provided highly specialized support based on each unit’s needs, such as DLA Distribution experts who helped the Iraqi military set up its own

Airmen gather for a Thanksgiving meal in Southwest Asia. DLA Troop Support supplied meals to thousands of troops throughout Iraq through the prime vendor program, marking the program’s first use for food in a war zone.

distribution depot. At the peak of the Iraq conflict, DLA personnel were embedded with military customers at more than 40 locations around the country, Bennett said. Back in the United States, DLA leaders had been continuously expanding the support personnel for USCENTCOM until, in August 2004, DLA Central was established as a permanent command, cementing the agency’s integration with its customers in that area of responsibility.

“When you know your customer better, you invest your support more





## Iraq: 10 Years Later



Air Force Staff Sgt. Darnell T. Cannady

appropriately than if you are operating from 7,000 miles away and are just guessing,” Bennett said. “The co-location improves our ability to anticipate and meet the warfighters’ requirements. We’re investing in the right stuff. We’re investing in the stuff the warfighter needs, not the stuff we think or thought the warfighter might need, and it saves everybody money all around.”

A prime example of adapting support based on the customers’ needs was the DLA Disposition Services mission in OIF. Traditionally, DLA Disposition Services had operated in the rear of conflicts, requiring troops to transport material back to a site for disposal or reutilization, Bennett said. During OIF, military leaders began asking DLA for forward

disposition sites in an effort to keep troops transporting material off dangerous roads, he said. Through negotiation and discussion, DLA agreed to establish four DLA Disposition Services sites, known at the time as defense reutilization and marketing offices, throughout Iraq.

Gamber, whose time as the DLA support team commander lasted from July 2005 to April 2006, was instrumental in establishing the last two DLA Disposition Services sites in Iraq. Being a disposition expert himself, he knew the importance of getting these sites established as weapons and equipment piled up for demilitarization, disposal or retrograde. A big part of his job was educating customers about the proper use of DLA Disposition Services sites, he noted.

Airmen move a pallet of supplies in Southwest Asia. DLA support teams coordinated the movement of many classes of supply during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

“We had to make sure all the military services were clear on the DRMO role, on what really did hit a DRMO site and how we could streamline the speed of getting equipment back for disposal or back through Kuwait for retrograde back to the U.S.,” he said.

Iraq was not only the first place where DLA positioned disposition support on the front lines, but it was also the birthplace of the expeditionary disposal remediation teams, which today play a huge role in U.S. operations in Afghanistan, Bennett said.

These locations often accumulated a lot of excess material, and through dialogue with military customers, DLA began sending disposition experts to these sites to assist in the removal and processing of the material. That travelling forward support has become the norm in Afghanistan, where EDRTs routinely travel the country to forward operating

*Iraq was not only the first place where DLA positioned disposition support on the front lines, but it was also the birthplace of the expeditionary disposal remediation teams, which today play a huge role in U.S. operations in Afghanistan.*

bases, where they conduct demilitarization or disposal on the spot, he said.

“After our experience in Iraq, we knew [the troops] were going to need the same level of support, so rather than wait for it, we have been working to get ahead of it in expanding the EDRT program in Afghanistan to avoid unnecessary transportation, keep Soldiers off the road and avoid expending resources to move scrap material around the battlefield when we could just as easily sell it off ... right there,” he said.

This shift to forward-located customer support was the predominant theme for the evolution of DLA’s operations during OIF. Another area where that shift was demonstrated clearly was subsistence. Before OIF began, DLA Troop Support had moved operational rations into Kuwait in preparation for troops’ immediate needs, said Rich Faso, director of customer operations in DLA Troop Support Subsistence. Even with supplies pre-positioned, the early days of the conflict were chaotic, with large numbers of troops moving into the country and larger numbers of meals moving to feed those troops, Faso said. At the same time, commanders on the ground began asking for dining facility support, knowing that operational rations were not sufficient for a longer conflict.

DLA had already established prime vendor subsistence operations in the entire U.S. and several overseas locations and had a prime vendor solicitation in place for Iraq in March 2003, he said. That contract was awarded in June 2003, and the vendor began setting up dining facilities that same year. While the prime vendor program itself wasn’t unique, the program in Iraq was the first to make deliveries into a war zone, Faso said, adding that DLA Troop Support staff learned many lessons about wartime operations.

Marines toss boxes of Meals, Ready-to-Eat from a humvee during an operation in Ramadi, Iraq. DLA Troop Support Subsistence issued more than 9.5 million cases of field rations during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

“With this type of contract, we were setting precedent every step of the way,” he said, noting that the requirements for military security to move supplies or to have vendor personnel positioned in Iraq to manage the trucks moving in convoys were all new.

Also new was operating at such a frenetic pace in a foreign country with different customs and capabilities, Faso said. Port congestion became an issue because Kuwait’s port was not accustomed to dealing with such large quantities of material. Also, the various Muslim holidays changed the tempo of operations and required sensitivity on the part of military

and contractor personnel. Availability of refrigerated trucks and dealing with diverse delivery points were also issues that had to be overcome, he noted.

Despite the learning curve, DLA enjoyed great success with the prime vendor program in Iraq, Faso said. The vendors themselves were extremely willing and capable, taking on all the challenges of the environment, and DLA was able to greatly expand offerings at dining facilities, he said. It didn’t take long before the OIF dining facilities gained a reputation for serving an array of quality food, including holiday meal spreads that could put the best family



Marine Lance Cpl. Benjamin J. Flores



## Iraq: 10 Years Later

celebration to shame. Over the course of 10 years of U.S. involvement in Iraq, DLA Troop Support did \$13.8 billion worth of business in subsistence, issuing more than 9.5 million cases of operational rations and supporting dining facilities throughout the country.

“We raised the expectation of our customers based on our success in Iraq,” he said, noting that lessons learned in Iraq have been applied to operations in Afghanistan and other areas around the world that pose a challenge.

“Learning about the safety and security and abiding by the rules of the country that we are operating in certainly led to successful ventures and will lead to successful ventures in the future, wherever we happen to go,” he added.

“Unfortunately, we tend to go to places that we haven’t been to before, and it’s a whole new learning process, but at least you can expect to have challenges, based on the challenges you’ve had before, and some of them will be consistent and others will be new challenges.”

During OIF, DLA adapted its operations countless other ways to accommodate warfighters’ needs and meet the challenges of a sustained wartime pace, Bennett said. Early in the conflict, the agency changed the way it packed and shipped pallets of material to take the burden of sorting and distributing material in theater off warfighters, he said. DLA’s practice had been to pack and ship containers as quickly as possible, but after receiving feedback from military customers complaining about wading through knee-deep sand to sort through material, leaders decided to adopt a “pure pallet” initiative that meant each unit got only the material belonging to it, he said.

Other lessons in distribution included pre-positioning equipment to be ready for warfighters, as DLA did with several hundred containers of construction and barrier equipment prior to the start of OIF, and setting up distribution

facilities in theater to speed deliveries. Bennett said he remembers working with USCENTCOM and military personnel on the planning for this first forward distribution depot, which was ultimately placed in Kuwait and served as a hub for supplies and equipment in high demand or expensive to transport at short notice. Because there was no suitable location for the depot on any U.S. base in the Middle East, DLA decided to, in another first, establish a commercially owned and operated distribution depot in a combat theater, he said. That depot eventually became the consolidation point as well, freeing up Army personnel who in the past ran the theater consolidation and shipping point.

Because there was no suitable location for the depot on any U.S. base in the Middle East, DLA decided to, in another first, establish a commercially owned and operated distribution depot in a combat theater.

“All the lessons learned boiled down to more forward support and placing the forward support personnel where they could be most effective,” Bennett said. “We continued to forward position people where, in partnership with the warfighter, we recognized that we would be a combat multiplier. The customers’ organizational structure wasn’t static, and so our organizational structure wasn’t static either.”

The partnership between DLA personnel and warfighters was one of the most visible lessons for those on the ground in Iraq, said Army Lt. Col. Ernest Maldonado, an operations officer in DLA Central who deployed to Baghdad as part

of the DLA support team in 2006. The team of about 22 people at the time was busy supporting the surge of U.S. forces into Iraq, he said, but he remembers the strong collaboration between civilian and military personnel as being key to overcoming challenges.

“We could actually leverage all our capabilities for a common goal,” he said. “I found that that was instrumental in overcoming a lot of the challenges.”

That collaboration became the norm, not just among the support team members, but between DLA and USCENTCOM, Maldonado noted. Before OIF, DLA had to be invited to USCENTCOM meetings, he said, but now the agency is an integral member of the planning process and truly has “a seat at the table.”

DLA’s relationship with USCENTCOM was always strong, but the challenges of OIF expanded it greatly and created collaboration, said Wheatley, the DLA Central chief of operations. Throughout OIF, the two organizations faced many challenges, he said, but DLA’s success helped to inspire confidence in USCENTCOM and other military leaders, leading to what is now a close partnership.

Wheatley said his decision to join DLA after his time in USCENTCOM was attributed directly to the agency’s success during OIF, which he witnessed personally. He said he remembers watching DLA expand across the battlefield and adapt to meet customers’ needs, such as improving the fuel delivery system so military customers went from measuring their fuel supplies in hours to measuring them in days, weeks, and now, months.

“DLA did an amazing job, and that’s one of the reasons I came to DLA; I was so impressed with their abilities when I was in USCENTCOM that I wanted to be part of the team,” Wheatley said. “They’re great logisticians across the board, and they provide world-class support that’s not seen in any other country or by any other organization.” 🌟

# Fuel for Iraqis

Story by Amanda Neumann

**N**avy Lt. Cmdr. Stephen Grace arrived at Baghdad International Airport Jan. 13, 2004, with the start of war in Iraq less than a year in the past. Sleeping in a truck overnight, he waited for a morning convoy to Baghdad's Green Zone, the center of coalition military and civilian efforts in the country. Grace was one of the first to deploy to Iraq from DLA Energy, which was then known as the Defense Energy Support Center.

Working alongside Task Force Restore Iraqi Oil, a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers effort, Grace and his five DLA Energy teammates were there to help support the Coalition Provisional Authority with its humanitarian mission to restore Iraqi oil.

"We went over there to assume a mission that had been done by a contractor to bring in refined product for the people of Iraq so they could get their livelihood back and get into some sort of routine while they were trying to get their production up and running," he said. "So we were bringing in [a combination of] gasoline, diesel, [propane] for cooking, and kerosene to help them get their infrastructure back up."

Shortly after arriving, Grace was named Combined Joint Task Force 7's humanitarian assistance fuels officer.

"Pretty much seven days a week,

A Marine stands guard at the K3 Oil Refinery near Haditha, Iraq. The refinery, capable of processing 16,000 barrels of crude oil per day, had been non-operational for three years until coalition forces, including DLA fuel specialists, and Iraqi government leaders stepped in to repair it.

— Photo by Marine Lance Cpl. Paul Torres





## Iraq: 10 Years Later

[I'd update] where fuel was coming and where it was going and what the Iraqis were doing in addition to what we were doing," he said. "We were importing on average 4-6 million gallons of fuel a day for the people of Iraq. We were tracking anywhere between 5,000 and 7,000 trucks on the road at any given time between trucks that were coming in full, already downloading and those that were retrograding out. It was a range based upon the product and availability."

Working with the task force on refineries and oil fields, Grace and his staff had daily meetings with Iraqi government fuel leaders around the country.

U.S. soldiers stand guard in front of an oil storage container at one of Iraq's largest refineries, the Al Daura Oil Refinery, in south-eastern Baghdad. DLA Energy team members who deployed to Iraq in 2004 described the oil infrastructure they found there as being in poor condition.

"Five or six days a week, we were on convoys going to the Iraqi ministries [outside the perimeter]," he said. "We had a routine. Once a week we'd go to the Iraqi Ministry of Oil, and the other days of the week we'd go to the Iraqi Petroleum Pipeline Company, the Iraqi Petroleum Distribution Company and the Iraqi supply. Basically they had directorates that did trucks, pipelines and the refineries."

Although he knew Iraq's fuel situation well from extensive studying, Grace, currently director of plans and operations for DLA Energy, was still surprised at what he saw on the ground.

"Their infrastructure was in very poor condition, very bad shape," he said. "And you would think that, and you understand it conceptually, but you don't have a reference point [until you see it]. We went to a storage depot on their

pipeline area and walked around. It was an understatement to say it was in poor condition or to say it was leaking. I have pictures where I'm standing beside a big hole dug in the middle of this field and it's full. In the U.S., you would think that was probably groundwater seeping up. It's not; it's fuel that has penetrated the ground so much that it literally pools in the field. A lot of times, words did not do justice to the challenges they have over there."

With daily threats to their security, leaving the secure and safe Green Zone for meetings was considered deadly, Grace said.

"You had to understand that when you went to a meeting, you were going out into the badlands," he said. "You drive everywhere fast, because this was back in the days before we had up-armored Humvees. You'd alternate under tunnels or overpasses because



Scott Flemer

there were instances where they were dropping mortar rounds off the overpass. Or you'd hear gunfire, and you weren't exactly sure if they were aiming at you or not."

During this time, Iraq's infrastructure was taking a lot of hits. With insurgency on the rise, pipelines were often blown up, disabling the Iraqi civilian population even more, Grace said.

"The insurgents were blowing up pipelines to stop us, but it didn't impact us; it only impacted their own people," he said. "In the early days, we were not getting any fuel from the Iraqi pipelines, and we were getting no product from the Iraqi refineries."

With a mission to get in and out of unsafe areas quickly, Grace and the team soon realized how much of a challenge that was.

"You had to be aware how you dealt with [Iraqis] because this is their country," he said. "There was a process. No matter how much of a hurry you were in, you were going to have to have tea first, then pleasantries and discussions, and maybe, if the discussions were impassioned, then you'd have tea before you left. You had a lot of people that had axes to grind because these were people that were not some of the favored ones during the Saddam [Hussein] regime. Once you got back, you'd update your reports on what they told you would be moved on the pipeline or trucks."

With days starting at 6 a.m. and routinely ending at 10 p.m., the team faced several obstacles, most notably cultural mindsets.

"You had to work with the Iraqis to change their thought process on how they did things," he said. "It was very unilateral. They had a process, but there was rigidity to it where it was cumbersome. The other problem was they were so used to being a state oil marketing organization whose whole purpose in life used to be to export crude oil out of the country. But then they



were tasked with how to import refined products, so we had to take on board their training and education process and provide them with insight on how we do business, acquisition and inventory management."

A few months after Grace's arrival, the first DLA support team stood up at Camp Victory, next to Baghdad's airport. The specialized team, composed of staff from all across DLA, provides logistical support to conflicts, natural disasters, emergencies, mobilizations and other contingency operations around the world.

After four months, Grace and his team transitioned out and a second round of DLA Energy employees came to Iraq, helping to continue the task force mission.

"We ended up doing Task Force [Restore Iraqi Oil] for nine months," he said. "In the early stages, we were to establish contracts and work with the

An Iraqi welder works in the desert heat to repair a severed oil pipeline in northern Iraq. During the mission to restore Iraq's oil infrastructure, insurgency was on the rise, and pipelines were often blown up in an attempt to delay the coalition's progress.

Iraqis on the acquisition process. Once we started the contracts, got fuel flowing and we started reporting it, then we transitioned over to the second [DLA Energy] team. Our two follow-on teams, who each did three months, continued with the operational side of it to continue with mission execution. We had to get funding for DLA Energy to execute the mission. We secured over a billion dollars' worth of funding, but we did it a lot cheaper and we returned somewhere around \$450 million. We didn't do it for as long as we originally thought, mainly because it was a tremendous success."

Bo Luzey, current deputy director of



## *Iraq: 10 Years Later*

“Do you have your infrastructure to be able to produce electricity or have refined products for the vehicles that are there? We didn’t want to be in the business of supporting the population, ... but we had to stand them up.”

— *Bo Luzey*

DLA Energy Americas East, was part of the third DLA Energy team to assist in the transition over to the Iraqis during Task Force RIO. In late 2004, Luzey was an Air Force operations specialist assigned to DLA.

The first two teams specifically targeted civilian infrastructure, refinery production and pipelines in the country. Then deputy commander of Defense Energy Support Center Iraq, Luzey and his team were tasked specifically with getting these areas back up and running.

Hundreds of fuel trucks wait to cross the border into Iraq at Habur Gate, Turkey, in 2004. The Defense Energy Support Center, now known as DLA Energy, frequently dealt with severe import issues while assisting with the U.S. military’s mission to restore Iraqi oil.

“Those are key notes for society,” he said. “Do you have your infrastructure to be able to produce electricity or have refined products for the vehicles that are there? We didn’t want to be in the business of supporting the population – that’s Iraq’s mission and that’s on them to do that – but we had to stand them up.”

When it came to supporting key infrastructure, the lack of technology and large size of the country made things difficult, Luzey said.

“If you haven’t been out of the country, you don’t know how big this place is,” he said. “Baghdad itself is like looking at the city of Houston; it’s that size. Of course, it doesn’t have the technological advances that we do.

But DLA was there because we had the expertise in government, contracting and setting up the logistics arm.”

With DLA Energy’s expertise in dealing with import issues, Luzey and his team often had to troubleshoot issues daily.

“We were also tracking all of the import routes that we were bringing in, thousands of trucks from Turkey, Kuwait and Jordan,” he said. “There were huge import issues. I went out and visited a place in Turkey called Habur Gate. There, you had 2 miles’ worth of trucks lined up waiting to get into and across the border, one right after the other. And these guys are living out there in all kinds of conditions waiting to be let into the country. DLA Energy Europe & Africa

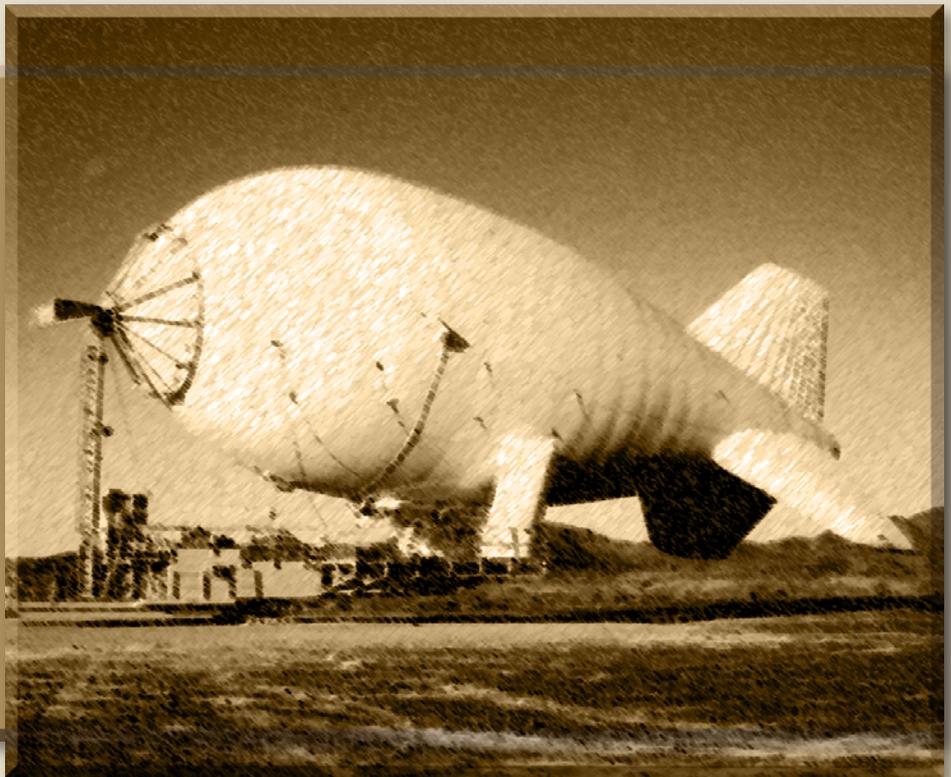


Bo Luzey

## Eyes in the Sky

In addition to fuel for the troops, bulk helium was needed for reconnaissance missions during the war. Aerostat blimps used by the U.S. military to monitor and provide surveillance for critical areas relied on helium supplied from DLA Energy's Aerospace Energy Office. In 2006, DLA Energy established a defense fuel support point in Iraq for the distribution of bulk helium, reducing product delivery from two to three weeks down to two to three hours.

"That's a whole management process, separate from fuels, that is related to [Operation Iraqi Freedom]," said Bo Luzey, deputy director of DLA Energy Americas East. "The helium was procured out of DLA Energy's Aerospace Energy office. They worked relentlessly in bringing those aerostats and the helium for those aerostats, plus the helium containers and shipping containers, to Iraq."



played a critical role because of some of the relationships they had with Turkey already. But there were all types of issues like that. And those issues continued as we stopped this mission and went to straight supporting the troops."

Once Luzey and his team were certain the Iraqis could meet certain targets, their mission was finished. By the end, the three teams had imported more than \$588 million in refined fuel imports and enabled the flow of more than 401 million gallons into Iraq. By 2005, with troops entering the country in rapid succession, fuel concerns shifted to the troops' needs.

"In 2004, we had certain targets," Luzey said. "We were trying to ensure that the Iraqis took responsibility. We had to ensure they had a certain level of a number of days of supply on hand to support the nation. Once we got those numbers, which showed that they could sustain them for a period of time, then our mission was over. Once that happened, the DSTs started bringing in more gas and diesel to support the actual troops that were there."

From fiscal 2005 to fiscal 2013, DLA Energy provided 3.2 billion gallons of fuel

to Iraq totaling \$8.2 billion in net fuel sales, the majority of which, 2.5 billion gallons, was jet fuel. In 2006, convoys delivered more than 13 million gallons of fuel monthly to U.S. and coalition forces in western Iraq. Also that same year, an initiative to bring unleaded fuel into Iraq via Jordan reduced the number of convoys that were required to travel from southern Iraq into the more dangerous Al Anbar province in the west.

In 2010, once Iraq was no longer a combat military operation, the transition from a Defense Department-led mission to a State Department mission began.

"Because the scope was so different, they were looking for help for that transition," Grace said. "We already had access to the supply chains. Combat operations had stopped. ... It would be the government of Iraq working as a normal partner with other countries that have embassies. It was another step toward some transition to normalcy. We started having meetings to discuss the transition in early February 2010, and we started assuming some of the support for their sites in the October timeframe."

In total, more than 35 DLA Energy

employees deployed to Iraq over a nine-year period. Bruce Jones, logistics management specialist in DLA Energy, was the last of the DST civilians to deploy. Arriving in Iraq in 2012 as a fuel liaison officer, Jones was sent to negotiate international fuel agreements.

"Our mission was to provide the DOS with a supply chain management skill set to manage their bulk resupply to the embassy and consulates within Iraq," he said.

Jones, who retired from the Air Force, said DLA support teams were essential to DLA's successful support during OIF.

"There were a number of issues we worked that had nothing to do with supply-chain management, from developing requirements for the transition to developing requirements for [Foreign Military Sales] case support," he said. "That's why I think the DSTs are a great asset for DLA to allow employees who have the background and expertise to deploy to lend their talents to that mission. We have the best training, the best equipment, and we have the best people. We may not always agree on a process or a way ahead, but at the end of the day, we get the job done." 🌟



*Iraq: 10 Years Later*

# Force Protection

Story by Amanda Neumann

A Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicle makes its way up an incline at Iraq's Contingency Operating Base Speicher in Tikrit. DLA supported MRAPs, vital to saving lives on Iraqi battlefields, before the first one was delivered to warfighters there.

— Photo by Army Spc. Jessica Haney



**F**or warfighters on the battlefield, protection against improvised explosive devices is crucial. For many, being safely transported in Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles can mean the difference between life and death. By reducing the effects of blasts, MRAPs, heavily armored vehicles that protect service members from IEDs

and small-arms fire, reduce deaths and traumatic injuries.

MRAPs come in 126 variations, each featuring unique communication systems, enhanced armor and independent suspension systems. With six original equipment manufacturers, the U.S. government procured the first MRAPs in 2006.



# THE MRAP PROGRAM

## A TIMELINE

### 2006

#### December

- Marine Corps involvement in the MRAP program begins
- Initially, DoD estimates buying only 1,463 total MRAPs

### 2007

- Weapon system designator codes established, national stock numbers coded to identified MRAP systems

#### January

- DLA's involvement begins with the procurement of 40 NSNs for early MRAP variants
- Only one weapon system support manager
- 4,196 MRAP NSNs

#### February

- DLA Enterprise List Management used to manage all MRAP NSNs

#### April

- First MRAP vehicles fielded in Iraq

#### July

- DLA forms first weapon system program management office for MRAPs

#### August

- Hybrid support logistics adopted as DLA's strategy for MRAPs, combining contractor logistics support with DLA's wholesale support

#### November

- 6,500 NSNs assigned to MRAP

#### December

- First weapon system MRAP integrated supplier team established, including more than 50 MRAP-exclusive supply buyers, planners, product specialists and contractors



## Iraq: 10 Years Later

“At the time, MRAP was the No.1 priority in the DoD, so it had high visibility. We overcame a lot of obstacles to get the spare parts to keep them going.”

— Sherry Wellmer

Since the program’s inception in response to increased IED threats in Iraq, MRAPs are credited with saving thousands of lives. MRAPs were rapidly pushed to units in Iraq and Afghanistan after an Office of the Secretary of Defense order in 2007. The U.S. government was initially going to buy 1,463 MRAPs, but by July 2008, the military had accepted its 10,000th MRAP. The Defense Logistics

A Soldier climbs into his Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicle before departing on a convoy route clearing mission near Tikrit, Iraq. DLA manages more than 30,000 items for the MRAP fleet.

Agency was in charge of buying spare parts for those vehicles, said Sherry Wellmer, chief of DLA Land and Maritime’s MRAP integrated supplier team.

“DLA went from managing a hundred or so parts to managing over 30,000,” Wellmer said. “We had to ensure we were buying enough of the right parts to initially acquire stock and then keep it in the pipeline at all times. This kept readiness rates up and allowed our customers in the field to get the parts they needed. Having a dedicated team that focused solely on MRAP parts was integral to the program’s success.”

Collaboration between the original equipment manufacturers and DLA contributed to the program’s success, Wellmer said.

“The fact that we were able to accomplish as much as we did was a major feat,” she said. “At the time, MRAP was the No. 1 priority in the DoD, so it had high visibility. We overcame a lot of obstacles to get the spare parts to keep them going. Once we got through most of the obstacles, we had some of the companies, like Navistar, maintain resident representatives here at our agency so



Navy Chief Petty Officer Michael Heckman



we could go to them for questions or help resolve issues.”

DLA Land and Maritime’s Brent Watson served on a tour with General Dynamics Land Systems Canada as a liaison officer in 2009. Watson, currently a DLA MRAP weapon system support manager, knows the damage IEDs can do firsthand.

“I was in the Army in combat operations in Afghanistan prior to MRAPs,” he said. “I was in nine IED direct-fire ambushes, and I got pretty lucky. I know people who didn’t. Having gone through an IED, I can’t explain how much I hate them. There’s nothing you can do; there’s no enemy to fight, no way to respond, no way to react. [In the military], you spend a lot of time traveling terrain, and you know IEDs are there. It’s a completely different experience than being shot at. That motivated me to be a part of the program to improve the survivability for Soldiers. ... It’s not only their survivability that has improved; their ability to execute their mission has improved.”

With various improvements over the

A Soldier mans an M-240B machine gun mounted on a Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicle at Contingency Operating Base Adder, near Nasiriyah, Iraq. MRAPs are credited with saving thousands of lives in Afghanistan and Iraq.

years, including underbelly improvement kits, independent suspensions and survivability upgrades, MRAPs have constantly evolved, allowing the vehicles to survive larger explosions, Watson said.

“Pretty much every MRAP has gone through a major upgrade,” he said. “There are very few MRAPs in Afghanistan now that look like any of the MRAPs that were rolling around in Iraq, where we initiated the program. Visually they look the same, but parts-wise, configuration-wise, they’re different.”

In 2007, when more than 30,000 troops were sent to Iraq as part of the “surge,” the DLA support team there – a deployed team of subject matter experts from across the agency – soon realized a more specialized team would need to be embedded with military maintenance units to help troubleshoot and expedite part requests for MRAP-specific issues.

## THE MRAP PROGRAM

A TIMELINE

### 2008

- Second weapon system manager added to support route clearance vehicles
- MRAP rollover trainers implemented in continental United States

### February

- First vehicles fielded in Afghanistan

### May

- First MRAP expedient armor vehicles fielded in Iraq

### July

- U.S. government accepts 10,000th MRAP

### December

- MRAP All-Terrain Vehicle released

### 2009

- Removal of obsolete parts begins
- Third MRAP weapon system manager added

### January

- 1,000th MRAP vehicle fielded in Afghanistan
- U.S. government accepts 15,000th MRAP

### February

- DLA merges support for MRAPs and route clearance vehicles into one program office

### August

- More than 10,000 national stock numbers coded to the MRAP

### October

- First five-member MRAP surge team formed, sent to Afghanistan

### November

- Five analysts hired to augment DLA MRAP program office

### 2010

#### March

- Second surge team sent to Afghanistan to replace first

#### July

- 20,000-plus NSNs coded to MRAP
- Review of obsolete parts continues



## Iraq: 10 Years Later



Army Staff Sgt. James Selesnick

“The DST worked MRAP requirements before,” Watson said. “But it was just overwhelming when the military surged. The challenges we faced from a part standpoint really required a specialized and dedicated presence because of the vehicles they sent there.”

With constant configuration changes and upgrades to the MRAP’s multiple designs, customers in theater didn’t have access to current technical manuals. That often meant trying to help customers find the right MRAP part to get a vehicle up and running, which was a logistical challenge for the new DLA MRAP Support Team, Watson said.

With representatives from every supply chain, as well as the DLA Logistics Information Service and DLA Distribution, DLA’s MRAP program soon became an all-encompassing, collaborative program, said Jeff Gamber, the weapons system support manager who deployed with the first DLA MRAP Surge Team to Afghanistan.

“No weapons system has ever attained a DLA enterprise support structure like MRAP had. We had dedicated subject-matter experts from each [primary-level field activity],” he said. “The value of this organized effort permitted instant resolution to critical warfighter needs. If there were any issues that arose within, say, the DLA Disposition Services disposal lane, instead of having to find out who could help, we could go through one point of contact and fast-track leadership buy-in to energize rapid support.”

With a dedicated MRAP warehouse at the DLA Distribution center in Kuwait, Gamber and the DLA MRAP Support Team worked with other DLA activities to stage parts at forward locations to support the MRAP fleets in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Soldiers install armor-mounting brackets to a Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicle at Joint Security Station Loyalty in eastern Baghdad. In order to meet the rapid demand for MRAP parts, the Defense Logistics Agency implemented a hybrid support methodology, combining DLA’s wholesale support with contractor logistics support to build an inventory of stock parts.

With special buying authorities in place, Gamber and the team had multiple avenues to get critical stock.

“If we didn’t have the DLA part on the shelf, our acquisition workforce could use special emergency procurement authority to procure parts from original equipment manufacturers,” he said. “If they had available inventory, many times they would ship within days to support the dead-lined MRAP in the field awaiting the part. On top of that, we knew if the part was ordered once for a dead-lined MRAP, it would be ordered again. To reduce customer wait time, we established a process for every MRAP emergency buy to be forward stocked in Kuwait.”

With inventory levels peaking, DLA and the MRAP Joint Program Office in Kandahar, Afghanistan, created a hybrid support strategy for wholesale parts that proved to be perfect for the vehicles, Gamber said.

“When you field a brand-new vehicle,

the gaining unit normally receives a push package with the parts that the program office predicts will break or eventually require replacement,” he said. “This initial issue of parts permits the supply chain to mature until retail and wholesale accounts adjust to the new demands. In most cases, every part listed in JPO MRAP push packages was also purchased by DLA in conjunction with vehicle fielding. We both had the capability to push parts to meet that customer’s requirements, and whatever one was faster was the one we chose.”

Gamber said he believes DLA employees’ dedication directly contributed to the success of the MRAP program.

“We were able to expedite any requirements for part orders back to the DLA supply chains,” he said. “And there was a lot of passion in our DLA workforce to make sure we got those parts. Due to that, we were able to meet any challenge and provide the right DLA support.” 🌟

# THE MRAP PROGRAM

A TIMELINE

## November

- RPG net parts for M-ATVs purchased

## December

- Fourth weapon system manager hired

## 2011

### July

- 7,078 obsolete national stock numbers removed
- \$2 billion worth of parts shipped by DLA to support MRAPs

### August

- Fifth surge team
- Husky and Buffalo MRAP variants achieve program of record

### October

- 26,316-plus MRAP NSNs
- 43,000 DLA NSNs coded to or associated with both MRAP and RCV
- MRAP sales exceed \$100 million for three months straight

## 2012

### June

- MRAP Stock Optimization Team established to maintain industrial readiness between the joint program office, multiple DLA organizations, the military services and manufacturers

### August

- Seventh surge team heads to Afghanistan

## 2013

### May

- 46,785 total NSNs coded to MRAP and RCV
- 6,752 M-ATVs, plus 296 in the enduring fleet
- To date, more than \$3.2 billion in sales

### September

- Final MRAP surge team scheduled to leave for Afghanistan
- MRAP Joint Program Office, headed by Marine Corps Systems Command, scheduled to close; switch to service-led MRAP programs



An MRAP that was the last U.S. Army vehicle to leave Iraq is cleaned before customs inspection at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, in December 2011. DLA’s support to the vehicles continues in Afghanistan.



# Supply Chains Come to Life

Story by Amanda Neumann

**D**uring David James' deployment to Iraq in 2005, rarely a day went by when someone wasn't trying to reach him for assistance. As a customer support representative at Camp Taji, 20 miles north of Baghdad, James was an expeditor for Defense Logistics Agency Troop Support's supply chains. He was primarily responsible for repair parts, including the ones that fixed air conditioners, a necessity in the searing Iraq heat.

"It's about 110 degrees almost every day during the summertime," he said. "On a warm day, it would jump up to 115. The air conditioning parts were really hard to keep up with."

Finding the parts warfighters needed became a daily concern for James, even when they were not at his forward operating base.

"A lot of it was face-to-face meetings with key customers," he said. "Sometimes people would just walk into the office. But in some cases, I never met the customers. They might be on a remote location, but they would send emails or call and say, 'Hey I'm at a different FOB, and I don't have a customer service representative here. Can you help me?' It gave me an opportunity to look at the whole supply chain from the perspective of the customer. The material they were ordering was things they needed to get vehicles working. So I saw the big picture and the impact that DLA has on really everything the military does."

For James, chasing and locating equipment became a time-consuming process.

"At that time, we were in transition, so it was hard when you'd have to research the status of the requisition," he said.

Members of a mobile redistribution team at Camp Victory sort through equipment returned from forward operating bases throughout Iraq as part of the United States' 2009 drawdown from Iraq. DLA personnel worked on the effort from the highest levels of command to forward operating bases throughout the country.

— Photo by Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Edwin L. Wriston



“Some items were in [the Enterprise Business System, DLA’s tracking software], and some weren’t. So we still had item managers, and you’d have to track down who was responsible for the item, then see if you could contact the item manager or the procurement contract specialist and see what kind of due-in you had on the material.”

Part of his job also included educating Army supply personnel, because he was co-located with an Army logistics support element, James said.

“Besides chasing parts, I was also helping the Army supply personnel navigate the DLA system, whether it was using some of the Web tools that we use or who to talk to about certain issues,” he said.

Less than a year and a half after his first six-month deployment was up, James deployed there again. He said he noticed several differences in supply-chain requests.

James’ 2007 deployment came shortly before the troop surge in Iraq, so requests centered on ballistic glass for up-armored Humvees and building materials, he explained.

Getting supplies into the country was one thing, but Marine Lt. Col. Kyle McCarthy’s job was to get things out. While assigned to DLA, McCarthy deployed to Iraq from 2008 to 2009, where he worked with the Multinational Force-Iraq staff on logistics policy for forces throughout the country.

“We were starting to think about the drawdown and the retrograde out of Iraq, so we were looking at the different FOBs that were out there,” he said.

If military units returning to the United States didn’t want to keep specific equipment, McCarthy got the signatures needed to authorize its transfer to the Iraqi government.

“As we were moving out of those FOBs, Iraqi units were starting to take them over,” he said.

In many cases, barriers, latrines and shower units stayed in place. With financial stewardship at the forefront of his mind, McCarthy made sure transfers moved quickly.

Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class James F. Bartels



“Drawing down has a lot of moving pieces and a lot of equipment,” he said, adding that most of these moves were made on specific deadlines.

“We just had to make sure we got the paperwork done before the closure so we could present it to that base commander who had authority to turn it over,” McCarthy said.

McCarthy, currently a DLA Troop Support Construction and Equipment supervisory customer relations specialist, said being deployed allowed him to see the supply chain come to life.

“Everything that those forward-deployed people have comes through DLA and especially Troop Support,” he said. “The food [mission] is huge; you’re feeding a lot of people. The uniforms and protective equipment, they all come from people in the same building as me, just on the other end of the hall. If you got hurt, the medical facilities are supplied through Troop Support as well. It’s all about supporting that warfighter.”

Between 2006 and 2012, DLA Troop Support deployed more than 40 employees to Iraq.

Kim Angeny, currently a tailored vendor logistics specialist with DLA Troop Support Medical, deployed in 2010 as an administrator for DLA Support Team-Iraq. She said being away from home for months was tough, but seeing the service members she supported made it all worthwhile.

“There was one [dining facility] we

Navy officers serve Christmas dinner to the crew aboard the amphibious assault ship USS Boxer in the Persian Gulf in 2006. DLA Troop Support provided meals to warfighters involved in Operation Iraqi Freedom both on the ground and at sea.

would go to for lunch that was close to the outside line,” she said. “And you would see the guys you knew were outside the wire. They would come in with the sunglass marks on their forehead and the dirt and dust on their uniforms. Although I was indirectly supporting them, just knowing that I’m doing what I can to support them and try to keep them safe ... makes it all worth it.”

Cathie Sexton, a supervisory logistics systems analyst from DLA Troop Support Subsistence, is a 33-year DLA employee who deployed to Iraq four times from 2007 to 2012, first to Camp Victory and later to the U.S. Embassy.

She said her experience in Iraq proved invaluable when she returned to work stateside.

“I think it was one of the best experiences of my life because we make decisions back here and we don’t really know how they’re operating on the ground,” she said. “But when you have that boots-on-the-ground experience, I can come back here to meetings, and if they say, ‘We’ll just do this,’ I can say, ‘No, you can’t, because this is how they operate downrange.’ We make decisions here that affect their operations as well. So when you have more experience, the better it is for everyone.” ✪



# Supporting the State Department

Story by Beth Reece  
Photos courtesy U.S. State Department

**M**ore than a year has passed since U.S. troops left Iraq, but the Defense Logistics Agency continues to provide food, fuel and disposal services for the State Department officials who are representing the United States in Iraq.

DLA began planning in the fall of 2010 to ensure logistics support would be in place for the State Department when it assumed responsibility for U.S. operations in Iraq Dec. 31, 2011. Since then, DLA employees have helped State Department officials establish their own support

contract and provided assistance with operational logistics planning, as well as acquisition and financial management.

“It takes time to write contracts and go through the whole bidding process, plus there are certain regulations and procedures that government agencies have to follow,” said Lynne Allen, who worked alongside State Department officials at the American Embassy compound in Baghdad from November 2012 to May 2013. “DLA agreed to continue providing basic life support to the State Department as long as they needed us.”

DLA used existing contracts to provide food to 13 dining facilities and fuel to 11 bulk fuel sites that were transferred from U.S. Forces-Iraq to the State Department. This gave the State Department officials time to arrange their own logistics support using resources available locally. Representatives from DLA Troop Support, DLA Energy and DLA Disposition Services were also initially stationed in Baghdad to help the State Department with commodity-specific issues, from determining the

Lynne Allen, former DLA liaison to the U.S. State Department in Baghdad, poses for a photo with (left to right) State Department Foreign Service Officer Ted Plosser, John Harville of the Baghdad Diplomatic Support Center and Kevin Sparks of DLA Disposition Services.





State Department officials rely on help from DLA's property disposal specialists to determine what types of equipment need demilitarization and how to dispose of unnecessary property.

right amount of food and fuel needed to planning delivery times and locations.

State Department officials stationed abroad typically live and work in stable environments integrated with the local economy. Iraq continues to transition to "normalization" and this period of stabilization takes patience and time, Allen explained.

"The State Department learned how complex DLA support can be, how thorough and knowledgeable we are in providing that support," she added. "The State Department is using experience with DLA support as a baseline to award a basic life support contract that will replace DLA support. The incoming contractor will be responsible for the

same services currently provided by DLA; the main difference is the incoming contractor will draw upon local Iraqi or regional resources instead of U.S. government resources."

Anita Luich is DLA's current liaison in Iraq and is serving her second deployment to the embassy in Baghdad, having worked there from June through December 2012.

She said having a DLA liaison with the State Department during the transition is crucial.

"Working closely with the State

Department will be critical as the [contractor] ramps up their supplies and services while DLA ramps down our support. Being the sole DLA [liaison officer] in Iraq, I'm constantly communicating with primary-level field activity representatives back in the states to ensure seamless support," she said.

As the State Department begins working with its own contractor, it has also reduced its footprint in Iraq by 67 percent, an effort that DLA Disposition Services has already been heavily involved in, Allen said.

State Department officials stationed abroad typically live and work in stable environments integrated with the local economy. Iraq continues to transition to "normalization," and this period of stabilization takes patience and time.



## Iraq: 10 Years Later

Property disposal specialists have helped State Department officials understand what types of equipment need “demilitarization,” a process that removes specific capabilities from military equipment.

“When the military services pulled out in December 2011, they left a lot of equipment behind for future use. Now the push is on closing the military bases they used and returning that land to the government of Iraq, which means retrograding or disposing of equipment or giving it to the Iraqi government,” she said.

Property disposal specialists have helped State Department officials understand what types of equipment need “demilitarization,” a process that removes specific capabilities from military equipment.

“We’ve helped them understand what to demil and how, and they’ve asked us everything from who is qualified to [destroy] military equipment to what size things should be cut down to,” Allen said.

Across Iraq, material identified for

disposal is loaded in containers for truck movement to DLA Disposition Services’ 5-acre disposition site, where a small group of DLA employees processes scrap material and demilitarizes equipment, Allen said.

“Using and sharing DLA’s experience and skills in disposal operations has enabled the State Department to stay on schedule and meet its reductions targets,” Allen said.

DLA Disposition Services will assist the new contractor until things are running efficiently, Luich said. The agency will also turn over to the State Department such material as plasma cutters and industrial shredders deemed necessary for the new contractor to meet mission requirements.

Serving as DLA’s senior liaison in

Baghdad was a tremendous learning experience, Allen said, adding that it was all the more rewarding to have support from the rest of DLA.

“I may have been the sole DLA liaison officer at the embassy compound, however it was a total team DLA effort, and I appreciate all support I received during my deployment,” Allen said.

“I have a better understanding of what our warfighters go through in terms of the isolation and the camaraderie they build and the sacrifices they have to make,” she said. “You often hear that deploying is a once-in-a-lifetime experience [for civilian employees], and it really is.” 🇺🇸

DLA Disposition Services’ Tony Nino destroys equipment so it can’t be used against U.S. forces.



## QUOTABLES

“You’re doing a great job. If I was about to take a ... pay cut, I’m not sure I’d be the high-output organization that you all are, so thanks for bucking up and really shouldering this enormous burden with a lot of class.”

*DLA Director Navy Vice Adm. Mark Harnitchek, speaking during his May 21 Director’s Call with the workforce about the 11 days of furloughs DoD civilians will start the week of July 8*

“I don’t pay much attention to the fact war brought it here, I just care about the quality.”

*Parwiz Khojizada, an Afghan steel mill chief executive, on the prospect of buying scrap metal from the U.S. military as it demilitarizes equipment during the drawdown in Afghanistan*

(Source: Yahoo! News)

“We have a huge issue. And the main thing I want everybody to understand is that [sexual assault] is not just a passing issue. For whatever reason, this is one that we’ve had for a very long time, and we have not been able to defeat it.”

*Army Chief of Staff Gen. Ray Odierno, speaking to a gathering of senior Army leaders about sexual assault in the armed forces*

(Source: Chicago Tribune)

“The fact is our force in Afghanistan is shrinking fast, and all the creature comforts and services deployed military-members have grown accustomed to over the past decade are going to be reduced. When serving, we are challenged to endure different things, to face different challenges, over time. But we’re an odd bunch, we Marines — probably no surprise that we’ll complain more about losing the sandwich bar on the way out than we did about getting shot at on the way in.”

*Marine Lt. Col. Cliff Gilmore, a public affairs officer at Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan, on the loss of some hot meals as the drawdown there continues*

(Source: NBC News)

## BY THE NUMBERS

### 13 MILLION GALLONS

Amount of fuel shipped each month to U.S. and coalition forces in Iraq in 2006, enough to drive a 2006 Toyota Prius more than 500 million miles.

(Source: Environmental Protection Agency)

### 120,000 POUNDS

Weight of a propeller shaft that was destroyed and disposed of by DLA Disposition Services in Guam in May, equal to the weight of about 24 million drywall screws.

### \$10 MILLION

Money saved by DLA Aviation’s Matthew Johns through an effort to reduce duplicate orders for 26 items associated with the F108 engine used to power large aircraft.

### 2007

The year the first Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicle was delivered to warfighters in Iraq.

# A Conversation with . . .

# Army Maj. Gen. Kenne

DLA's Logistics Operations Director Shares Lessons He Learned During His Five Years Supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom.

## **What was your role in providing logistics support during the war in Iraq?**

I spent five years developing logistics in the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility, to include being the CENTCOM director of logistics and commander of the 1st Theater Support Command. I also oversaw the monumental effort to draw down millions of pieces of equipment during the end of the war in Iraq and worked with DLA Disposition Services as it removed hazardous material and scrap from Iraq. It was a great collaborative effort, and I was impressed with DLA's monster capability.

## **What was the biggest logistical challenge before the start of operations in Iraq?**

There was a rapid buildup of forces at the start of the war, so we had to work fast and hard to build a supply base in Kuwait. Sustaining a force in that type of environment, where there's insurgent violence and political instability, is challenging enough, but the high-priority nature of sustainment for warfighters in Iraq also caused the material pipeline to get clogged early in the war.

One of the things we had issues with right at the start was tank pads;

these pads reduce shock and noise, as well as damage to road surface. They melted rapidly as we drove tanks from Kuwait to Iraq in 120 degree temperatures, and the amount we were asking to resupply was about five times more than anticipated. For this and several other items, we had to find manufacturers that could set up additional production lines. DLA and Army Materiel Command worked closely with manufacturers to ramp up production of repair parts that hadn't been made in a while.

## **Based on your knowledge of military logistics in general and DLA operations specifically, what are some of the toughest and most important lessons learned in Iraq?**

One of the biggest things we learned is that we need to have a close relationship with warfighters and share a role in the early stages of logistics planning. For example, when a commander says, "We're going through this city," we need to be able to say, "Sir, there's a bridge in that city and

Teodora Mocanu



Army Maj. Gen. Kenneth Dowd, DLA Logistics Operations director, and Air Force Col. Seann Cahill, incident response commander, participate in a briefing on DLA's response to two simulated hurricanes bearing down on Florida as part of Exercise Ardent Sentry in May.

# th Dowd

if that bridge is taken out, it's going to stop all of your logistical support." And because we're fighting with more of a joint flavor, we need to know more about what each service does and how they operate. Providing logistics from a joint perspective also helps us better manage costs in the long run.

The drawdown of millions of pieces of equipment was also a monumental task. Both the services and DLA realized how critical it was to have a strong DLA Disposition Services presence on the ground staffed with DLA experts who have training and experience in property disposal.

## ***What are some of the most significant changes DLA made because of those lessons?***

We're doing a better job planning logistics support and retrograde. Years ago, we tried to synchronize efforts from DLA Headquarters at Fort Belvoir, Va., but now we're physically sitting in those logistics meetings in country to make sure we're synced with what the warfighter needs. In addition to putting senior officers on the battlefield alongside warfighters, we have national account managers for each service and to represent the federal agencies. We're able to better discuss challenges and brainstorm solutions. Most importantly, warfighters don't have to call around looking for their logistics person because in most cases, they're now part of the operational planning teams.

We've also taken what we learned in Iraq in the disposition arena and started building that capability early on in Afghanistan. And we've got better, top-of-the-line shredders and cutters to tear stuff down. Today, we're actually cutting up significant items such as Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles on site, where before we would have thrown them into a container and paid as much as \$100,000 per vehicle to fly them back to the United States.

Additionally, we're talking more with our industrial partners, such as Boeing, UPS and FedEx, to find out what their best practices are and whether there are better ways to supply our warfighters. Tremendous opportunities are being created by these exchanges, and we're also discovering cost savings by doing things differently in some areas.

## ***Having worked with DLA as commander of 1st Theater Support Command, what changes did you want to make upon your arrival at DLA?***

I know what it's like to be a Soldier sitting in a foxhole in the middle of the night wondering if his requirement has made it all the way back to DLA or the Army Materiel Command. Because of that, I try to convey the urgency of the warfighter and how the work we do each and every day impacts those service members on the front line.

Another thing I set out to do was ensure that we're linked to each of the services so that when they have an issue, they know who to work with to get it fixed. We're also asking the services to tell us what they'd like to see us do better and provide feedback on additional ways we can help them. DLA used to be a very business-oriented organization that focused

on money and inventory. That's still very important, but now we're directly engaged with customers to find out what it is they really need and how we can provide it when and where they need it. As DLA Director Navy Vice Adm. Mark Harnitchek, says, we've become a big logistics enabler.

## ***Based on your experience with the drawdown in Iraq, what things should we repeat or do differently with the drawdown in Afghanistan?***

The big thing is to take the lessons we learned from Iraq and push them to Afghanistan. For example, making sure we have demilitarization gear and property disposal yards in the right place. As I mentioned before, in Iraq we learned how to better manage property and scrap at forward operating bases. So now in Afghanistan, instead of putting a warfighter at risk driving scrap to one central location in Bagram, we cut it up and dispose of it in place if at all possible, using our hub-based disposal operations.

We work closely with the Office of the Secretary of Defense to get policies in place that allow cutting it up in place and determining what equipment needs to be brought back. Having those policies in place early was a huge help and a lesson taken from Iraq.

## ***How do you view DLA now that you've been here for almost one year?***

DLA is a tremendous organization, and I'm proud to be a part of it. The men and women who work here are first class. They work hard and care about what they do. I believe we'll continue to get more missions in the future, because the services are realizing how great we are at our business. ☺

CUSTOMER ACCOUNT MANAGERS

# Your Personnel Guides

Story by Beth Reece

**S**hameera Carr gives good advice, and she isn't afraid to tell people what they don't want to hear. As a labor and employee relations specialist serving DLA Aviation, she spends most of each workday guiding supervisors through issues like telework and disciplinary actions.

"Without her expert advice, we'd be in trouble," DLA Aviation Customer Operations Deputy Director Paul Hughes said about Carr's recent help with a leave administration matter.

Carr and 18 other human resources specialists are spread across eight DLA Aviation sites to help leaders with staffing, recruitment, position classification, organizational restructures and even the implementation of furloughs. Similar teams are located at DLA Headquarters and the agency's field activities. Each is headed by a customer account manager who oversees human resources support at local levels.

John Bray, customer account manager for DLA Troop Support, which has nine human resources specialists, calls his team a "gateway for information." As DLA Headquarters officials outline details and provide guidance on impending employee furloughs, for example, Bray and his team

interpret that guidance for local use.

Recent planned furlough notices that were canceled the day before they were sent out showed the need for this type of expertise in organizations.

"We had a lot of questions about exactly when and how the letter was going to be issued, but after we sent the template and instructions out to supervisors, many of them said we'd made it really easy for them," said Rocky Weaver, customer account manager for DLA Aviation.

In addition to an agencywide town hall meeting in which DLA Human Resources Director Brad Bunn outlined the civilian furlough plan, Bray met with local supervisors to ensure their questions were answered. Customer account managers at other DLA organizations may have taken different steps, he added, but their collective goal was to ensure supervisors and employees were informed of the latest developments.

Managers also need assistance in other areas of human resources. Weaver's staff stays busy helping leaders with organizational structure and position management, especially in

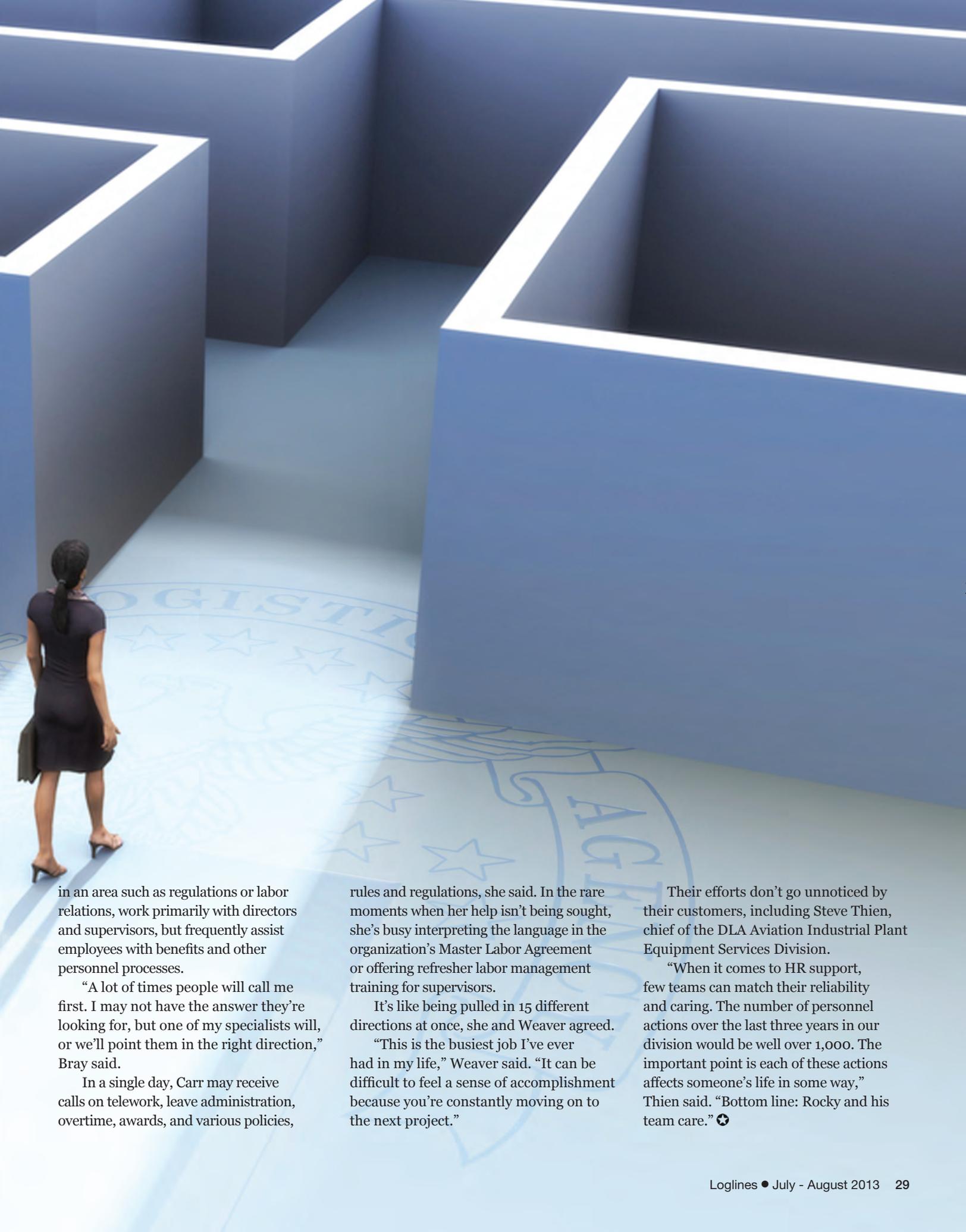
regards to how offices are staffed.

"When each new commander comes in, they have different thoughts on the way business needs to be run, so they start posturing the organization the way they feel it needs to be set up," he said.

Current changes include a new planning directorate that will absorb employees from two other divisions, plus modifications in the staffing structure of another directorate. And while hiring has been suspended throughout DLA, human resources specialists are still working with managers in cases where exceptions have been made for mission-essential reasons.

Training has also been curtailed, but the rollout of the Enterprise Business System's Inventory Management Stock Positioning tool at several Navy sites will require employees to be trained. Human resources specialists are working with DLA Training officials to ensure employees still get the necessary training.

Customer account managers and their team members, all of whom specialize



in an area such as regulations or labor relations, work primarily with directors and supervisors, but frequently assist employees with benefits and other personnel processes.

“A lot of times people will call me first. I may not have the answer they’re looking for, but one of my specialists will, or we’ll point them in the right direction,” Bray said.

In a single day, Carr may receive calls on telework, leave administration, overtime, awards, and various policies,

rules and regulations, she said. In the rare moments when her help isn’t being sought, she’s busy interpreting the language in the organization’s Master Labor Agreement or offering refresher labor management training for supervisors.

It’s like being pulled in 15 different directions at once, she and Weaver agreed.

“This is the busiest job I’ve ever had in my life,” Weaver said. “It can be difficult to feel a sense of accomplishment because you’re constantly moving on to the next project.”

Their efforts don’t go unnoticed by their customers, including Steve Thien, chief of the DLA Aviation Industrial Plant Equipment Services Division.

“When it comes to HR support, few teams can match their reliability and caring. The number of personnel actions over the last three years in our division would be well over 1,000. The important point is each of these actions affects someone’s life in some way,” Thien said. “Bottom line: Rocky and his team care.” 🌟



# I AM DLA

**My name is:**

*Nathan Zuniga*

**I am:**

*A quality assurance specialist with DLA Energy.*

**Describe your job in a sentence.**

*I perform quality control and assurance for all types of fuel and cryogenics that are purchased for our warfighters.*

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

*I have been in DLA Energy 13 months now, but worked with DLA Energy on a number of my deployments when I was on active duty for 22 years in the Air Force.*

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

*My favorite thing about working for DLA is being part of this great team of professionals that provide the essential items the warfighter needs to accomplish their mission on a daily basis.*

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

*My best memory of working for DLA is meeting the president when I was doing a secure mission.*

**How do you make a difference?**

*I believe that I make a difference by using the skill set and experience I acquired during my 22 years of active duty military service to provide an insight to our partners and suppliers of what the warfighter needs to accomplish the mission.*

*Nathan Zuniga*

