



DLA Distribution Sigonella, Italy: A key link in logistical support to Europe and Africa

By Emily Blubaugh, DLA Distribution
Public Affairs

Located in the middle of the Mediterranean and centrally positioned between two continents, DLA Distribution Sigonella, Italy, provides theater-specific distribution services and logistics support for United States European Command and African Command operations by leveraging an adaptive distribution network that delivers responsive, efficient and innovative Warfighter-focused support.

“Our organization has accomplished distribution functions to points south into the Gulf of Guinea and around the Cape leveraging all transportation options, both commercial and military, to support numerous

operations and missions within the EUCOM and AFRICOM Areas of Responsibility,” said DLA Distribution Sigonella, Italy, commander United States Navy Supply Corps Cmdr. Preston Gill. “DLA Distribution initiatives are improving cargo routing between established North and South channels and will further enhance support of trans-theater movement.”

The Navy Warehouse Transfer, for example, has extended DLA Distribution Sigonella, Italy’s, role in warehousing and distribution operations in Naples, Italy, and Rota, Spain, in support of both Europe and Africa. Rota and Naples have increased the center’s distribution network and the ability for loadout and sustainment of forces in these AORs.

routes, as Sigonella is the primary consolidation point for DLA Distribution Europe cargo destined for AFRICOM.

As the only organization with hazardous material and cold storage capabilities within the region in support of EUCOM/AFRICOM, DLA Distribution Sigonella, Italy, also has the distinction of being the central receiving and distribution center for all petroleum, oils and lubricants, and HAZMAT for the entire EUCOM/AFRICOM theaters, and it has, along the years, utilized existing military channels and leveraged commercial industry to develop a flexible, agile distribution network tailoring the support to the demand.

“Pin Point” logistics is another core competency which allows the distribution center to offer best support to the combatant commands, providing sustainment while being responsive to dynamic schedules for mobile units and extensive non-standard ports of call. “Pin Point’ refers to our ability to get material to ships and forces that may only have a small window of opportunity to receive the material as they pull in on short notice. This, along with our strategic location, affords shorter transit times and cheaper costs, especially to Africa,” said Gill.

The organization’s mission continues to evolve from regional distribution to supporting joint



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Additionally, the existing strategic partnership between DLA Distribution Europe and DLA Distribution Sigonella, Italy, allows the distribution centers to streamline the cargo flow between the Northern and Southern distribution network

operations extending beyond the Mediterranean, stretching further east and south into Europe and Africa. Although initially developed to support naval operations and afloat units in the Sixth Fleet Area of Responsibility, DLA Distribution Sigonella, Italy,

takes advantage of its strategic location and unique capabilities to support and sustain all Department of Defense agencies in a joint environment.

“At DLA Distribution Sigonella, Italy, we constantly strive to

improve logistical support to Warfighters worldwide,” said Gill. “I look forward to continuing to build valuable relationships with customers in the EUCOM and AFRICOM AORs and evolving our support.”

DLA Distribution Europe Surface Optimization supporting Warfighter Support Enhancement and Stewardship Excellence

By *Thomas Brame and Charles Crumb, DLA Distribution Europe*

The Distribution Process Owner Strategic Opportunities, or DSO, team, consisting of the United States Transportation Command, Defense Logistics Agency, and U.S. General Services Administration, is working collaboratively with DLA Distribution Europe’s partners and customers to drive significant, tangible improvements in distribution performance to the Warfighter. One specific improvement included in the DSO effort is Strategic Surface Optimization, which focuses on the DLA Director’s focus areas of Warfighter Support Enhancement and Stewardship Excellence.

Working to that end, DLA Distribution Europe recently added an additional capability to handle 40 ft. containers, made possible through new container handling equipment, or CHE. The new CHE has the capability of handling 20 and 40 ft. containers and can lift up to 45 metric tons, or 99,000 pounds.

Prior to receiving the CHE, DLA Distribution Europe shipped only 20 ft. containers to customers in Afghanistan, accommodating approximately 20,000 lbs. The ability to ship 40 ft. containers now allows for approximately 44,000 ft. of transport. This constitutes a significant improvement for the distribution center, considering that the majority of freight being sent is construction materiel. One truck hauling two 20 ft. containers can accommodate eight bundles of 16 ft. lumber, whereas one truck with a 40 ft. container can hold not only the eight bundles of lumber, but also an additional four bundles of plywood. As a result, the container shipped is now fully utilized and the Warfighter now receives more freight per shipment.

Additionally, the capability included cost efficiencies. It was determined that the average cost to ship 20 ft. containers via the Northern Distribution Network, or NDN, is approximately \$32,000 per



truck; however, a 40 ft. container saves approximately \$11,000 per shipment.

DLA Distribution Europe began shipment of 40 ft. containers on a regular basis utilizing the new CHE in early Aug. 2010. Since August, there have been 381 40 ft. containers shipped via the NDN, equating to a savings of approximately \$4.2 million, or a return on investment of nearly \$3.5 million.

DLA Distribution Europe’s added capability is just another fine example of how the agency, as a whole, continues to look for ways to reduce cost while preserving or enhancing support to the Warfighter.