



September 2010

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

CONTINUOUS  
PROCESS  
IMPROVEMENT

Leading change through Passive  
Radio Frequency Identification:  
Enabled Receipt

Dedicated truck program expands  
to DLA Distribution Warner  
Robins, Ga.

DLA's largest distribution facility  
begins annual flu season support  
to military

New Regional Training Centers  
of Excellence to enhance training  
offerings

# DISTRIBUTION *In Review*

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DO

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# DLA DISTRIBUTION *In Review*

## Table of Contents - September 2010

Unity of Purpose, Unity of Effort, Unity of Thought – an update from the DLA Distribution commander .....3

Director releases 2011 guidance .....5

Norfolk medical mission provides critical medical supplies to nation’s troops .....6

Improving processes and support to the Warfighter, DLA Distribution Oklahoma City, Okla., employees observe efficiencies through integrated process teams.....8

New Regional Training Centers of Excellence to enhance training offerings.....10

Leading change through Passive Radio Frequency Identification: Enabled Receipt .....12

Kaizen teams play a large role in continuous improvement at DLA Distribution Susquehanna, Pa.....14

DLA Distribution Corpus Christi, Texas, hosts continuous process improvement training .....15

DLA Distribution San Joaquin, Calif., to enhance Warfighter support with new general purpose warehouse .....16

Dedicated truck program expands to DLA Distribution Warner Robins, Ga.....17

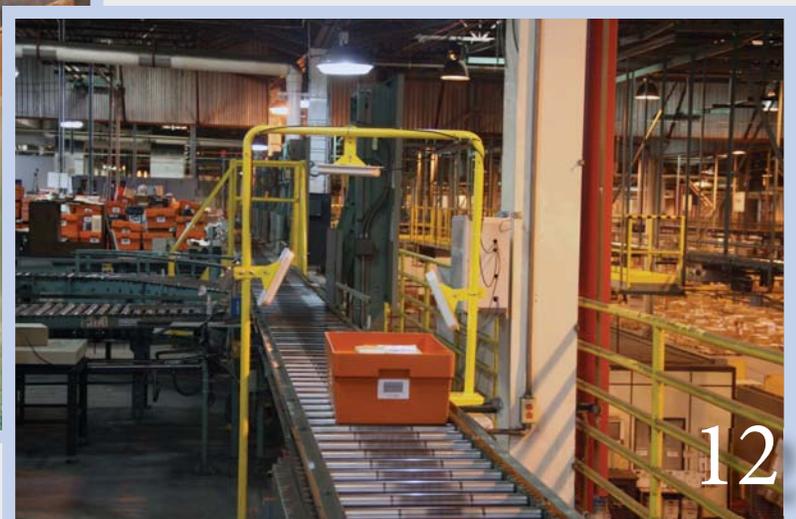
Vendor Shipment Module advantages highlighted at DLA Enterprise Supplier Conference and Exhibition .....18

DLA’s largest distribution facility begins annual flu season support to military .....19

DLA Distribution Norfolk, Va.: Providing world class distribution to the Tidewater Region and beyond.....20

Supervisor Mentorship at DLA Distribution Oklahoma City, Okla., developing a high performance culture .....22

“Strategically Speaking” with Akimasa Kojima, DLA Distribution Yokosuka, Japan.....23



# UNITY OF PURPOSE, UNITY OF EFFORT, UNITY OF THOUGHT – AN UPDATE FROM THE DLA DISTRIBUTION COMMANDER



Greetings from Camp Arifjan, Kuwait. As many of you know, I have been under Individual Augmentation orders as the Director of Central Command's Deployment and Distribution Operations Center. I left DLA Distribution Headquarters on the 31st of July and conducted a Transfer of Authority with Major General McMahon on the 2nd of August. Over the past six weeks, I have gained an appreciation for how dynamic the CENTCOM Area of Responsibility (AOR) is and the role DLA is playing to provide logistics support to our Warfighters. DLA Distribution, in particular, is playing a significant role both in terms of providing CLASS IX support from our Distribution Centers in Kuwait, Bahrain and now in Kandahar, Afghanistan as well as having a team of dedicated folks at Camp Taji, Iraq that are working with our Iraqi counterparts to assist with the standup of their national logistics facility. I was fortunate to be able to spend the better portion of a day

with our team and I believe each will tell you that they are having the experience of a lifetime. Their morale is high, camaraderie solid and their technical capability was truly appreciated by the Iraqi Army. They are making a very noticeable difference...their effort is well respected by the host nation, they are recognized as true professionals in their field and I am extremely proud of all they have done. When they return to their home station they should be greeted as the American Heroes they are. They have earned my deepest respect, BZ to all of them for volunteering to move forward and on a job well done.

I also want to recognize our team performing distribution at the Kandahar Air Facility; their efforts have significantly changed the logistics infrastructure in Afghanistan for the better. These 40 folks have hit the deck running and they haven't stopped yet. I have not had the opportunity to get to Kandahar to see them, but

by all accounts they too have high morale, have seized together as a team and are truly making a difference for the Warfighter. As many of you know, Kandahar is in the middle of perhaps the largest Taliban strong hold in Afghanistan and the base comes under frequent attacks. The Expeditionary unit has become a huge enabler for a number of reasons, most notably reduction in strategic air lift, providing parts support across the country and will be expanded in the very near future. BZ to the Kandahar team for all they are doing to support DLA's mission of being America's combat logistics provider of choice. *(Continued on next page.)*

## DLA DISTRIBUTION IN REVIEW

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*(Continued from previous page.)*

I would like to take a moment and recognize the families and significant others of our forward deployed teammates, they are the real unsung heroes that are minding the home front, day in and day, out while their loved ones are forward. Because of what they do our folks are able to focus on the mission at hand. It takes a real team effort on both fronts to ensure success of mission and to keep families and relationships strong over this period of separation. Let's not forget to reach out to those who are forward and to those who are left behind and remind them of our support.

I also had the opportunity to travel with Colonel Vern Beatty (DLA Distribution, Kuwait) to Bahrain to perform the ribbon cutting ceremony for DLA Distribution Kuwait, Bahrain Detachment. This is a wonderful facility with lots of capability and capacity; it was an honor and privilege for me to attend and participate. The real benefactors of this capability will be Naval Forces Central Command and our maritime forces along with the Army who have several weapon systems in Bahrain ensuring our safety.

Also, thanks to each of you who are serving in other overseas locations and throughout the United States who are keeping the industrial

bases fired up as well as supporting our effort from afar. Each of you is making a difference; the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines I talk to are very aware of your support and appreciate all that you are doing to make their life easier. We are making a difference.

Prior to my departure for Kuwait, I had the pleasure of visiting our distribution centers in Oklahoma City and Hill, Utah. In each case, I was able to hold town hall meetings and was impressed with the passion for the work that we do. I appreciated the open, honest dialogue and hearing about the topics we discussed; each is now being addressed to make working conditions better. Please know that my number one priority is the safety of our workforce, if you see something that isn't right please report it so we can get it fixed. I have asked each Director/Commander to transmit to me, in their weekly update, what is making their head hurt and I am getting exactly what I wanted; Mr. Brad Bellis is now onboard and is leading the headquarters effort to take these "head hurters" for action and correct them...he is off to a quick start. I will get out to see each of you over the course of the remainder of my tenure as the DLA Distribution Commander. I look forward to having the opportunity to see you all and learn about your operation.

We delivered our PLFA review to the Director of DLA, Vice Admiral

Thompson, on the 29th of July, it was definitely a three run homer. I suspect with a little effort across the breadth of the Distribution Enterprise, we can hit a grand slam next year. The review was really a summary of your efforts and all the hard work you accomplished over the last year. Thanks to each of you for all you have done. As many of you know the Secretary of Defense has asked us to look for savings that we can transfer out of the "tail" (support) and put into the "tooth" (war fighting capability). We need to focus on our processes to ensure we are as lean and efficient as we can be. As I mentioned in my welcome remarks back in June, we are very effective, but it is now time to enhance our effectiveness with efficiencies that allow us to continue our work at more affordable rates.

We are on track with our efforts to build a strategic plan to align our efforts with the Director's Strategic vision and annual guidance. Mr. Scott Rosbaugh has been leading this effort so if you have input, please pass it along. My intention is to brief our plan to the headquarters and then deliver it at a Commander's conference I will host in New Cumberland shortly after my return.

Thanks for all you do...keep charging

Stay Safe,  
RDML Tom Traaen

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**DLA DISTRIBUTION IN REVIEW**

# Director releases 2011 guidance

By Sara Moore

Defense Logistics Agency Director Navy Vice Adm. Alan Thompson has released his fiscal 2011 Director's Guidance, which refocuses the agency's goals with an emphasis on increasing efficiencies and savings in accordance with Defense Department requirements.

"DLA is putting its full support behind Secretary [of Defense Robert] Gates' requirements to reduce the department's overhead so that more money can go to troop development and force modernization," Thompson said. "Initiatives are included in the fiscal 2011 guidance that ensure DLA will increase the efficiency and effectiveness of our processes. That's just good business and part of DLA's obligation to its customers."

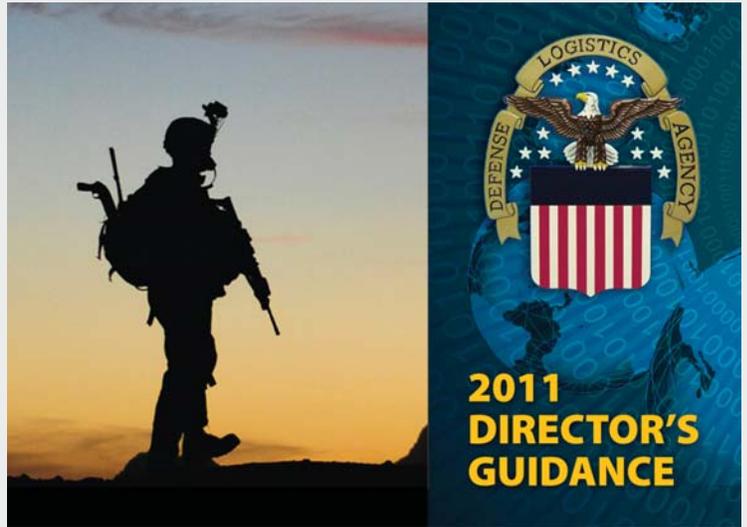
The 2011 Director's Guidance includes perspective from DLA's Strategic Plan for fiscal years 2010-2017, DoD's recently published Logistics Strategic Plan and other DoD guidance. The guidance includes 19 initiatives, some of which are being continued from the fiscal 2010 Director's Guidance. The fiscal 2011 guidance continues to emphasize DLA's three strategic focus areas of Warfighter Support Enhancement, Stewardship Excellence and Workforce Development.

In the area of Warfighter Support Enhancement, the initiatives focus on support of operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, improving business operations and contracting to better serve warfighters, and

developing logistics efficiencies that better serve customers and save money. In the area of Stewardship Excellence, the initiatives focus on pursuing price reductions, improving detection and deterrence of counterfeit material and meeting Congressional and DoD inventory management and overall supply chain performance. When it comes to Workforce Development, the initiatives focus on ensuring workforce capabilities match present and future mission requirements, supporting diversity and enhancing DLA's performance-driven culture.

"As we move into the new fiscal year and begin to work on the focus areas and initiatives in the 2011 guidance, we'll apply what we learned in the past months to our operations," Thompson said. "We'll continue to provide best-value logistics to the armed forces as we anticipate and meet the requirements of the coming years. DLA will keep looking beyond the near horizon to the future, and we'll continue to develop and implement cutting-edge capabilities and products for our customers."

In the 2011 guidance, Thompson noted that the agency has made significant progress on



the initiatives in the fiscal 2010 Director's Guidance. Some notable successes were the agency's support to ongoing operations in Afghanistan, a proactive response to the defense secretary's call for efficiencies in business operations, an expansion of outreach communications to customers and DoD leaders, and a leadership role in support of U.S. Central Command's emphasis on local purchases in Southwest Asia and use of the Northern Distribution Network, which has improved logistics support to Afghanistan.

"Over the past year, the DLA team once again gave critical support to our warfighters, stakeholders and customers," he said. "We made good progress on the initiatives contained in the fiscal 2010 guidance. I know every DLA employee will continue to provide the same high-quality sustainment in the months ahead as we begin to execute the fiscal 2011 guidance."

Visit [http://www.dla.mil/library/guidance\\_2011.pdf](http://www.dla.mil/library/guidance_2011.pdf) for the fiscal 2011 Director's Guidance.



# Norfolk medical mission provides criti

*By Emily Blubaugh, DLA Distribution  
Public Affairs*

When a Warfighter needs a bandage, where does it come from? How about a surgical gown, medical sponges or vaccines? DLA Distribution Norfolk, Va., plays a vital role in ensuring the readiness of our nation's troops with the storage and distribution of these and other medical items under its newest mission, the expedited delivery of high-priority medical materiel.

Serving as a trans-shipment point where supplies are consolidated and shipped out to soldiers in the field, DLA Distribution Norfolk, Va., now manages general medical/surgical supplies, X-ray machines, vaccines, and other types of pharmaceuticals.

DLA Distribution Norfolk, Va., inherited its medical mission, operational since March 2010, from the Norfolk Intra-Fleet Supply Support Operations Team during the Navy Warehouse Transfer, which transfers Navy tactical distribution functions performed by Commander, Fleet and Industrial Supply Centers' regional FISCS to DLA. The original NWT agreement did not include the transfer of medical missions; however, the contract between Navy, DLA Troop Support, and the third party logistics company handling the mission was coming to an end



**Serving as a trans-shipment point where supplies are consolidated and shipped out to soldiers in the field, DLA Distribution Norfolk, Va., now manages general medical/surgical supplies, X-ray machines, vaccines, and other types of pharmaceuticals.**

and it was ultimately decided that the medical materiel transfer to DLA Distribution Norfolk, Va., would be included, largely due to the fact that an in-sourced medical mission already existed within the organization.

Previously, DLA Distribution Norfolk, Va., employed 25 contractors to handle nearly 39,000 general cargo and 3,600 special handling requisitions yearly. "This transfer has created multiple efficiencies. Most immediate, the Distribution Standard System has allowed us to eliminate many manual efforts and substitute contractors with five government employees and produce equal or better service," said DLA Distribution Norfolk, Va., deputy commander Denise Cordeiro.

Although the transition has been successful, the transfer was the result of a lot of hard work and dedication by the Norfolk team.

Previously, the depot operated a scaled-down version of the facilities needed to handle this type of mission. Although all DLA Distribution's Navy and Continental United States sites have the capability to support medical cold chain management cross-docking, Norfolk took this to the next level in its ability to store these items for incoming ships, acquiring special handling materiel to support cold chain management. Where its facilities were previously very basic, Norfolk obtained a new freezer and security alarm systems to protect the mission, as no secure items had ever been

# tical medical supplies to nation's troops

stored on site. The freezer was tested to ensure it could run at the proper temperatures to condition the boxes and items to meet commercial requirements, as many pharmaceuticals being transferred required temperature controlled and value-added packaging.

Training of employees was also needed to ensure proper handling of the materiel, and DLA Distribution employee Scott Sheipe was on-site for training and customer assistance. "We needed to work through the normal challenges of any major function transfer," he said. "In this case, employees needed to understand how to properly store pharmaceuticals and establish those environments which are Food and Drug Administration compliant." The depot is only the second of DLA Distribution's 25 sites to receive Food and Drug Administration licensing to

move pharmaceuticals.

Since adopting the mission, DLA Distribution Norfolk, Va., has processed over 80,000 medical items, including general cargo, controlled drugs and cold-chain managed items.

"DLA Distribution Norfolk Virginia's goal is to perfect the medical process and expand medicinal support to the fleet, while achieving a 99 percent accuracy and efficiency rate to our customers," said Cordeiro.



Since adopting the mission, DLA Distribution Norfolk, Va., has processed over 80,000 medical items, including general cargo, controlled drugs and cold-chain managed items.



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# Improving processes and support to the Warfighter, DLA Distribution Oklahoma City, Okla., employees observe efficiencies through integrated process teams

By Stacy L. Umstead, DLA Distribution Public Affairs

Through knowledge of mission and customer requirements, DLA Distribution Oklahoma City, Okla., employees are using their ingenuity to further improve processes and support to the Warfighter.

Integrated process teams, or IPTs, have been established to review internal processes within DLA Distribution's Midwest Strategic Distribution Platform and observe opportunities for process improvement and streamlining operations. "We are using the DMAIC Process Improvement Model," said Thomas Wahpekeche, Performance Excellence Office chief. "DMAIC is the process that Defines, Measures, Analyzes, Improves and Controls processes that allows for better efficiency and effectiveness."

The most recent IPT reviewed the process for internal ordering of supplies for employee use. Two employees from different branch offices co-chaired the IPT and began mapping the supply order process from beginning to end. "Repair parts for routine maintenance on a vehicle were taking up to 45 days to receive," said Tim Hanna, Electronic Industrial Control mechanic. "As we met and mapped out the process, we realized that there were

unnecessary layers of review and excess, or even duplicate, handling of the requests for parts within the work centers, thus delaying the request being processed by the supply clerk."

Under the improved process, the excessive layers have been cut and the approval process has been streamlined leaving the entire process taking less than 12 days from date of requirement to delivery. "We will continue to look for ways to even further improve on this process," said Mary McHenry, resource advisor.

Other IPTs have been established within DLA Distribution Oklahoma City, Okla., to review inventory denial rates, customer turn in processing and the new procurement process – all areas part of DLA Distribution's key performance metrics which are tracked monthly.

The Inventory Denial IPT, established in July, is currently reviewing the trends in the spike in the distribution center's denial rate. "An example of a denial is when a customer orders 100 washers based on the Distribution Standard System balances and the distribution center only has 80 on hand," said Roy Shipp, general supply specialist. "Because we cannot fulfill the complete 100

washer order, that becomes a denial within DSS." DSS is the distribution and warehousing operating system used throughout the DLA distribution network.

During the review, the IPT and its green belt facilitator assigned to the team, recognized extreme spikes in the denial rate during the weekends. "Denial rates were negatively impacted by the 48-hour timeframe when only emergency support operations center personnel are scheduled to provide after hours support," said Delayne Dye, Performance Excellence Office lead. As a result of the IPT's observations, potential inventory denial sheets are now handed out to warehouse supervisors at the daily production meetings and special emphasis is made on Friday's data to work items that are potential weekend denial candidates. Potential weekend denial candidates are potential denials that will exceed the four-day threshold, for processing of potential denials, over the weekend timeframe.

The distribution center's Customer Turn-in Working Group has been closely working with key customers for several months to further improve materiel turn-in times. This process was also a prime candidate for an IPT and Wahpekeche took on the role of green belt facilitator.

“One of our studies revealed that there was enough volume of small and medium-sized customer returns at one of our pick up points to warrant placing a turn-in inductor/packer at that location,” said Dale Gill, Preservation, Packaging, Packing and Marking, branch chief. “By placing that resource at the entry point, assets are now inducted shortly after being offered by the customer. Previously, the assets would wait for pick up and transport for induction into DLA Distribution Oklahoma City’s central turn location.” This process will allow DLA Distribution Oklahoma City, Okla., to expedite induct of serviceable priority assets back into the system to fulfill customer requests.

New procurement processing was also assigned a green belt facilitator and an IPT formed and in its infancy has turned up some astounding findings. “After reviewing every transaction that contributed to the June New Procurement metric, we were awed to find ‘F’ condition, or ‘unserviceable returns’ were being considered as new procurement,” said Lisa Boatman, Performance Excellence Office. The Oklahoma City team immediately began to identify, sort and categorize assets that fell into the new procurement category. “This is allowing our



**DLA Distribution Oklahoma City, Okla., employees work to map out internal processes to find opportunities for process improvement and streamlining operations.**

distribution representatives to quickly induct, transport and stow materiel.”

According to Ned LaViolette, director for DLA Distribution Oklahoma City, Okla., the SDP’s Performance Excellence Office will continue to provide guidance and assistance to current and future IPTs as the organization continues to seek efficiencies.

DLA Distribution Oklahoma City, Okla., provides a full range of distribution services in support of the Oklahoma City Air Logistics Center, Tinker Air Force Base tenants, and other global customers.

Core services include receiving, storage, packaging, and issue of military supplies. Support to the Oklahoma City Air

Logistics Center is primarily for programmed depot maintenance for numerous aircraft and engines and is available around the clock.

The majority of the items shipped from DLA Distribution Oklahoma City, Okla., are destined for customers on base including the 552nd Air Control Wing, the U. S. Navy Strategic Communications Wing One, the 507th Air Refueling Wing and the 3rd Combat Communications Group.

Off-base shipments support customers on Air Force bases worldwide with the various systems and commodities that have been repaired at Tinker Air Force Base.

DLA Distribution Oklahoma City, Okla., is one of 25 distribution centers within the Defense Logistics Agency.



# New Regional Training Centers of Excellence to enhance training offerings

By Jessica Roman, DLA Distribution Public Affairs

The DLA Distribution workforce is vital to the current and long-term success in effectively supporting the Warfighter at optimal cost. In order to support DLA director United States Navy Vice Adm. Alan S. Thompson's Workforce Development strategic focus area and to further develop the DLA Distribution workforce, an Integrated Process Team, or IPT, workshop was brought to DLA Distribution to develop a Regional Training Center of Excellence, or RTCOE, concept.

The RTCOE will enhance Distribution Operations Training, and the goals are to regionalize training, achieve the goal of standardizing processes at all sites, and to reach and teach an educationally diverse DLA Distribution workforce to execute



**Members of the Integrated Process Team discuss goals and objectives for the Regional Training Center of Excellence implementation.**

the mission of supporting the Warfighter.

Currently, Distribution Operations Training utilizes two training methodologies: live classroom training and distributed learning methods, such as interactive video teleconferencing. With the implementation of the RTCOE, two additional course delivery formats are being developed including computer-based training and laboratory training.

There are currently 14 courses available as part of Distributions Operations Training including:

- *Cold Chain Management Training: This module trains employees in proper practices that are used to store, prepare, and package temperature-sensitive medical items. Students will learn methods and procedures to handle and package temperature sensitive products using Preparation of Medical Temperature-Sensitive Products Requiring Freeze or Refrigerated (Chill) Environments for Shipment guidelines.*
- *Defense Transportation Coordination Initiative training: This module describes key systemic processes. It also provides information related to Shipper and Transportation*



**As part of the Virtual Warehouse, two members learn how to scan receipts.**

*Provider, Distribution Standard System, or DSS, transaction procedures, and DSS actions. This course also provides students with a working knowledge of DTCI responsibilities and key systemic processes.*

- *Handling of Electrostatic Discharge Sensitive, or ESDS, items training: Current and new employees develop proper practices used to handle and package ESDS items.*
- *Processing Foreign Military, or FMS, Sales: This course trains current and new employees in proper practices used to apply requisition processes to FMS shipments.*
- *Inert Training: Focusing on identifying, handling, and ensuring that items capable of containing ammunition are certified inert prior to going to DLA Disposition Services activities, personnel learn the correct techniques.*
- *Inventory Control: The*

curriculum is geared toward inventory personnel, and it is used to provide an overview of all inventory functions and train personnel in required inventory actions from location survey and physical counts through causative research.

- *Incoming Supply Discrepancy Reports, or ISDR: New inventory personnel focus on proper practices used to process ISDRs, to include researching discrepancies.*
- *Packaging Hazardous Material for UN Conformance – Performance Oriented Packaging: DOD and DLA employees are trained in proper practices used in receiving and packaging hazardous materials.*
- *Preservation, Packaging, Packing, and Marking, or PPP&M: Proper packaging practices are discussed to perform the functions associated with PPP&M.*
- *Receiving: This program trains current and new employees in proper practices used to receive and accept materiel in support of the Warfighter.*
- *Stock Readiness and Shelf Life: These two courses are taught as a combined modular course or as separate modules. The course trains current and new employees in proper practices used to perform the requirements of the DOD Stock Readiness Program and the proper steps to manage the shelf life of materiel.*
- *Storage and Handling of Classified Material: This program trains personnel in proper practices used to process classified material without error.*
- *Top 100 Weight and Cube:*

*This module focuses on proper practices used to identify and document accurate weight and cube data in DSS.*

- *Warehousing: This curriculum is geared towards proper practices used in all facets of warehousing to include stow, pick, pack, and rewarehousing.*

As DLA Distribution continues to evolve in providing world-class support to the Warfighter, additional classes are being developed to focus on emerging issues including: transportation, kitting, Hazardous Material training, Level 1 Sub-Safe, workload planning, and distribution training management support.

Personnel at the recent workshop included experts in Operations, Distribution Planning and Resources (including instructors and subject matter experts), Information Operations, Human Resources, Training, and site experts from DLA Distribution San Joaquin, Calif., and DLA Distribution Susquehanna, Pa.

During the workshop, participants had an opportunity to develop goals, objectives, and tasks for the RTCOE implementation, and to visit the DLA Distribution Susquehanna, Pa., mock warehouse



**Two Integrated Process Team members receive hands-on packing training at the DLA Distribution Susquehanna, Pa., Virtual Warehouse.**

located in Mechanicsburg, Pa., for experience in Job Instruction Training in a hands-on environment.

Implementation of the RTCOE will help to accomplish several key strategies including developing the workforce; providing employees with the knowledge and skills to execute the distribution operations mission; providing technical training to include policies and procedures and how each interfaces; using training as a vehicle to move to standardized processes and procedures; and establishing and implementing various methods of delivery to include: on-site distance learning, computer-based training, and laboratory training.

Meeting these goals will help to enable the workforce to capitalize on their skills, experience and potential in meeting mission goals, and help DLA Distribution to leverage the diverse backgrounds of all employees while most effectively supporting the workforce and the Warfighter.



# Leading change through Passive Radio Frequency Identification: Enabled Receipt

*By Jessica Roman, DLA Distribution Public Affairs*

In order to maximize efficiencies and speed the materiel receipt process, DLA Distribution, in conjunction with DLA headquarters, has developed a process utilizing passive radio frequency identification, or pRFID, that aims to reduce costs and improve service to the Warfighter.

By leveraging automatic identification technology, or AIT, in operations, all three arms of the supply chain: suppliers, distribution, and customers can benefit. Suppliers benefit through faster payment, having a customer focus, and leveraging new technologies. Distribution benefits through a faster receipt process, reduced costs, and more accurate information sharing. Final customers benefit through receiving orders at a faster pace and receiving more accurate orders.



**A pRFID-enabled tote is diverted to a conveyor with a smart table and workstation.**

## **Center of Excellence: Driving pRFID projects and technology**

In 2008, DLA named the San Joaquin, Calif., distribution center as the Center of Excellence, or COE for three AIT projects. San Joaquin was the optimal location to test new technologies. “An excellent culture and a testing ground that encompassed all of the distribution functions from our depots around the globe provided the combination we needed to develop new AIT processes at San Joaquin,” said Denise Blanks, chief of DLA Distribution’s Distribution Operations Distribution Standard System Division.

The COE was established in January 2009 at DLA Distribution San Joaquin, Calif. Three projects began in the testing phase at that point. The first project, Fast Lane Receiving, later renamed to Passive Radio Frequency Enabled Receipt, or PRR, enables the use of vendor pRFID labels in the receiving process. The second project, Intra-depot Transportation, supports enhanced visibility between the mission side and the Containerization Consolidation Point, or CCP. The final project, Consolidation and Containerization Point Freight Terminal, reads pRFID labels throughout the warehouse, provides for increased visibility of items, reduces resource time for finding lost packages, and can reduce costs by utilizing newer technological reading devices, rather than multiple pRFID door portals.

The COE utilizes a three-phase approach to determine if a new AIT project is viable. In the planning and assessment phase, a pathway to success is determined through mapping processes, establishing baseline metrics, testing and evaluating, identifying proven capabilities, and planning for deployment. The second phase includes rapid deployment of already-proven concepts from the planning and assessment phase. Deployment is tailored

specifically for the implementation site. Processes are monitored, and benefits are realized at this point. The final phase includes information sharing with Department of Defense and other agencies, collaborating with vendors, and indentifying best practices across the government.

After a successful phase one, the PRR project is being deployed across the DLA Distribution enterprise.

## **The PRR process**

The pRFID process begins before the package even arrives at DLA Distribution. First, DLA Distribution places an order with a vendor for items. The vendors then pack the items, provide document labels, and tag the shipment with pRFID labels.

Each pRFID enabled package is entered into a special website called Wide Area Work Flow, or WAWF. WAWF was developed by DLA for all vendors to enter Advance Shipment Notice, or ASN, which provides all background information on a shipment to DLA. Vendors enter ASNs into WAWF within one day of shipment, providing time for DLA Distribution to receive the shipment information prior to its arrival at a facility.

The Defense Automatic Addressing Shipment Center, or DAASC, which is part of DLA, receives the basic transactions that stem from WAWF, and converts the messages so they can be read and understood by the Distribution Standard System, or DSS. DSS is the system that DLA Distribution uses to manage all shipments.

Once a shipment arrives at DLA Distribution, the most important step is identifying which packages have pRFID labels, and which do not. First, each package is directed down a divert portal, and if a package contains a pRFID label,



### A tote passes under a pRFID portal.

it is sent down a pRFID-enabled lane. Otherwise, the package is sent down a non-pRFID-enabled lane where it is manually receipted.

Each pRFID tag contains a small copper antenna – a small chip the size of a pin head – located in the center of the tag. When a shipment is received at DLA Distribution, and is identified as being pRFID enabled, the package is directed through a portal with an antenna that emits a radio wave. The pRFID tag absorbs the energy from the radio wave, which excites the tag. Once the frequency hits the pRFID tag, the tag emits back its identification. The identification is similar to a vehicle license plate. Each package's identification number is noted in the ASN, and once the package emits its individual number, the identification number and ASN are married in DSS. At this point, DLA Distribution recognizes the package as complete.

A complete package is diverted down a special pRFID-enabled lane that has a special reader and antenna included. The employee then slides the tote with the package inside of it onto a scale with a pRFID reader, and pushes a button to emit a radio pulse to excite the pRFID tag. DSS is then prepopulated with all vendor supplied shipment information, and the employee is ready to move on to the next receipt.

### Advantages to PRR

The major advantage to the new PRR

process is time savings. Because the pRFID tag contains the Pin, Call, Cliin, or ASN, data, including all of the customer's information such as document number, shipment number, and Department of Defense Address Codes, the employee does not need to enter this information upon receipt into DSS. "Because of PRR, a 5.5 percent increase in receipts processed was realized, receipt revisions have been reduced by approximately 62 percent, and receipt cancellations have been reduced by approximately 83 percent, based on DLA Distribution San Joaquin's PRR implementation," said Blanks.

Another advantage to the PRR process is quality control and accuracy. Operators no longer have to match up shipments with the correct vendor. Because of this, there is a large reduction in the amount of errors and inaccuracy processed in the system.

Because of the time savings and increases in accuracy, DLA Distribution can concentrate on slower materiel that takes more time to receipt, such as redistribution orders and stock transfer orders.

### Implementation at DLA Distribution

The PRR project is currently being rolled out across the DLA Distribution enterprise.

DLA Distribution San Joaquin, Calif., currently has eight lanes devoted to PRR. The project has been so successful, that the remaining eight receiving lanes have

also been outfitted with equipment to support PRR. While not all 16 lanes will be enabled at the same time, having all 16 lanes available to complete pRFID-enabled receipts will provide DLA Distribution San Joaquin, Calif., with the needed flexibility to provide optimal support.

Initially, the installation at DLA Distribution San Joaquin, Calif., provided some challenges. The portals were so powerful that they were reading from the next lane over, instead of the lane that the package was actually located in. Through some fine-tuning, this challenge was successfully overcome.

"The smart table idea we brought home from a site visit to Lackland, Air Force Base was instrumental in allowing us to completely eliminate the over reads we were experiencing," said Luis Avila, DLA Distribution San Joaquin, Calif., Systems Division. "Our DDJC Automated Materiel Handling System personnel were key to our success in the design and deployment of our smart tables. Without them, we could not have met our timelines nor drastically reduce the cost of the smart table to that of a commercial table. Commercial tables started in the \$4,000 to \$5,000 range, and we were able to deliver for \$351 per table, a significant savings to the government."

Because all vendor-supplied shipment information is prepopulated into the system, the operator learning curve for the PRR system is minimal. "One of our employees suffers from dyslexia, and being able to scan the pRFID tag vice keying the information in has eliminated keyboard errors for him," said Avila. "We are expecting to see greater production since we have eliminated half of the processing screens. We did this by moving data fields to screens that could accommodate, and most importantly, having the system processing behind the scene. This part of PRR is referred to as screen suppression."

The PRR project is continuing to move forward based on the successes of the previous installations. Completed installation at all Continental United States DLA Distribution depots is scheduled for completion by March 2011.



## Kaizen teams play a large role in continuous improvement at DLA Distribution Susquehanna, Pa.

*By Deitra Slade, process improvement specialist, and Vi Kownacki, training instructor, DLA Distribution Susquehanna, Pa., Performance Excellence Office*

Small changes made by the 58 DLA Distribution Susquehanna, Pa., Kaizen teams make a big difference in how employees function and feel about their work environment. Their larger projects benefit by reducing costs and improving customer satisfaction.

The quality of a working environment is an essential component to the quality of production completed in a work day. The placement and organization of the necessary tools can also be a major factor to reaching production goals. The Packing I Kaizen team, consisting of both first and second shift members, came together to create a better working environment, focused on maximizing workspace and the mission of ensuring that the kind, count and condition of the shipments handled are accurate for the Warfighters.

The team heard about a type of workstation being used in another building that might work for them too. They obtained, tested, and found them to be a success. "The workstations allow us to have more productivity because we can concentrate more and keep focused on what we are doing," said Harold Harris, a Kaizen team member. "I think the

stations have nice storage space," said Bernice Williams, who is also a member of the team. Other employees in the area have agreed that this was a positive change and have embraced the idea of continuous improvement.

With simple ideas to improve their mission, the small parcel Kaizen team is improving communication in their area across all (four) shifts. They initiated the use of a communication board to inform coworkers on important factors that may affect their workflow. This has proven to be beneficial because issues with workload, equipment maintenance, computers and printers, and the Distribution Standard System are all listed on the board as they occur on a daily basis. This ensures that coworkers from all shifts are informed.

A Kaizen team was formed of two shifts of general supply specialists working in the Transportation Emergency Supply Operation Center, or ESOC, called the ROD Squad, which identified a problem concerning returns to the depot from our customers. The ROD Squad met weekly using the eight-step problem solving process, including collecting data. Within a year, they initiated a Return Materiel Authorization program which permits ESOC to determine mode of shipment, choose the cheapest rates and provide customers with a preprinted



**Members of Packing 1 Kaizen Team representing two shifts who share the same work area, and are sharing in making it a better work environment.**

return label. Benefits included cost savings and improved customer satisfaction. The ROD Squad is eager to tackle another challenge.

These teams are allowing for greater efficiencies within DLA Distribution Susquehanna, Pa.



**The Kaizen team named ROD Squad uses the eight-step problem solving process to save costs and improve customer satisfaction.**



**The Small Parcel Kaizen Team improved communication using a board to inform coworkers from all shift about factors affecting the mission.**

# DLA Distribution Corpus Christi, Texas, hosts continuous process improvement training

By Karen Abernathy, DLA Distribution Corpus Christi, Texas

Recently, DLA Distribution Corpus Christi, Texas, and several other outlying distribution centers had the opportunity to improve the performance of core competencies while enabling Stewardship Excellence and Workforce Development through a weeklong intensive continuous process improvement training course at Corpus Christi, Texas, entitled “Level 1: Establishing a Problem Solving Culture.”

The class of 27 attendees was comprised of 17 personnel from DLA Distribution Corpus Christi, Texas, and members from nine other distribution centers, including DLA Distribution Albany, Ga., Warner Robins, Ga., Barstow, Calif., Oklahoma City, Okla., and Puget Sound, Wash.

The week-long training was centered around establishing a problem-solving culture by focusing on core values, lean principles, and the cultural patterns of high performing organizations. In particular, attendees received instruction on team building, utilizing visual techniques to help identify problems, recognizing the seven wastes, and the 7-step problem solving process, which consists of: Define the problem; Grasp the situation; Plan; Do; Check; Act; and Conclusions and lessons learned.

Additionally, the course taught that an organization should have the following cultural capabilities to help them be high performing organizations: Design and operate work to reveal problems; contain and solve problems close in person, place and time; accumulate and share knowledge; leaders coach and develop the above capabilities.

The basic premise of these capabilities is that it is much easier to fix small problems before they become larger, making it essential to design processes so that problems are easily recognized and then work to solve them.

Participants varied in levels of responsibility, from directors to interns, making the course unique and dynamic. In addition, nearly every area of distribution was represented, making the training environment conducive to the sharing of different perspectives among attendees. Consequently, team members were able to see how their individual areas impacted other areas of operations. Blessings Foster, DLA Distribution Corpus Christi, Texas, inventory supervisor explained, “The training provided the opportunity to pool together supervisors from different areas of operations, and enabled us to collectively see how the puzzle comes together, and see what we need to do to improve.”

In addition to the exchange of ideas, the training included group exercises and simulations

throughout the week that gave participants hands-on processes to aid them in grasping the Lean principles. The teams were required to execute several projects and simulations, such as building Lego cars and erecting towers out of plastic cups. Each exercise reinforced the DLA cultural capability of teamwork, distribution core competencies and brought to life the pragmatic and practical applications of Lean principles. “I loved it. I thought it was informative, useful training—applicable to daily life—personally and professionally,” said Ginger Greene, DLA Distribution Corpus Christi, Texas, inventory action team member. “The simulations were most valuable because they helped us work together as a team to figure out a process,” she added.

Green Belt certification is subsequent to the initial training. Participants receive certification upon completion of a continuous process improvement project of their own.

Upon conclusion of the training, DLA Distribution Corpus Christi, Texas, commander United States Army Lt. Col. Bernard Warrington, Jr., challenged the class to “Be the change you desire by being the voice and example of change beginning with a renewed mindset of breaking through the status quo and complacency. Most importantly, facilitate and lead change by ‘just doing it’ as a change agent.”



# DLA Distribution San Joaquin to enhance Warfighter support with new general purpose warehouse

*By Annette Silva, DLA Distribution San Joaquin, Calif., Public Affairs*

Construction is well underway for the 480,000 sq. ft. general purpose warehouse at DLA Distribution San Joaquin, Calif., DLA's Western Strategic Distribution Platform, supporting America's military services West of the Mississippi and throughout the Pacific Rim.

The \$29 million warehouse will be used mainly for storage of bulk materiel and will include 2,500 sq. ft. of space for office areas, a lunch room, rest rooms, and locker rooms.

"This facility will allow team San Joaquin to further improve speed and accuracy of materiel requisitions," said United States Marine Corps Col. Adrian Burke, DLA Distribution San Joaquin, Calif., commander. "Once properly configured, this warehouse will be used to deliver goods to our Warfighter customer base in the Continental United States and overseas."

Burke also mentioned that Base Realignment and Closure driven consolidations mean that those sites remaining have to operate more efficiently and in a more coordinated fashion within the Department of Defense supply chain.

"Modern assets, like this warehouse, are enablers to that end state," Burke said. "We are going

to integrate this facility into our operation and put it to good use as quickly as possible."

The addition of the new warehouse will be racked out with narrow aisle configured storage capability. The use of narrow aisle technology in the strategic distribution platform environment will increase the number of storage locations from an originally projected 16,492 to 31,230 for the building, with 14,738 locations gained. The yield will be measurable in daily productivity numbers as we drive to provide the Warfighter with timely and accurate delivery of goods, parts and equipment.

The environment was taken into consideration when the construction plans were made. The warehouse's base is made of recycled concrete and asphalt that was ground from the warehouses

that were demolished. Additionally, a cool roof, consisting of materials that very effectively reflect the sun's energy from the roof surface, installation of smart meters for gas and electric to provide accurate information on the amount of electricity and gas being used, and high output fluorescent fixtures with motion detectors in the warehouse bays are being installed. A follow-on project for installation of a solar integrated roof is scheduled for fiscal year 2012.

This new warehouse replaces four World War II era, 173,000 sq. ft. warehouses, and is the final step in a depot modernization program that will replace a total of 12 World War II warehouses with a projected completion date of 2011.

Construction is scheduled for completion in August 2011.



**The \$29 million warehouse underway at DLA Distribution San Joaquin, Calif., will be used mainly for storage of bulk materiel and will include 2,500 sq. ft. of space for office areas, a lunch room, rest rooms, and locker rooms.**

# Dedicated truck program expands to DLA Distribution Warner Robins, Ga.

*By Stacy Umstead, DLA Distribution Public Affairs*

DLA Distribution Warner Robins, Ga., is expanding its dedicated truck values to the special assets mission -- supporting customers across the United States.

Dedicated truck is the direct delivery of shipments to specific locations to meet time definite dates with deliveries. This process provides the customers with direct delivery services from the shipping location to their receiving door.

The first dedicated truck special assets delivery departed Warner Robins, Ga., Sept. 8, for customer stops in South Carolina, North Carolina, New Jersey, Delaware, and Pennsylvania. Other special asset dedicated truck routes support customers in Florida, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Utah, and California.

Direct delivery service via dedicated truck supports high-volume customers receiving numerous shipments. Through coordination with the customer, all cargo, regardless of the priority and size, may be delivered up to seven days a week from some DLA distribution facilities. In most instances the materiel is processed and delivered the next business day after acceptance of a Materiel Release Order.

An advantage to the customer using this program is that they can specify where to deliver the

materiel and schedule the time of day for the truck to arrive. This allows customer orders to bypass the central receiving point, saves time and arrives at predetermined special assets locations.

“Dedicated trucks improve efficiencies at the distribution center and the customer by guaranteeing a scheduled pickup and delivery,” said Bob King, director, DLA Distribution Warner Robins, Ga.

To determine the feasibility of using dedicated truck, transportation experts at DLA Distribution, New Cumberland, Pa., worked with King and his representatives evaluating tonnage, frequency and commodities being supplied which are key decision points in the decision-making process.

Once the decision is made to support a customer via dedicated truck, a DLA Distribution representative, working with the customer, develops a partnership agreement.

Throughout the DLA Distribution network, customers are receiving materiel faster through use of dedicated truck deliveries. DLA Distribution currently has over 150 dedicated truck routes reaching over 500 delivery locations, with more being added each year.

DLA Distribution Warner Robins, Ga., distributes supplies to all



**DLA Distribution Warner Robins, Ga., expands its dedicated truck values to the special assets mission – supporting customers across the United States.**

branches of the military at locations all around the world. More than half the work completed at DLA Distribution Warner Robins, Ga., is in support of the Warner Robins Air Logistics Center. The \$12 billion inventory at DLA Distribution Warner Robins, Ga., includes parts and equipment for F-15, C-130, C-5 and C-17 aircraft, target acquisition systems, and most airborne electronic warfare systems.

As a result of the most recent round of Base Realignment and Closure, DLA Distribution Warner Robins, Ga., will expand its services to become one of four Strategic Distribution Platforms, or SDP's operated by DLA Distribution, New Cumberland, Pa. DLA Distribution Warner Robins, Ga., is expected to be fully operational as an SDP in 2011. At that time, the organization will provide a majority of storage and distribution services to our military customers and other DLA distribution centers in the Southeastern United States.



# Vendor Shipment Module advantages highlighted at DLA Enterprise Supplier Conference and Exhibition

By Stacy L. Umstead, DLA Distribution Public Affairs

During the recent Defense Logistics Agency-hosted Enterprise Supplier Conference and Exhibition in Columbus, Ohio, DLA Distribution representatives were on hand to explain the advantages of using the Vendor Shipment Module, or VSM, to current and potential customers of DLA Distribution.

VSM is a web-based system that utilizes DLA's Distribution Standard System routing logic and addressing to provide DLA vendors with military shipping labels and transportation documents for their DLA-administered contracts.

One of the main features of VSM is that it populates various external systems such as Materiel Release Order Tracker and Global Transportation Network and allows customers in transit visibility of their items as they are shipped from the vendor facility to a DLA Distribution facility, port, or in some cases, directly to a customer.

Currently there are over 1,960 vendors using the system, processing over 99,000 shipments per month. "The benefits of using the system include a reduction in the number of misdirected shipments, reduction in the number of frustrated shipments at the Consolidation and Containerization Points and ports,



Wayne Myers, DLA Distribution traffic management specialist, discusses advantages of using Vendor Shipment Module during the 2010 DLA-hosted Enterprise Supplier Conference and Exhibition in Columbus, Ohio.

and a reduction in customer wait time," said Wayne Myers, DLA Distribution traffic management specialist.

Vendors can sign up to use VSM via the DLA Distribution website at <https://dpms.ddc.dla.mil>. Once signed up, vendors can receive training on the system via an online process.

"VSM provides the vendor the capability to add multiple shipping sites, access to a web services feature that allows connections directly to the vendor's warehouse system providing instantaneous

addressing, shipment history online and archived, and system security," said Myers. "Additionally, DLA Distribution offers VSM users access to a toll-free help desk number to answer any questions or address concerns."

VSM is just one of the many programs customers can receive information on at the conference, which featured speakers from Department of Defense, military services and DLA. In addition, there were informative breakout sessions and exhibits from DLA headquarters, its field activities and major suppliers.

# DLA's largest distribution facility begins annual flu season support to military

By Emily Blubaugh, DLA Distribution Public Affairs

Once again, DLA Distribution Susquehanna, Pa., is gearing up to prepare military facilities with annual influenza vaccine stores.

The year's first shipments of the annual flu vaccine departed DLA Distribution Susquehanna, Pa., in early August for issue to military facilities, which in turn will administer the supplies to active duty, dependents, Department of Defense employees and retired military.

The 2009 Flu Season brought with it much concern over H1N1, a subtype of the familiar Influenza A virus. The H1N1 virus was the most common cause of human flu in 2009, but has since moved

into the post-pandemic phase. This year, DLA Distribution Susquehanna, Pa., will be distributing a new version of the influenza vaccine, which combines the H1N1 viral strain with more common flu strains, eliminating the need for a separate H1N1 vaccine. "Every year immunologists determine which strains will be the hardest hitting for the upcoming season. As a result, the DLA Distribution Susquehanna, Pa., seasonal influenza vaccine will contain the H1N1 component," said Michael Minto, DLA Distribution Medical and Chemical Biology program manager.

The primary shipper of influenza vaccine for the services, DLA Distribution Susquehanna, Pa., has issued over 10 million doses

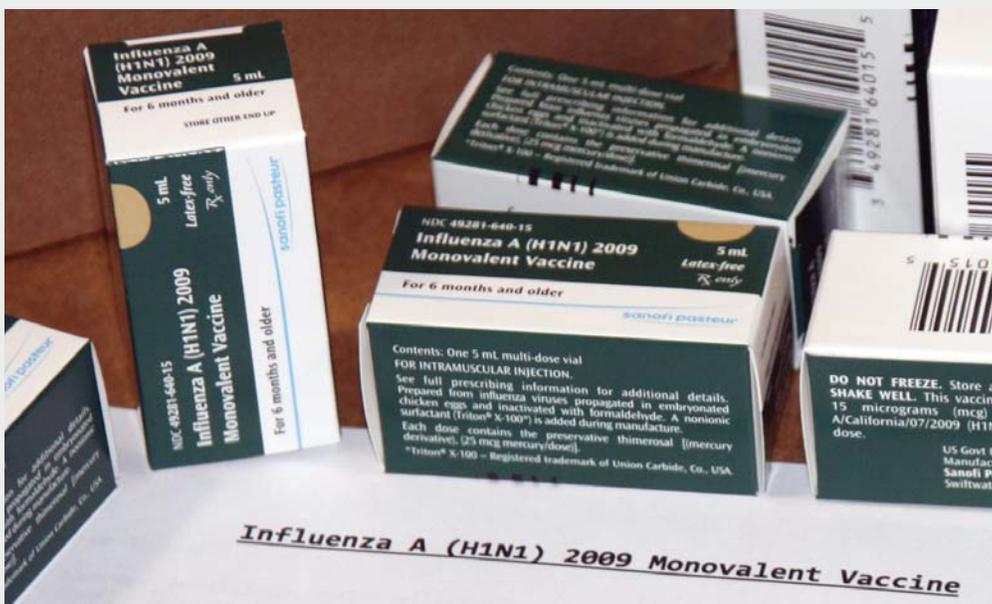
in the past five years, with nearly 5 million issued last year alone. The projected estimate for this year's distribution is nearly 3 million doses.

Although flu season had not officially begun, DLA Distribution Susquehanna, Pa., initiated the planning process for the upcoming season in June with the ordering of supplies, such as specialized packaging to ensure vaccines are maintained within the mandated temperature range. Additionally, cold chain test shipments were performed, as well as cold chain training. Lastly, refrigerator and freezer temperatures were verified and supplies conditioned according to protocols, remaining in accordance with Department of Defense-approved cold chain management protocols.

"Maintaining the vaccine's temperature is key to the distribution process. Use of specialized packaging and digital temperature monitoring devices ensure there is no compromise in quality during transport of the vaccines to our troops," said Minto.

DLA Distribution Susquehanna, Pa., is the only United States Pharmacopeia-compliant cold storage facility within DLA Distribution.

The organization also stores and distributes anti-viral pharmaceuticals and ancillary kits throughout the year.



**The H1N1 virus was the most common cause of human flu in 2009, but has since moved into the post-pandemic phase. This year, DLA Distribution Susquehanna, Pa., will be distributing a new version of the influenza vaccine, which combines the H1N1 viral strain with more common flu strains, eliminating the need for a separate H1N1 vaccine.**



# DLA Distribution Norfolk, Va.: Providing Tidewater Region and beyond

DLA Distribution Norfolk, Va., was established in 1992 as a result of the Defense Management Review Decision, 902. At that time, the Navy Supply Center divided all functions between the Defense Logistics Agency and the United States Navy. DLA Distribution Norfolk, Va., became the sole provider of receiving, storage, packing, shipping and local delivery functions. The depot handles specialized material such as Level 1 / Sub Safe, classified, pilferable and hazardous material.

DLA Distribution Norfolk, Va., is located on Naval Station Norfolk, the world's largest naval station, occupying 4,300 acres of Hampton Roads Virginia real estate known as Sewells Point. Naval Station Norfolk is also home to 70 ships, 134 aircraft, 16 aircraft squadrons, and over 350 other tenant commands. It has 13 piers and 11 aircraft hangars.

The mission of DLA Distribution Norfolk, Va., is to provide a full range of distribution services and information, using a seamless, tailored, worldwide Department of Defense distribution network that delivers effective, efficient and innovative support to combatant commands, military services, and other agencies during peace and war. The vision is to be the customer's first choice for multi-modal distribution services, at all levels, in any environment,

under any condition.

## Operation Pacer Goose

In September of 2009 DLA Distribution Norfolk, Va., assumed Intermodal Hub operations. The transfer from the Navy included a crossdock operation for the import and export of cargo, and an Ocean Terminal operation that provides sustainment ship loading planning, stevedoring, stowing, ship loading and discharging operation that supports DoD-owned and leased assets.

Having the Intermodal Hub as a member of the DLA family has provided numerous opportunities to participate in new operations. One recent successful operation was the loading and offloading of Thule Air Base supplies aboard the MV AMERICAN TERN in support of Operation Pacer Goose.

Thule Air Force Base is the U.S. Armed Forces' northernmost installation, located 750 miles north of the Arctic Circle. Resupply for the installation by ship occurs only in the summer months when the ice around Thule thins enough to be broken by a Coast Guard cutter, allowing vessels to pull into port. The yearly resupply provides the air base with military equipment, vehicles, medical supplies, dry goods, commissary and base exchange supplies, and specialized equipment to handle

jobs in ice and snow.

After being loaded with a year's worth of supplies in scorching heat by the employees of DLA Distribution Norfolk's Intermodal Hub, MV AMERICAN TERN then departed on the 3,000 mile trip to Greenland with a crew of 23. They spent approximately a week unloading in Greenland before MV AMERICAN TERN was then reloaded with used equipment and trash for the voyage back to Norfolk.

Once MV AMERICAN TERN returned pier side to DLA Distribution Norfolk's Pier 8, the large scale Pacer Goose offload of cargo of vehicles, equipment, general cargo and HAZMAT began, once again in scorching heat with heat indexes reaching nearly 115 degrees. Working extremely long days, nearly 15 hours per day, DLA employees offloaded nearly 17,000 measurement tons of cargo from MV AMERICAN TERN and ensured she got underway again on schedule.

## Navy Warehouse Transfer Optimization

Earlier this year DLA Distribution Norfolk doubled its warehousing business, as a result of the Navy Warehouse Transfer initiative. Material processing and warehousing sites were added throughout Hampton Roads and Dahlgren,

# ing world class distribution to the

Va., in addition to Crane, Ind., New London, Conn., and Indian Head, Md.

One of the first opportunities for optimization was the Fleet Class VIII Pharmaceutical Prime Vendor, Medical/Surgical Prime Vendor, and medical operations that were initially handled by the Intra-Fleet Supply Support Operations Team, or ISSOT. Previously, 25 personnel handled an average of 38,787 general cargo and 3,582 special handling requisitions yearly. With the implementation of the Distribution Standard System, many manual efforts were eliminated and the contracted operation with the Navy was transferred to a smaller-staffed government operation, while producing equal or better service. DLA Distribution Norfolk, Va.'s goal is to perfect the medical process and expand medicinal support to the fleet, while achieving a 99 percent accuracy and efficiency rate to our customers.

## Material Procession Center Expansion

The Material Processing Center, or MPC, provides its customers with customized material sorting, receipt processing, and delivery services. These types of tailored services have led to the recent expansion of the MPC to all large afloat units in the Hampton Roads region, including the Norfolk based

aircraft carriers that had been previously supported by the Navy. Additionally, the MPC has increased its local delivery capability to not only Naval Station Norfolk, but other DoD bases located throughout the Hamptons Roads region. Customers of the MPC now enjoy the convenience of receiving their stock already sorted by storeroom locations or by type of material type such as direct turnover, open purchase, depot level repairable, high priorities, and HAZMAT, among others. Aircraft carriers can choose to use up to 18 sort options. Customers also receive Receipt in Process

CDs to help expedite receipt processing and Material Outstanding File maintenance. Additionally, Casualty Reports and critical work stoppage material are delivered twice daily. All of these services help minimize the workload on the ship. Since the expansion, the MPC has seen a steady rise in its annual productivity by 14 percent.

DLA Distribution Norfolk, Va., is embracing new opportunities with a positive workforce while meeting the challenges of a fiscally constrained



**One of four tractors, each weighing approximately 57,000 pounds, is loaded onto a commercial carrier at DLA Distribution Norfolk, Va. The tractors will be used for snow removal at Thule Air Base, in support of Operation Pacer Goose.**

environment. They deliver enhanced region support, the leadership is establishing an optimized workforce skill base to meet tomorrow's challenges, and employees are engaging in the solutions...One Team, One Fight! Through it all, the focus has remained on safety. The workforce continues to seek excellence in safety as they strive for their next Voluntary Protection Program Star!



# Supervisor Mentorship at DLA Distribution Oklahoma City, Okla., developing a high performance culture

Leadership behavior is a critical element of any culture change effort. As an organization engages in culture change it is critical that leaders behave in ways that are consistent with the culture that the organization is endeavoring to become. A critical element of this is that leaders have the skills and capabilities to behave in the ways that will develop a high-performing culture.

Ned LaViolette, director, DLA Distribution Oklahoma City, Okla., has initiated an effort to transform his organization's culture with the goal of becoming a high performing organization. A key element of this change effort is the initiation of a Supervisor Mentorship Program.

This effort involves LaViolette working directly with the supervisors to develop their skills and capabilities so that they are able to demonstrate the behaviors that are expected of them as leaders within a high-performing culture at DLA Distribution Oklahoma City, Okla. The initial session was focused on the critical aspect of how supervisors should interact with their employees on a day-to-day basis. He used the principles of emotional intelligence as the framework for this session and demonstrated the proper ways for supervisors to conduct themselves during interactions.

To continue this mentorship effort, LaViolette coordinated with John Destalo, DLA Distribution culture champion, to have Dr. Bryan Adkins, president of Denison Consulting, spend two days at his organization to teach the supervisors and managers the basics of the Denison Culture Model and provide a greater understanding for how this model can be used to build a high-performing culture.

A particularly powerful aspect of this session was the portion Adkins calls "What You Might Hear." This is a series of slides organized around the four

quadrants of the Denison Model. For each quadrant, Adkins has gathered quotes of organizations he has worked with, one grouping of these quotes is from organizations that are high-performing in the quadrant and the other is from organizations that are "not so high performing." These quotes help give life to the Denison quadrants with more expressive, natural language, such as "We do a good job of connecting the dots," to express a culture strong in mission. Another example is "It's all about winners and losers," to express a culture weak in consistency.

As he presented these quotes, Adkins asked them to think about which quotes reflect their current situation. This led to specific discussions by the supervisors and managers about their experiences with the culture at Oklahoma City.

At the end of this session LaViolette challenged each supervisor to use the "What You Might Hear" slides and sit with their team and go through each of those slides and have them reflect with their teams on the culture. After they have done this they were directed to work with their teams to develop team goals and objectives which would go up through the branches to the senior leadership of the organization.

In addition to utilizing Adkins for his Supervisor Mentorship Program, LaViolette had him sit with their culture committee, which is a voluntary committee of employees from across the organization. They have been meeting weekly for a number of months to gather the voice of the employees and involve the employees in contributing to the improvement of their culture. Adkins gave a similar presentation to them, listened to the challenges they have faced, and provided advice for them to be productive culture change agents within the workforce and help them focus their team efforts on having a positive impact on their culture.

For much of the second day, Adkins participated in two Town Hall sessions with the workforce. This Town Hall session included a presentation by a customer communicating the importance of the work of DLA Distribution Oklahoma City, Okla., employees to the customer, a safety training session for how to deal with an active shooter scenario, a welcome to new employees and various updates by the director including the status of key metrics as well as Adkins' presentation.

The presentation by Adkins was much the same as that given to the supervisors and the committee. Transparency between management and the workforce has become a critical element of Oklahoma's change efforts and providing the supervisors and employees much the same information in these briefings aligns with this principle.

At the end of the session, LaViolette shared with the employees the challenge he gave the supervisors letting them know that their supervisor will be sitting with them as a team to reflect on those key culture slides and develop team goals and objectives.

After his experience at DLA Distribution Oklahoma City, Okla., Destalo stated, "While we all understand significant culture change within an organization is a very difficult and slow effort, the work going on at Oklahoma City is focused and incorporates all the elements of the Denison culture model. During my two-day visit I saw firsthand efforts at improving adaptability, mission, consistency, and involvement. It was a pleasure to spend time with this organization and hopefully have provided support that will contribute in at least a small way to the steady improvement of the DLA Distribution Oklahoma City culture."

# *“Strategically Speaking”*

**Akimasa Kojima, administrative management officer, DLA Distribution Yokosuka, Japan**



## *Warfighter Support Enhancement*

My goal is to contribute to all three of the DLA Director's focus areas, as well as the DLA Distribution Commander's priorities. As one of the locally-hired Japanese national employees for whom English is not my native language, the most important role I have is to be an effective communicator between the organization's management and the local national employees. As the command's official translator and interpreter, I'm responsible for conveying information in the most precise manner possible to management in English and to the local national workforce in Japanese. It is important to convey and exchange information, without adding or deleting anything, in order to provide management with an objective view that reflects fact. Aside from translation, the local national employees need to be provided assistance to correctly understand management expectations so that they can internalize DLA business concepts, enabling them to know how they can contribute to the success of the organization.

## *Leadership and Workforce Development*

My role is to support communication by providing quality translation. In providing translated information, timeliness and preciseness are the keys for creating an environment where we are sharing information. We make a conscious effort in providing translation support for training and information sharing so that the workforce can hear our leaders' words and can obtain quality instruction for their training.

## *The Key to Success*

Understanding our mission, vision and values is the key to success. Each of us needs to know what we want to do in order to support the team and to contribute to the success of the organization, and to become knowledgeable and skillful in performing our jobs.

Information is shared so that we can communicate with full understanding, resulting in successful work performance.

I want our military customers to know about both our mission and our people. We are here to provide services that fulfill their needs.

I appreciate my job which, is both challenging and rewarding. I feel a sense of accomplishment when my efforts successfully results in supporting the organization and our people. I'm thankful for my job that brings learning opportunities for my professional career and advances me as a leader.

**Akimasa Kojima**  
**DLA Distribution Yokosuka, Japan**

To read this month's complete "Strategically Speaking," be sure to visit  
DLA Distribution on the web at <http://www.ddc.dla.mil/>.



**WE ARE AMERICA'S  
COMBAT LOGISTICS  
SUPPORT AGENCY.  
WE ARE DLA.**



## **COMING IN FUTURE ISSUES**

**DLA Distribution support to EUCOM and AFRICOM**

**DLA Distribution Expeditionary**

**DLA Distribution one year in review**

