

New program helps acquisition process run smoothly

By Scott Woosley, DDC Public Affairs

Acquiring services and supplies is a daily function for government employees. While acquiring services and supplies seems simple enough on the surface, the process is actually quite complex within the government because of the regulations involved.

“Government acquisitions are covered by a number of large and complex regulations that civilian corporations do not have to use when competing their requirements,” said Renee Cairo-Iocco, deputy director for Acquisition Operations at Defense Distribution Center headquarters in New Cumberland, Pa. “The process can be daunting for those that are unfamiliar with those regulations.”

The Acquisitions Operations Directorate at DDC headquarters has implemented a new program to help smooth out and improve the process for all concerned at DDC headquarters as well as at its 26 distribution centers.

When someone in the organization determines a need for a service or item, their part in the process is more than simply saying, “I need this.” The specifications need to be spelled out in detail, according to Cairo-Iocco.

“The people who need the items or services are the technical experts,” Cairo-Iocco said. “They need to ‘define’ the requirement to ensure that contracting personnel buy the right supply or service.”

If someone needs pallet straps, for example, Cairo-Iocco’s office needs to know more than just, “We need pallet straps.” The acquisitions staff needs to know how long the straps need to be, how wide they need to be, what their load requirements are, and more. All the information needs to be included in the acquisition packages that are submitted to the office. The problem the office frequently encounters is that many of the people who want a particular supply or service prefer to leave the job

of determining specific qualities of the supply or service to the acquisition office. Not only is that outside of the scope of the acquisition office’s function, it’s also specifically prohibited by regulation.

“We cannot make technical determinations for our customers or define their requirement,” Cairo-Iocco said. “The person or organization making the request must specify those things.”

According to Cairo-Iocco, it’s simply a matter of educating the workforce about the acquisition process. She understands that many people are busy already or don’t have extensive training on how to complete the front end of the process, so she and her team have developed a new program to help.

Nancye Deem, who also works in the acquisition office, is the program manager for the Acquisition Assistance Program

which is intended to provide a solution. Under the new program, when someone within the command is tasked with purchasing an item or service, they can call Deem for help.

“When they call our office, they will get someone with expertise in the acquisition process who will guide them through it,” Deem said.

Each caller is then paired up with a person who will walk them through the entire process from end to end. According to Deem, the idea is to provide a single point of contact to ensure continuity through the process.

“When someone has a question, they will have a specific person to call to get the answer they need,” Deem explained.

The program doesn’t consist of call support alone, though. Members of the acquisition team will also travel to each

Teamwork leads to success in the UGR mission



William Rivera, foreground, an employee at Defense Distribution Depot San Joaquin, Calif., packages Unitized Group Rations, or UGRs, on the assembly line at DDJC. Rivera and other employees at DDJC volunteered to help package additional UGRs during a recent surge.

By Annette Silva, DDJC Public Affairs

Teamwork was the key ingredient for the success of the Unitized Group Rations, or UGRs, mission at Defense Distribution Depot San Joaquin, Calif., earlier this year.

Faced with a recent surge in requirements for the UGRs, employees from all over the distribution center stepped up to help the group fulfill their mission requirements.

From October 2007 to February 2008, UGR requirements jumped by more than 630,000 meals. This was in addition to regular requirements for the UGR “Heat

of the distribution centers in the coming months to train key people at each location about the acquisition process.

“This is the education part of the program,” Deem said. “We will go to each of our distribution centers and present a briefing to the individuals who are tasked with putting together acquisition packages.”

The training presentation explains what the acquisition office can do in addition to explaining what the role of each participant is.

While the acquisition office cannot provide specific technical information, they can make sure the person submitting the request knows what information needs to be included in the package.

“Ultimately, this will improve the service we provide,” said Deem. “The more complete the packages are, the better we are able to ensure everyone gets exactly what they need when they need it.”

& Serve” meals that contain ready-to-eat entrees and the UGR-B ration meals that include ingredients to prepare meals.

An additional 50 team members were temporarily assigned to the UGR mission to help build and ship the meals. The personnel came from the Stock Positioning, Retrograde and Deployable Distribution Center teams.

“I really appreciate all the individual and team efforts in getting the UGRs on track,” said Army Col. David Rodriguez, DDJC’s commander.

The surge gave a diverse group of employees the chance to help out another critical area in DDJC’s support to the U.S. war fighter.

Freddy Clary, the weekend coordinator for distribution center operations, helped out during the surge. “My main reason for volunteering was to serve the war fighter,” said Clary. “It also gave me the chance to work in an area that I had not worked in before and to be able to work along side veteran and new employees.”

DDJC takes on new generator storage mission

By Annette Silva, DDJC Public Affairs

Defense Distribution Depot San Joaquin, Calif., located in Tracy, Calif., was recently tasked with a new mission – storing mobile electric power generators. The first shipment arrived Jan. 31.

Previously, the generator mission belonged to Defense Distribution Depot Tobyhanna, Pa., which had housed generator assets from PM Mobile Electric Power for the past 10 years.

The Tobyhanna distribution center was originally chosen to house the generators because they were co-located with Tobyhanna Army Depot which has a large Power Unit/Power Plant Assembly mission.

Through the years, Tobyhanna Army Depot’s assembly program decreased while the increase in production of generators remained constant. As a result, DDJC and

Defense Distribution Depot Albany, Ga., are partnering with DDTP to provide additional support.

Only generators necessary to sustain major end items will be stored at DDTP since its primary purpose is to provide support to their co-located maintenance activity – Tobyhanna Army Depot.

“This re-distribution project will allow us (DDTP) to continue to reduce excess dormant stock holdings while reducing the storage footprint in concert with the BRAC 2005 supply, storage and distribution determination,” said John Heuberger, DDTP’s deputy commander. “It also allows the (Defense Distribution Center) to position stock for worldwide distribution to better support the war fighter.”

The initial supply of generators to be shipped to DDJC will total 1,000 and will increase to 3,000 in the future and with a steady flow from vendors.



Pictured are some of the generators that Defense Distribution Depot San Joaquin, Calif., will store. The generators were originally stored at Defense Distribution Depot Tobyhanna, Pa., but changing requirements led to the move.