



NEWSBLAST

U.S. Army Contracting Command

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"Providing global contracting support to war fighters."

MICC welcomes new commanding general

By Daniel P. Elkins
MICC Public Affairs

FORT SAM HOUSTON, Texas – Brig. Gen. Kirk Vollmecke assumed command of the Mission and Installation Contracting Command during a March 28 ceremony here attended by military and civic dignitaries.

During a change of command ceremony officiated by Carol Lowman, ACC executive director, Vollmecke accepted the reigns of command as outgoing commander, Brig. Gen. Stephen Leisenring, leaves for an assignment as the deputy commander for the Joint Theater Support Contracting Command for Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan.



Photo by Mike O'Rear

Brig. Gen. Kirk Vollmecke assumes command of the Mission and Installation Contracting Command, and challenged the workforce to focus its resources and expertise to meet the Army's needs.

Lowman praised Leisenring for leading the MICC through a realignment, the development of the Acquisition Milestone Agreement process and the management of contracts in support of Arlington National Cemetery.

Vollmecke comes to the MICC after serving as the director for contracting in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology. Lowman said the insight, energy and enthusiasm Vollmecke brings to the MICC is critical in meeting the acquisition needs of Soldiers against a backdrop of shrinking funds.

"While the MICC is saying goodbye to an outstanding leader, the command is fortunate to welcome another superb leader in Brig. Gen. Kirk Vollmecke," she said. "He understands our procurement processes and practices as well as ... the uncertainties of the budget environment and the challenges that lie ahead."

At the ceremony, Vollmecke echoed that awareness as the Army transforms the institutional Army.

"Our Army is in a new era of budget uncertainty and resource constraints. A decade of war needs coupled with a decade of statutory and regulatory procurement changes have brought great challenges to our contracting workforce and team," he said. "Now, more than ever, we must provide the smartest and most effective contracting solutions with the best possible oversight."

The new commanding general said that the MICC must focus its resources and expertise on awarding timely contracted solutions to meet mission needs, negotiating better outcomes for our customers and improving contract performance oversight.

Vollmecke, who is Acquisition Level III-certified in contracting and program management, is a certified professional contract manager and member of the National Contract Management Association. He is a graduate of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College where he was awarded the first Hite Acquisition Award for Excellence, and has earned a master's degree in Strategic Studies from the U.S. Army War College. He is also a graduate of the Naval Postgraduate School where he earned a master's degree in management with a concentration in acquisition and contracting management.

As commanding general of the MICC, he is responsible for providing contracting support for the war fighter across Army commands, installations and activities located throughout the continental United States, Alaska and Puerto Rico. In fiscal 2011, the command executed more than 63,000 contract actions worth almost \$7 billion across the Army.

Spotlight on...

Roderick W. Redman

A contract cost/price analyst with the Army Contracting Command-Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md., Roderick W. Redman ensures that the Army acquires goods and services at a fair and reasonable price.

“It’s a great honor to procure items for our Soldiers that give them the tools they need to accomplish the mission and come home safely to their families,” he said.

Realizing that Soldiers are frequently deployed and often endure prolonged separation from family and friends, Redman adds that it’s all he can do to serve.

“There is no greater civilian service to our men and women in uniform,” he said.

After a day’s work, there is nothing he enjoys more than taking Tess, his 9-year-old daughter, out to visit the country’s natural wonders or spend time reading

books and playing games with her.

The Clarksville, Md., resident brings to the ACC-APG workforce a license to practice civil litigation and contract law and has undergraduate experience in aerospace engineering and business management.

Prior to joining the ACC workforce, Redman worked in satellite communications, cellular networks and telecommunications infrastructure. The last few years he served with a network consulting company.

It’s a background he uses to his advantage when he evaluates contract proposals.

“I work proactively to be a strategic business advisor,” he said. “I want to ensure and maintain the fairness and integrity of the acquisition process and uphold the standards of the contracting professional.”



Roderick W. Redman
Contract Cost/Price Analyst
ACC-APG
Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md.



Photo by Ed Worley

Quad-A exhibit showcases ACC

Giselle Lyons, Army Contracting Command Public and Congressional Affairs, explains the ACC mission to two participants at the Army Aviation Association of America Annual Professional Forum and Exhibition in Nashville, Tenn. Mary Dubose and Denita Walters, ACC deputy chief of staff, Human Capital, and Constance Jones, ACC Small Business Programs Office, were on hand to discuss employee recruiting and Army small business opportunities during the April 2-4 event. This was ACC’s first outreach event with its new display, with the theme of “If a Soldier flies it, we buy it.”



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Commanders, directors meet to review ACC programs, priorities and initiatives

By Art Forster

ACC Office of Public & Congressional Affairs

Senior leaders from Army Contracting Command, major ACC contracting centers, the Expeditionary Contracting Command and the Mission and Installation Contracting Command met at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, March 27 to review selected command programs, priorities and initiatives.

In her opening remarks, Carol Lowman, ACC executive director, set the stage for the conference.

“We’ve come a long way since the command was established three years ago,” she said. “We need to continue to grow, mature and sustain our team of military and civilian contracting professionals and provide them the guidance and means to succeed. Reduced budgets, manpower constraints and ever-changing priorities will continue to challenge us but I’m confident that, together, we will ensure the command provides quality contracting

solutions in support of our war fighters.”

The conference included presentations and group discussions that covered a wide range of subjects.

Stephanie Lopez, ACC deputy chief of staff for Installations and Logistics, briefed the attendees on the new Facilities Investment Corporate Board. She said the purpose of the board is to establish a decision-making process that provides a structure for the gathering, reviewing, prioritizing, approving and resourcing facility investment endeavors throughout the command. The process ensures that proper analyses, priority and approvals are conducted prior to the investment of facilities funds.

ACC Command Sgt. Maj. John Murray reviewed the progress of integrating and training military personnel throughout the command. He described how ACC Soldiers are learning basic contracting skills from civilian mentors at major ACC contracting centers and MICC installation contracting offices.

“We are making great progress in preparing our military contracting professionals to assume positions of greater responsibility,” Murray said. “The creation of civilian to military contracting mentorship programs is a ‘win-win’ for everyone and has made us all better.”

Lowman described how the ACC Industry Executive Council has served to improve communication between the command and civilian firms that do business with the Army.

“These meetings provide our contractors the opportunity to share concerns and ask questions about Army contracting policies and procedures,” she said. “We’ve found this forum to be mutually beneficial and intend to continue this dialogue.”

The conference concluded with an executive session that included an exchange of ideas and recommendations about personnel, budget, information technology, contract operations and other management issues.

ACC leaders visit Rock Island, host town hall meeting

By Liz Adrian

ACC Rock Island, Ill., Public Affairs

ROCK ISLAND ARSENAL, ILL. – Army Contracting Command Executive Director Carol Lowman and Command Sgt. Maj. John Murray visited ACC-Rock Island March 15 to meet with ACC-RI leaders on a variety of topics, tour the facilities and host a town hall with approximately 500 attendees.

During the town hall, Lowman presented 15 employees with senior executive service coins and two prestigious awards.

Gregory Moore, Kuwait/Qatar branch chief in the Reachback Division received the Superior Civilian Service Award for his leadership in contracting support to Southwest Asia, and for filling in as the director of contracting for the Office of Program Management Saudi Arabia National Guard.

U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Michael D. Stallsmith, a member of ACC-RI’s Non-Complex Reachback Branch, was presented with the USAF Senior Airman Below the Zone promotion.

According to Maj. Lee Dent, chief of the Non-Complex Reachback branch, “This is a very distinctive honor as Airman 1st Class Stallsmith will be promoted to senior airman six months early.”

Lowman spoke about the successes and challenges Army



Photo by Liz Adrian

Approximately 500 Army Contracting Command-Rock Island, Ill., employees gathered to hear Carol Lowman, ACC executive director share her thoughts on ACC’s future and improving the workforce.

contracting has encountered since the Gansler Report was published.

She also shared some thoughts on ACC’s future while encouraging employees to actively work on improving their writing, abstract thinking and multi-tasking skills in order to become even more valuable as contracting professionals.

Army drawdown forces tightening of retention standards

By David San Miguel

ACC Office of Public & Congressional Affairs

Army officials have announced the tightening of recruitment and reenlistment standards to reduce end strength and reshape the force to meet future requirements.

According to Sgt. Maj. of the Army Raymond F. Chandler III, the drawdown will impact all ranks as the Army reduces its force of 570,000 to 490,000 by taking a hard look at who should join, who should stay and who should leave.

The Army will continue to retain qualified, competent and proficient Soldiers, Chandler said. But it will enforce standards more strictly, and those Soldiers with discipline problems will disappear from the ranks.

To implement those cuts in personnel, the Army will recruit less, retain fewer Soldiers and reduce the force through retention control points and early retirement for some Soldiers.

Under the new retention directives issued by the Army G-1, commanders are instructed on how they are to implement the “whole Soldier” concept when determining their best. This whole Soldier concept includes all those attributes, competencies, leadership potential, adherence to standards, duty performance and evaluations that demonstrate the Soldier’s ability to serve in any military occupational specialty.

“Those are still going to be important criteria and one of the many ways we measure whether you are among the best,” Chandler explained. “But it’s also two other areas, which may be more intangible – character and commitment. Those are going to be a really big part of the professional Soldier of the future.”

“Service is a privilege... not a right,” he stated. “You’ve got to continuously work hard to truly posture yourself as someone who is among the best. There are performance indicators that get you promoted, and there are discipline and conduct issues that get you in trouble.”

Command Sgt. Maj. John L. Murray, Army Contracting Command, added that this focus on the “whole Soldier” will help

commanders identify those best qualified for retention.

The sergeant major explained that there are those Soldiers that will look at the physical fitness scorecard and identify the minimum standards they need to pass the test, and then after they’ve achieved that mark, they simply stop.

“This is an opportunity for us to seek out and retain the best-qualified people for our Army and for the nation. It’s our obligation to do that.”

– Sgt. Maj. of the Army
Raymond F. Chandler, III

“They get up and announce that they’re done,” Murray said. These are the Soldiers that will only meet the minimum standards to get by and that’s not what we need.”

This month, the reenlistment window opens for Soldiers whose enlistments end in fiscal year 2013. Unlike previous years, however, ACC brigade-level commanders cannot exceed reenlistment objectives set by the Army Materiel Command and are directed to retain only a percentage of the eligible population.

In addition, commanders must address Soldiers in over-strength, balanced and shortage military occupational specialties. This may require Soldiers to reclassify from over-strength to shortage or balanced MOSs if they are to continue with their Army career.

Fortunately, 51-Charlie (acquisition, logistics and technology contracting noncommissioned officer) is a shortage MOS, added Murray. “Still, Soldiers must meet the standards. We will only reenlist

those top performers.”

He admits that though standards to enter the 51-Charlie career field are stringent, “a Soldier just can’t just sit back and say I’m okay, I’ve made it.

“These standards have got to be enforced across the board,” Murray said.

Standards, he remarked, Soldiers may find daunting at times considering the ACC’s contracting mission requiring their constant deployment and work in field office environments in some remote region of the world.

This unique career field mandates that the Soldier adhere to a strict discipline regiment to maintain the Army standard, the sergeant major said.

Murray added that it is imperative that leaders at every stage ensure their Soldiers receive the proper performance counseling necessary in determining their retention.

“When a commander refuses to reenlist an individual,” he said, “it will not be a surprise to that Soldier.”

The drawdown comes as the Army completes its mission in Iraq and focuses on winning in Afghanistan; after 10 years of war, the Army is switching gears, moving from the need to grow the Army to reducing it to its pre-Global War on Terror levels, Chandler said.

“A lot of people talk about the drawdown and think it’s going to be a gigantic challenge for the Army,” he said. “In some ways it is – we’re fighting a war, we’re deploying Soldiers, we have incredible strain on our force. But this is an opportunity for us to seek out and retain the best-qualified people for our Army and for the nation. It’s our obligation to do that. And as sergeant major of the Army, my expectation is that the NCOs are doing what they’re supposed to do: to counsel their Soldiers, to develop their Soldiers and to help their Soldiers get better. And I’m also expecting them to enforce standards and discipline.”

(Portions of this article were obtained from written reports by Jennifer Mattson of the NCO Journal, Rob McIlvaine of the Army News Service and the Deputy Chief of Staff, G1 Public Affairs.)



ACC in the News

These articles include mention of the Army Contracting Command.

Army officials cut the ribbon on newly renovated Long Barracks

My San Antonio Homepage
(Published March 27, 2012)

Officials from Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston Tuesday dedicated the renovated Long Barracks as the new headquarters for the Mission and Installation Contracting Command during a ribbon-cutting ceremony at the fort.

Construction of the barracks got under way in 1885 and was completed in 1887 with the addition of its distinctive sally port and four additional barracks forming a 1,084-foot-long line of nine contiguous, two-story barracks. The building, which came to be known as the Long Barracks, served as home to a variety of units and missions throughout its history.

<http://www.mysanantonio.com/news/military/article/Army-officials-cut-the-ribbon-on-newly-renovated-3438175.php>

Military Spending: Bullets by the Billions

By Mark Thompson
Time Battleland
(Published April 2, 2012)

Army Contracts

Alliant Techsystems, L.L.C., Independence, Mo., was awarded a \$2,541,000,000 fixed-price-adjustment contract. The award will provide for the procurement of 5.56 mm small caliber ammunition. Work will be performed in Independence, Mo., with an estimated completion date of Sept. 14, 2013. One bid was solicited, with one bid received. The U.S. Army Contracting Command, Rock Island, Ill., is the contracting activity (W52(1J-09-D-0027).

...the lead item (click on it to enlarge) in Monday's contract announcement [list](#) from the Pentagon. More than \$2.5 billion for bullets. Trust they're getting the quantity discount. We've asked just how many bullets you get for that kind of money, and we'll share the answer when we get it.

UPDATE: "The contract announcement yesterday was in error," an Army spokesman tells Battleland. The \$2.5 billion contract is a four-year deal, and Monday's announcement was screwed up by Pentagon computers (think of it as friendly fiscal fire). It has been corrected:

<http://battleland.blogs.time.com/2012/04/02/bullets-by-the-billions/#ixzz1r5RcH0li>

