



Vol. 4, No. 5
Feb. 6, 2013

NEWSBLAST

U.S. Army Contracting Command

"Providing global contracting support to war fighters."

Quality assurance policy benefits MICC customers

By **Ryan L. Mattox**
MICC Public Affairs Office

JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO-FORT SAM HOUSTON, Texas – Assuring Army customers receive what they pay for is the objective behind a new quality assurance policy published by Mission and Installation Contracting Command officials in January.

The policy also marks a major milestone in helping correct the Army material weakness in contract administration and oversight. It follows the MICC's Quality Assurance Program roadmap to provide guidance on goals, expectations

and functional requirements for quality assurance across the command leading to improved customer service. The roadmap includes three basic elements – policy and procedures, quality assurance workforce development and contracting officer's representative management.

"This policy is a major step in the MICC Quality Assurance Program," said Joe Merry, a senior quality assurance specialist with the MICC Strategic Services Quality Assurance. "The Army has a material weakness in contract administration and oversight and documentation of that oversight. In many cases, we do not have documentation to

support that the Army received acceptable services and supplies in accordance with the requirements of the contract to justify contractor payments. It demonstrates that we are committed to moving forward in addressing the Army material weakness with contract administration."

MICC quality assurance specialists are acquisition professionals and members of the command's acquisition team. The policy defines their roles in conducting the quality assurance mission, which is critical to the success and efforts to hold contractors responsible and accountable for performance and quality control.

See **POLICY**, page 3.

Civilian participants contribute to JCRX-13 training success

By **Larry D. McCaskill**
ACC Office of Public & Congressional Affairs

Part 1 of a series.

FORT BLISS, Texas-During the initial stages of Army Contracting Command's Joint Contracting Readiness Exercise 2013 here, senior military leaders – uniformed and civilians – conducted professional workshops to offer their advice and counsel to officers, noncommissioned officers and civilians participating in this year's event.

"The Army 1102 civilians (contracting officers) are absolutely essential to our ability to train and develop their military 51C (military contracting officers and NCOs) teammates," said Bryan Samson, Expeditionary Contracting Command deputy to the commanding general. "Integrating our Soldiers into the installation and center contracting structures, in the states and overseas, is the best method to provide rotational, hands-on contracting opportunities."

See **JCRX-13 SUPPORT**, page 4.



(Photo by Larry D. McCaskill)

Maj. Richard C. Garrison and Maria Finan, senior contracting officials with the 409th Contracting Support Brigade, Kaiserslautern, Germany, conduct oversight and assessment of the simulated Regional Contracting Centers as part of the JCRX-13 exercise held at Fort Bliss, Texas, Jan. 14 - Feb. 1.

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Spotlight on...

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Acting chief earns Soldiers' praise, garners special coin recognition

By Liz Adrian
ACC-Rock Island, Ill.

ROCK ISLAND ARSENAL, Ill. - On Jan. 25, Col. John P. Hannon, acting executive director, Army Contracting Command-Rock Island, presented Matthew J. Rosebrough, acting chief of Supply and Services, Directorate of Logistics, Army Sustainment Command, with a Senior Executive Service coin from Michael R. Hutchison, former ACC-RI executive director and now ACC deputy to the commanding general.

The coin was presented to Rosebrough for his assistance in outfitting nine officers located at ACC-RI with winter coats and gear.

"Given the extremely cold temperatures lately, the fleeces that we normally use in the winter really didn't cut it," said Hannon.

Beginning in November, Lt. Col. Christopher G. Dake worked with Rosebrough to determine what the officers required as well as the best way to get the gear to them.

Rosebrough then coordinated with his counterparts at Fort McCoy, Wis., to secure all of the necessary gear and willingly set up multiple appointments to issue the gear in order to best accommodate everyone's schedules.



(Photo by Liz Adrian)

Col. John P. Hannon, ACC-RI acting executive director, presents Matthew J. Rosebrough, acting chief, Supply and Services, Directorate of Logistics, Army Sustainment Command, with an SES coin.

"This was the most user friendly process I have experienced in more than 20 years in the Army," said Dake.

Dake noted that the type of support Rosebrough provided was non-existent during his first assignment at Rock Island Arsenal and Soldiers wore whatever their last unit had issued them.

"[Rosebrough] was patient with us through schedule changes and was truly great to work with," said Hannon. "I wanted to take the time to thank him by presenting him with one of Mr. Hutchison's coins, and Mr. Hutchison agreed."

NewsBlast readers now have a tool to provide feedback about the weekly newsletter. To access the feedback tool, click on the mailbox icon to the right. The questionnaire is brief and will only take a few minutes to complete. Responses, however, will assist the editorial staff in producing a publication to better meet readers' expectations and information needs.




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The *NewsBlast* is a weekly newsletter authorized and produced by the U.S. Army Contracting Command's Office of Public and Congressional Affairs editorial staff in accordance with AR 360-1 (The Army Public Affairs Program) to inform, educate and entertain the ACC community on people, policies, operations, technical developments, trends and ideas of and about the Department of Defense, the Department of the Army and this command.

The views and opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. government, the U.S. Army or this command.

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Personnel behind the scene recognized

By **Larry D. McCaskill**

ACC Office of Public & Congressional Affairs

It doesn't take smoke and mirrors for an exercise like the Joint Contracting Readiness Exercise 2013, sponsored by the Army Contracting Command, to occur. According to exercise planners and those behind the scenes, it takes long hours and a lot of effort.

"A lot of behind-the-scenes man hours have gone into making this happen," said Maj. Michael Spahr, executive officer, 905th Contingency Contracting Battalion, Fort Bragg, N.C., and JCRX-13 operations officer-in-charge.

"For the last year a majority of our days have been spent planning this because it is that important of an exercise," he said. "Once the exercise commenced, it was simply a matter of pulling all the pieces together to make sure everything is in sync and transparent to the trainees. There will be issues but you work through them."

As one of the first ones in and the last ones out, Master Sgt. Della Martin, 648th Contingency Contracting Team, Fort Benning, Ga., and JCRX operations noncommissioned office-in-charge, ensured the day-to-day operations items such as training schedules, personnel accountability rosters and coordination between the various cells were monitored and tracked.

"It's a job and it's what I do. You have to love it," she said, moving quickly down the hallway to the next office.

Even though they don't provide training or support to the trainees, the JCRX Joint Visitors Bureau is a very important piece to the training mission.

"There are a lot of senior leaders

Department of Defense-wide who are interested in this exercise and have shown an interest in coming to view it," said Lt. Col. Vernon Myers, JVB officer-in-charge and 916th CCBN commander.

Until recently, more than 80 senior level officials had shown interest in visiting this year's exercise. That number slipped a little due to Department of Defense budget cuts, but the JCRX Joint Visitor Bureau didn't slow down.

"Right now we are responsible for more than two dozen distinguished visitors coming to the exercise. It's been controlled chaos ensuring we connect the DVs with the appropriate personnel and are given the proper briefings. It's not easy but I have an excellent group of NCOs and officers who are tracking their every move."

During the exercise, the trainees had more than 50 scenario events from the mission scenario event list, all courtesy of the JCRX-13 Senior Contracting Officer Control Cell.

"We're simulating a slice of a joint theater support contracting command that simulates the higher headquarters of the exercise," said Lt. Col. Carol Tschida, Expeditionary Contracting Command's strategic plans officer and officer-in-charge of the JCRX Senior Contracting Officer Control Cell. According to Tschida, a large document called the Master Scenario Event List wraps up everything that happens during the exercise, from contracts given to the trainees to the databases they use. Often called a MSEL, it also outlines a variety of situations—some contract-related, some not—that are injected into the exercise. Members of the SCO Control Cell provided a task to the notional contracting



(Photo by Larry D. McCaskill)

Maj. Michael Spahr, JCRX-13 operations officer-in-charge, and his team of support personnel were recognized for their behind-the-scenes contribution.

centers then evaluated their action.

"We already know what the right answers are so we'll go over their actions and determine how well they handled the task," Tschida said.

Of everything that occurs during the course of the exercise, Spahr said the one thing they could count on was change.

"The hardest part is the 10-meter target – the unexpected. Whether it's changes to arrival times, distinguished visitors and guests, switching rooms, or facility management issues to accommodate the changes, you just have to remain flexible to accommodate for the unknown and unaccounted for," Spahr said

"Thank you to everybody who helped with this exercise," he continued. "An exercise like this does not revolve around one person; it takes many agencies to make it happen. It takes efforts from people at ACC and ECC headquarters all the way down to the various contingency contracting teams and everyone really did their best."

POLICY

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The command's overarching goal is to ensure it has an effective and independent government quality assurance program required by the Federal Acquisition Regulation. The program assures contracted services or supplies conform to contract requirements, and contractors are "acceptably maintaining" their quality control systems to ensure they are providing acceptable services or supplies.

Merry said it is also important to

understand that quality control is the responsibility of contractors, and the MICC Quality Assurance Program focus is determining that contractors are maintaining adequate quality control inspection systems congruent with the services performed and supplies furnished under contracts.

Merry pointed out that it is difficult to hold contractors responsible and accountable for performance and quality

control if requirements have not been well defined with measureable outcomes. This is where quality assurance specialists can play a role in the pre-award process through assisting in determining if requirements are written with well-defined outcomes.

The new quality assurance program policy is available on the MICC SharePoint site.

JCRX-13 SUPPORT

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Samson conducted the civilian professional development session during this year's exercise.

"I am both proud and appreciative of our civilian contracting workforce. None of our civilian contracting professionals have position descriptions requiring them to train our military contracting personnel," Samson said. "They are busy supporting the many ACC customer activities, which is a full-time job in and of itself.

"They invest in our Soldiers because they believe it is important, because they want to make a positive difference in our Army and because they are committed to the Army contracting team," he said. "In return, our 51Cs can provide workload capacity and capability to the local contracting offices."

According to exercise planners, the exercise was a highly realistic challenge, designed to prepare joint military contracting personnel to deploy and perform their procurement missions under demanding conditions.

Samson said the civilian volunteer cadre is a mission-critical asset for preparing military participants to execute all phases of contracting in an efficient, effective and legally compliant manner.

"The 51C provides contracting support at home station, during contingency operations, at training and readiness exercises, and during combat operations," he said. "They provide a unique capability to the Army.

"As we know, our service's slogan is - Army Strong," Samson said. "I submit that our 51C formation adds strength to the Army and our civilian contracting professionals add strength to our contracting Soldiers."



ACC in the News

These articles mention Army Contracting Command.

Contracting interns tour missile systems they support

By Skip Vaughn

Editor, *The Redstone Rocket*

(Published in *The Redstone Rocket*, Jan. 30, 2013)

The contracting interns had gotten an aviation tour months ago, so it was only fitting that they visited the missile side Thursday.

About 50 interns from the Army Contracting Command-Redstone received an overview and demonstration from the Precision Fires Rocket and Missile Systems Project Office, part of the Program Executive Office for Missiles and Space. Their tour site was the Prototype Integration Facility's Barclay Hall.

http://www.theredstonerocket.com/news/article_6c764aba-6af6-11e2-a045-001a4bcf887a.html

Joint contracting exercise commences

Army Contracting Command Public Affairs

(Published in *the Fort Bliss Monitor*, Jan. 31, 2013)

More than 300 participants, trainers and support staff arrived at Fort Bliss as part of Joint Contracting Readiness Exercise 2013, the U.S. Army Contracting Command's annual contingency contracting readiness exercise.

The Army Contracting Command designed forum and exercise trains military and deployable civilian contracting officers in warrior and contracting specific tasks. Trainees and cadre members from Army Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force components are participating. This hands-on training exposes contingency contracting officers to contracting and contingency challenges while affording them the opportunity to develop and exchange solutions with their peers from other services and Army components.

<http://fbmonitor.com/2013/01/31/joint-contracting-exercise-commences/>

Post-It note message battles suicides

By Charles Molineaux

(Aired on *48News in Huntsville, Ala.*, Feb. 5, 2013)

(*John Murray Jr. is the son of ACC Command Sgt. Maj. John and Ingrid Murray.*)

HUNTSVILLE, AL (WAFF) - Seven-year-old John Murray Jr. makes his message simple and clear as he writes it out with a marker on four Post-It notes: "Ask for help!!!" (The fourth note is for the exclamation points.)

It's his prescription for troubled U.S. soldiers and veterans as the Army faces a growing problem with suicides.

<http://www.waff.com/story/20971894/2nd-grader-gets-to-the-heart-of-army-suicides-ask-for-help>



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