

MRAP Joint Program Office Takes Home Inaugural Vehicle Award

Marine Corps Systems Command Corporate Communications (FEB. 16, 2012)

Carden Hedelt

QUANTICO, Va.—After the Allies landed at Normandy on D-Day during World War II, keeping the front line well supplied was vital to maintaining the foothold that the Allied Forces had fought so hard to win in the first place. Due to damaged French rail lines, the only way to move supplies was by convoy. Called the Red Ball Express, the convoy employed nearly 6,000 trucks at its height and was able to move about 12,500 tons of critical supplies per day.

It seems fitting that the National Defense Industrial Association (NDIA) awarded their inaugural Red Ball Express Award, bearing the name of this urgent and necessary ground endeavor, to the Mine Resistant Ambush Protected Vehicle Joint Program Office (MRAP JPO). NDIA presented the award to the MRAP team in February at the Tactical Wheeled Vehicle (TWV) Conference in Monterey, Calif.

The Red Ball Express Award goes to a government organization, industry organization, or individual proved deserving through significant contributions to national security by developing or procuring TWVs, or contributing to technology critical to TWVs. This specific award honors accomplishments from April 1, 2010, through March 30, 2011. MRAP's award recognizes two of the team's procurements in that time period: the MRAP Recovery Vehicle (MRV) and the MRAP All-Terrain Vehicle (M-ATV).

Dave Hansen, Marine Corps Systems Command's joint program manager for MRAP, and John Rooney, MRAP JPO's technical director, accepted the award to acknowledge all the work the MRAP JPO team has accomplished since its founding in October 2007.

"This is supposed to be an award for a group or body who exemplifies not only TWVs, but who has the greatest impact on them going forward," Hansen said. "We thought we had a pretty good path going forward for the award thinking that MRAP has affected all TWVs, at least in the survivability category, because almost everybody's survivability criteria have gone up because of us. Everyone always says 'MRAP levels of protection' now, and that's a testament to the work we've done here."

According to Hansen, the MRV stands as the most capable and complex recovery vehicle the Department of Defense has ever fielded. It employs an elevating, rotating, and extendable 30-ton boom; dual boom winches; towing winch;

and an independent underlift capacity with an articulated towing crossbar. The vehicle can tow up to 55,000 pounds and offers the same level of protection as the rest of the MRAP family of vehicles (FOV).

Only 147 days passed between contract award and fielding of the first three MRVs.

"It's a very complex vehicle, so getting from contract award to fielding in such a brief time is a huge accomplishment," Hansen said. "The other MRAP vehicles concentrated on protecting people inside the truck. This one protects the people inside, plus it has thousands and thousands of pounds in towing capacity, additional recovery capabilities, and much more."

According to the award nomination, the MRV's manufacturer took a risk and initiated production based on a preexisting truck model of theirs before there was a firm requirement. This risk made the MRV's rapid fielding possible.

The acquisition process for the M-ATV was also very rapid, with the request for proposals going out in December of 2008 and the contract award coming seven months later in June 2009.

"That was a competitive source selection and we had several competitors—just about anybody who did anything in the TWV community competed," Hansen said. "For a major truck program to be competitively bought inside of seven months is pretty impressive, too."

That tight timeline is also impressive because the M-ATV was born out of a tricky requirement: Make a lighter, more maneuverable vehicle that can tackle Afghanistan's rugged terrain while still offering MRAP-level protection.

"The M-ATV had to be under 25,000 pounds, and our closest MRAP that we previously bought was in the 38,000-40,000 pound range," Hansen said. "We really did push industry to come up with a design that could still protect four passengers and a gunner at the same protection levels as every other MRAP vehicle."

Once the M-ATV was designed, tested, produced, and fielded, the trucks quickly rolled off the assembly line.

At the start of the Red Ball Express Award period, 1,000 M-ATVs had already been fielded and more were coming at the rate of about 500 trucks a month. Another 5,700 vehicles would enter the field in the next year, taking the total number of M-ATVs fielded to more than 7,000. The

contract also provided for new training as there is little commonality between the M-ATV and the rest of the MRAP FOV.

Despite the reduction in weight and other differences, according to MRAP officials, the M-ATV provides protection similar to the line of vehicles that has set a higher standard for personnel protection in TWVs.

"The M-ATV is equal to any other MRAP that we have out there today," Hansen said. "We do extremely well at saving lives and that's the number one thing. Lots of people are still here because of the M-ATV and all the other MRAPs. You always hear the number of people that MRAPs have saved and the actual number is classified, but it's a very significant number however you look at it."



MONTEREY, Calif.—From left: Dave Hansen, Marine Corps Systems Command's joint program manager for the Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicle, and John Rooney, MRAP's technical director, accept the Red Ball Express award from retired Air Force Lt. Gen. Lawrence Farrell, president and chief executive officer for the National Defense Industrial Association.

Photo courtesy National Defense Industrial Association

AFMC Wins International Waste Management Awards

AIR FORCE MATERIEL COMMAND PUBLIC AFFAIRS (FEB. 28, 2012)

Brian Brackens

WRIGHT-PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Ohio—The Air Force Materiel Command Asset Management Division recently earned the Richard I. Stessel Waste Management Award, making the AFMC team the first federal entity honored by the Air and Waste Management Association.

The association named the AFMC division a winner of the Stessel award for demonstrating its leadership in promoting waste management and environmental compliance throughout the command.

"The Stessel Award represents 20 years of AFMC environmental professionals supporting the command's mission by lowering costs, increasing efficiency, and making the world a better place by reducing hazardous waste," said Lt. Col. Mark Madaus, chief of AFMC's Natural and Cultural Infrastructure Branch.

The Air and Waste Management Association is a non-profit international environmental management organization,

which serves as a forum for industry professionals and annually presents awards to organizations that make a positive environmental impact.

The association also awarded Jim Ryckman, Aeronautical Systems Center environmental engineer and former AFMC Air Quality program manager, with the 2012 Richard Beatty Mellon Award for excellence in environmental stewardship and public educational outreach.

"The Mellon Award is a true testament of Jim Ryckman's commitment to the field," said Madaus. "He has invested so much time in education and outreach efforts, and over the years has literally interacted with tens of thousands of people—helping to grow the next generation of environmental leaders."

Peter Hess, chair of the Air and Waste Management awards committee said that the AFMC team was selected due to its commitment to managing and reducing waste.

"Air Force Materiel Command demonstrated excellence in developing and implementing an aggressive, credible program for waste management," he said. "The judging body was particularly impressed by the leadership of the pro-

gram's developers and how the program was embraced by the command."

AFMC stood out among the international nominees for the award said Hess.

"The bar was set very high for candidates of the Stessel Award," he said. "The four international finalists for the award were all deserving to be winners, but AFMC's program had the broadest application and success."

Jeff Munday, chief of AFMC's Asset Management Division, credits the award to the work of installations throughout the command.

"While the division got the award, the real credit has to go to all the installations, because that's where the rubber meets the road and that's where the real action has taken place," he said. "With guidance and funding, we've been able to support installations and put in place efforts to reduce our hazardous waste."

Dave Fort, AFMC energy program manager and former manager of the Hazardous Waste Management Program said the award is a reflection of the people working throughout the command.

"AFMC has some of the best waste managers in the Department of Defense," he said. "They know their bases, they know their processes, they know their programs. No one person won this award. It was a collective effort of hundreds of people and their commitment, which reflects the quality of people we have working in AFMC."

AFLCMC Planning Tempo Quickens

88TH AIR BASE WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS (MARCH 6, 2012)

Derek Kaufman

WRIGHT-PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Ohio—The "champion" shepherding planning for the standup of the Air Force Life Cycle Management Center says input from the workforce is critical for the proposed new organization to be successful.

Col. Art Huber, vice commander of the Aeronautical Systems Center at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, is overseeing the monumental planning effort to be ready for the planned initial operational capability of AFLCMC by Oct. 1, 2012.

"We're forging the foundation for this new organization now, and we have a responsibility to both America's warfight-

ers and taxpayers to do this right," Huber said. "Our core planning team has considerable cross-functional experience located at bases across AFMC. However they need participants with good ideas, questions, and concerns to share them."

Huber noted some 500 professionals are on the teams working to define roles and responsibilities and ready to execute the tasks to stand up an entirely new organization.

"We're doing so with a vision to develop a single center responsible for total life cycle management of weapon systems."

One thing the colonel wanted to make absolutely clear is the Air Force Life Cycle Management Center's organization and approach will be completely new.

"The AFLCMC will be an entirely new unit, rather than one that inherits its lineage from any of its constituent predecessors," Huber said. The new unit will include some 26,000 people located at 75 geographic locations.

As part of a command-wide restructure, Air Force Materiel Command officials announced Nov. 2, 2011, plans to consolidate certain missions and activities, reducing the number of centers from 12 to five. The plan aims to reduce overhead costs and redundant layers of staff and is expected to generate \$109 million annually in Air Force savings. The Air Force announced Feb. 29, 2012, the nomination of Lt. Gen. C.D. Moore II, AFMC vice commander, for appointment as commander of AFLCMC.

AFLCMC will have oversight of missions now performed by the Aeronautical Systems Center at Wright-Patterson AFB; the Electronic Systems Center at Hanscom AFB, Mass.; the Air Armament Center at Eglin AFB, Fla.; and three Aerospace Sustainment Directorates located at Robins, Hill, and Tinker AFBs. The entire workforce of these organizations will report to the AFLCMC, eliminating layers of management overhead.

Joining AFLCMC will be the Air Force Security Assistance and Cooperation Directorate, formerly the Air Force Security Assistance Center. It will continue the foreign military sales mission from its Wright-Patt location. Additionally, AFLCMC will include a newly designated Propulsion Directorate lead at Tinker AFB. This directorate will oversee engine acquisition work performed at Wright-Patterson and engine sustainment work accomplished at Tinker.



A re-winged A-10 Thunderbolt II is rolled out during a ceremony Feb. 15, 2012, at Hill Air Force Base, Utah. Officials at bases across Air Force Materiel Command are hard at work readying for a command-wide restructure to cut overhead costs, make every defense dollar count, and support the warfighter. The Air Force Life Cycle Management Center, a new organization to be headquartered at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio, will lead integrated, cradle-to-grave life cycle management of Air Force weapon systems like the A-10.

U.S. Air Force photo by Alex Lloyd

Program offices that today are organizationally aligned under aeronautical sustainment directorates at the three air logistics centers will report to program executive officers at AFLCMC acquisition directorates, Huber said. The 66th Air Base Group at Hanscom AFB and the 88th Air Base Wing at Wright-Patterson will report to AFLCMC.

“Under the new organizational construct, it’s important to note that the fundamental acquisition and sustainment processes that we execute will not change initially,” Huber said. “However, who executes these processes and the ‘touch points’ between locations and between centers will change in many instances. Over time, we hope to standardize them across the center and continuously improve them.”

Planning teleconferences and integration meetings between AFLCMC implementation team members are ongoing. An Integrated Master Schedule has been created to help document, prioritize, and phase tasks, once the implementation decision to proceed is finalized.

“As we consolidate functional responsibilities, we will need to ensure the resources are in place to take on the mission. We need to be careful not to duplicate efforts. We need to

ensure that reporting chains make sense and are consistent with statutory requirements. We need to ensure we don’t create functional stovepipes or processes that limit flexibility of program managers and PEOs to make those critical decisions related to requirements, test, performance, cost and schedule,” Huber said.

AFMC 2011 Facility Energy Excellence Award Winners Announced

AIR FORCE MATERIEL COMMAND PUBLIC AFFAIRS (MARCH 9, 2012)

Libby VanHook

WRIGHT-PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Ohio—Gen. Donald Hoffman, Air Force Materiel Command commander, announced during the Energy Management Steering Group on March 6, 2012, that Eglin Air Force Base, Fla., captured first place in the command’s first Facility Energy Excellence Award. Second place was awarded to Hill AFB, Utah, and Edwards AFB, Calif., received third place.

The award is intended to recognize efforts in promoting energy reduction, changing the energy culture, and recognizing the performance of the installation facility energy managers. Categories focused on a variety of program factors target-

ing cultural change, weighted at 80 percent, and energy reduction, weighted at 20 percent. The award acknowledges outstanding accomplishments from January 2011 through December 2011.

The cultural change components being judged covered various indicators including program leadership, action plans, energy investments, and energy awareness. *Culture change* continues to be one of three pillars of the Air Force vision to “make energy a consideration in all we do.” The other pillars are *reduce demand* and *increase supply*.

The energy reduction component was assessed by measuring the actual reduction in energy intensity as reported to the Air Force Civil Engineer Support Agency, and compared with the previous year’s consumption.

“Each of these installations built a robust energy management program focused on implementing energy conservation opportunities and emphasizing stewardship to impact energy awareness at the point of consumption,” said Paul Parker, AFMC director of communications, installations, and mission support. “These efforts are commendable and result in both energy and financial savings for the command.

“This competition was about more than just statistics,” he said. “It’s about conserving energy, reducing demand, and changing culture, resulting in the reduction of our energy footprint while also helping to improve our energy security posture. Together, let’s continue to make energy conservation a consideration in all we do.”

Navy Announces 2012 Young Investigator Research Awards

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE NEWS RELEASE (MARCH 27, 2012)

The Department of the Navy is awarding \$13.7 million to university professors selected from a record number of applicants for the Office of Naval Research’s (ONR) Young Investigator Program (YIP), officials announced March 26.

The ONR YIP is one of the oldest and most selective scientific research advancement programs in the country. Its purpose is to fund early-career academic researchers—called investigators—whose scientific pursuits show exceptional promise for supporting the Navy and Marine Corps while also promoting their professional development.

“The Department of the Navy’s support of these outstanding research scientists is one of the ways we will maintain our technological advantage for the Navy and Marine Corps and our nation,” said Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus. “The Young Investigator Program rewards these emerging leaders

in STEM [science, technology, engineering, and mathematics] fields.”

The 26 winners of ONR’s 2012 (YIP) were selected from a diverse pool of more than 350 candidates. They represent 19 academic institutions across the country in disciplines ranging from nanomaterials, robotics, and marine meteorology to undersea medicine, learning behaviors, and psychology. Each selectee receives annual monetary awards over a three-year period for research efforts that hold promise in advancing naval technology. The list of the 2012 YIP winners can be found at <http://ow.ly/9QnmZ>.

Office of Naval Research’s YIP awardees are college and university faculty who have attained tenure-track positioning over the past five years. They are selected based upon the merit of their research and potential contributions for game-changing advances for the Navy and Marine Corps. Many YIP winners continue to engage in naval research beyond their award periods, and their research careers often accelerate earning them opportunities and prominence in their respective fields.

The YIP began in 1985 when ONR selected 10 winners and awarded them \$50,000 per year for three years. Since then, the program has grown steadily to include a total of 579 recipients who represent 120 institutions of higher education.

For more information, contact the ONR Corporate Strategic Communications Office at 703-696-5031.

Pentagon Issues Challenge for Learning Applications

AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE (MARCH 28, 2012)

WASHINGTON—Defense Department officials today launched a challenge to industry to develop innovative mobile applications that provide science, technology, engineering, and math learning tools.

The contest, which will run from April 2 to June 4, is headed by the Advanced Distributed Learning Initiative, a DoD research and development office.

The Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) App Challenge will benefit national STEM efforts for kindergarten through high school education, but also have an immediate impact on the Defense Department, said Kristy Murray, director of the Advanced Distributed Learning Initiative.

“We are always looking for innovative ideas for how we better incorporate mobile devices for learning within DoD,” Murray said.

The challenge is open to all mobile app developers who have creative ideas for developing apps that foster problem-solving, discovery, and exploratory learning in the targeted area of common misconceptions of science, Murray said. There is no cost for entering the challenge.

Winning developers will be showcased at the Advanced Distributed Learning Initiative's iFest Conference in Orlando, Fla., July 31 to Aug 2. For more information or to submit an entry, visit the STEM App Challenge website.

New Contracting Tool Offers Insights Into Capability, Capacity

U.S. ARMY ACQUISITION SUPPORT CENTER (MARCH 29, 2012)

Senior decision makers with the Mission and Installation Contracting Command (MICC) at Fort Sam Houston, TX, have a new planning tool that allows them to better gauge their effectiveness in executing the acquisition mission.

The Capacity and Capability Model, or CAP2, provides a methodology to measure the capacity and capability of MICC Mission Contracting Centers (MCCs), mission contracting offices, and installation contracting offices throughout the nation to perform their missions for customers.

"Developed by a cross-functional team of contracting, financial, and personnel experts, the CAP2 was designed to support the MICC's transformation and delegated authority to regional mission contracting centers," said Pat Hogston, director of MICC Contract Support, Plans, and Operations (CSPO).

MICC restructured its contracting centers and installation contracting offices under seven regional MCCs in 2011 to improve customer service and workload distribution while establishing a more effective span of control that contributes to the standardization of procedures and processes.

Fielding of the CAP2 Model to MCC directors follows a 100 percent data validation screening involving MICC contracting offices.

The capacity and capability components of the CAP2 Model take a deliberate approach, matching necessary manpower and skills.

Capacity takes into consideration whether MICC contracting offices have the resources available to sustain the contracting activity required to meet customer demands for acquisition services. It is supported by a MICC internal manpower model, which is fashioned after the U.S. Army Training and



Army Brig. Gen. Stephen B. Leisenring, U.S. Army Mission and Installation Contracting Command commanding general, explains the new MICC organizational structure to the seven Mission Contracting Center directors Sept. 7, 2011, at Fort Sam Houston.

U.S. Army photo by Ben Gonzales

Doctrine Command manpower model. The MICC model is based on process-oriented, statistically based studies of a variety of actions commonly performed by contracting offices. The MICC internal manpower model goes beyond the TRADOC studies by accounting for recent changes in the resources required for multimillion-dollar task and delivery orders, as well as contract administration efforts.

Capability measures the MICC contracting activities' performance relative to personnel qualifications, certifications, skill attributes, and experience. It also captures statistics necessary for succession planning and other management considerations.

The capacity and capability components of the CAP2 Model take a deliberate approach, matching necessary manpower and skills.

"While other contracting metrics and manpower models are available, one aspect that distinguishes the CAP2 is the side-by-side view of resources needed and qualitative measures reflecting the ability of existing resources to perform the mission," said Alix Gayton, chief of the Workload Assess-

ment and Management Branch for the MICC CSPO Plans and Programs Division.

She added that MICC leaders will continue to use situational information on various mission sets among the different units served. With the assistance of the CAP2, decision makers can baseline functions and assess norms across their respective families of work.

The capacity and capability components roll up into a dashboard presentation, offering MICC leaders at all levels a snapshot of opportunity and risk assessment by area of responsibility.

Witnessing 40 Years of Change at Natick

U.S. ARMY GARRISON-NATICK PUBLIC AFFAIRS (MARCH 29, 2012)

Bob Reinert

NATICK, Mass.—Chris Pentheny will never forget Valentine's Day, 1972. On that Monday, he started a job at a place where he would spend the next 40 years. It must have been love at first sight.

The then 24-year-old Pentheny, a graduate of Lowell (Mass.) Technological Institute, began work as a laboratory technician at what came to be known as the Natick Soldier Systems Center. On March 30, he will finally leave for retirement.

"At that time, I never planned I'd spend a career here," said Pentheny, "but as it turned out, it was just one thing led to another. It was a very interesting 40 years here, which has gone by so very fast."

When Pentheny got to Natick, President Nixon was in the White House and the Vietnam War had yet to end. He departs under President Obama with the nation's military fighting in Afghanistan. Pentheny has seen a great deal unfold in the intervening years.

"I've been here through eight presidents," said Pentheny, "and I've spent my entire career in Building 4."

For most of his four decades at Natick, Pentheny has worked as a textile technologist in the clothing and textiles directorate. He finishes with Program Manager-Soldier Clothing and Individual Equipment, but he has worked with pretty much everybody on just about everything.

"Over my career, there [have] been so many changes," said Pentheny, a Hopkinton, Mass., native who has bachelor's and master's degrees from Lowell. "I've worked on so many different project areas. Every time I turned around, it was a new and interesting adventure. I just enjoyed it the whole time.



Chris Pentheny has seen dramatic changes in soldier technologies over his 40 years as a textile technologist at Natick Soldier Systems Center. Pentheny retires March 30, 2012.

U.S. Army photo

"Trying to learn the new technologies and rolling your sleeves up and getting into it [were] the best part of it. I really enjoyed the science part of it."

Pentheny recalled that he was a member of the Natick team that originally evaluated GORE-TEX. He recently found a sample of it as he cleaned out his office in anticipation of his last day.

"I would say that product finally came about in the first generation of the extended cold-weather clothing system," Pentheny said. "That's really when the GORE-TEX became first adopted by the military."

No matter what he worked on, Pentheny always enjoyed the company.

"The one thing I liked most is the people I've met at Natick," Pentheny said. "Everybody's been wonderful."

Pentheny's career spanned two-thirds of the 58 years Natick has existed. The installation has changed dramatically, and its reputation has grown during Pentheny's time here.

"I think the organization is well known and recognized throughout the industry, at least the textile industry," Pentheny said. "Knowing that, and having been part of that, makes me very proud."

Pentheny isn't quite sure what path he will follow in retirement.

"This is another change," said Pentheny, "and another new adventure."

Airman Earns Top Maintenance Award

EGLIN AIR FORCE BASE PUBLIC AFFAIRS
(MARCH 30, 2012)

Kevin Gaddie

EGLIN AIR FORCE BASE, Fla.—Air Force Senior Airman Alexander Blench, an avionics specialist with the 46th Maintenance Squadron here, recently earned the 2011 Lt. Gen. Leo Marquez award in the technical category.

The award recognizes Blench's excellence in aircraft technical maintenance.

Receiving the award is "mind-blowing," Blench said.

"I honestly wasn't expecting it to go to the Air Force level," he said. "The award is a result of a team effort. I could not have done this by myself. This award is a direct result of the knowledge passed on to me by my supervisor, Staff Sgt. Nathaniel Hensley."

Blench enlisted in the Air Force in January 2008 and has been stationed here since November 2010. He works on the F-15 C and E models.

"I specialize on electronic warfare and countermeasure systems," the Escondido, Calif., native said. "I do all kinds of work on the aircraft, to include wiring, flight controls, environmental systems, munitions guidance systems, and video lines."

According to his awards package, Blench isolated a countermeasure failure, rectified a faulty radar elevation discrepancy, and replaced a defective computer to solve a flight control failure. His efforts contributed to the successful completion of several F-15 test missions.



Senior Airman Alexander Blench, an avionics specialist with the 46th Maintenance Squadron at Eglin Air Force Base, Fla., performs modifications to improve reliability of inlet ramp scheduling on the F-15 E model. Blench recently won the 2011 Lt. Gen. Leo Marquez award for maintenance excellence in the technical category.

U.S. Air Force photo by Kevin Gaddie

Blench described himself as a hands-on type of person.

"I love taking things apart and rebuilding them," he said. "This career field gives me an opportunity to do what I like to do. When I'm put on a job that takes four to five days to figure out what the problem is, and tear the jet apart, it's enjoyable for me."

Blench said he began his mechanical experience as a kid working in his father's machine shop.

"I've always been in that kind of environment," he said. "Just before I joined the Air Force, I refurbished helicopter engines—tearing apart the linings and re-welding them, looking for cracks, things like that."

Blench said he plans to make the Air Force a career.

"I would like to press through the ranks to a position of leadership, and make life better for airmen coming up behind me," he said.