

Western Region Picks Up Where Central Region Leaves Off

Restructuring, Innovative Teaching Strategies, Facilities Upgrade at DSMC's Western Region

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Located in beautiful, sunny Southern California, the Defense Systems Management College (DSMC) Western Regional Center (WRC) is located on Los Angeles Air Force Base, about three miles from Los Angeles International Airport. Also situated on the base is the Air Force Space and Missile Systems Center (SMC), where many of the Air Force's newest acquisition programs are currently being started. In close proximity is the Defense Contract Management Command's (DCMC) Western Region Headquarters. Together, their missions require acquisition and program management skills that traverse all levels and categories of the acquisition disciplines. As a result, SMC and DCMC are a rich source of potential students for the WRC.

A Brief History

Recently, the DSMC WRC Director, Robert Tate, hosted Army Brig. Gen. Richard A. Black, DSMC Commandant; and DSMC Air Force Chair, Anthony "Tony" Kausal, during Black's first visit to both activities. The WRC visit was part of Black's oversight tour of several West Coast Defense Acquisition University (DAU) consortium schools.

Prior to closing the DSMC Central Regional Center and establishing a new DSMC Mid-Atlantic Regional Center, the DSMC Central and West-



ROBERT TATE, DIRECTOR, WESTERN REGION (RIGHT) DISCUSSES THE WESTERN REGION'S PENDING MOVE TO ANOTHER AIR FORCE BUILDING WITH DSMC COMMANDANT, ARMY BRIG. GEN. RICHARD A. BLACK. ALSO JOINING THE DISCUSSION IS LISA GEORGE (LEFT), THE DSMC WESTERN REGION'S MANAGEMENT SUPPORT ASSISTANT.

ern Regional Centers shared the area west of the Mississippi River. The approximate dividing line created the DSMC WRC, which included the Mountain and Pacific Coast states as well as the two OCONUS states of Alaska and Hawaii.

Since closing the DSMC Central Regional Center in St. Louis, the DSMC WRC now covers a much larger geographical area. Within the area are located four of the five Air Force Materiel Command Depots ó McClellan, Hill, Tinker, and Kelly.

Several vast test ranges, maneuver areas, and complexes fall within WRC's geographical boundaries: White Sands; China Lake and Point Mugu; Edwards; Tonopah; Nellis; the National Test Range at Fort Irwin; Yuma Proving Ground; Fort Huachuca; Marine Corps Camp Pendelton and 29 Palms; and two Warfare Centers – Space and Tactical Warfare. In addition to these areas, Vandenberg AFB is the launch area for all polar orbiting satellites and all missile intercept test activity; and Kirtland is the home for laboratories as well as the

Tate is currently the Director, Western Regional Center, DSMC, Los Angeles AFB, Calif., a position he assumed in January 1995. Prior to that, he served as a professor of engineering, functional manager, and course director at the DSMC main Fort Belvoir, Va., campus from June 1984 to January 1994. Tate holds a B.S. in Electrical Engineering from San Diego State College and an M.S. from Central Michigan University. He is also a graduate of the University of California Executive Program.

DSMC WESTERN REGION'S FUTURE HOME WILL EVENTUALLY BE A NEW ACQUISITION EDUCATION CENTER WHERE THE REGION WILL BE THE LEAD TENANT. STANDING IN FRONT OF THE NEW BUILDING ARE FROM LEFT: EDWARD SALEM, DIRECTOR OF STRATEGIC PLANNING, SMC; ARMY BRIG. GEN. RICHARD A. BLACK, DSMC COMMANDANT; TONY KAUSAL, AIR FORCE CHAIR, DSMC EXECUTIVE INSTITUTE; AND ROBERT TATE, DSMC WESTERN REGION DIRECTOR.



airborne laser project and other space test activities.

Nothing So Constant as Change

In addition to these installations and their ongoing activities, change resulting from the Base Realignment and Closure decisions is a reliable constant. Within the WRC, two major shipyards closed – Mare Island and Long Beach; two Air Force Depots, McClellan and Kelly, are in the process of privatization; the Navy Aircraft Repair Facility at Alameda closed; and the Navy is relocating its Space and Naval Warfare Command Headquarters from the nation's Capitol area to San Diego. This Headquarters move either augments or upgrades a local acquisition workforce, which results in additional Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA) education requirements.



THE AIR FORCE SPACE AND MISSILE SYSTEMS CENTER (SMC) AT LOS ANGELES AFB, CALIF., HOSTED THE DSMC COMMANDANT AND AIR FORCE CHAIR DURING A VISIT TO THE DSMC WESTERN REGION. SMC IS WHERE MANY OF THE AIR FORCE'S NEWEST ACQUISITION PROGRAMS ARE CURRENTLY BEING STARTED. PICTURED ARE STAFF AND FACULTY FROM SMC, DSMC, AND THE WESTERN REGION. FROM LEFT: TONY KAUSAL, AIR FORCE CHAIR, DSMC EXECUTIVE INSTITUTE; AIR FORCE COL. MICHAEL KAYE, CHIEF OF ACQUISITION DEVELOPMENT, SMC; LESLIE BORDELON, DIRECTOR OF SYSTEMS ACQUISITION, SMC; ARMY BRIG. GEN. RICHARD A. BLACK, DSMC COMMANDANT; JANET HODGES, WESTERN REGIONAL OFFICE MANAGER, DTIC; DALAL ESTRADA, APDP AND TRAINING MANAGER; AIR FORCE LT. COL. JAMES A. REGO, JR., DEPUTY CHIEF, PROGRAM OPERATIONS, LAUNCH PROGRAMS SPO, SMC; EDWARD SALEM, DIRECTOR OF STRATEGIC PLANNING, SMC; AND ROBERT TATE, DIRECTOR, DSMC WESTERN REGION.

All of these organizations and changes impact the Acquisition workforce either directly or indirectly – some by staying and some by going – and almost always generate out-of-cycle requirements. With the closing of Mare Island, the WRC received a large influx of ACAT I and II acquisition students en route to their new duty locations – most to headquarters' positions. New staffing requirements at the Marine Corps Tactical Systems Support Activity increased their out-of-cycle requirements.

Curriculum, Resources, Teaching Strategy

The DSMC WRC currently conducts only mandatory DAWIA courses, focusing on Acquisition 101 and 201 as well as other selected courses, including some test and evaluation courses and a few mandatory business courses. WRC conducts most of these courses in its large classroom facility, augmented by other local classrooms when scheduling dictates two simultaneous offerings. However, courses are also conducted at the client's on-site location.

Students attending courses at the WRC can participate in extra-curricular activities, access the online Acquisition Deskbook and various other acquisition websites, view some of the DSMC faculty tapes, and use other resources. These resources are not available to students attending courses at local, on-site locations.

During the DSMC Commandant's visit, he and the WRC Director discussed various alternative teaching methods such as distance learning [Technology-Based Education and Training], as a means to implement on-site training away from the WRC without significantly reducing the quality of instruction and extra support that enhances acquisition education.

Branching Out

For some time now, the WRC Director and the DSMC Commandant have collaborated to establish tributary or dis-

tributary locations throughout the WRC to establish a presence, forward course material, hand out current items like the *Program Manager* magazine and the CD-ROM Acquisition Deskbook, and augment student material with a permanent reference collection. The DSMC Commandant and WRC Director are in agreement that knowing and working with local points of contact will help to smooth the way for classroom set-up and more effective and efficient course delivery.

With the large segment of the acquisition workforce population located, or soon to be located within the geographical boundaries of the Western Region, DSMC and the WRC are looking at five tentative candidate locations for establishing these small tributary or district locations. Together, they intend to carry out their joint vision of taking a quality education directly to the professional acquisition workforce.

As the first location, they selected San Diego, now home to the relocated Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command (SPAWAR). SPAWAR brought to San Diego an influx of headquarters personnel and their training requirements – requirements that the WRC had not factored into prior planning activities. Since the DSMC Commandant's visit, the WRC conducted an ACQ 201 Intermediate Systems Acquisition Course in the San Diego area, using a rented classroom. However, effort is underway to attain a classroom and small office to serve this new activity.

Other tentative locations for a similar small office with a suitable classroom include Fort Huachuca, Kirtland AFB, Hill AFB, and the China Lake/Edwards AFB high desert area. All of these areas host not only a substantial number of professional acquisition workforce members, but also require unique types of training.

Also during his visit, the DSMC Commandant visited SMC Headquarters, including a courtesy call with the SMC Technical Director, followed by the

SMC Command Briefing. During the visit, discussions were also held concerning WRC's pending move to another Air Force building. This new location will eventually be a new Acquisition Education Center where DSMC will be the lead tenant. The new location provides more classroom, office, storage, and study space. Moreover, the addition of study space will permit DSMC to offer not only the traditional classes, but new, enhanced Technology-Based Education and Training-oriented courses, including computer-based CD-ROM courses and Internet-connected courses. A reading room equipped for hard copy as well as electronic dissemination will provide students the latest acquisition information. Also included will be a viewing room for the latest acquisition and management thoughts and ideas presented by various DoD and other speakers on videotape or other multimedia.

The WRC's vision is simply to reinforce the DSMC vision – "...to be the academy of distinction, promoting systems management excellence." Taking that one step further, WRC is working actively to not only support the DSMC vision, but to also become the focal point and recognized forum for the latest acquisition and systems management thoughts and ideas throughout the entire Western Region.

Inquiries

Anyone who desires to take a course offered by DSMC should first contact their local training office for detailed Service/Component/organization procedures on how to apply for DSMC courses. The Service/Component-level points of contact listed in the DSMC 1997 Catalog (pp. 36-37) can advise on specific application procedures. For catalog requests or general information about DSMC courses, schedules, etc., call the Office of the DSMC Registrar at (703) 805-3681, DSN 655-3681, or Toll Free 1-888-284-4906. Information about DSMC courses, schedules, etc., is also available at <http://www.dsmc.dsm.mil> on the DSMC Home Page.