

## IN MEMORIAM

The Defense Acquisition University and the entire defense acquisition workforce extend our deepest sympathy to the family, friends, and colleagues of two defense contracting officers who were killed in a rocket attack on the U.S. Embassy compound in Baghdad on Jan. 29.



Barbara Heald, 60, of Falls Church, Va., was working and living in Saddam Hussein's former palace within the Green Zone on the day of the attack. As a defense contracts negotiator for the Iraq Project and Contracting Office, she served the people of the United States and Iraq by contracting for and delivering services, supplies, and infrastructure identified within the \$18.4 billion Iraqi Relief and Reconstruction Fund.

A native of Stamford, Conn., Heald volunteered to serve in Iraq after retiring from the Department of Agriculture. She spent much of 2004 in Iraq aiding the reconstruction and had recently returned to Iraq for a second stint.



Lt. Cmdr. Keith E. Taylor, USNR, 47, of Irvine, Calif., was also living and working in the Green Zone while serving with Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Central Command Detachment Iraq. As a contracting officer for the Iraqi reconstruction effort, Taylor's job was to award, monitor, and close out contracts for road improvements, schools, and water treatment plants.

A native of Jacksonville, Fla., Taylor was a member of Naval Supply Support Battalion 1 out of San Diego, Calif. Arriving in Baghdad on Oct. 6, 2004, this was his second mobilization. Taylor's first mobilization for Operation Iraqi Freedom lasted from February to June 2003, serving with Naval Air Force Pacific. His second mobilization was to have ended on March 30.

Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology Claude Bolton held a Pentagon memorial service for Heald and Taylor on Feb. 3 at the 9/11 Memorial Chapel.

- Listen to the users. Listen, listen, listen, listen, listen. Ask good, deep, probing, persistent questions, and listen some more. Then, go do.

### 7.0. Trust people.

- 'Nuff said. (For those who insist on more, check out "The PM's Dilemma," *Defense AT&L*, May-June 2004.)

### 8.0. Ensure leaders at the highest level are aware of your program.

- Don't cut the middle-management reviewers out of the loop entirely, but don't let critical information stop half-way up the food chain either.
- Top cover = Good. Mid-level blockages = Bad (but not insurmountable).
- Disagreements about the viability and value of a program are inevitable. A general rule of thumb is to assume the warfighter/user is correct, even if he or she disagrees with some in your chain of command.
- When elements of your chain of command disagree about the viability of a program, the highest ranking person is often correct. *But not always*. This can be determined by reviewing the previous bullet and going along with whoever agrees with the warfighter.
- This means you may need to develop selective hearing occasionally and accept the consequences thereof. It is probably a good idea to enlist the support, assistance, and top-cover of the person whose opinion is in agreement with the warfighter—as well as the warfighter, of course.

### 8.5. Many people will try to shut you down or tell you no.

- The question is whether they ever had the authority to give you a "yes" in the first place. (That piece of programmatic wisdom comes from none other than Oprah Winfrey.) If a person or review board has no authority to give you a "yes" but is very willing to tell you "no," then why did you seek their approval in the first place? Seek out and focus on authorities who can grant you a "yes."

### Funding and its Antecedents

Some within the DoD acquisition community are fond of saying "If it ain't funded, it ain't." There is a kernel of truth here, a partial truth, but we recommend adding the word "yet" to the end of that statement, or maybe "as far as *you* know." The thing is, the cynicism and tunnel vision of the "if it ain't funded" attitude is extremely limiting. How many of our most useful programs, inventions, and concepts would never have occurred if we all had to wait for the legitimacy of real programmatic funding?

Leadership is required here, and we're not talking about people in positions of formal authority. You must overwhelmingly convince your peers, subordinates, superiors, and critics that your program is here to stay and their