

Acquisition integrity stressed to workforce

By Scott Woosley, DDC Public Affairs

Acquisition integrity was the topic of a presentation to the Defense Distribution Center acquisition workforce Nov. 6.

Senior Executive Scottie Knott, director of Acquisition Management for the Defense Logistics Agency, spoke to a gathering of DDC and Document Automation and Production Service personnel to reinforce the message that individual employees are the ones who hold the line on acquisition integrity.

“No amount of oversight can make a contract better,” Knott said. “That’s your responsibility.”

According to Knott, the acquisition workforce makes up approximately 30 percent of DLA’s “white-collar” workforce, more than 2,500 people, and manages more than \$26 billion in obligations. Being a good steward of those taxpayer dollars is a mandate, not an option, she said.

DDC’s Acquisition Operations personnel provided Knott with an overview of their processes for acquisition planning, assistance and post-award accountability. According to Gene Surmacz, director, DDC Acquisitions Operations, Knott believes some of those processes could be applicable to some of DLA’s large privatization and prime vendor contracts.

“The entire day was a valuable session on various acquisition matters,” Surmacz said.

Knott also explained that the need for supply chain integrity went beyond simply being the right thing to do. Those who depend on the items we purchase and deliver, America’s war fighters, deserve nothing less, she said.

While DLA doesn’t buy or distribute “big ticket” items such as



Senior Executive Scottie Knott, director of Acquisition Management for the Defense Logistics Agency speaks to a gathering of Defense Distribution Center and Document Automation and Production Service personnel Nov. 6. Knott stressed the importance of integrity in the acquisition process.

tanks, planes or ships, the items it does deliver—nuts, bolts, uniforms, food, etc.—are vitally important to the people on the front lines. Getting those items at the best price and delivering them in the most efficient manner is what integrity in the acquisition process, in addition to ensuring the process abides by all relevant policies and regulations.

“We do this through our acquisition integrity model,” Knott explained.

The model covers four topics: oversight, policy, workforce development and process improvement, and each is a continuous process.

Knott stressed that appropriate policy requires input from the workforce. Policymakers need information from the workforce about

what works, what doesn’t, what’s practical and what isn’t. Unworkable policies serve no purpose and only make it more likely that violations will occur, she said.

Knott also explained how important workforce development is to the process. The more training and broader understanding the acquisition workforce has of the entire process, the better it will function. Many acquisition areas are intertwined and a well informed, and highly trained workforce helps to find ways to improve the process and increase efficiency.

“I encourage everyone to become familiar with different fields of acquisition,” she explained. “Being a jack-of-all-trades is a good thing in acquisitions.”