

that determines the best value for the taxpayer by examining the benefits of retaining distribution mission work in-house or contracting the work out to a private sector source.

Thanks to the reservists from A-106, the distribution center will be in great shape no matter who takes over operations.

DDRV has been through A-76 in the past, competing in the second round of A-76 in 1999. At that time, the government's proposal for operations, called the "most efficient organization," came out on top when the contract was awarded in 2002.

The results of the current study are scheduled to be announced Aug. 17.



Navy reservists from Defense Distribution Center Detachment A-106 with employees of Defense Distribution Depot Richmond, Va. The reservists assisted DDRV with a re-warehousing project.

Deputy's view of DDSP's mission

Ed Visker, deputy commander, Defense Distribution Depot Susquehanna, Pa., spoke recently to staff at the Defense Distribution Center headquarters. "Our goal is to be the best distribution center in DDC, not just the fastest. We also want to be the safest and have the best environment for our employees."

DDSP is the largest of the 26 distribution centers DDC manages.

Situated at a transportation hub, DDSP is fortunate, Visker said, that "the Army got it right back in 1917 when it bought this land and built the New Cumberland Army Depot." DDSP is located in South Central Pennsylvania and is less than a one-day truck drive from more than 75 percent of the American population.

DDSP processes on average more than 650,000 issues each month. In fiscal year 2006, DDSP shipped more than \$10 billion worth of product to America's war fighters and peacekeepers around the world. All this work adds up to an economic impact to the local area of more than \$300 million annually.

DDSP's operations span the distribution process from picking,

packing, shipping and storage to set assembly, Visker said. For example, members of the DDSP medical team build everything from first aid kits to operating rooms.

According to Visker, improving the DDSP culture is an important part of maintaining the massive operation. Recent employee surveys showed concerns with communications, leadership, and teamwork. To address these concerns, DDSP, and most of DDC, have added more scrutiny to the way they hire supervisors and now require each supervisor to attend a leadership academy.

For the operation to survive, it must also seek continuous improvement, Visker said. To that end, DDSP has adopted many Lean principles (a program for continuous process improvement), and the DDSP workforce has embraced the opportunities to share their knowledge and suggestions. Visker said this is leading DDSP to quality through standardization.

Visker served as the Chief of Staff at DDC headquarters prior to becoming DDSP's deputy commander in 2006. He also commanded two of DDC's distribution centers, Defense Distribution Depots San Joaquin, Calif., and Anniston, Ala.



According to Defense Distribution Depot Susquehanna, Pa., Deputy Commander Ed Visker, the Army made a wise decision in 1917 when it purchased the property currently occupied by DDSP. The location allows access to more than 75 percent of the American population within a one-day drive.



Today, Defense Distribution Depot Susquehanna, Pa., is the largest distribution center in the Department of Defense.