

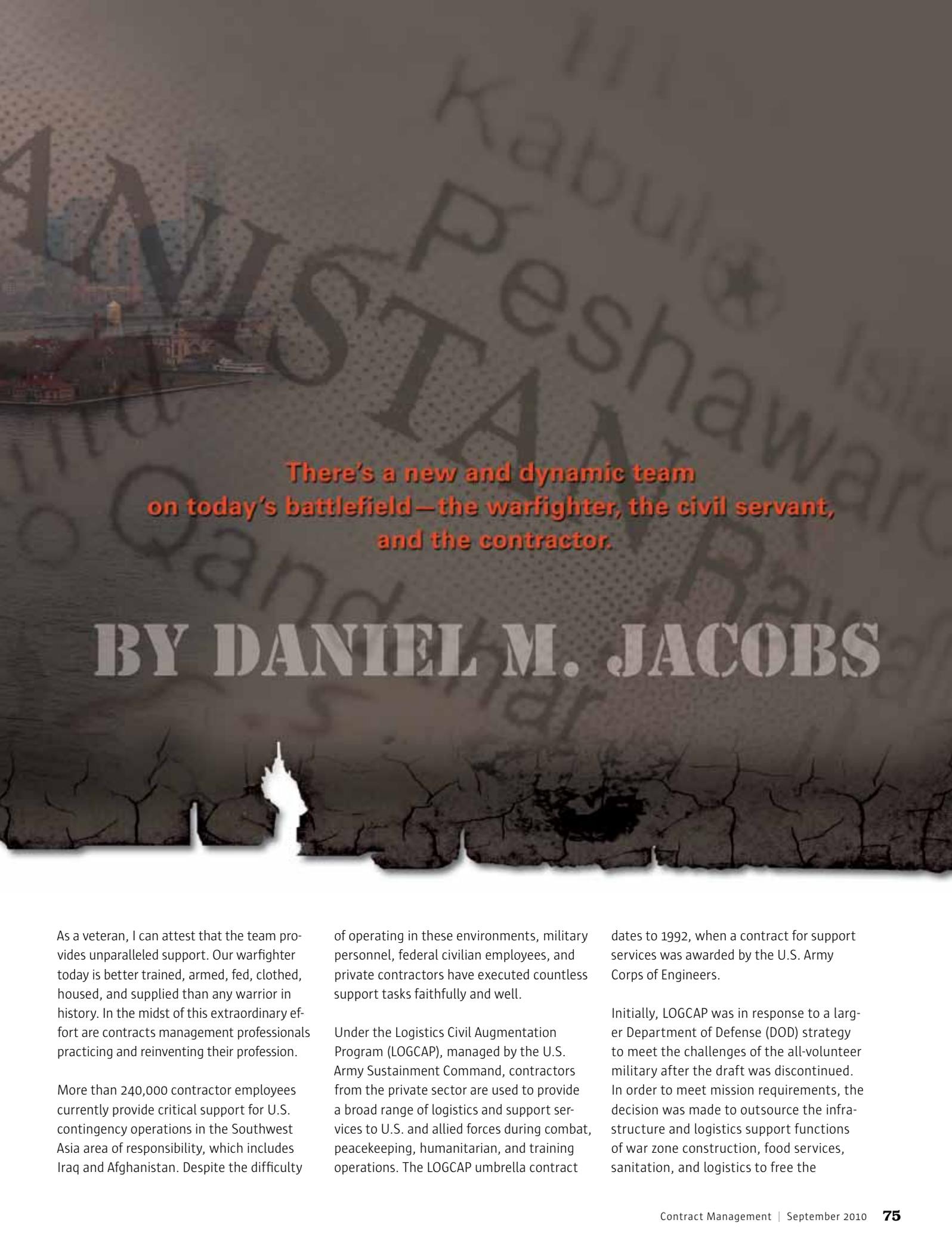
Correction:

In the August 2010 issue of *Contract Management*, the opening paragraphs of this article (“Contract Management in the War Zone—Mission-focused and Succeeding”) were inadvertently omitted during the print process. The full text of the article is reprinted here.

CONTRACT MANAGEMENT IN THE WAR ZONE—

MISSION-FOCUSED AND SUCCEEDING

In a recent 15-day mission to the NATO Air Base in Kandahar, Afghanistan, the challenge of contract management in a war zone was observed first hand, to include a deadly car-bombing in Kandahar and a rocket attack on the base. America is rightfully proud of its men and women who serve; the warfighters, the civil servants, and the contractors—the finest team ever assembled in wartime. Their mission is 24/7 and they are in harm’s way every minute—they are mission-focused and they deliver in spades!



**There's a new and dynamic team
on today's battlefield—the warfighter, the civil servant,
and the contractor.**

BY DANIEL M. JACOBS

As a veteran, I can attest that the team provides unparalleled support. Our warfighter today is better trained, armed, fed, clothed, housed, and supplied than any warrior in history. In the midst of this extraordinary effort are contracts management professionals practicing and reinventing their profession.

More than 240,000 contractor employees currently provide critical support for U.S. contingency operations in the Southwest Asia area of responsibility, which includes Iraq and Afghanistan. Despite the difficulty

of operating in these environments, military personnel, federal civilian employees, and private contractors have executed countless support tasks faithfully and well.

Under the Logistics Civil Augmentation Program (LOGCAP), managed by the U.S. Army Sustainment Command, contractors from the private sector are used to provide a broad range of logistics and support services to U.S. and allied forces during combat, peacekeeping, humanitarian, and training operations. The LOGCAP umbrella contract

dates to 1992, when a contract for support services was awarded by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Initially, LOGCAP was in response to a larger Department of Defense (DOD) strategy to meet the challenges of the all-volunteer military after the draft was discontinued. In order to meet mission requirements, the decision was made to outsource the infrastructure and logistics support functions of war zone construction, food services, sanitation, and logistics to free the

uniformed services to perform the ultimate warrior mission of fighting.

LOGCAP IV, the latest version awarded in 2009, employs a strategy developed by the Army Sustainment Command, in consultation with its higher headquarters, the U.S. Army Materiel Command, and combatant commanders, who represent LOGCAP's ultimate customers—the warfighter and other U.S. service members in the field.

The current strategy calls for multiple contractors to deliver services under LOGCAP instead of using a single contractor for the entire contract. Under the strategy, planning support and performance functions have been split to more effectively manage the number and scope of LOGCAP actions required to fight the Global War on Terror.

The use of multiple LOGCAP contractors is designed to reduce risk to the government, which no longer needs to rely on a single company to execute the entire LOGCAP contract at a time of very high demand for military logistical and support services. Under the new strategy, the three performance contractors may compete for individual LOGCAP task orders, creating a competitive environment meant to control costs and enhance quality. The three companies are:

- DynCorp International, LLC, of Falls Church, Virginia;
- Fluor Intercontinental, Inc., of Greenville, South Carolina; and
- Kellogg, Brown and Root Services of Houston, Texas.

I was sent to Afghanistan by DynCorp International to provide certification training to their subcontracts managers/administrators and technical representatives, a program established in July 2009. The training was part of DynCorp CEO Bill Ballhaus' initiative to take a more proactive, problem-avoidance approach to managing contracts in a war zone.

Their fundamental challenge in Afghanistan is to provide efficient, cost effective, and timely

support services in a war zone that presented multiple logistics, communications, and security problems. For example, many of their supplies and services were purchased locally and from international firms. In the process, they utilize local and third-country nationals; all of these present unique security and communications challenges. In addition, Afghanistan has only one major highway throughout the entire nation.

To comprehend the unique challenges in Afghanistan, you must understand Gen. Stanley A. McChrystal's strategy. At the time, he was the top U.S. and NATO commander in Afghanistan who intended to use the 30,000 U.S. reinforcements authorized by President Barack Obama and as many as 7,000 soldiers pledged by other NATO nations to protect key cities and towns in southern and eastern parts of the country, where the Taliban insurgency is strongest. By focusing on securing population centers, he hoped to reverse enemy momentum, foster more responsive local government, and, where possible, persuade Taliban fighters through a mixture of pressure and incentives to lay down their arms. General Petraeus, his former commander and now successor, currently plans to continue the strategy.

In each of those cities and towns, NATO forces establish a forward operations base (FOB). In addition to warfighters at many of those FOBs, there are DOD civilians (Defense Contract Management Agency [DCMA], et al.) and contractors providing logistics and security support. The current count is classified, but there are many.

Imagine the challenge facing you when, in concert with the assigned DCMA administrative contracting officer and FOB military commander, you must facilitate the planning and purchase of supplies, services, and data necessary to build and maintain from scratch the infrastructure to support the NATO troop activities in a FOB located in a foreign country at war.

This includes housing and feeding the troops; providing potable water, sanitary, and waste disposal facilities; waste management; health and medical care facilities; storage

facilities; and secure structures such as bunkers, access roads, command and administrative facilities, communication towers, recreation facilities, and, in some instances, helipads and runways. All of this while under potential rocket attack or being overrun by the Taliban. Contracts professionals, both men and women, in Afghanistan are redefining contingency contracting every day.

In discussions with the professionals and end users on the ground, it quickly becomes apparent that we are being served by competent and dedicated personnel who are emotionally engaged—they genuinely care about the mission and the people they serve. The LOGCAP contract requires a grueling schedule of a minimum 12 hours daily, 7 days a week. In fact, they work on the average 14- to 16-hour days.

In a perverse recognition of the success of the LOGCAP effort and compounding the challenges is a Taliban strategy recently chronicled by *Stars and Stripes* (April 18, 2010):

The Taliban has begun regularly targeting U.S. government contractors in southern Afghanistan, stepping up use of a tactic that is rattling participating firms and could undermine development projects intended to stem the insurgency, according to U.S. officials... Within the past month, there have been at least five attacks in Helmand and Kandahar provinces.

Many contractor personnel have paid a personal price. More than 1,400 contractor employees, Americans and third-country nationals, have died in Iraq and Afghanistan. Tens of thousands more have been wounded.

Of course, in the midst of all of this there are the naysayers criticizing contractors' efforts and DOD's oversight. In most cases, the critics are not familiar with the challenges, the efforts required to meet those challenges, or the extraordinary results achieved daily. Granted, there are always opportunities for improvement, such as the initiatives by DynCorp and DCMA's plans for more effective oversight.

The Commission on Wartime Contracting, an independent, bipartisan legislative

commission, was established to study wartime contracting in Iraq and Afghanistan. Created in Section 841 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, this eight-member commission is mandated by Congress to study federal agency contracting for the reconstruction, logistical support of coalition forces, and the performance of security functions in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The commission could play a critical role in recognizing and resolving the many complex problems associated with wartime contracting, and in addressing the future use and oversight of contractors in the war zone. It is interesting to note that none of the commissioners are contracts management or project management professionals.

The commission could look to the Packard Commission Report on Defense Management (1986) for a successful example of defense commission contributions. Appointed by President Ronald Reagan and formerly known as the “President’s Blue Ribbon Commission on Defense Management,” headed by the late David Packard, co-founder of Hewlett Packard and former Deputy Secretary of Defense in the Ford administration, they focused on what was being done right and introduced the federal government to best practices.

In 1986, the Packard Commission Report stated:

The quest for excellence...will be successful only if a new management philosophy can replace the old. Instead of concentrating on the things that are being done wrong and trying to fix them with more laws, more regulations, and more inspectors...concentrate on those things that are done right and use them as models... Establish centers of excellence.

The Packard Commission correctly focused on *best practices* and noted there were four consistent standards present in every successful government program/project:

- They were well led,
- They were well planned,



- They were executed by competent personnel, and
- They performed as a *team*.

At the end of the day, the commission and others will find that the answer is clear: provide competent leaders, ask the contracts management professional and end user what is needed, and include DOD contractor personnel in their planning.

The lessons have been learned and are being chronicled daily by the men and women in harm’s way, from both government and industry. They are centers of excellence and professionals; by definition they possess a body of knowledge that contains a code of ethics and standards of conduct.

They are mission focused, emotionally committed, and they get the job done, in spite of the challenges thrown at them, internally and externally, every day; just ask their customer, the warfighter, and you will discover it is faster, better, and cheaper than ever.

To my fellow contracts management professionals: Thank you. Well done! **CM**

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

DANIEL M. JACOBS, CPCPM, CMC, is recognized as one of the nation’s leading authorities on public contracting. He is chairman/CEO of the Federal Market Group (FMG), a veteran-owned company that includes Government Business Solutions, Federal Market Publishing, and the Federal Market Institute—all Washington, DC-based organizations providing professional training, research, publishing, and consulting services to government and industry in public contracts management. FMG also includes the EuroMarket Group in Brussels and FMG Middle East in Tel Aviv. He is an NCMA Fellow, past national president (1987–1988), recipient of the Charles A. Dana Distinguished Service Award, the Honorary Life Member Award, and a member of the Executive Advisory Council. He is chairman emeritus, Board of Trustees, of the non-profit foundation Contract Management Institute. He is a member of the Project Management Institute, the Institute of Management Consultants, the Professional Services Council, and a life member of the American Legion.

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