

414th CSB's Pardew says goodbye, leaves lasting legacy

Story by John Roche, U.S. Army Africa 414th Contracting Support Brigade

In the fall of 2008, the Army's Southern European Task Force (SETAF) conducted major organizational changes as it restructured to support U.S. Africa Command. In October 2009, the Army established U.S. Army Africa (USARAF) in Vicenza, Italy, as its newest Army Service Component Command (ASCC). A few years earlier then Lt. Col. Paul Pardew commanded and successfully activated the 900th Contingency Contracting Battalion as part of the Army's new Expeditionary Contracting Command. Little did he know that his success would lead to his selection to lead the activation of the Army's Contracting Support Brigade in Vicenza to support operations on the African continent. After Senior Service School, Col. Pardew served as the Chief of Staff, Expeditionary Contracting Command (ECC).

In 2010 the Army's ECC initiated planning to align the 414th Contracting Support Brigade (CSB) as the newest contracting unit in direct support of USARAF. The ECC directed the location of the 414th CSB in Vicenza, Italy to facilitate integration with the supported ASCC (USARAF), exercise efficient mission command and oversight of subordinate contracting units already pre-positioned in Vicenza, and to integrate with the existing Regional Contracting Office-Italy (RCO), also in Vicenza. The Army's acquisition and contracting leadership knew there was only one man for this challenging position, and that was Pardew.

The 414th CSB is a subordinate command of the ECC, which is a subordinate command of the U.S. Army Contracting Command (ACC). In January 2011, the 414th CSB established a transition office in Vicenza, Italy. The initial mission focused on civilian/military staffing, facilities, and IT in support of the approved stationing plan. Upon Pardew's arrival in July 2011, the 414th CSB achieved provisional status ahead of schedule. His Army operational and contracting experience led him to recognize that the 414th CSB's unique role as the only forward deployed enabling unit was on the critical path for USARAF's future. Pardew's vision was to activate the unit and provide a robust contracting capability for USARAF

while maintaining and improving the current services that existed in support of U.S. Army Garrison Vicenza and Livorno and tenant units, his largest customers. He and the 414th consistently achieved the activation milestones ahead of schedule.

On Oct. 16, 2012, the ECC Commanding General Brig. Gen. Theodore (Ted) C. Harrison, declared the 414th CSB as achieving the criteria needed for Initial Operating Capability (IOC). As a result, the 414th CSB was officially recognized as a subordinate command under ECC and officially recognized during the Brigade Activation Ceremony. Pardew assumed duties as the Principal Assigned Responsibility for Contracting (PARC)/Contracting Authority for USARAF/Italy following the successful validation and endorsement from the staff assistance visit and Procurement Management Review (PMR) conducted in July 2012. The 414th CSB reached full operational capability (FOC) Oct. 1, 2013.

Pardew is fond of saying "pressure makes diamonds." It's how the unit has accomplished so much in such a short amount of time. The brigade is currently fully engaged as the primary contracting activity responsible for all Army contracting support on the African continent including support for USARAF, USAFRICOM, and Special Operations Command, Africa. He established new Theater Support Contracts including African Limited Life Support (ALLS) and the African Surface Distribution Services (ASDS) which enhance logistics and sustainment for exercises, theater security cooperation events, and operations in Africa. He created strong bonds with USARAF G4 (Logistics) and G8 (Finance) to maintain a solid "fiscal triad." His relationships extended to USAFRICOM J4 (Logistics) and SOCAFRICA to ensure operational contracting support was coordinated and synchronized with other USAFRICOM partners within DoD and its agencies.

In 2013, Pardew established a Regional Contracting Office-Africa to ensure a dedicated cadre of contracting professionals focus on the growing mission in Africa. He also supported the establishment of USAFRICOM's initiative for the Army's



Col. Paul H. Pardew, commander, 414th Contracting Support Brigade, receives the brigade colors from Brig. Gen. Theodore (Ted) C. Harrison, commanding general, Expeditionary Contracting Command, during the first activation ceremony, October 2012 at Hoekstra Field on Caserma Ederle in Vicenza, Italy.

Lead Service for Contracting Coordination (LSCC) across the Geographic Combatant Commander's Area of Responsibility. USAFRICOM tasked USARAF as LSCC to coordinate and synchronize contracting support across the military components for operational contracting support in Africa. The 414th will lead the effort as USARAF's direct support contracting activity.

Pardew's lasting legacy and most important concern is his workforce. He is most proud of the accomplishments of his military, civilian, and local national contracting professionals. He cares for his Soldiers and Civilians as Family. He caught the eye of DoD's senior leadership, and was hand-picked once again to lead the Joint Staff J-4 (Logistics) office for Operational Contracting Support. It's a clear trend...success breeds success.