

Army goes to SEASM

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When the Defense Energy Support Center's Fuel Card Program Office, or DESC-K, was given its marching orders to develop an electronic order and receipting system for ships' bunkers fuel, the team knew it would benefit the customers normally associated with fuel: the Navy, Military Sealift Command, and the Coast Guard. But, DESC-K recently added a new customer to that list.

Three Army vessels were enrolled in and began using the SEA Card Order Management system in April. The boats, the Harvey, Frederick and Nicolet hail from the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers Detroit District. They are participating in the SEA Card program as a pilot program. If the Corps of Engineers and DESC are satisfied with the processing of fuel transactions with DESC contracted merchants, additional Corps of Engineering vessels will come under the SCOMS umbrella.

"The Corps of Engineers interest is a testament to the strength and benefits of the SCOMS program", said DESC-K Director Frank Pane. The system was designed in a collaborative process with the prime contractor, Multi Service Corporation, and its primary subcontractor BP Marine, DESC and the military services. Since the first pilot program in October 2005 and initial fielding in June 2006, SCOMS has provided the warfighter a secure, web-based order/receipt/invoice system for ordering bunker fuel.

The system provides information 24 hours a day, seven days a week for fuel ordering officers. DESC contract, merchant, and product availability information is available for every DESC-contracted port worldwide, and fuels officers can electronically place the order directly to the correct bunkers fuel merchant. The SEA Card maximizes the warfighter's logistical support. Merchants can electronically acknowledge order receipts, and vessels send fuel quantity receipts; orders and receipts are electronically submitted to DESC/DFAS. In addition, there is an unparalleled management data tracking and reporting capability down to vessel and product level. The vessel "masking" capability of SCOMS also increases the vessels port physical security.

As of April 13, SCOMS supported fuel capability at 245 DESC locations worldwide, and had processed 495 vessel refueling transactions totaling \$152.6 million. With 265 vessels currently enrolled in the program, the military services continue to expand the vessels registered in SCOMS.

"The future is growing", said Pane. The complexities of meeting the needs of operationally differing customers and a global merchant base has been challenging, but feedback from both the warfighter and the merchant has been very positive, he said. "SEA Card provides a simple and disciplined process used worldwide by [Military Sealift Command's] five SEA Logistics Operation Centers for managing approximately 120 ship fuel plans. The success of SEA Card can best be expressed in a few words, 'SEA Card works!'. If the system were to be taken away from its users, there would be a lot of angry people because this system has simplified their workload", said Rene Fry, fuel manager for MSC.

A recent merchant survey conducted by Multi Service Corporation rated the SEA Card program "above average", a truly outstanding result for a program fresh out of the box, said Pane. Pane credits the success to DESC's Direct Delivery Commodity Business Unit, Resources Office and legal counsel. Through SCOMS, DESC has pushed its logistics capabilities forward directly to the end-user. It has linked the military services with the source of supply and has provided transparency into significant financial transactions, thereby increasing stewardship.

These capabilities have aligned DESC bunkering fuel support with the three strategic thrusts identified by Army Lt. Gen. Robert Dail, Defense Logistics Agency director - Extending the Enterprise, Connecting Warfighter Demand with Supply, and Delivering Supply Chain Excellence

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