



# New Vice President joins DCC



*Brigadier-General (Ret.) Steve Irwin has been appointed as a Vice President at Defence Construction Canada. He brings 35 years of experience and leadership to the Corporation, as well as a sound appreciation of the unique skills and services DCC brings to the Department. (Photo courtesy DND)*

For years, Brigadier-General (Ret.) Steve Irwin's colleagues at DND have known how impressed he has been with DCC's work on behalf of the Canadian Forces.

So it should come as no surprise that, following a very brief retirement, Irwin was recently appointed as a new Vice President at DCC.

"I've had a pretty long and very positive relationship with the Corporation for 35 years of my military career," said Irwin.

"I've had a very high regard for the Corporation for a very long time. I am absolutely thrilled to be with DCC."

Given Irwin's lengthy and distinguished career in the Canadian Forces – most recently serving as CEO of the Canadian Forces Housing Agency for a brief but influential period, as well as Chief Engineer for the Canadian Forces, and Director General Military Engineering – his experience merges with DCC's own mission of providing contracting, construction contract management and related infrastructure services to its primary client, DND.

"This seems like a very good match," he said. "It allows me to stay in very much the same arena I was in before. It also offers a different culture, and some different challenges than what I've faced before. I just jumped at the opportunity. I didn't hesitate. An organization like DCC is right up my alley."

Particularly, it's the specialty services that DCC offers that made an impression on Irwin.

"About 10 years ago, I was invited to a mediation session DCC was having with a consultant firm. It opened up my eyes to a whole different world from what we saw at

DND, and how much we took for granted. The legal issues and the expertise to handle these types of challenges are amazing. When I became aware of it, and saw it on one project, I was absolutely amazed at how complicated this was, and what the skills were in DCC to deal with this."

Despite his many accomplishments with the Canadian Forces and proven leadership abilities, Irwin admitted that he still has a learning curve to master once he assumes his duties at DCC on May 1.

"I think the first thing that I'll do with all the folks there is learn from them, and make sure I understand what drives DCC, the corporate culture, and what the future is as the corporation sees it now," he said.

Irwin pointed to the expansion of DCC services, including UXO, infrastructure management, and project management as important growth areas for the Department.

Irwin's well-honed corporate knowledge and experience at DND will also allow the corporation to gain additional insight into how best to serve the client.

However, he's quick to note that while in the Canadian Forces, he was consistently impressed with DCC's ability to forecast the Department's needs through its business planning process.

"Without a lot of input from the Department, DCC could read the indicators in such a way that they could set up a business plan that would allow them to respond to the needs as they developed," said Irwin. "That always amazed me. The expertise is there at DCC. What I want to make sure is that the optimum conditions are there for them to get things done in the best possible way. That's what will be my biggest contribution."

# GATES era comes to a close at CFB Shilo

The German Army pulled out of Shilo, Manitoba more than five years ago, but remnants of the German Army Training Establishment Shilo (GATES) have been easy to spot over the years.

Until recently, that is.

DCC and DND have been working together to demolish and remove buildings left over from the GATES era. And that job is nearly over.

The plan is to make room for more modern developments suited for the future requirements of this Area Support Unit, and the increased influx of troops through the addition of the 2 PPCLI Regiment, as well as a large training commitment of the base.

The demolition job is almost done, putting to end the physical presence maintained on the base by the German Army for over a quarter century. But the legacy of the Germany Army's training history in Shilo remains strong, said Frederick Hart, DCC's site manager on the base.

With more than 4,000 German soldiers training at the base each year for more than 25 years, "they became an integral part of southwest Manitoba," he said. "There are still guys here who started businesses. Their support staff here put on the annual Oktoberfest. They married local people. The area was quite sad when they left. But the influence is still in the area."

That influence grew when GATES was established in 1974, when the German Army began using Shilo as a training facility for their Heavy Armoured Vehicles. GATES began with about 10 buildings on the base. These consisted of workshops and garages, a storage facility, a mess hall, and several barracks. The number of buildings used by GATES grew steadily to over 50 buildings by the year 2000, including larger buildings such as a Headquarters Building, a medical/dental facility, and large tracked vehicle maintenance shops.

In early 2000, however, the German government decided to pull out.



*DCC coordinated the demolition and removal of the German Army Training Establishment Shilo (GATES). Room has been cleared for more modern developments for this Area Support Unit, as well as the increased influx of troops through the addition of the 2 PPCLI Regiment.*

Since 2001, a decommissioning and demolition plan has been carried out to clear older structures used by GATES, known as the Q-Line buildings, to clear space for CFB Shilo's future development.

In 2005, the program continued with the removal of the Officers Mess and Quarters building. This 6,900 square foot structure was built and occupied by GATES in 1974.

The next building removed was the hospital/dental building, a structure of almost 19,000 square feet, also built in 1974. This building became obsolete after the new Medical/Dental facility was commissioned in 2004.

DCC coordinated another large phase of demolition of the old GATES facilities in 2006 with the removal of the Petroleum, Oil and Lubricants (POL) Storage building, as well as older wheeled vehicle maintenance shops on the south side of the base. The vehicle maintenance building was a pre-engineered metal structure.

"It was completely deconstructed and will be re-erected in Winnipeg as a storage and maintenance facility," said Hans-Georg Philipsen, a Contract Coordinator at Shilo.

The demolition of the "flagship" GATES building, the Tracked Vehicle Maintenance Facility, is underway.

Built in 1990, this building was a state-of-the-art structure, designed with the latest developments in construction in 1990, and was highly energy efficient, said Philipsen.

This 20,000 square foot building was the primary GATES Armoured Fighting Vehicle Maintenance facility, which included 12 vehicle bays and two service pits, two work bays, a sound-proof engine test facility, three overhead 20-ton capacity cranes, workshops, battery charging room and offices. This structure was erected for a capital cost of \$4.7 million and was designed to

last a century.

Luckily, DCC ensured that all useful components were removed and salvaged, including all machinery, cranes, rooftop units and, most importantly, all the steel columns and beams. These will be re-used in a new heavy equipment maintenance building in Winnipeg.

"It's sad to see this landmark of the GATES era gone, but it was necessary to remove these last remnants of the German era to make room for the future development of CFB/ASU Shilo," said Philipsen.

Shilo's development continues, despite closing the book on one of its chapters.

The 2 PPCLI Garrison Facility, commissioned in 2004, as well as the new Military Family Resource Center (which opened in 2005) are two recent examples.

Future plans, said Philipsen, include an expansion of the General Strange Hall Gym and Pool Building, and the construction of a new headquarters building, slated for 2008.

Removal of the old GATES buildings and replacement with modern structures also conforms to the new National Building Codes and Environmental Requirements, he added.

# Historic Seaforth Armoury gets a new mission

The commanding structure of the historic Seaforth Armoury befits its future role as the Army's main point of response to domestic disasters in the Vancouver region – including earthquakes.

Constructed in 1935, the Seaforth Armoury's castle-like exterior, complete with turrets, a semi-Renaissance architectural style and a large front gate, is suitably imposing.

But it's the structure's reinforced concrete construction that makes it viable to modernize this building and turn it into a post-disaster building.

Before it can take on its new mission as a staging ground for potential Army rescue operations, however, it's getting a refurbishment that will strengthen its ability to withstand natural disasters.

To ensure the interior structure is upgraded to meet the 2005 National Building Code of Canada standards, DCC is administering the seismic design work on the building, home to one of the units of 39 CBG, the Seaforth Highlanders of Canada.

"Because it will become a post-disaster relief centre in the event of a major disaster, the Armoury will be designed to ensure it's the last building standing," said Rick Gudz, DCC's Manager, Site Operations, at CFB Esquimalt.

Step one of this process was the installation of a new roof, a \$900,000 contract completed in April. The roof installation, itself a complex project, is composed of sheet metal, which covers the main drill hall area.

Mock slate covers the higher and steeper pitch roofs and flat built-up roofing in up to nine flat roof areas.



*DCC is completing a new roof installation (above and below), and is administering the seismic design work of the Seaforth Armoury, a project that will ensure the interior structure is upgraded to meet the 2005 National Building Code of Canada standards. This type of refurbishment will help ready the Armoury for its new task as the Army's main point of response to domestic disasters in Vancouver.*

Although the original building featured asphalt shingles on the roof, "it wouldn't have lasted as long as the mock slate, and we wanted a 50 year roof, not one that we'd have to repair again in 15 years," explained Bill Clark, Associate Project Manager.

"As far as energy use and environmental considerations, the mock slate is a higher point rating on the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Green Building Rating System (a voluntary, consensus-based national standard for developing high-performance, sustainable buildings).

"I think it's going to look pretty good."

Meanwhile, DCC and DCPEP are also wrapping up the seismic structural design work for the retrofit phase, added Clark.

"Part of that design was to assess the roof, and its seismic strength. Because we determined that we can do most of the strengthening of the roof from inside the Armoury, we went ahead with the replacement of the roof membrane for this year."

Construction will begin next year on the interior structural and renovation aspect of the project, explained Gudz.

An interior refit will upgrade several components of the Armoury, and will involve integrating beams into various parts of the interior, including a fully functional office space, as well as upgrading the heating, ventilation and electrical systems.

Meanwhile, DCC is also preparing for the relocation of the Jericho Beach Units to the Seaforth Armoury site.

"We're going to be building a large consolidated project so that the Canadian Forces can close out facilities at Jericho Beach, another large DND entity in Vancouver," said Gudz.

"Overall, the project is pretty substantial, and it's been nice to get the first phase completed."



# Trenton's communication tower gets a fix

The familiar orange and white tower that overlooks CFB/8 Wing Trenton may be covered in scaffolding, but it's still a fully functional communications tower.

But the 50-metre steel tower, which houses a bevy of communications equipment and antennae used by the base, is undergoing a massive renovation and repair job nonetheless.

Years of harsh sunlight, freezing temperatures, and winds have taken their toll on the 75-year-old structure. So the former water tower will receive a much-needed facelift.

On March 15, workers erected scaffolding, which has grown to envelope the entire structure.

With such a large scaffolding set-up, the \$624,000 project has presented some unique challenges, said Coleen Purdey-Morrison, a Contract Coordinator at DCC's site office on the base.

"The winds have posed a pretty big obstacle," she said. "With scaffolding on a job like this, the biggest consideration is safety."

Indeed, workers are fitted in harnesses at all times as they carefully work their way across the scaffolding, putting the finishing touches on the scaffolding itself, and preparing the massive structure for an eventual sand-



blasting. By mid-April, work is expected to have begun inside the tower's gigantic tank.

This will include sandblasting and repairing holes – some of which are large enough to fit a work boot into – as well as welding plates onto problem areas. Workers will also prime and

paint other sections inside the tank. Aside from ensuring safety standards are met on the site, DCC is also keeping a close eye on other challenges posed by repairing an older structure.

"The existing paint on the inside and outside contains lead, so we're going to have to take precautions for that," said Purdey-Morrison.

"Any work inside the tank is confined space entry, and that adds another factor. Once the scaffolding is up, workers will enclose the whole thing in plastic and sandblast the outside."

The tower will be painted the exact same color, white and orange, as the original structure, since it has been designated as a historical building, she added.

All sorts of antennas are fixed to the top of the tower, which, despite construction, are still used by Wing Telecommunications and Information Services Squadron. This means workers have to step carefully while moving about the tower.

"It has to function at all times. What's challenging is that everyone working on the tower has to maintain at least 30 centimetres of distance from some of the antennas. So we've asked everyone to maintain that distance at all times from all the antennas."

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Defence Construction Canada (DCC) is a Crown corporation with a mandate to provide contracting, construction contract management and related services to the Department of National Defence (DND).

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## DCC freezes billing rates for second consecutive year

DCC has always believed in adding value to the services it offers the Department of National Defence.

Now, the more DND asks DCC to do, the more it's getting in return, thanks to DCC's ability to freeze its billing rates for the second consecutive year.

You'd be tempted to say that DND is getting more for its dollar – and you'd be right.

"It's really the result of higher business volumes and revenue," explained Angelo Ottoni, DCC's Chief Financial Officer.

"DND has been coming to us for additional work over the past few years, and this has generated operating efficiencies and better margins for DCC."

Much of the volume increase is due to the expansion of the service line offerings, such as the environmental and project management services.

DCC receives no parliamentary appropriations, and operates on a fee-for-service basis. DCC's financial management policy has been to generate sufficient cash to meet its anticipated operating and capital requirements.

Because DCC is doing more for DND while holding firm on its fixed operating costs, the Corporation can freeze its billing rates for this fiscal year—just another way DCC is able to produce cost-effective and efficient services for the Department of National Defence.

