

Simplifying Service Delivery

After the signing of a service line agreement (SLA) between DCC and 5 Area Support Group (5 ASG), on 2 April 2007, business as usual in the Quebec region just got a lot easier. The SLA — which covers \$3.2 million in services, including contracting, construction and consultant contract management, environmental support services, program and project management support services as well as commissioning services for Valcartier, Montreal and St Jean — was an important step towards rationalizing a complicated billing process.

“It [the billing process] was very time consuming and the clients expressed their concern that everything was taking too long — that the process was too bureaucratic,” says Marc Lanteigne, Quebec regional director. “We wanted to find a way to focus more of our energy and resources on providing services rather than providing invoices.”

Prior to the SLA, invoices were created for every single project, big or small. For CFB Valcartier



Major Anne Egglefield of 5 ASG and Ross Nicholls, President and CEO of DCC, on 2 April 2007, sealing the SLA between DCC and 5 ASG.

alone, that meant that more than one hundred-fifty itemized invoices could be generated on any given month. Producing the invoices was a time-consuming as well as expensive process, and reviewing them with the client, in accordance with Section 34 of the *Financial Administration Act*, added considerably to that cost.

“Some days I had lineups of clients in front of my office asking me why they were charged fifteen minutes here or ten kilometers there,” says Louis Brisson, CFB Valcartier’s site manager. “Then, the following month, the fifteen minutes I had spent

answering questions on the previous invoice had to be billed and were added to the new invoice. The whole process would start over.”

With the new SLA, a total of five recoverable contracts (R0) will be opened per garrison, per year, and one twelfth of the total amount will be billed monthly. “Now all we have to do is print five invoices for a fixed amount every month and all the client has to do is ask himself “have the services I required been provided?” adds Mr. Brisson.

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CFB/ASU Edmonton Turns Pedal Power into Energy Awareness

The bicycles may have been stationary at CFB/ASU Edmonton on April 17, but the 32 Energy Challenge participants certainly weren't. Based on calories burned, their pedal power generated 9.4 watts per hour of energy during the four-hour challenge, which DND Engineering Services and DCC hosted as part of the Garrison's Energy Performance Contract (EPC).

"The goal is to increase awareness about energy consumption on the base — to prove to people how much energy it takes to operate lights and computers and various things that we have direct control over," says Capt. Mike Avery, Program Officer/2i/c for Engineering Services Company. First to hit the bike for his team, Avery says that when you see the readout approaching only a few watts after several hours of intense effort from the teams, it makes you realize how much energy it takes to turn on a light bulb. (It takes 100 watts per hour to run a 100-watt light bulb.)

"You can imagine how much energy it takes to run the base every day — it gives you a new perspective," he says.

The four teams were drawn from Land Forces Western Area (LFWA) Headquarters; DCC's Edmonton office and DND's Construction Engineering staff; Engineer Services Company; and ASU Edmonton Personnel Company — with the LFWA team coming in first. The Energy Challenge is the second that DND and DCC have hosted as part of the EPC's Training and Awareness Program, which is managed by Poonam Madan, environmental project coordinator for DCC at CFB/ASU Edmonton.

"Part of the EPC is that the contractor projected 10 percent of the savings coming from an increased attitude towards conserving energy," she says, adding that other programs have included information sessions, participation in Environment Week, and a computer blitz that showed how much energy was saved simply by shutting off computers and monitors.



Brian Fraser (left), DCC site manager, pedaling away with other participants at the Edmonton Energy Challenge.

"You can do all kinds of mechanical things to save energy — using more energy-efficient lights, for example — but if you're not shutting off those lights, they're not as efficient as they could be. Through these programs, we want to give people a chance to see how they can contribute to energy-saving on the base."

Dennis Kikuchi, design officer for Engineer Services Company, says that Phase 1 of the Garrison's EPC is now in the monitoring and evaluation stage. The EPC — which uses the energy savings from renovations to finance their cost — included work such as lighting retrofits; electronic occupancy sensors in common areas; control work to heat and cool areas more efficiently; heat recovery units; variable frequency drives on motors; and some insulation and envelope work.

"We spent about \$7 million in construction, and the first-year payback was \$700,000 to \$800,000," says Kikuchi, who participated in the Energy Challenge on the Engineer Services team.

"The original contract for Phase 1 was for a 10-year payback, but we're paying it down quicker. We're aiming for a seven-year payback for Phase 2."

Phase 2 of the EPC — currently in the feasibility stage — will involve much of the same work, but will extend it to various LFWA units in British Columbia, southern Alberta, Yellowknife and Whitehorse. "Saving energy and the environment — it's part of the future," he says. "Just increasing energy awareness could save another 10 percent. Anything we do could make a difference."

"The EPC was an excellent vehicle for making all the necessary adjustments in aid of reducing the amount of energy we expend, and we have seen the results," says Capt. Avery, whose responsibilities include paying the base's utility bills. "You can see a drop in electricity use directly as a result of these improvements. It's definitely been a good thing that we've done, and I know other bases have or will be doing the same thing as well."

Vertical Village opening at CFB Valcartier

A demonstration by the Royal 22nd Regiment, on Friday April 13, 2007, marked the opening of a new training facility at CFB Valcartier. Situated on the Mont Sorrel, the Vertical Village is modeled on an Afghan mountain village and will be used to train Canadian soldiers leaving for Afghanistan. The \$1.3 million facility was built using twenty-three recycled forty-foot sea containers that were juxtaposed in various ways to form eleven distinct buildings.

For Christian Bourgault, the DCC contract coordinator who oversaw construction, this project

was a test to his abilities and proved to be a learning experience on many levels. "It was cold and it snowed almost everyday. Many precautions had to be taken to ensure the safety of workers. Plus, we were working in an isolated area, in an alpine setting, with no water and no electricity nearby."

Construction did take place at a less than ideal time of year; work began on January 20th and the project had to be completed by April 1st. During that time period, nearly 170 cm of snow fell over the region and temperatures remained well below

freezing, often reaching below the -20°C mark.

"We didn't let any of that slow us down. We had a strict deadline and the days were short. So, we had to find ways around it," adds Mr. Bourgault.

Arrangements had to be made to get the remote roads leading to the isolated construction zone cleared, early in the morning, before



Vue de l'intérieur de l'enceinte afghane à la BFC Valcartier.

the first of the two crews on rotation began their work day. To deal with the cold, once the crew reached their destination, large propane powered blowlamps were used to defrost engines and other mechanical components of machinery. In addition to that, because of the construction site was secluded, heated chemical toilets had to be installed and maintained.

At the same time as the Vertical Village was being built, Mr. Bourgault also oversaw the construction of the nearby Afghan Compound; a similar facility modeled on an urban setting.



The Royal 22nd Regiment conducting a tactical demonstration, on 13 April 2007, marking the opening of the Vertical Village at CFB Valcartier.

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In addition to a streamlined invoicing process, for the Montreal and St-Jean sites, the SLA means that staffing requirements could be planned for the year. For some time now they have been operating with what Mr. Lanteigne calls "a skeleton staff" and hiring new employees was done to address immediate rather than long-term needs.

"Now that we know what level of service we are expected to provide for the year we can sit down and hire enough staff to make sure we always have the right people on hand to provide those services.

We'll be doubling our staff in the Montreal office in the next few months — from seven to fourteen," says Mr. Lanteigne.

He adds that despite the seemingly more relaxed approach, everything will continue to be monitored closely. "I'll check regularly to make sure that the amount we are charging isn't much higher than the level of service being provided and vice-versa. Amounts will be adjusted accordingly throughout the year."

According to Ross Nicholls, President and CEO of DCC, the agreement reflects a broader corporation-wide trend to simplify. "The problem exists across the country. It was an especially big issue in Quebec, but the Regional Office and the Base CE staff have shown great initiative here and now, suddenly, they're ahead of the pack."

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