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From stocking fish to benefit the cleanliness of an on-base reservoir, to clearing UXO, to building safe and up-to-date facilities for troops to live, work, train and relax—among countless other services—we were able to apply our technical expertise and innovative solutions to the challenges of developing and maintaining military infrastructure across the country.

This was also the year that DCC deployments to Afghanistan ended. With the CF on schedule to leave Kandahar, Afghanistan by December 2011 and DCC's infrastructure support work ending, DCC closed its site office at Kandahar in October 2011 and the site office in Kabul in September 2011. For the first time since 2007, there are no DCC employees supporting DND work at the Kandahar Airfield or in Kabul. We at DCC look back on that mission with pride. More than 70 current and former employees from all parts of the company contributed on the ground or through site visits to our efforts to support the Canadian Forces in Afghanistan. The lessons we learned from that experience will serve us well for years to come.

On behalf of everyone at DCC, I extend my best wishes to you for the holiday season. We thank you for your ongoing support and cooperation, and look forward to continuing our work in 2012.

James Paul
President and CEO
Defence Construction Canada



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But the fruits of the labours of 63 employees, who served in several locations in Afghanistan, are all around: a runway ramp, numerous buildings, miles of paved road and other local infrastructure. And the lessons learned will impact DCC's work for its Client-Partner for years to come.

Working in a war zone brought challenges, not the least of which was dealing with heightened security requirements. "We couldn't tender to just anyone," says Kerry Mould, Manager, Construction Program, who was the last of three DCC managers to oversee the military support operation. "Instead, we developed lists of contractors who had been pre-screened by NATO intelligence to ensure they really existed and were not connected to the Taliban."

The DCC team also put in place a number of standing offers (SOs) to allow it to quickly meet DND's many short-notice demands. DCC also managed to fine-tune the contracting process, such that tender documents could be issued to bidders in 24 hours. This was essential for many projects, including a key one for paving roads, which required a huge supply of gravel acquired from local sources.

DCC also made other significant contributions to the local construction industry, notes Larry Clinton, Coordinator, Professional Service Contracts, who did two tours at the Kandahar office, and was site manager when it closed down in September. "A lot of people would show up as contractors but with no experience," Clinton says. "Our coordinators worked with these folks, and showed them our standards and methodologies. They really appreciated how we worked with them."

Mould says that it became apparent as the mission went on that the key to success was teamwork. "If you're going to deploy, you need a team with all the appropriate skills right there on the ground." Lessons learned from the DEW Line Clean-Up project as well as the



Janette Brodeur, DCC Construction Program Manager and Mike Palmer, Project Support Officer (centre) debrief Kerry Mould, Manager Construction Program, Military Operations Support, on their deployment to Afghanistan.

Operation Podium support to the Vancouver Olympics, were applied to our operation in Afghanistan, as many of the same principles applied. However, in Afghanistan we had to develop many new procedures for working in a dangerous and foreign country.

The Afghanistan mission was a “corporate success story” says Mould, with DCC staff from every region volunteering and giving their all, sometimes in dangerous conditions both outside and inside the confines of the airfield, like the rocket attack that landed outside the DCC office door just days before the end of the mission.

For Clinton, who turned out the lights and closed that same office door behind him at the end of the mission, he recalls having mixed emotions as he packed up to come home. “I was gratified for the job well done, and humbled knowing all that went on there, all the work we did. But when we left, you’d never know that DCC had been there. That’s the whole point, but it’s sad; we closed the door on this chapter of our history.”



The last three DCC employees in Kandahar (from left to right) Judith Elliott, Contract Services Officer, Larry Clinton, Coordinator, Professional Service Contracts and Michelle McAuley, Administrative Assistant. *Absent: Gary Gesner, Electrical Coordinator, stationed in Kabul.*

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At the end of this month, and nearly 28 years later, de Vries retires as DCC's Senior Vice-President, Operations.

Even in those early days, de Vries says he knew that DCC was a special place to work. "From the outset, there was a very high degree of accountability," he says. "They gave me the freedom to progress and do what I wanted to do."

De Vries' CV shows the fruits of that freedom, as he rose from his first position as project engineer to become a construction manager on the North American Air Defence Modernization project in 1991 and then the first director of the newly created Environmental Services group at Head Office in 1996. He was appointed to his current position in September 2009.

During his time at DCC, he helped implement a considerable expansion of the services DCC offers to its Client-Partner. In the early 1990s, he says, the company took a look at what it needed to do to grow. At that time, DCC primarily offered construction and contract services. "We set a target that 5% of our business would be from non-traditional sources." Now, the split is about 50-50, between traditional services and new offerings, such as project and program management, real property services and environmental services.

De Vries recalls embarking in 2003 on the "little gem" that became the service line matrix concept around which DCC organizes its services today. The service line model came about



The Association of Consulting Engineering Companies of Canada (ACEC) surprised retiring Senior Vice-President, Operations, Ron de Vries with a special award at its annual awards ceremony on November 1, 2011. The award recognized Ron's many efforts over the years to establish and maintain an open relationship with the consulting engineering industry. This special recognition puts Ron's contributions on the same impressive plane as the only other recipient of such an award from the ACEC: the province of Quebec, which was honoured for introducing important standards to the industry. Ron is shown here with ACEC Chairman Herb Kuehne (right).

as a response to the challenge of integrating the non-traditional services into regular business and ensuring the organization could offer a consistent level of service to its client across the country.

What has remained constant over the years of change, he says, has been the dedication of DCC staff to the Client-Partner, and their care for the work they do.

"Everyone does things as if they owned the company, and they care about other individuals' successes," de Vries remarks with obvious pleasure and agreement. "It's the ultimate in effective service delivery: everyone's watching out for everyone else."

As he rides off into the sunset on one of the horses that will help him fill his days after he leaves DCC, de Vries also sees a very positive road ahead for DCC. "There will always be areas where we can be supportive" to the Client-Partner, he says. And by optimizing service delivery, enhancing collaboration and continuing to innovate, he is certain that DCC will be able to meet DND's needs for years to come.

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Ensuring the safety of these young sailors was just one of a couple of last-minute hitches DCC Esquimalt staff had to deal with as they put the finishing touches on an already complicated operation to install eight heavy air-handling units (AHUs) on the roof of the new part of the Fleet Maintenance Facility building currently under construction.

The original plan had been to have a 500-ton (454-tonne) crane do the job; however, the loads it would have placed on the ground would, due to sub-par soil conditions, have risked damaging underground services and nearby structures. The latter includes the base's heritage dry-dock, which is still in use today despite having been built in the late 19th century.

Having such a large crane on site would have also impeded base operations for a week, says Eivin Hoy, Assistant Manager, Operations, DCC Esquimalt, blocking vehicle and pedestrian traffic and barring workers from any offices under the reach of the crane.

To work around these problems, DCC secured DND's agreement to bring in a Sikorsky-64 Airplane Helicopter to lift the AHUs, which weighed between 5,000 and 12,500 lbs (2,268 to 5,670 kg) each, to the building's roof. Hoy and DND Project Manager John Laverdière had talked through the pros and cons of both approaches. In the end, they concluded that using the helicopter, while costly, would be a net financial gain for the base, since the job could all be done in one day and would allow the project to stay on schedule.

The project team met its first unexpected hitch on



On Sunday, October 23, 2011, DCC Esquimalt brought in a Sikorsky-64 Airplane Helicopter to lift eight heavy air-handling units (AHUs) onto the roof of the fleet maintenance building currently under construction at FMF Cape Breton. Pictured here are (from left to right) Craig Mercier from Stuart Olson Dominion Construction with DCC's Jon Whiten, Heather Davies, Veronica McEllister and Eivin Hoy.

the Thursday before the operation. At 3 p.m. that day, DCC learned that Transport Canada required letters of concurrence from several organizations (including the local municipality) before it would issue a flight permit. This paperwork was out-of-the ordinary, and neither DCC nor the contractor had been aware it would be needed. Since not getting the flight permit would mean having to delay the operation for week, DCC Esquimalt hustled to get the letters for the following morning. "We obtained the permit in the nick of time on Friday," recalls Hoy.

The lift began at 9 a.m. Sunday (shortly after the sea cadets were safely out of harm's way) and lasted about six hours. All the AHUs were flown from an open space about half a kilometre from the building that had been cleared of equipment, dirt piles, cars and people, and placed in their final locations on schedule, with only very slight damage to one which was later corrected.

Looking back on it, Hoy says, "I think this project really highlights the teamwork between DCC and DND." DCC came up with a suggestion to deal with difficult circumstances and went above and beyond in response to the last-minute hitches. For his part, "the DND project manager, Laverdière, stepped up by weighing the net benefits and supporting the solution."



Lift of the air-handling units (AHUs) began at 9 a.m. and lasted about six hours. All the AHUs were flown from a freshly cleared site .5 km from the building and placed in their final locations on schedule.

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Members of the DCC Workplace Charitable Campaign team reveal the DCC 2011 national fundraising goal during the launch event on September 20, 2011 at the Cartier Square Drill Hall in Ottawa.

"We knew that we could count on our employees to make our national campaign a success again this year," said Paul. "DCC employees are very caring and have demonstrated their dedication to their local communities over and over again in a multitude of ways. This was especially true during the DCCWCC."

In addition to DCC's national and local fundraising activities, employees didn't hesitate to also participate in fundraising activities organized by DND across the country.

To conclude its campaign on a high note, DCC was the runner



On October 6, 2011, more than 80 DCC employees in Ottawa gathered to enjoy a barbecue at Constitution Square to raise money for the DCC Workplace Charitable Campaign. On hand to serve up the hamburgers and hot dogs were DCC's four Vice-Presidents (from left to right) Randy McGee, Ron de Vries, Angelo Ottoni and Daniel Benjamin.

up for the National Team Spirit

Award highlighting a successful national campaign, which was presented by the GCWCC National Campaign Chair, PWGSC Deputy Minister François Guimont.

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James Paul, DCC President and CEO, and Stephanie Ryan, Manager, Communications, attended the awards ceremony in Toronto on November 29, 2011. Mr. Paul accepted the award from Stephen McIntyre, CA, Ernst and Young (shown in photo). As summarized in the event program, DCC was presented with this award as “the report goes beyond simple GAAP statements and includes succinct discussions on the objectives and performance of the organization as detailed in the MD&A.”



James Paul, DCC President and CEO, (left) accepts the CICA reporting award for small federal crown corporations during the awards ceremony in Toronto on November 29, 2011. The award was presented by Stephen McIntyre, CA, Ernst and Young.

“We were thrilled to receive this recognition last year from the CICA and equally excited to win again this year,” said Paul, when accepting the award. “This affirms the strength and value of our organization and the economy and efficiency that is required of government Crowns. DCC has been extremely successful at building a service delivery model that can deliver the required infrastructure projects for the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Forces, during a period of fiscal restraint.”

The CICA, a national industry association, has been handing out its corporate reporting awards for 60 years, as part of a broader program to enhance the quality of financial reporting in the country.

To view the Annual Report, visit the [DCC website](#). For more comments from the judges, [click here](#).

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To suggest story ideas or to comment on the newsletter, please contact [the Editor](#).

Look for the next issue of *DCC at Work* in February 2012.



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