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Training helps law enforcement use DLA resources better

By Jake Joy

Nearly 200 disposition customers met with DLA personnel as part of the 2012 Law Enforcement Support Office National Training Conference held in Seattle, May 1-3.

The DLA-hosted conference, in its fourth year under the guidance of the DLA Disposition Services-based LESO office out of Battle Creek, Mich., and its 12th year for DLA overall, provided a sampling of the estimated 12,000 approved recipient organizations with an opportunity for

making new contacts, receiving comprehensive training and providing a chance to come face to face with DLA support personnel.

“They’ve been great, always available to help you, they give (law enforcement) a comfort level that makes (us) want to be in the program,” said Lester Hobbs of the Delaware Emergency Management Agency. Hobbs was attending his second conference, after the one held in San Antonio last year. “It’s just keeping you up to date with all the new information,” he said.

Since he became its excess property coordinator, his agency’s total take of property requisitioned through LESO has risen from \$4,000 in 2010, to \$1.9 million in 2011 and is already at \$3.1 million since the beginning of 2012. “We’re just taking off,” Hobbs said. “We’re really stomping.”

Nationally, law enforcement interest in used and excess equipment has seen staggering growth recently, too, with FY11’s nearly \$500 million in property more than doubling FY10’s \$212 million. This year is on track to meet or exceed FY11’s numbers. For DLA, the interest means avoiding the cost of destroying and disposing of unwanted military equipment.

With tightening budgets in virtually all corners of government, and a military looking to shed weight and adapt to future needs, municipal, state and federal agents are finding treasures in the used goods inventories currently amassed by DLA.

“The overall experience, the training and networking, it’s educational, we made a few contacts and we learned a few ways to utilize the system better than we had been,” said Dan Dopps, training coordinator for the Quincy, Wash., Police Department. Since signing up two years ago, his city has saved about \$350,000 on “everything from entrenching tools to CONEX storage boxes, backpacks – just a wide variety of things.”

LESO staff said they were pleased with the outcome and the attendance, which jumped to nearly 200 this year after attracting about half that number the two previous years.

“It went great,” said Deborah Smith, a property disposition specialist and aircraft-watercraft team lead in the LESO office. “Collectively, our office works together very well. We consistently listen to what’s



Participants in the 2012 Law Enforcement Support Office National Training Conference held in Seattle, Wash., visit a DLA Disposition Services Lewis warehouse at Joint Base Lewis-McChord May 2 to meet with disposition specialists and get a feel for some of the items available through the 1033 program. Photo by Jake Joy.

coming back from post-conference critiques. We're listening to the customer, finding out what they want and adjusting fire."

Breakout training sessions provided instruction on a variety of topics for both those new to and veterans of the LESO-administered 1033 program, including weapons, aircraft and watercraft policies and procedures, how to requisition property, supply condition codes, want lists and demilitarization policies.

Some organizations shared success stories on how property received through the 1033 program had helped them rescue people or conduct operations and response they would not have been able to otherwise. DLA took additional time to honor the stewardship of those organizations that had saved more than a million dollars through reutilization efforts.

Attendees also took a field trip to the DLA Disposition Services Lewis site, at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, just south of Seattle. The visit provided participants a sampling of the layout of excess yards, the day-to-day work conducted there and an idea of some of the property on hand for requisitioning at that site and others.

Both DLA and its 1033 program customers said they find a lot out about one another through these ongoing direct outreach methods.

"I enjoyed it; I learned a lot myself," said John Williams, property disposal specialist and LESO's Eastern weapons lead. "I finally got a chance to meet the people I'm talking to on the phone all the time."



DLA's 1033 LESO program manager Craig Barrett addresses the nearly 200 attendees during a training conference session May 2. Breakout training sessions provided instruction on a variety of topics for both those new to and veterans of the LESO-administered 1033 program, including weapons, aircraft and watercraft policies and procedures, how to requisition property, supply condition codes, want lists and demilitarization policies. Photo by Jake Joy.



Property disposal specialist Ron Chavis meets training conference attendees during the May 3 session. LESO staffer John Williams said that at the training, "I finally got a chance to meet the people I'm talking to on the phone all the time." Photo by Jake Joy.