

CRANE Quarterly

Crane Army's History & OUR Heritage



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Team,

As we move forward into 2021, it's important to remember the men and women who made Crane Army what it is today. Since 1941 and our beginnings as Naval Ammunition Depot Crane, hardworking Hoosiers have stepped up and stepped in to provide munitions to our troops wherever and whenever needed throughout all our nation's conflicts since World War II. I thank all of you for being part of our proud legacy.

Please take a moment to appreciate those who set up today's Crane Army team for success and look closely at some of the photos in the following pages—you may just see some familiar faces.

As always, thanks for all you do.



Col. Stephen P. Dondero



For more than four decades Crane Army Ammunition Activity has been dedicated to providing conventional munitions support for U.S. Army and Joint Force readiness.

Left: Col. George H. Connor, Jr., Crane Army's first commander, speaks during a ceremony establishing CAAA in 1977. Crane Army has experienced incredible innovation over the years and supported the warfighter in all of our nation's wars and conflicts since then.

CRANE Quarterly Magazine

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In Every Issue

COMMANDER'S COMMENTS

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RECON
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What do you do with an unusable white phosphorous round? This Crane Army employee makes sure to disassemble it responsibly and ensure each part is destroyed or recycled.



Mailbag

Q: What does it mean when you are undercompensated for your region under the new AcqDemo project? Is there anything that can be done about that?

A: A primary goal of AcqDemo is to compensate employees appropriately for their individual and organizational contribution to the mission of their organization and the value of their position. This goal promotes greater compensation for those who are the highest (undercompensated) contributors; encouragement for the lowest contributors to improve; and appropriate compensation for all levels of contribution in between.

All employees fall into one of three compensation regions: overcompensated, appropriately compensated or undercompensated. These are levels determined by your overall contribution score (OCS) and the undercompensated region is considered underpaid for their level of contribution and position.

When we transitioned into AcqDemo your current salary was used to create your initial expected contribution score. If in the undercompensated region, the goal is to continue to increase your CRI (basic salary increase) with future appraisals and similar or greater contributions by the employee which will move you towards the standard pay line and then, per Army guidance, as close to the upper rail as possible. This will not happen quickly as there is only so much money in the pay pool but it will happen consistently, year after year, as long as the employee continues to meet or exceed their expected contribution score. Being in this region generally allows a greater percentage of basic pay increase than those who fall within the appropriately compensated region.

CAAA welcomes feedback from readers. Please include sender's name, phone number and valid email address.

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NEWS & NOTES



Meeks said nominating employees for awards should be as easy as possible. That's why CAAA provides a range of options from length of service and non-monetary awards to time off awards and civilian medals and more. Each award has a different set of criteria, so it's important to reach out to colleagues to determine what the best route is.

"It's nice to know our efforts don't go unnoticed," said Meeks. "If people want to nominate someone for an award they should share that information with their supervisor."

To make nominating coworkers for awards even easier, Meeks and her team are developing an online platform people can go to nominate outstanding employees for awards.

Above & Beyond

1

Crane Army Ammunition Activity's workforce is full of people going above and beyond the call of duty to ensure they provide exceptional support to the warfighter every day. Recognizing the great work our employees do is essential and the Crane Army awards program aims at addressing this issue.

"I believe recognition is essential in the workplace," said Kim Meeks, Crane Army management analyst and leader of the awards program effort. "We all work to make a living, but being recognized for going above and beyond or for tackling a particularly challenging task provides people with a sense of accomplishment and appreciation."

2

Did You Know?

The Secretary of the Army Award for Valor was established April 15, 2002, to acknowledge acts of heroism or bravery connected with an Army employee or Army activity, or that in some way benefits the Army. The performance of the act must be evidenced by voluntary action above and beyond the call of duty. The equivalent military decoration for this award is the Soldier's Medal.



Terry Diehl - 50 Years of Service
Letterkenny Munitions Center

3

By The Numbers: 325

Lt. Col. Dennis K. Williams II, commander of Letterkenny Munitions Center, had the opportunity at the end of fiscal year 2020 to honor the career milestones of 17 dedicated LEMC employees with Length of Service awards. These awards represented an accumulated 325 years of service that these employees have devoted to the safety and security of our country.

Recon



Top Left: Employees disassemble a cluster munition before sending the smaller components off to be recycled or destroyed. One of Crane Army's priorities is to demilitarize unserviceable munitions to make room in storage facilities.

Second row on the left: Blockers and Bracers ensure those munitions are staying put. A Crane Army employee cuts and prepares banding used to keep munitions secure during shipping and storage.

Second row on the right: When unusable or obsolete munitions crowd storage space, Crane Army knows what to do. This Crane Army employee is carefully taking apart an unserviceable white phosphorous 155mm round before it is recycled, leaving more storage space for quality munitions.



Bottom left: On the road again! This CAAA employee is loading a truck with munitions before they are shipped out. Crane Army's Depot Operations team works hard to make sure that the warfighter gets what they need when they need it.



Bottom right: It's all in the details! This CAAA employee is testing and measuring munitions components as they come in to make sure that when munitions are produced, the products that go into them are nothing but the best.



ACQDEMO UPDATE

Joe Mikac, CAAA Chief of Staff

CAAA recently completed our first, albeit abbreviated, cycle under the Department of Defense Civilian Acquisition Workforce Personnel Demonstration (AcqDemo) Project. AcqDemo provides a better system to retain, recognize and reward employees than the General Schedule pay scale while also supporting an employee's personal and professional development. AcqDemo leveled the playing field for CAAA as we compete to recruit and reward the best talent in our region of the country.

We recently completed our first pay pool process. The process starts when an employee's supervisor rates the employee on three factors by scoring each factor with a 1, 3 or 5 and then averaging the three scores (similar to DPMAP). This preliminary appraisal is then sent to directorate subpanels.

The subpanels, comprised of directorate supervisors, were meticulous in reviewing all ratings to ensure consistency within the divisions before being sent to the pay pool panel. The subpanel has clear grading criteria and compared a supervisor's ratings against that criteria.

During the year's pay pool process there was much discussion between the panel members. When the subpanels disagreed with a supervisor's rating, the supervisor was called in to defend their assessment. Depending on the supervisor's justification, the subpanel would allow the rating to stand or change the supervisor's suggested rating if they found significant cause. The subpanel did not conclude their review until there was a clear concurrence between panel members and the supervisor. This process reflected a sharp focus on employee contributions and fairness in assigning ratings.

After the subpanel's review, the employee ratings were sent to the pay pool panel, which was comprised of the deputy commander, the chief of staff and directors. The panel performed another level of review, ensuring that ratings were consistent across the command. Once again, deliberation did not conclude until there was a clear concurrence on the ratings.

After panel deliberations, there appeared to be a renewed commitment among our supervisors and senior managers to ensure performance objectives were clearly understood and employee self-assessments were more thorough in discussing employee contributions, results and impact to the organization. It was also refreshing to hear employees become more invested in the mission by discussing performance with one another in terms of their impact to CAAA and how it could be best captured in their next self-assessment.

ACQDEMO SUBPANEL REVIEWS

What worked:

- Subpanel members ability to objectively review their peers' appraisal utilizing a standard grading criteria
- Subpanel members conducting a candid discussion on whether supervisor scoring is fair and consistent
- Obtaining a concurrence across the panel and with supervisor if a score was changed



Crane Army's strength has always been it's dedicated workforce.

Our History & Our Heritage



For 80 years hardworking Hoosiers have diligently supported the defense of our nation through many wars and conflicts. Crane Army Ammunition Activity is proud of its role in this legacy of service and has faithfully provided munitions to our men and women in uniform whenever and wherever needed following its own founding in 1977.

Since beginning the mission of providing munitions readiness to all the services, Crane Army played a major role in supplying warfighters with the materials they needed to succeed overseas during wide-ranging hostilities such as the Gulf War, the Bosnian War and the War on Terror.

"The exceptional ability of our people to meet the urgent needs of the warfighter sets Crane Army apart," said CAAA Deputy to the Commander Norm Thomas, who has worked for Crane Army for 38 years. "They go out and excel at it every day. Every one of them steps up and handles their duties with passion."



Above: Crane Army Ammunition Activity inherited the legacy mission of ammunition manufacturing, storage and depot operations from the Navy in 1977 after the Department of Defense established the Army as the single manager for conventional ammunition at the conclusion of the Vietnam War. Pictured here are Crane Navy employees working on a munitions production line in 1942, just one year after Naval Ammunition Depot Crane was established during World War II.

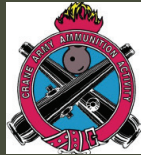
Vickie McKibben, the lead depot operations supply system analyst for CAAA, agrees.

"I find it very fulfilling to know what we do at Crane Army supports our warfighters and protects our country," she said. "It has been rewarding to see folks over the years come here and grow and learn about how much we do for the warfighter and realize they're contributing to the security of our nation."

Top: A Crane Army blocking and bracing employee prepares munitions for shipment in the 1980s.

Army assigned as the Single Manager for Conventional Ammunition 1975

Chemical Agent Disposal 1980



White Phosphorus Conversion Plant 1988



Plating Facility Renovation 1990



Lumber Storage Facility 1991



1975

1980

1985

1990

1995



CAAA Established 1977



Supervisor Safety Awards 1983



Signing of Union Contract 1984



QA Surveillance Facility Groundbreaking 1986



Operation Desert Shield Outload 1991



Ammunition Production Workers 1995

CAAA Through the Years

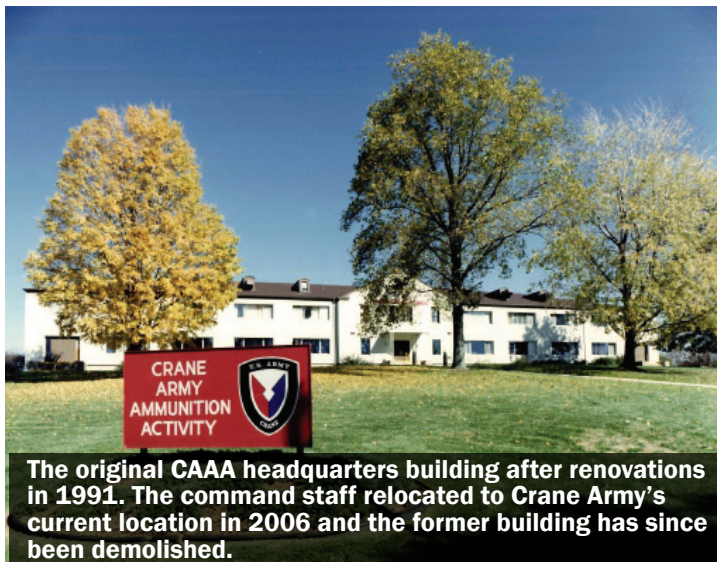
For example, CAAA employees worked tirelessly to meet the short deadlines required by surging troops during Desert Storm in 1991. During the Gulf War Crane Army was responsible for supplying nearly 50,000 tons of ammunition and shipped hundreds of rail and truck loads over a short period of time.

"We had a big push in our ability to get materials out the door and items out for shipment, but we didn't just meet the deadline," Thomas said. "We simultaneously improved our out-loading processes as we shipped munitions out, resulting in an incredible revitalization in the face of a challenge."

Ten years later Crane Army also reorganized its production and demilitarization missions under a new manufacturing and engineering directorate. The manufacturing and engineering workforce has since found new and innovative ways to produce, demilitarize and refurbish munitions and conventional ammunition for the Army.

Manufacturing and engineering is currently involved in a range of projects from the production and renovation of pyrotechnic flares, bombs, artillery, charges and bursters to demilitarizing munitions in environmentally-friendly ways. These salvaged materials can sometimes be put to immediate use like in CAAA's white phosphorous plant where rounds are converted to phosphoric acid.

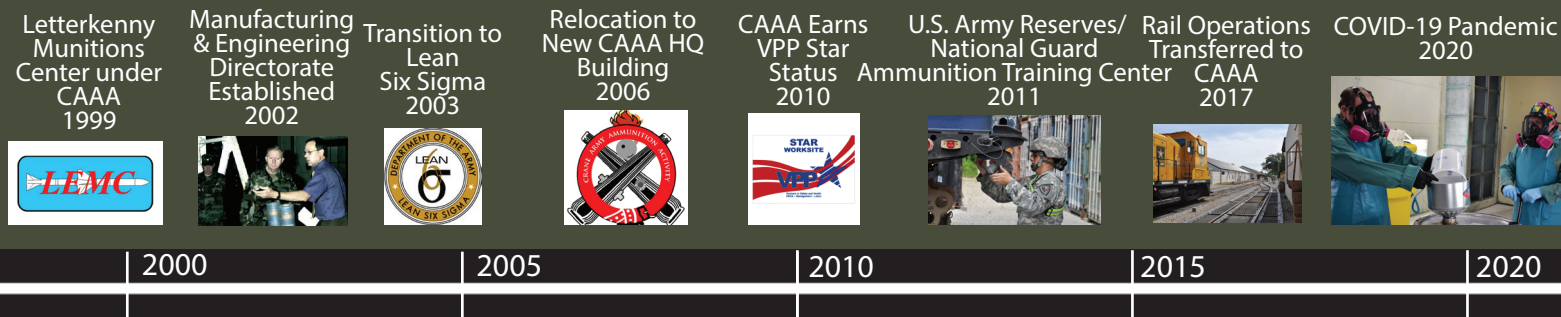
Vietnam-Era veteran Bruce Majors operates a drill press in the machine shop in 1988



The original CAAA headquarters building after renovations in 1991. The command staff relocated to Crane Army's current location in 2006 and the former building has since been demolished.

"My work finding and brainstorming ways to safely destroy or take apart unserviceable munitions, and working with other engineers to make them come to life, makes it so that the storage space we have can be filled up with usable munitions," said Robin Hart, a planner and estimator for manufacturing and engineering who has worked with CAAA since 1980.

"Through our demilitarization we can make a difference in funding too. I have seen how jobs get funded and equipment is purchased based on the recycling we are able to do."



CAAA proved its dedication once again in 2003 during Operation Iraqi Freedom. CAAA temporarily shut down production lines so that employees from all directorates could focus solely on shipping munitions to support the mission. Crane Army employees worked around the clock, seven days a week, to ensure the thousands of tons of munitions Crane Army supplied were in the hands of the warfighter when they needed to be.

"During Operation Iraqi Freedom we supported several missions but during one in particular, uniformed Soldiers came and worked side by side with our folks," McKibben said. "To see them working side by side in the cold and the dark and doing what it took to get the munitions ready to go out; it was inspiring and it sticks out in my mind as one of my favorite memories."

CAAA has a proven history of delivering quality munitions when they are needed but Crane Army has never stopped looking for more ways it can help the warfighter succeed. Crane Army remembers and respects its past but continues to modernize to determine the most efficient ways of providing the best possible munitions in the years ahead.

"We are going to see a focus on modernization," Thomas said. "There's this incredible appetite to fund and pursue modernization, not just in our amazing facilities, processes and equipment, but in the people that make Crane Army the unmatched force that it is."



The most significant factor in Crane Army's storied history is the hardworking men and women who have contributed to its mission and continue to make it what it is today. Their dedication to their nation and to each other has and will continue to make CAAA one of the premier munitions providers for our armed forces.

"People ask me why I stay and all I can tell them is I love what I do and I love who I work with," said Hart. "The relationships I have with my team are so important."

DEPOT OPERATIONS

In times of crisis or when mission requirements simply demanded a surge in resources, Crane Army has faithfully continued the legacy of ensuring that our Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines have quality conventional munitions wherever and whenever needed. Along the way CAAA has constantly looked to innovation or restructuring while embracing new technology to help streamline its depot operations in a drive for success.

In 1980, only a few years after CAAA was established, Crane Army launched a Depot Improvement Program with a goal to improve readiness and lower ammunition storage costs. Two decades later the Depot Operations directorate was reorganized and the explosive disposal functions were moved in 2002 under the newly formed Manufacturing and Engineering directorate. DO also completed modernizations to its offices the following year. In 2010, DO replaced the Standard Depot System that was at the heart of logistics operations with a new computer software system called the Logistics Modernization Program. DO made another leap forward that year when it consolidated its administrative offices and lunchroom to their current location.

Most recently DO started its All Things Storage planning initiative to maintain strategic and operational readiness for the next 20 years, keeping an eye on the future while still maintaining efficiencies in its current activities. Remaining at the heart of why Crane Army exists, and with a proven history of evolving for the better, Crane Army's depot operations will continue to be relevant far into the future to support the warfighters of tomorrow.



Ammunition inventory, 1992



Launched in 2005, the Ammunition Transportation and Tracking Control Center, now the Ammunition Operations Center, enabled CAAA to have greater visibility of depot operations.

STAFF



CAAA computer room in 1978

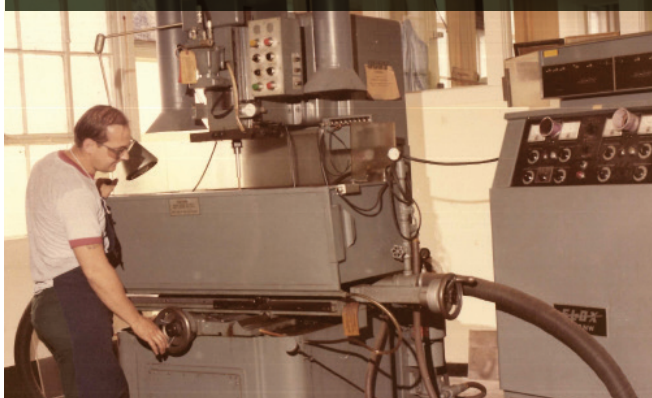
Modernization is not just for munitions! Crane Army's success in the production, demilitarization, storage and delivery of ammunition would not be possible without all of the critical team members who support its primary missions behind the scenes, and few things have evolved as rapidly over the years as the technology we use every day.

Today the CAAA Information Management Office, or S-6, consists of 22 information technology professionals who manage the Crane Army Data Center and Installation Campus Area Network to ensure security of the Department of Defense Information Network. They maintain cybersecurity compliancy patching and reporting and provide day-to-day end-user support for CAAA's Organic Industrial Base mission operations.

Last year the COVID-19 pandemic posed a major challenge to CAAA's daily operations. The IMO was instrumental in rapidly reacting to a change in the requirements for alternate worksite capability for approximately 1/3rd of the CAAA administrative workforce. CAAA's existing IT inventory was assessed and redistributed, and an additional 200 laptops were quickly acquired and deployed. This enabled a significant number of CAAA's workforce to telework. Subsequently, learning to manage, patch, update, and mitigate vulnerabilities, and provide end-user support on these remote assets has not been easy, but IMO staff have adapted and are managing compliancy and support within standard to ensure that nothing can stop Crane Army from meeting its mission.

MANUFACTURING & ENGINEERING

Machine shop lathe, 1975



The more things change, the more they stay the same; and some things never change—like the need for skilled machinists that craft the metal components of munitions and ordnance-related products that warfighters need at the speed of war. The manufacturing and engineering directorate's machine shop has been a key part of that evergreen mission since day one of Crane Army's existence and continues to be a primary manufacturer of metal canisters and parts for CAAA's other production areas like pyrotechnic candles and countermeasures, as well as other Army and Navy customers.

Machine shop lathe, 2019



Today, the CAAA machine shop is a full service operation with lasers, water jets, wire electrical discharge machining, computer aided drawing/ computer aided manufacturing, master cam, computer numerical control milling, CNC turning, grinding, welding and part finishing (plating and powder coating). MES is fully staffed to provide engineering and technical support for high capacity production machining and is also able to provide tool and die design support for the fabrication of tooling to support production requirements.

ACTIVITY SUPPORT

CAAA safety audit, 1986



Safety has always been deeply engrained in the DNA of Crane Army due to the inherent risks involved in the production, storage, demilitarization and delivery of munitions. Today that focus on creating a culture of safety remains at the heart of all that we do. The professionals in the Safety and Environmental division support CAAA with numerous safety and environmental programs. From pollution prevention to controlling rodents in CAAA's storage magazines, ASF's wide-ranging responsibilities include risk assessment/risk management, safety training and inspections, mishap investigations, and implementing corrective actions if safety issues are discovered.

"My safety team's vision is for CAAA to be the safest producer, destroyer, shipper and storer of conventional munitions within JMC by 2026," Eric Byrnes, CAAA's safety chief, said. "We have a layered approach to achieving this focusing on command culture, programs, procedures and engineering."

In 2020 the safety team focused on government-owned vehicle accidents and improving other safety areas.

"Following recognition of a negative trend CAAA took action, reducing GOV accidents from an average of two per month prior to October 2020 to zero accidents to date," Byrnes said. "Other areas of focus include fork truck operations, weight handling equipment, explosives certification, and radiation safety program improvements, environmental compliance, and implementing Process Safety Management for pyro building operations. Employees will hear more about, and be involved in, these improvements as we understand and implement solutions."

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Trish Staggs

Countermeasures Commodity Manager

Crane Army credits its success to its dedicated workforce. CAAA consistently provides quality munitions to the warfighter because its people continuously excel. One example of this is Countermeasures Commodity Manager Trish Staggs.

Staggs has supported Crane Army for almost 20 years and is known for her swift critical thinking and straightforward communication.

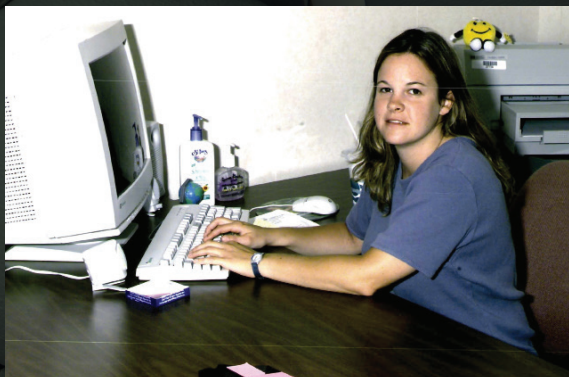
"We are a lot busier than we were when I first started and we have a lot more countermeasure products. We just keep growing," said Staggs. "Things have changed a lot over the years but our team keeps improving."

The countermeasures division produces materials like decoy flares that burn at specific heat signatures to deter heat-seeking aircraft missiles. These flares have saved the lives of many brave men and women, but in order to make them effective, the chemistry has to be just right. Staggs ensures that the employees handling these valuable munitions have all of the tools and materials they need to succeed.

"She is very easy to work for," said Larry Mattingly, a countermeasures chemical engineer. "She is very knowledgeable and has a solid chemistry background which has come to help all of us out a lot. She hits the ground running faster than most people in her position would. I find her refreshing to work with."

Staggs's colleagues say one of the reasons they can turn out quality materials is because of her leadership style. Staggs leads her team with respect, occupational expertise and professionalism.

"Trish is supportive of her team and a great delegator. She is involved but trusts her people," said Mattingly. "I'm getting towards the end of my career and was able to retire a year or two ago and probably would have, but working for her has reinvigorated me. It's a nice feeling to work for someone who makes you want to work."



Trish Staggs in 2000, her first year with CAAA.



Commodity manager Trish Staggs is an invaluable part of Crane Army's countermeasures team.

"I can always rely on her to face issues head on and get timely, safe and sustainable results," said Manufacturing and Engineering Director Paul Allswede. "She is always mission-focused and open and constructive with peers, subordinates and superiors as well as with internal and external customers."

Staggs said that as Crane Army grows in its support of the warfighter and capabilities to produce quality munitions, she hopes the workforce also continues to support one another.

"The biggest thing that keeps me at CAAA is the people and the relationships I've built over the years," said Staggs. "I hope the younger generations keep that culture up, too, because that's the most important aspect of Crane Army to me. I don't want to let the people down."

Only Our Best For The World's Best

www.crane.army.mil