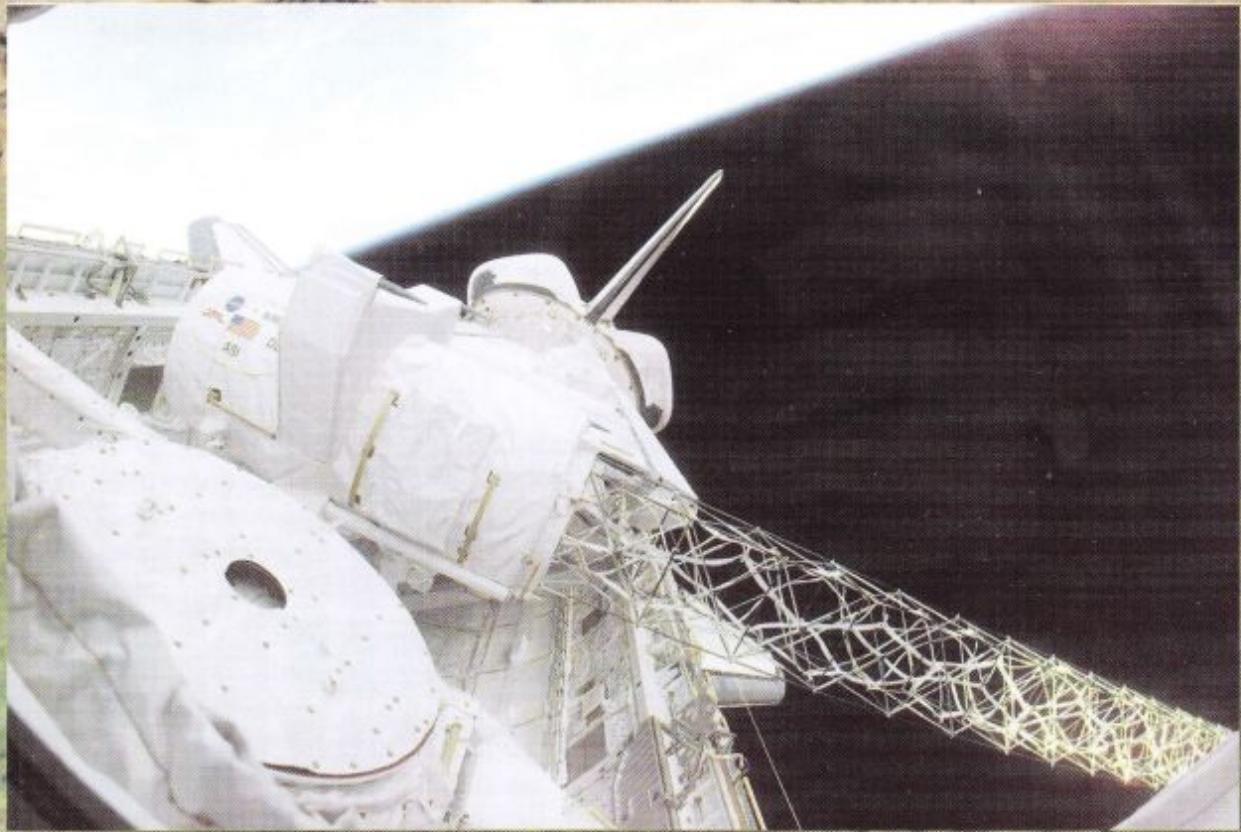


NATIONAL IMAGERY AND MAPPING AGENCY

**EDGE**

GUARANTEEING THE INFORMATION EDGE  
APRIL 2000



**MISSION  
ACCOMPLISHED**

APRIL 2000

# EDGE

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## On The Cover

It was a brilliant success. Years in the making, the Shuttle Radar Topography Mission successfully mapped—in 3D—more than 119 million square kilometers of land in nine days, 18 hours. NASA's shuttle, *Endeavour*, using a 200-foot extending antenna (inset) captured the data as it repeatedly orbited the Earth.

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# COMMAND POST

**E**xcellence is a habit. I believe that people who perform well do so because they have disciplined themselves to do their best. They apply an attitude of positive achievement to their work product.

This issue of the EDGE is all about excellence. Our cover story features the Shuttle Radar Topography Mission, a shining and history-making accomplishment. The inspiration and creative energy for the mission originated right here at NIMA. This issue's cover photo marks the beginning of our commitment to a new level of excellence in providing extremely detailed topographic information to our customers. It shows that

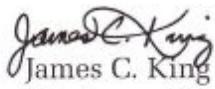
NIMA not only is adapting to changes in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, it is leading the way.

We cannot fail in our readiness, our modernization, nor our dedication to our customers. Our recent internal reorganization, NIMA-21, creates a more efficient work environment that is solidly based on accountability and responsibility. NIMA sustains its commitment to excellence in our Mission, Vision, Core Values and Strategic Plan. We're on a steady course to the future, and we're ready!

In the pages that follow, you'll read about Dr. John Hamre, the departing Deputy Secretary of Defense who always strived to make things better. He has been a staunch supporter of NIMA and never failed to do his absolute best at whatever task he set for himself. There is also an article on how excellence is recognized via the presentation of the "Director's Coin." Emblazoned with the Latin *Tempestivum Verum Definitum*, it states our relentless dedication to being "Timely, Accurate, Precise." Lastly, there are several articles which highlight the extraordinary work NIMA people do everyday.

The outcome of battles throughout history has depended on the united commitment of those who fight. NIMA has a genuine commitment to making and fielding excellent information, products and services. Let us recommit ourselves to the habit of excellence so we can continue GUARANTEEING THE INFORMATION EDGE in imagery, imagery intelligence, and geospatial information. Together, we will continue to make a difference in the Department of Defense, the U.S. Intelligence Community, and in the lives of many Americans who expect excellence from their government agencies. We can do no more, and our customers will expect nothing less.



  
James C. King  
Lieutenant General, USA

# NIMA's DNC I7 Paves Way to New Charting Era

by Howard Cohen  
Marine Navigation Department

**A**s NIMA enters the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, paper products continue giving way to digital data. A recent example is the release of Digital Nautical Chart (DNC®) Area 17, 7<sup>th</sup> Edition of the Eastern United States.

NIMA plans to showcase DNC 17 as the first database released to the fleet for safe navigation independent of paper charts as backups. This will be a significant milestone for both NIMA and Navy because previously-released DNC databases on CD-ROM were merely used by the fleet for familiarity, training and monitoring a ship's position.

## What is a DNC?

DNC is a database of nautical features replicated from paper charts to support navigation systems and Geographic Information Systems (GIS). Depicted features are thematically organized into 12 categories called "coverages." These are cultural landmarks, earth cover, land cover, environment, hydrography, inland waterways, limits, aids to navigation, obstructions, port facilities, relief and data quality.

The database is designed to support electronic chart display and information systems (ECDIS) used by



(Photo by John Berg)

NIMA's Hydro NPC, using cutting edge technology, includes from l-r: Dave Turnbull, Tom Roff (front), Dave Brown, Steve Lewis, Michaela Duffy, John Tosh, Bob Lesko, and Ty Marr.

"Quite simply, it will pave the way for transitioning the U.S. fleet into the modern electronic charting era," said Walter Kozak, DNC requirements manager for the Navy Division, Plans and Operations Directorate. "More significantly, it will provide the modern Navy electronic bridge with enhanced automated situational awareness, support vastly improved navigational hazard-avoidance capabilities and help reduce staffing requirements on the bridge."

U.S. Navy and Coast Guard ships. DNC data also support new systems currently under development by U.S. military-sponsored contractors.

"Currently, DNC only supports shipboard training, situational awareness, mission planning and GIS applications," Kozak said. Until DNC data and ship navigation systems are certified by the U.S. Navy as meeting criteria established for electronic navigation systems, he added, each DNC CD-ROM must carry the

**disclaimer: "DNC IS NOT TO BE USED FOR NAVIGATION."**

DNC data will eventually replace the requirement for carrying paper charts traditionally produced by NIMA and the National Ocean Service (NOS). In an era of rapidly advancing technology, Kozak

said, the DNC is a crucial and necessary innovation.

Aboard Navy ships, submarines and Coast Guard cutters, this means a savings in money, space and manning requirements on the bridge.

The current DNC vector database is comprised of 29 geographic regions. NIMA already has distributed advance data sets on 29 CD-ROMs to its customers. The database will eventually include coverage of the Great Lakes and global navigation coverage between 84° North and 81° South Latitude.

"To date," said Kozak, "more than 4,700 charts have been converted since this project began five years ago. Fiscal 1999 was a banner year as we completed digitizing 2,200 charts."

## Teamwork and Technology

"DNC's have been produced for years," said James McGaughran, Data Generation Division's (GID's) inhouse production project leader. "What made DNC 17 significant was the collaborative effort between two Geospatial Information (GI) groups."

The collaborative effort was between the Marine Navigation Department's (GIMM's) NIMA Production Cell (NPC) and GID's Data Capture and Finishing Environment (DCAFE).

The Marine Navigation Department used "cutting edge technology" to publish a product on CD that can be updated bimonthly instead of annually, while the other used an established production system. "It will be every two months for now," McGaughran said. "However, our goal

## NIMA's HydroVision

"To provide customers up-to-date tailored data on demand from a single digital nautical data maintenance environment focused on aggressive data collection and near real time information processing by regional teams that leverage the advantages of imagery, imagery intelligence, and hydrographic data sources."

is to produce one a month, *and* reduce the number of people who handle DNC 17 almost to half—to 15."

Area 17 is significant, McGaughran said, because it's the first testing ground for one of NIMA's customers—the U.S. Navy.

"We are on the verge of revolutionizing maritime navigation as we know it today," said Navy Cmdr. Michael O'Loughlin, assigned to the Navy Division, Plans and Operations Directorate. "New computer technologies eliminate the Navy's reliance on paper charts, allowing us to take advantage of new digital nautical products such as NIMA's DNC."

## Navigationally Safe Data Set

"We want to create a navigationally safe data set, keeping it current and accurate," said HydroVision NPC's branch chief, Mark Sadecki. The production of DNC also was another step in NIMA's HydroVision program which is aimed, Sadecki said, at providing "aggressive data collection and near real time" regional processing. "It means," he added, "that GI will become an organization consisting of integrated, regionally-based teams providing optimal upkeep of data."

Just as the Global Positioning System is replacing the need for a sextant on the bridge, Kozak said, NIMA's DNC will ultimately replace the need for paper charts on the bridges of U.S. ships. "Isn't this a great way for NIMA and its customers to kick off the new millennium?"

NIMA's DNC home page may be accessed via NIMA's homepage <http://www.nima.mil> by clicking the "Services online" button and then the DNC homepage hotlink. DNCs can be downloaded from the DNC Website, which is password protected. ♦

# IAs Head West to Observe Military Exercises

by Liz Sherman  
Imagery Analysis Office

**I**magery analysts are packing their bags and heading west—to the Army's prestigious National Training Center (NTC) in California.

Following the annual trend for NIMA, 12 analysts from the Middle East/Africa and Eurasia divisions of the Imagery Analysis Office (IA) spent one week at Fort Irwin in the vast Mojave Desert east of Los Angeles to observe military exercises.

Analyst William C. Dabbs of the Iraq Branch, who headed the most recent trip in February, said the visit to

Fort Irwin provides imagery analysts the opportunity to experience a battlefield environment. "The deployment of armored forces for offensive and defensive operations directly relates to what many of us do on a day-to-day basis," he explained. "At the NTC, we can observe firsthand this operational deployment of an actual battle."

Combat brigades garrisoned in the continental United States travel to the Center for one month "rotations," where they engage in simulated combat with a highly trained opposition force called "OPFOR." The OPFOR is actually the U.S. 11<sup>th</sup> Armored Cavalry Regiment (ACR) posing as a motorized rifle regiment from the fictional nation of "Krasnovia."

The equipment used by the "Krasnovians" is another interest for the analysts.

"This trip provides an up-close and personal look at foreign and U.S. military equipment," Dabbs said. Such equipment includes the American M-1A1 Abrams main battle tanks, M2A2 Bradley infantry fighting vehicles (IFVs) and other top-of-the-line armored fighting systems. OPFOR's equipment was visually



*IAs who headed West include, from left: Gene Knoll, William "Corbett" Dabbs, Mark Pillings, Chris Rowe, Robert Omiatek, Liz Sherman, Kendal Lloyd, and Terry Sosnowich.*

modified to resemble the Soviet T-72 tanks and BMP-2 IFVs. U.S. Air Force aircraft also participated in the exercises, playing both the role of "friendly" and "enemy" fighters.

Robert J. Omiatek Jr., of the Russia Branch, said that observing the many facets of the battle would benefit him as a military analyst. "Experiencing a force-on-force exercise in real time was insightful for me as an IA," Omiatek said, "because the battle was a continuous evolution of events rather than one brief snapshot in time as I'm used to seeing on the light table."

Although the trip helped the analysts in their work at NIMA, the U.S. Army personnel also gained valuable insight. "We provided intelligence briefings to the 11<sup>th</sup> ACR to give them an idea of what NIMA/IA does and how we can assist them in their training role or a real world situation," Dabbs said.

Members of NIMA's predecessor organizations traveled to NTC numerous times during the late '80s and early '90s. This tradition was resurrected in 1998 and has become a worthwhile trip for analysts. ♦

# Helgerson is New NIMA Deputy Director

John L. Helgerson, a career CIA officer and former deputy inspector general, is NIMA's new Deputy Director.

Helgerson, who served as CIA Deputy Inspector General since 1998, also was Deputy Director for Intelligence. He began his career as an analyst working on the Middle East and Africa, and later headed units responsible for covering Russia, Europe, Africa and Latin America.

A native of South Dakota, Helgerson graduated from Saint Olaf College in Northfield, Minn., and received his graduate degrees from Duke University, Durham, N.C. He was an assistant professor at the University of Cincinnati before joining the CIA.

Helgerson is the author of *Getting to Know the President: CIA Briefings of Presidential Candidates, 1952-1992*, published by CIA's Center for the Study of Intelligence in 1996. ♦



## Hamre Receives NIMA's Award For Excellence



(Photo by Larry Franklin)

John J. Hamre, Deputy Secretary of Defense, has joined an extremely small group of recipients of the NIMA Medallion for Excellence.

The award is issued by the Director, NIMA, to recognize service or achievement. It is given to those who have contributed to the success of the

NIMA mission and have established a pattern of excellence.

NIMA Director Lt. Gen. James C. King presented the medal, a three-inch gold medallion of the NIMA seal, in a special ceremony held March 8 at the Washington Navy Yard. King praised Hamre for his support of NIMA and called him a "significant part of the legacy of NIMA."

Hamre stepped down from his Pentagon post March 31 to become president and chief executive officer of the Center for Strategic and International Studies. The award, he said, was totally unexpected—he was just stopping by NIMA to thank everyone for their support. "There's no one I'm closer to than NIMA," he said. "Everybody in this department (DoD) depends on what you do."

Hamre has served as Deputy Secretary since July 1997 and, prior to that, had served as DoD comptroller.

# Promotion Process Reflects Person-Based Approach of WORKFORCE21

by Paul Hurlburt

**W**ith the second annual *WORKFORCE21* promotion cycle underway, people involved in creating the new human resources system are upbeat about the prospects for more success.

Last year, the Director had specified that the number of promotions offered would be comparable to NIMA's previous "best" year for numbers of promotions, which was 1997.

That goal was accomplished. As statistics show, 595 DoD cadre promotions were made in 1999, including career-ladder promotions promised under legacy systems. This was 43 more than 1997's 552.

Promotions of NIMA CIA-affiliate employees are not currently processed under *WORKFORCE21*.

The first *WORKFORCE21* promotion cycle also "affirmed the reality of the switch to a person-based system," said Dave Kraus, chief of the NIMA Research Division.

Of the 422 employees promoted under *WORKFORCE21* (not counting career ladder promotions), most did not change assignments, although they may have assumed more responsibilities as a result of their promotion.

Unlike legacy systems, *WORKFORCE21* allows people to be paid for their value to the organization—what they con-

tribute to the mission in terms of their skills and performance. The concept of a "person-based" system differs from legacy systems in that employees are not paid solely according to their assignment or the position they occupy. Legacy systems typically required an individual to move to a new position before receiving a promotion, unless the promotion was on a "career ladder."

The agency benefits when employees are rewarded for what they contribute to the organization instead of according to the position they occupy and the "step" they are on, officials say. Employees, too, can also benefit in obvious and subtle ways.

"Anyone who was promoted without changing assignments probably benefited from the person-based concept [of *WORKFORCE21*]," Kraus said, because they would not have been promoted unless a vacancy were announced under the legacy system. Kraus led one of the management-employee teams that designed *WORKFORCE21*. He was later a member of the *WORKFORCE21* Implementation Team and currently serves as chairman of the Information Services Occupation Council.

Officials also believe *WORKFORCE21* demonstrated more impartiality in the promotion process than under legacy systems.

"Impartiality certainly ruled," said Dave Pierce, chief of the Customer Support Office administrative team, who served on the promotion panel in the management support occupation.

"We went from a legacy system, typically using a two- or three-person panel to examine two or three candidates to fill a single position, to a system that uses several persons on a panel, examining a much larger portion of the talent in NIMA at one time," Pierce said. "The best were promoted and duly recognized for their skills and performance."

The *WORKFORCE21* promotion process "provides a thorough review of a candidate's capabilities and how well they meet the promotion criteria," Kraus said.

Kraus and Pierce are the first to admit that, in terms of paying people for their value to agency, NIMA has a way to go. But, Kraus says, "we're headed in the right direction. I expect we'll leap forward this year with another round of promotions."

A clear example of how employees have already benefited from person-based promotions occurred in St. Louis, Kraus said. Due to the existing grade structure, many IS employees there were being paid less for doing the same work as their counterparts in the East. But when the promotion panel looked at their skills, according to standards defined by the IS Occupation Council, these employees received promotions. In fact, more people in the NIMA Research Division from St. Louis than elsewhere got

promotions last year because of the grade-skill discrepancy, Kraus said. "They had been artificially restricted from promotions, so *WORKFORCE21* leveled the playing field across the occupation."

Research Division employees in the East have the opportunity to get promoted, too, Kraus noted, "if they advance their skill set. And *WORKFORCE21* provides them the roadmap they need to advance to the next level," he added, citing the Occupation Guide, which is provided for every NIMA occupation.

The "person-based" approach to promotions was seen as an important advantage to several employees, who earned promotions last year.

"I believe the person-based concept is what opened the door for my promotion," said Tammi Kiser-Sparks, a NIMA staff officer in Public Affairs. "I've worked for the government for a number of years and have had scant opportunity for growth—unless, of course, I wanted to take another position. *WORKFORCE21* allows me to stay in a position I like and be paid for the expertise I've developed."

Scott Robertson, a member of the Central Imagery Tasking Office, was still officially in training when he applied for and received his promotion. "My master's thesis was a CITO project, and I spent the summer on site with CITO when I was writing it," he said.

## Good Sense

"A person-based system is good sense in that it allows me to perform my duties with

appropriate rewards," said Faye Ellenburg-Virostek, a former cartographer assigned to the Congressional and Public Liaison Office on a detail and later reassigned as a NIMA Staff Officer. She noted that the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence audit team hailed *WORKFORCE21* as "an innovative approach to personnel management."

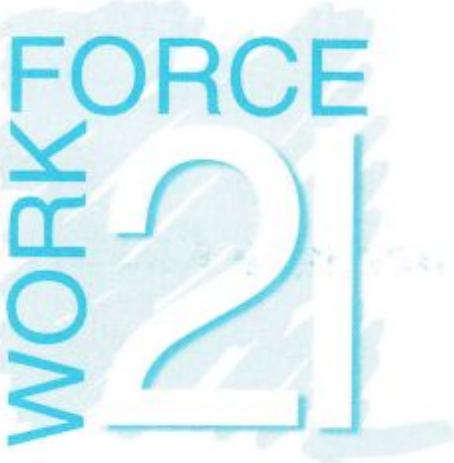
## Promotions Under *WORKFORCE21*

"The bulk of the promotion process rests with the promotion panels," said Betty Damker, *WORKFORCE21* implementation lead for performance management. Occupation Councils in each of the NIMA occupations convene the panels. Membership of both councils and panels is intended to reflect NIMA's diversity in terms of gender, race, geography, organization and technology.

Promotion panels announce opportunities, assess and select promotion candidates, notify supervisors and candidates of selections, and provide feedback to all employees who applied for promotion.

"The panel members are responsible for making sound professional judgments, maintaining confidentiality, demonstrating their commitment to valuing differences, and making effective 'people' judgments," Damker said.

In support of the person-based concept of *WORKFORCE21*, employees have the opportunity for promotion based on assessment of their demonstrated skills and performance,



rather than solely on the level of their assigned duties.

Employees applying for promotion should "provide specific examples that reflect the scope, complexity and frequency of their use of specific skills," Damker said. "They may also address their work history through describing major duties, responsibilities and accomplishments that they believe have prepared them for promotion to the next band."

Because assignments and promotions are not linked in *WORKFORCE21*, employees generally must demonstrate that they can perform new skills before they are rewarded. One way to obtain new skills and experience is through a developmental assignment, rotation, or detail. Formal training should also be considered. NIMA's Career Development Centers can provide guidance on ways for employees to enhance their careers.

The feedback provided by promotion panels to those employees not accepted for promotion is especially important, Kraus said.

*continued on page 11*

# Requirements Management System Steps Up Training to Increase Customer Service

by Jim Stacy  
NIMA College

**O**n Jan. 13, David Broadhurst, director of the NIMA College, presented a special certificate and plaque to Derrick Thomas, U.S. European Command. Thomas was the 4000th graduate of the Requirements Management System (RMS) training program since its inception in 1995.

The Requirements Management System (RMS) is used by all DoD civilian and military organizations, as well as all members of the U.S. Imagery and Geospatial Information Service, to task national imagery collection. Training is managed by the NIMA College National Imagery and Analysis School (NIAS). It's conducted at the Collection Training Facility, McLean, Va., at training sites in the military commands and the U.S. Army Intelligence Center, Ft. Huachuca, Ariz. NIAS trains and certifies more than 550 students annually.

RMS training initially took place only at the Collection Training Facility and U.S. Strategic, Pacific, and European Commands. A 1998

restructuring of the system, enabled all operational RMS sites to take part as well, increasing the flexibility to meet customer requirements. NIAS mobile training teams deploy to customer sites at MacDill Air Force Base, Fla.; Ft. Bragg, N.C.; Norfolk, Va.; and Camp Humphries, Korea.

One of the most significant instances was support to a time-critical need for RMS-trained personnel at U.S. Air Force Europe, Ramstein, Germany, during the Kosovo operation. The National Imagery and Analysis School tailored the normally two-week RMS course into an intense one-week course, certifying four students at the Ramstein Operations Center to meet NATO Theater operational requirements.

"The Collection Training Facility has been called 'the shining star' of the RMS community by NIMA customers," said Lt. Col. Kathy Parker, deputy chief of the Tasking and Requirements Management Branch. "The staff continues to exhibit excellence and dedica-



David Broadhurst presents a special certificate and plaque to Derrick Thomas, the 4000th graduate of the RMS.

Photo by Stan Chrzanski

tion in the quality of instruction and instructional products they provide to their customers."

RMS training is part of the school's Imagery Collection Management Training Program. It currently offers three courses: a requirements management course for tasking officers and collection managers; a research course for analysts; and a user-assisted series for all RMS users. Two of these deal with imagery collection management. They are Imagery Collection Strategies, a collection management course, and National Imagery Collection Management, available in the third fiscal quarter as an Intelink web-

based course. Other Intelink training will include Map Utility, Conditional Tasking/Multi-Discipline Intelligence, and Production and Distribution—which will be offered as online workbooks. (See <http://ops-tasking.nima.ic.gov/Intelink/RMS/CTF>). The imagery collection management courses will become an increasingly more important part of training.

"Much of NIAS success is dependent on its training partnerships with the commands," said Jim Stacy, chief of the Tasking and Requirements Management Branch. "The critical element of this partnership is the Command Instructors program, whereby the College certifies local instructors to deliver its courses. This gives the commands the flexibility they need to meet the constant turnover of trained personnel while simultaneously reducing both NIMA and command costs." NIAS has trained and certified instructors at the U.S. Strategic, Pacific, and European Commands and is working with the U.S. Army Intelligence Center to certify Army instructors. "This will incorporate Requirements Management System and national imagery collection management in Army imagery intelligence commissioned warrant and noncommissioned officer and enlisted imagery analyst courses."

As a logical extension of this partnership, the National

Imagery and Analysis School is further strengthening its relationship with the U.S. Pacific Command (PACOM) to satisfy critical training requirements in Korea.

"As a pilot for an on-the-job training and train-the-trainer program," Stacy said, "the NIMA College is authorizing PACOM to certify U.S. Forces Korea subject matter experts as on-the-job trainers in lieu of the one-week research course. The objective of these programs is to empower the Commands to train more users by increasing course availability, tailoring training materials, and choosing best training methods to meet specific command needs while ultimately reducing their travel

**"The Collection Training Facility has been called 'the shining star' of the RMS community by NIMA customers. The staff continues to exhibit excellence and dedication in the quality of instruction and instructional products they provide to their customers."**

costs and time away from station."

In addition to the command and service school partner-

ships, the NIMA College is working with the Army National Ground Intelligence Center/Imagery Operations Directorate at the Washington Navy Yard to establish the National Joint Imagery Training Facility (NJTIF). It will replace the Collection Training Facility when it closes later this year. ♦

*For questions regarding the NIAS training, contact Jim Stacy via e-mail or by phone at (703) 805-3202—DSN 655.*

## WORKFORCE21, continued from page 9

"People in a person-based system can't grow without feedback," he added. "The whole intent of *WORKFORCE21* is for employees to know more about why decisions are made that affect them, so the promotion panel feedback fits in with this approach."

The promotion process should be easier for applicants this year because it is now more standardized across occupations, officials say. Employees are encouraged to demonstrate their value to NIMA by submitting a promotion application in the occupation of their choice.

The deadline for turning in promotion applications is May 8.

# NIMA, To Coin a Phrase

The concept of special "commander's" coins—or in the case of NIMA, a Department of Defense agency, a "Director's coin"—is steeped in Army tradition and was adopted by the Agency shortly after the arrival of NIMA's Director, Lt. Gen. James C. King.

Traditionally, they are awarded by unit commanders to subordinates for outstanding achievement. Each unit has its own specially-designed coin that carries a uniform set of responsibilities and rules for the recipients. (See coin holder's responsibilities, pg. 13.)

Now NIMA has gone a step further by issuing a commemorative coin, one commemorating the Shuttle Radar Topography Mission (SRTM). Only a few went into space aboard *Endeavour* with agency pennants, flags and seals. Most of the coins are strictly earth-bound and will be given as mementos to those participating in the project. Each has a serial number and may be given to those who have aided or taken part in the SRTM.

## The Idea of Coins

Although some disagree on where the idea for distributing coins comes from, Army Col. Michael Thompson, NIMA chief of staff, said he believes it



Col. Mike Thompson displays the enviable collection of coins he's gathered throughout his career.

goes back to the days of World War II Europe and members of the Army's First Division, known as "Big Red One." Before customized coins were used, soldiers used the pfennig, a German "penny."

NIMA's coins are bronze, with an enameled front side sporting an eagle's head rising from two diagonal crossed green laurel branches. Enclosed above is a tripartite blue scroll doubled and inscribed, *Tempestivum Verum Definitum* ("Timely, Accurate, Precise") and encircled by 13 white stars. Circling the emblem is a white enameled band inscribed "National Imagery and Mapping Agency."

The seal has significance in mapmaking and targeting. The laurel symbolizes honor and high achievement. The three arrows symbolize the combat support mission. The eagle symbolizes watchfulness and is the national emblem of the United States. The 13 stars exemplify the principles of freedom upon which the U.S. was founded and underscore the national security mission of the Agency. Black denotes outer space from which a constellation of defense satellites gather intelligence and geospatial information. The demi-globe represents the mapping mission of the agency. Black and white domi-

(Photos by John Herlihy)

nate in the seal to symbolize night and day and constant vigilance.

The reverse of NIMA's Director's coin is emblazoned "Director's Award for Excellence" and sports a three-star flag with the NIMA banner and the words "Guaranteeing the Information Edge."

The commemorative coin is identical, except that the back shows the space shuttle *Endeavour* with the SRTM an-



## Commander's Coin Holder Responsibilities

The Commander's coin is meted out especially for "excellence" in performing work in an exemplary manner. As such, awardees are usually governed by a number of rules in keeping with the prestige of holding a unit or commander's coins.



challenge and allows the individual to exact a penalty for the insult of having been wrongfully challenged.

- Challenges may be made to or by more than one coin holder at a time but may not be repeated. The loser of the challenge is expected to make amends to everyone who issued the challenge. Coin holders who produce their coins are entitled to compensation from every-



NIMA's coins - The front of both coins is identical. The backs shown are the Director's coin (middle) and SRTM coin.

tenna fully extended, gathering digital terrain elevation data of the Earth's surface. "This was NASA's first manned mission in 2000," said Dr. Eric Berryman, of NIMA's Public Affairs Office. "SRTM is the most ambitious collection of topographical data ever attempted, to date. The initials around the rim of the coin represent the partners in the mission: National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL), German Aerospace Center (DLR), and the Italian Space Agency (ASI)."

## Challenges

- Coin holders must be in possession of their coin at all times.
- Coin holders must show their coin when challenged to do so. Only coin holders may challenge each other. A challenge is conducted by producing a coin and requesting that the challenged coin holder produce a NIMA coin, also. Failure to immediately produce a NIMA coin constitutes a grave offense for which a penalty must be exacted. Immediately producing the coin when challenged is a successful rebuke of the

one who made a wrongful challenge.

- Once a coin holder has been found to be without a coin, the disgrace is considered to be absolute and no further challenge may be issued at that time or at that event.
- Anyone obtuse enough to issue a challenge to a coin holder known to be in possession of a coin deserves to pay the penalty.

## Penalties

- Penalties shall be levied on all occasions for failure to produce a coin or insulting a coin holder.

continued on page 17

# NIMA Milestone Reached with DoD/CIA Memorandum of Agreement

NIMA's transition to the organization envisioned at its creation reached another milestone with the signing of a Memorandum of Agreement on Feb. 11. The memorandum, signed by Director of Central Intelligence George Tenet and Secretary of Defense William Cohen, addressed key questions regarding the transition of CIA personnel and positions to NIMA.

The agreement, said Tenet, "resolves important issues that arose with the establishment of NIMA." It does not, he added, "change existing relationships."

The MOA states that CIA affiliates will "retain their CIA affiliation for the duration of their U.S. Government employment if they choose to do so, even if they occupy DoD/NIMA rather than CIA positions." It also states they will be eligible to compete for both CIA and NIMA positions.

## Resolves Workforce Uncertainty

"The intent really is to resolve uncertainty in the workforce," said Karen Northart, director of NIMA's Human Resources Office and herself a CIA affiliate. "What the MOA will do is take the affiliates out of limbo, and will

go a long way to establishing consistency in how all NIMA personnel are treated."

At NIMA standup, Department of Defense cadre employees joined with the affiliates and uniformed service members. "You had separate civilian personnel systems, separate security processes with different rules," Northart said. Affiliates also had "legitimate concerns about their career development," retained CIA benefits and retirement options. "This memorandum," she added, "answers many questions, establishes greater reciprocity throughout the Intelligence Community and will assist both affiliates and cadre employees in leveraging our resources. It also will result in a stronger NIMA and a stronger Intelligence Community."

## Transferred Positions

As part of the agreement, NIMA will obtain 1,022 positions from the CIA and the funds—transferred from the CIA's budget beginning in fiscal 2001—to support them. Once NIMA has the money, it will reimburse funds back to the CIA to support the affiliates in their current functions.

Under the MOA, affiliates will retain staff status and CIA



Northart

(Photo by John Dier)

badges. Among other things that won't change:

- How they are paid, the amount they're paid and the dates on which they're paid;
- Procedures for reporting time and attendance;
- Earnings and leave statements;
- The way NIMA operates with regard to domestic travel benefits and entitlements;
- The way NIMA operates with regard to overseas benefits and entitlements;
- Polygraphs and drug test rules;
- CIA security requirements;
- Retirement and resignation—affiliates will be

reassigned back to CIA immediately prior to retirement or resignation for appropriate personnel processing;

- Security accesses;
- Trial period (for new CIA affiliates);
- Career status; and
- Grievances involving CIA processes.

CIA affiliates who desire to transfer to DoD may do so.

### Involvement in *WORKFORCE 21*

In the short term, no changes will be made in the promotion or reassignment processes for CIA affiliates; however, the MOA provides for the participation of CIA detailees in *WORKFORCE21*. Affiliates also are eligible to receive NIMA awards allocated in accordance with NIMA policies and procedures.

As affiliate replacements enter the workforce as NIMA DoD employees, Northart said, they must still conform to CIA security requirements. This includes routine and periodic lifestyle polygraphs and special clearances.

"The National Photographic Interpretation Center was a successful organization composed of CIA employees, Defense Intelligence Agency civilians and DoD service members for 30 years," Northart said. "NIMA has a great potential for being even better." Already, other intelligence agencies look at NIMA as a model, she said. "Work-

*FORCE21* and other initiatives ensure the future of NIMA. When we developed *WORKFORCE21* and pay banding, they watched us, and they're still watching."

### One NIMA

From NIMA's perspective, the term "affiliate" refers to any CIA employee assigned to NIMA. The MOA means most affiliates working at NIMA will now be detailed to NIMA on a reimbursable basis without an "end of tour date." Depending on some situations, some affiliates will be on rotational assignments with specific end of tour dates.

"The MOA takes us one more step towards the one-NIMA concept," Northart said. "It will allow NIMA to have all positions under its budget and general personnel authority."

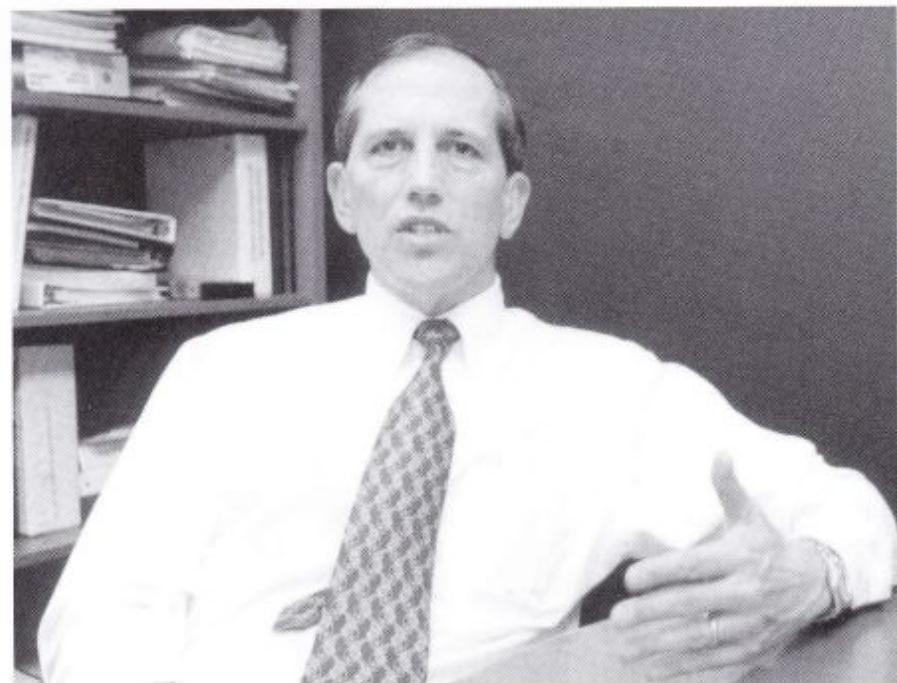
Under *WORKFORCE21*, all employees—both cadre and affiliates—would have the same standards for promotion, job consideration and awards without regard to background.

To Rick Stakem, deputy director of the Operations Directorate, the MOA means that the issue of affiliation has been resolved. "Even if the affiliates were told not to worry about it, they'd worry about it," he said. The challenge now is to ensure that CIA affiliates can continue to instill what he calls classic intelligence values—their own analytical integrity, intellectual curiosity, professional commitment and trade craft excellence—into NIMA.

### What Now?

"Where do we go from here?" said NIMA Director Lt. Gen. James C. King in a memo to

continued on page 19



(Photo by John Reff)

Stakem

# Life After NIMA

*This is part of an ongoing series of articles keeping the workforce informed about the competitive sourcing initiatives at NIMA.*

By Don Kusturin

**C**ompetitive sourcing studies at NIMA are nothing new. In 1997, a cost/benefit analysis was conducted on computer operations. As a result, much of that function was contracted out. A number of NIMA employees were affected. Most of them, however, took advantage of NIMA programs and have found their initial concerns eased—there is life after NIMA.

Jimmy Boyd, Chief of the Systems Operations Branch (SONO), knows too well the unsettling effects that contracting out functions can have. He's had to inform people that their jobs would be making the transition.

"Some were angry," he said. "They were scared, concerned, apprehensive, defensive, and felt betrayed by the government and managers." For many, the fears proved unfounded.

## Right of First Refusal

NIMA provides a soft landing for employees by ensuring incoming contractors give former NIMA personnel "right of first refusal." This means contractors must first offer jobs to NIMA employees where vacancies exist for work done in support of the agency. It has resulted in a high percentage of those affected returning as contractors.

"The 'right of first refusal' was great for employees," Boyd

said. "And most have adjusted well." After transitioning to the private sector, these employees "continue to give their best," he added. "The quality and dedication they show have precluded any negative effect on the NIMA mission."

Boyd said that approximately 70 percent of the people affected by contracting have returned to work at NIMA for the contractors, some doing the same job. "Those eligible to retire fared extremely well," said Boyd. "They got retirement checks and comparable salaries with the contractors."

"Contracting out for me came at an ideal time," said Daryl Berg, who met both the age and time-of-service requirements. "I was eligible to retire on Friday and began working for ARTI (Advanced Resource Technologies, Inc.) on Monday. My wife and I felt this was an opportunity too good to pass up."

Berg, like many in NIMA, was able to capitalize on having enough years of service for retirement purposes and being able to return to comparable work on the next business day. This allowed him to bring in pay from two sources with a single decision.

## Voluntary Early Retirement Authority

Vashti Blanchard foresaw the trend in downsizing of the workforce and made the right decisions to protect herself. Because she had the required age, but not the time in federal govern-



Waggoneer and Berg

ment, she was eligible to take the Voluntary Early Retirement Authority.

"There had been articles and speakers on the topic of government downsizing for many years," she said. "I had prepared myself long before it was presented to me. Therefore, the decision I made was best for me."

Don Wagoner found himself in a similar situation. He had time in service without the age requirement needed for full retirement. His decision was not necessarily one of choice, but of necessity. He felt pride working for the government and wanted to stay a NIMA employee, but found himself with no other alternative than to retire at a reduced benefit and return to NIMA collecting a contractor's salary.

"[Things are] better now. ARTI is a good company, pay is good and I'm getting a Federal Annuity with Federal Health Benefits," he said. "The civilian health benefits are expensive."

"It is not as painful as one might think," said Vashti. "There are a lot of advantages working for the private sector. In a very short time, I have obtained so much and have been given opportunities I had not gained from working for the government."

All three former NIMA employees said they are glad they had met retirement eligibility, but acknowledged there were those who hadn't. Their advice to those who might be affected in the future: be prepared. They recommend education, training and the willingness to adapt.

"My advice is that if the inevitable happens, and you're contracted out, look at it as a chance to jump into the 21st century with a new job, new employer and make the best of it," said Berg. "Who's to say what opportunities may develop in the future?" ♦

## NIMA To Coin a Phrase

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2. Penalties may be agreed upon by those concerned prior to the actual challenge.
3. Other than a previous agreement on penalties, the following apply:
  - a. If challenged in a restaurant, café, office, work space or public house the miscreant who fails to produce a coin or who wrongfully challenges a coin holder shall buy the coin holder a beverage of his or her choice.
  - b. If on an athletic field or in a fitness facility, the miscreant will execute 10 push-ups or an equal number of sit-ups.
  - c. If the challenge occurs in some other area, the penalty may be deferred or satisfied at a later date when the conditions of "a" or "b" apply, or an autographed two-dollar bill may be offered to satisfy the debt.

## Decorum

1. Coin holders are expected to uphold the highest standards of decorum and dignity.

Coin challenges conducted under circumstances that violate good order and discipline, customs of the service, the dignity of the individual concerned or similar circumstances will be declared invalid.

2. In cases where the coin challenge is under question, the senior coin holder present (military or civilian), who is not involved in the matter, will decide the merit of the challenge.
3. In those cases where all present are involved in the challenge, a decision will be deferred until an officer, noncommissioned officer (NCO) or petty officer (PO) not involved in the case can be located. The decision of the officer, NCO or PO appealed to is final and cannot be overturned.
4. In situations where civilians are solely involved, a toss of the coin—with a heads or tails call—will decide the issue.

**N**IMA Mission Support employees subject to outsourcing are getting some breathing room to plan their next career move, thanks to a two-year pilot program approved by the Director in January.

Assignments held by employees in many MS functions will be shifted to contractors on a voluntary basis, as long as at least 50 positions are converted each year, said Jerry Dunbar, director of the Mission Support Office (MS). Over the next six years, a total of 300 MS positions are subject to conversion to contract.

The trial program, which could be extended for six years, affects MS employees mostly in Bethesda and St. Louis, where most of MS commercial activities are performed. Referred to as the "MS Attrition Model," the program is possible because of Base Operating Services (BOS) contracts signed in September with Alaskan Native companies qualifying under the preferential procurement provisions of the competitive sourcing regulations. These contracts are a culmination of exceptional work done by a contract acquisition team made up of members from MS and PC, according to Dunbar.

"The new BOS contracts will also consolidate existing MS

contracts," Dunbar said. "OMB A-76 regulations generally require competitive sourcing studies to determine whether the function can be performed more efficiently in house or by

The government retains control over which modules to award, which also allows control over costs.

As outlined in a Jan. 31 memorandum to employees by

NIMA Director Lt. Gen. James C. King, NIMA will require that the contractors hire staff from current MS personnel in numbers set by the contractor.

"Any remaining government workforce will be consolidated and organized to work

in modules that have not yet been placed under contract."

## Giving Employees More Control

The flexibility provided by the BOS contracts will benefit both NIMA and employees, according to Dunbar.

"Say a government employee with a critical skill, such as a boiler operator, suddenly leaves NIMA," he said. "With the BOS contracts, we now have the ability to quickly convert the work to contract and the contractor immediately recruits for a replacement."

If the pilot program is extended, employees also will have more flexibility to schedule important events, such as retirement, to take maximum advantage of the benefits that they have earned.

"About a third of all MS employees are currently eli-

# MS Pilot Project Helps Employees Cope with Outsourcing

by Paul Hurlburt

contract." These studies, he added, have unknown but date-specific outcomes. These same regulations also allow for direct conversion to contract, again, under the preferential procurement provisions.

In 1997, MS established a vision of "One Agency, One BOS." The MS strategy to achieve the vision calls for a consolidation of contracts by site, then by region and finally by agency, Dunbar said. "The BOS contracts are now in place and the next step is to divide in-house functions into modules that will be individually negotiated for conversion to the BOS contracts. The contractors will then solicit the workforce, and upon receiving commitments from employees who wish to transition to the contract, decisions will be made on which modules to award. This entire cycle will then be repeated next year."

gible for retirement under Voluntary Early Retirement Authority (VERA)," Dunbar noted. In the next six years, another third of MS employees will become eligible to retire under VERA. The latter group is the one standing to benefit most from this attrition model, he added, because "if MS went the traditional route of an A-76 cost competition, many of these folks might or could miss the opportunity to obtain their retirement benefits."

The BOS contracts allow employees to choose when they depart government service. If the pilot program is successful, more employees will be able to take advantage of retirement benefits. The remaining third of affected MS employees are enrolled in the Federal Employee Retirement System (FERS). This group has pension portability from their thrift plan and social security benefits.

"Few people like the whole contracting-out notion,"

Dunbar said, "but given the options available to us, this attrition model is the most worker-friendly solution. It's all about giving employees as much control as possible by giving them time to make decisions about their careers."

## Partnership Envisioned

The BOS contracts are with Akima and Chugach, and are renewable for up to 10 years, which will allow NIMA and the contractors to build a strong partnership, Dunbar said. "We want the transition to contract to be transparent to all MS customers, by providing highly responsive customer service and by living NIMA Core Values," he said. Incentives are built into the contracts to encourage quality performance.

MS functions available under the BOS contracts include security services, installation maintenance,

space management, safety and health and other base support functions. The MS visual information function is under a separate A-76 competitive sourcing study. Administrative services (i.e., secretarial and clerical) in MS are covered by a NIMA-wide natural attrition plan.

Plans call for retaining minimum levels of in-house capabilities in MS, with contract augmentation where feasible. These include NIMA policy development, MS policy and program management for core processes, corporate planning, site and contract management, agency space planning and space boards, NIMA representation, customer requirements definition, Automated Information Systems Security certification and accreditation, security incident management, personnel clearance processing, special security access programs, and force protection. ♦

## NIMA/CIA Memorandum

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Agency employees. "First, we will make every effort to clarify the content, meaning and impact of the Agreement." Second, he added, "I have chartered a team to provide counsel and advice on issues as they arise." The team, led by Rick Stakem, includes John Kringen,

director, Imagery Analysis Office; Terry Vernier, director of the Central Imagery Tasking Office; James Harris, deputy general counsel for Intelligence; Ed Henson, director of the Acquisition Office; and Karen Northart.

"I am pleased we now have a signed MOA," King said. "I am

confident that it will serve the needs of all parties and move NIMA forward in GUARANTEEING THE INFORMATION EDGE to all customers of imagery, imagery intelligence and geospatial information."

# Task Force Helps Transition to National System, Wins Director's Kudos

by Paul Hurlburt

**T**he difficult we do right away—the impossible takes a little longer,” was a popular World War II ditty. It personified how Americans approached the task of winning the war. That motto could easily have been used by NIMA employees who recently worked to bring a new imagery analysis system on line.

Deemed vital to national security, the NIMA-led National Exploitation System (NES), which provides data used in the exploitation and dissemination of imagery, officially replaced other systems maintained by the Intelligence Community last October.

Facing this daunting task, more than 250 Agency employees, contractors and Intelligence Community members formed the NIMA Information System Task Force (NISTF), responsible for managing the transition from legacy systems to NES. Within six months, under the leadership of Betsey Mazzella, chief of Imagery Analysis and Technology Integration, this rapid-response task force tackled—and overcame—all

challenges of the transition in a manner King likened to Tennyson’s “Charge of the Light Brigade.”

## ‘Superb Example’

About 70 members of the NISTF gathered Jan. 24 in the Washington Navy Yard auditorium to receive thanks from their director and senior leaders. Special guests included Assistant Director of Central Intelligence for Analysis and Production John Gannon and Craig Baugh, the Defense Intelligence Agency and Command representative, both who played key roles in the transition.

Some “fabulous positives” came out of the effort, King told the audience. Not only was operating capability achieved and customer confidence enhanced, the NISTF members demonstrated that “when we work together as a community, there’s just nothing we can’t accomplish.”

Members of the NISTF included employees from all the NIMA directorates, but especially Systems and Technology (ST), which delivered the National Exploitation System, and the Directorate of Operations (DO), NIMA’s primary NES user.

Bill Allder, deputy director for Systems and Technology, called the task force accomplishments “a superb example” for everyone in NIMA of “how we need to operate.” Laying aside organizational boundaries, he added, task force members “put all the issues on the table to choose the best course of action as a group.”

“You thought you could do it, and you did,” said Bobbi Lenczkowski, deputy director for Operations, describing the group’s positive approach.

For her leadership of the NISTF, Betsey Mazzella, chief of the Imagery Analysis Tech-



Betsey Mazzella receives the Distinguished Civilian Service Award for her leadership of the National Information System Task Force.

Photo by Rob Cox



separate local area networks by the end of the fiscal year.

"Many of us understood bits and pieces, but few understood the whole system and the changes to the workflow that both NIMA and the Intelligence Community would see," Mazzella said. As a result, King asked Mazzella to report to him daily.

Representing both DO and ST, Mazzella's immediate challenge was to "build a trusting relationship, then rank the priorities and work through them quickly," working as a team. "It wasn't DO versus ST," she said. "We worked through the issues and priorities together."

Long hours and "daily reprioritization" became the routine.

"The first week Roy Combs [NISTF executive officer] and I worked almost nonstop," Mazzella said. "We had to get the network people and the system people together and provide guidance on what issues to work." Time also was spent recruiting members of the NISTF and organizing them into working teams. But in many cases, "folks just stepped forward," she said.

As the task force patiently and systematically addressed each issue, the National Exploitation System incrementally became operational, achieving full capability in October. ♦

The "Real Warriors," Mary Ellen Dixon, left, and Vickie Roach receive NIMA Director's Coins from General King for their special contributions.

nology Integration Staff (IACS), received the Distinguished Civilian Service Award. Her "direction and personal example" were cited as being "critical in making sure that NIMA could meet its commitment to guarantee the information edge."

King presented the NIMA Medallion of Excellence to Mazzella and four other members of her management team, Roy Combs, Pat Cribb, Keith Littlefield and Robert McGee. He also presented Director's Coins to Vickie Roach and Mary Ellen Dixon for their contributions to the NISTF.

More than 260 employees from throughout NIMA, the Intelligence Community and private industry received Certificates of Appreciation, signed by King. Their names will appear in the *NIMA Connector*.

## Runs on Existing Networks

Comprised of servers at different locations and a database of imagery information, the Y2K-compliant NES runs on existing CIA, DIA and NIMA networks, replacing imagery exploitation systems formerly maintained by the CIA and DIA. The repository for imagery intelligence reports created on those legacy systems also moved to the NES, giving customers worldwide access to its database via Intelink.

The transition involved not solely the NES, but the networks it was designed to serve, Mazzella said. The goal is to consolidate the



The NIMA Medallion for Excellence is presented by General King to five members of the NISTF management team, from left, Rob McGee, team lead Betsey Mazzella (foreground), Keith Littlefield, Roy Combs and Pat Cribb.

Phot by Rob Cox

# Aero Analyst Obtains NIMA Data On Reserve Duty

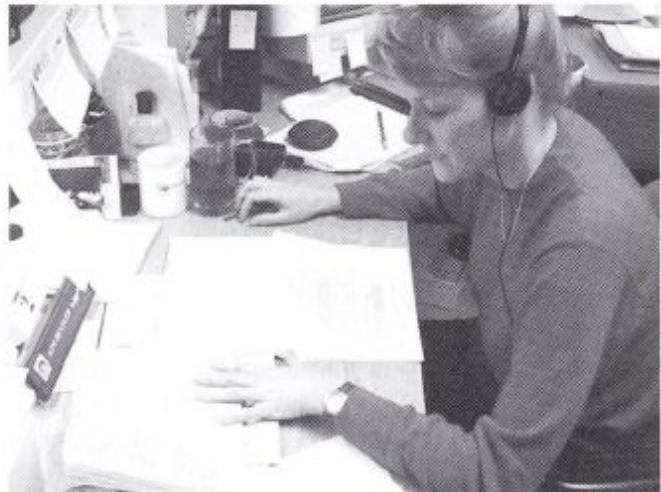
*Bill Norman  
AAFIF Production Support*

Understanding customers' needs is an important part of providing relevant and timely data—especially aeronautical data which can change quickly. Gathering that data is sometimes a challenge to collection systems that are hampered by rapid turnover of personnel. The Aeronautical Navigation Department (GIMA) has an unusual case where one of its analysts is a customer, a collector, and an information producer.

**K**atarina (Kim) Bentler is an aeronautical area analyst. She's also a major in the U.S. Air Force Reserve and an aircraft commander on KC-135 tanker aircraft with the 63rd Air Refueling Squadron at Selfridge Air National Guard Base, Mich. "I travel to Selfridge one or more times each month to put in time as a pilot," she said. "And every time I come back to NIMA, I bring some insight I've gained in the operational environment."

Managing a full-time job and flying for the Air Force in Michigan isn't easy. Reserve pilots fly once or twice each month on a "long weekend," and they spend several weeks each year on special exercises or projects. To join her squadron, Kim takes a commercial flight from St. Louis to Detroit, then a rental car for the last 50 miles to Selfridge. "It gives special meaning to the term 'long weekend,'" she laughed.

A special mission for Bentler occurred on January 14 when she flew from Selfridge to Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, and back—some 35 hours of flying time plus a few stops for crew rest. While in Guam, she was able to obtain detailed airfield information she needed to update the aeronautical database. "The information was much more readily released to NIMA as a result of my being there in person," she said. "And it was a unique opportunity for me to



Bentler

*[Photo by Don Kusturini]*

update an airfield that was within my area of responsibility."

Prior to her trip, Bentler reviewed the airfield records for Andersen Air Force Base to determine what data was needed. She also coordinated with NIMA aeronautical imagery analysts to see if any "ground truth" photography would be helpful for interpreting what they see on their typical "top-down" view of the world. Using this shopping list of data shortfalls, she collected information on lighting for the airfield parking areas and detailed parking plans (what kind of airplane can be parked where). The data provided some ground truth validation for the imagery analysts.

Following her graduation from the U.S. Air Force Academy in 1983, Bentler completed the Undergraduate Pilot Training (UPT) course at Columbus Air Force Base, Miss., in 1984. As a pilot, she flew tankers for eight years followed by a seven-year stint doing various non-flying jobs. Her aviation experience qualified her in 1997 as an aeronautical analyst in NIMA's Aeronautical Navigation Department, where she was assigned territorial responsibility for air-



fields in the Far East and Pacific Ocean. She returned to flying status with the Reserve in March 1999.

"I'm very happy to be back in the air," she said. "I think it brings a valuable perspective to the NIMA workforce and am always looking for ways to enhance the aeronautical information database—thus GUARANTEEING THE INFORMATION EDGE!" ♦

## Bring Your Child to Work Day

Ever wish your children could see what you do on the job? If so, mark your calendars for April 27—Bring Your Child to Work Day. From 6 a.m. to 3 p.m., children between the ages of 9-15 will be allowed to shadow their parent or legal guardian in their day-to-day jobs.

Children will be required to sign in. The liberal leave policy will be in effect on the 27th.

Further information will be provided in a NIMA News release. Or call Ernie Peters, 227-7076.

# NIMA School Partnership—A ‘Capitol’ Success



*Winners of Hutchison Elementary School's geography bee with Rep. Davis. (L-R): Breanna Rebischke, 6<sup>th</sup> grade, Carlos Davila and Dee Henson, 4<sup>th</sup> grade.*

“What do you want to be when you grow up?” The question came during a tour of Capitol Hill on Feb. 11. Rep. Tom Davis (R-Va.) was meeting with three young winners of a geography bee from Hutchison Elementary and three School Partnership Program coordinators.

The three students, Breanna Rebischke, 6<sup>th</sup> grade, and Carlos Davila and Dee Henson, 4<sup>th</sup> grade, were accompanied by Julie Mehalik, Hutchison Elementary School; John Liebsch, NIMA; and Kim Roivas, NIMA.

After Breanna and Carlos gave their answers, it was Dee’s turn. Without hesitation he replied that he wanted to work for NIMA. Not too surprising, since Dee’s father, Greg Henson, is a watch officer in the NIMA Operations Center, Bethesda.

When asked about it later, father Greg chuckled and said Dee “will likely change his career plans in a few short years, but for now it seems to be a good reflection on his feelings about NIMA’s partnership with Hutchison School.”

And his dad works there to boot!” Greg called Dee a “well-traveled kid,” often spending weekends with the rest of the family exploring Virginia’s many landmarks he is studying in 4<sup>th</sup> grade history.

NIMA’s School Partnership Program is particularly successful at Reston due to NIMA volunteer tutors, pen pals and all the employees at Reston who contribute through grocery receipt drives, etc. NIMA Reston renews its Partnership Agreement with Hutchison Elementary School as part of the School’s Geography Bee event. NIMA Reston currently boasts 17 tutors and 19 pen pals and has collected more than \$2,500 in grocery store receipts that the school will use to purchase equipment and supplies. ♦

For information on how to participate in the NIMA School Partnership program call *Joan Mears (NIMA East) at 301-227-3105, or Sharon Smith (NIMA West) at 314-263-4142.*

# SRTM Hits a Home Run: A Personal View from the Newsroom

by Jennifer Lafley

Sometimes total success just doesn't seem to be within our grasp—but that's not the story of the Shuttle Radar Topography Mission, which blasted into space on Feb. 11. Now that the 10-day mission is over, the sheer volume of information gleaned covers an incredible area of more than 119 million square kilometers of land. How it will be used is even more mind boggling.

After nearly two years of working together, National Aeronautics Space Administration (NASA), Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL), European Space Agency and NIMA team members had progressed beyond collaboration—they had become friends as well as colleagues. By the time the shuttle was launched, each member knew the others' work habits, expertise and personalities. And though each group had its own perspective of how events played, the clock-like precision and success of the mission elated all. Together, they contributed to the successful completion of mapping much of the world's surface in three dimensions—collecting radar images from nearly 48 million square miles.

## From the News Room: Kennedy Space Center

Reporters on the space news beat of various media organizations hung out in front of the NASA news room at the Kennedy Space Center. It's a collegial group, and information is freely shared. Inside the news center, half of the room was dedicated to the public affairs officers from NIMA, NASA, JPL and the European Space Agency, who interacted and disseminated information. A long counter with a battery of telephones and hookups for laptop computers was where we conducted most of our business.

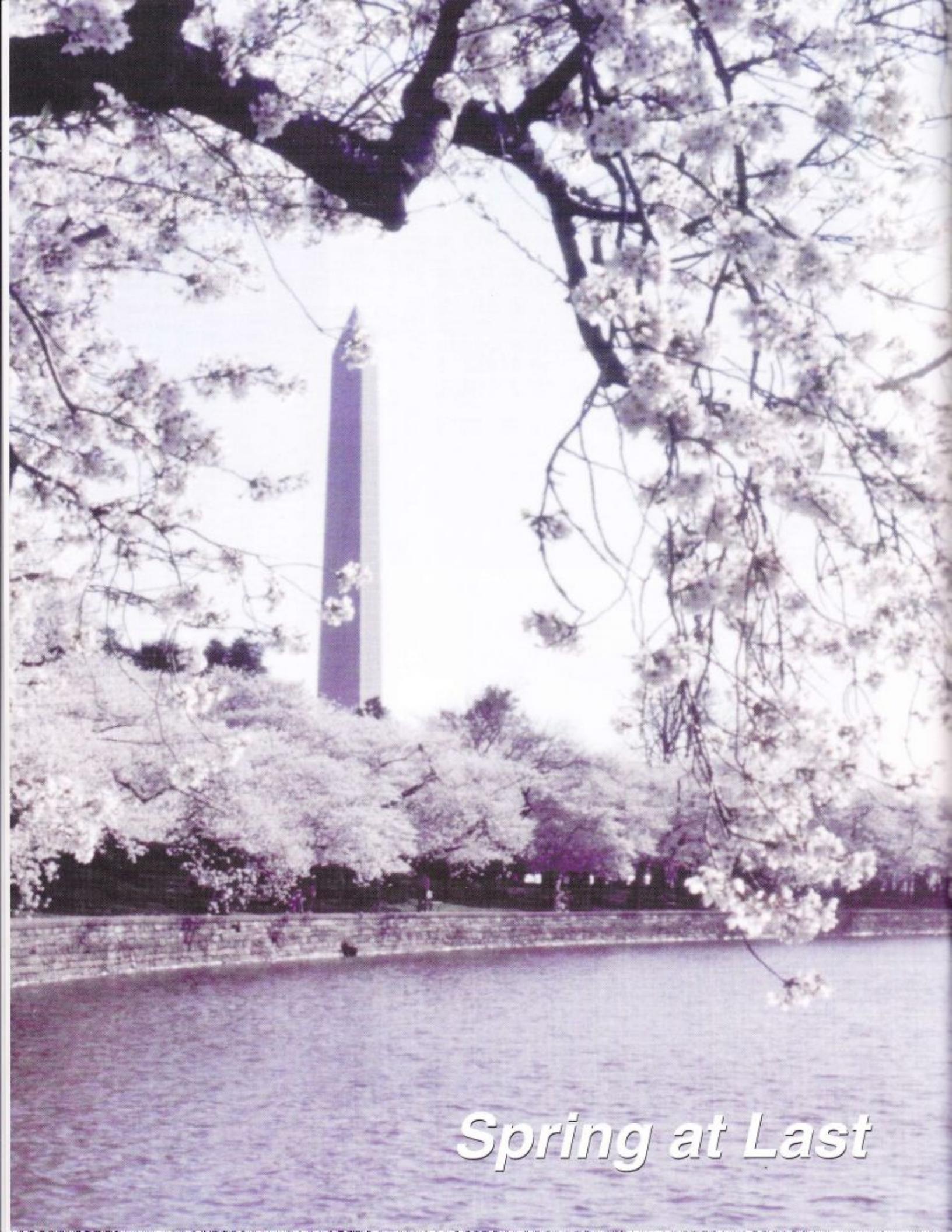
Across the room, a larger bank of counters sporting names such as *USA Today*, *Houston Chronicle*, *Spacenews*, *St. Petersburg Times*, and *Florida Today*. Even though the reporters from these newspapers and news agencies weren't partners in the mission, the reporters formed close working relationships with their "sources." Japanese astronaut Momaru Mohri was especially popular. Much revered in his country, Mohri had more reporters following him than the rest of the astronauts combined.

An earlier launch attempt of the mission in January brought the most reporters. The reason: it was raining and cold. The newsroom swarmed with the typically relaxed print reporters in jeans and sweatshirts contrasted by the coifed and immaculately dressed anchormen. Requests for interviews with SRTM team members and for information about the agencies involved kept everyone busy. Phones and faxes were ringing. Added to the mix were newly selected astronauts, signing autographs and gaining experience talking to reporters.

NIMA Director Lt. Gen. James C. King represented the agency at a press conference on NASA television that was picked up by CNN and other stations. Tom Hennig, NIMA's SRTM project manager, appeared on all the local television stations and Terry Meehan, formerly of the Congressional and Public Liaison Office, gave several radio interviews. The warmth of the media spotlight was exhilarating, but when NASA announced that the first launch attempt was aborted, the room emptied within minutes.

It was over, at least for the next 11 days. The only sounds in the room were public affairs officers making plane reservations to return home.

Continued next page



*Spring at Last*