

State Of the ART

Morning update meetings are packed like a can of sardines, according to one United States European Command (USEUCOM) Marine Corps colonel. Col. Marsha Lee Culver, Assistant Chief of Staff at Headquarters USEUCOM, said morning updates are standing room only, but relief is on the way.

Elbow Room

Story and photos by
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Marine Col. Marsha Lee Culver, As
Staff, Headquarters U.S. Europe
inspects flooring during a walk-through inspection
of Building 2358 on Patch Barracks in Stuttgart,
Germany. John Adams, Ansbach Area Engineer
with Europe District (standing) assists.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Europe District expects to turn over Building 2358, a renovated command center on Patch Barracks in Stuttgart, Germany, to USEUCOM at the end of this summer. The building will provide 31 offices, nine conference rooms, two kitchens, and a state-of-the-art command center to the USEUCOM staff.

The \$6.2-million renovation of the 34,133-square-foot facility involved demolition, structural configuration, and fire-proofing, but has been tied up in a struggle for money for over a decade.

Culver said the project's delay started in the late '80s. "All the funding that was set aside to do the renovation ... was taken away because this was back when the Berlin Wall was falling, Russia was reorganizing, ... and

Congress said 'Wait a minute, why are we going to invest all this money when we now have other expenses?'" Culver said.

The wait for the new command center has been long, but not necessarily bad, she said.

"The need for a command center ... did not go away and the dynamic nature of EUCOM did not change, in fact, it even got more complex," Culver said. Involvement in Africa, Operations Desert Storm and Desert Shield, and more recently, the global war on terrorism, have affected how the USEUCOM staff conducts

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its day-to-day operations.

To ensure the building met USEUCOM's needs, the Europe District design staff worked closely with



Samuel Baxter (left) and Regina Jugueta-Vetter (center) of Europe District, talk with Marine Col. Marsha Lee Culver.

USEUCOM, the *Staatliches Hochbauamt Reutlingen*, and Theater System Integration Office (TSIO).

"Although it was unfortunate that we could not have good working space during that time, ... [the delay] that took place allowed us to craft and design this building, I'm sure differently, than we would have done 11 years ago - much differently."

Although USEUCOM did not get funding for an extension to the building, they were able to gain some square footage inside by altering the former command center. Culver said the old center was similar to what one would see in movies with action taking place on the floor while leadership viewed the action from a mezzanine above.

"We did not get our extension ... but since we filled in that top deck we were able to get more office space - and it's still not big enough," Culver said. "It just doesn't hold all the operations that we would need to put into a robust command center, but the technologies in it are state of the art ... and there is a plan to continue on with these technologies to keep up [with] the pace of the environment we're in."

Regina Jugueta-Vetter, project engineer with the Stuttgart Resident Office said TSIO, a federal agency working with EUCOM, is taking advantage of the building's technology-accommodating construction.



Marine Col. Marsha Lee Culver (left), discusses the layout of Building 2358 on Patch Barracks in Stuttgart with John Anderson and Regina Jugueta-Vetter (right).

Raised floors allow for easy access to local area network, Integrated Visual Information System (IVIS), telephone, and other cables, and the building is equipped with electrical drops from the ceiling to allow for varied computer system configurations.

TSIO began laying about 160 miles of cable in February in equipment rooms.

Construction will be finished in late May, but the Corps, contract architect Firma Groetz, and TSIO, have agreed to keep some suspended ceilings open and to install the fire protection stoppers between the walls and cable trays once TSIO is finished in mid June.

Operating in phases has worked well so far, she said. The TSIO staff get several rooms to work in, and modifications are attended to one at a time. The Corps team then checks the completed rooms for quality assurance.

Jugueta-Vetter said the parties

involved have worked closely to keep on schedule and to keep the customer happy.

Culver said that being flexible when facing future challenges and looking at ways to optimize the facility is key. "In today's world of technology you can't just build something and dust your hands off and say 'I'm finished'. You've got to continually evolve. And, in fact, some of the designs of the rooms are made ... so we can configure them. There is some morphing we can do in the building right now."

Culver emphasized both flexibility and growth, and she recognized that the process has been challenging for TSIO, the Corps' team and the Bauamt. She thanked them all for being a strong team.

"We've changed commanders. We've changed people and personalities. Funding has been worked through different iterations. ... We've had a lot of growing pains and we've had a lot of changes and considerations," she said. "The Corps of Engineers has been very patient ..." and has been flexible with all the changes EUCOM has encountered.

