

**Quality Partnership Initiative**  
**American Association of Port Authorities and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers**  
**Communication/Collaboration Best Practices**

Name: DCA Dredging Contractors of America

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**Best Practice:**

Senior Level Partnering. Begun in 2006, to address some very serious nationwide contractual issues, the partnering evolved into an open dialogue on many issues contractual, technical, and programmatic that has resulted in many specific successes, but also had led the Corps to understand industry concerns better and for industry to understand and react to Corps concerns and challenges. Corps brings senior level folks from HQ and Divisions, and dredging industry brings senior execs from each company.

**Purpose:**

Maintain open dialogue between Corps and dredge industry senior leaders to create as efficient a marketplace as possible with stakeholder satisfaction being the biggest concern. Intent was and is to filter to Districts as well as specific issues need addressing regionally.

**Explanation:**

Contractors see a wide variation in how projects and contracts are executed. Industry gets frustrated when perceived bad practices continue uncorrected or are repeated in different Districts. When one

District may get it right other Districts may not. There is a need to advocate for best practices around the country for a consistent market place. Corps (and ports) is frustrated with perception of an industry that is unresponsive to their needs and is also not innovative. Partnering format allows for all issues to be put on table and for Corps leadership to assign PDT's to address that include dredgers and Corps. Trickle down is other industry groups like WEDA and regional port groups doing their partnering to engage industry in similar discussions.

#### Examples of Results:

Many great examples, but Industry Days is one that has been adopted by most Districts. This is in response to concerns industry had about not getting enough time or information to bid projects. Industry days recommend Corps include industry in conceptual studies and after completion of draft specs so that industry and Corps can bring their teams together to discuss the scope of the project and any special difficulties or new or unusual requirements that may need more explanation than can be made in writing. Results have been dramatic, with every job that made a good faith industry effort bringing in better bids than anticipated as well as projects that are executed as anticipated because both sides know what to expect of each other.

We could make the case that RAMP was an outcome of the Partnering as industry came to understand better just how problematic the O&M funding situation had become.

PDT's have been formed to review survey issues, endangered species issues, cost estimating, overdepth, project level partnering, DIS, and DQM. Most have resulted in positive results.

Why this Process is Important to the Port and the Corps:

This is an essential component of an efficient dredging program that ports need to rely on. With such hard work being put into winning permits and funding, it is essential that Corps and ports be able to know that dredgers are providing the services they need at prices that are reasonable. Dredgers need to understand that the market is definable to extent possible and that plans and specification are meaningful and practical. Best summarized by good jobs and good specs derive good bids.

Attachments (if any)