

Ohio PTAC client's \$100 million in military contracts supports troop efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan deserts

Nordic Air and PTAC program celebrate with Ohio Governor

HARPERSFIELD, OH – Thanks to help from the State of Ohio's Procurement Technical Assistance Program, Nordic Air Inc., a small business that designs heating and cooling units, has been awarded over \$100 million in defense contracts that directly support U.S. troops in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Nordic Air supplies Military Environmental Control Units (ECUs) that provide heating and cooling units housed on a portable trailer that can also include a generator large enough to supply power to an entire encampment. The trailer, easily pulled by a Humvee, can be set up to provide heating and cooling in minutes. The ECU fits the military rapid-deployment need and is also uniquely designed to operate in extreme temperatures that range from the deserts of Iraq to the tundra.

The awarding of these contracts - \$45 million with the U.S Marine Corp, \$60 million to \$90 million with the U.S. Air Force and \$800,000 with the U.S. Navy – has created the need for a 130,000 square foot building expansion and 100 new jobs. Nordic Air is located in Harpersfield Township, a very small community in Northeast Ohio, inside Ashtabula County, which is a HUBZone area. Creating 100 jobs for this small community is big business and a healthy number by anyone's standards.

Ohio's Governor Bob Taft and over 200 state, local and federal dignitaries and well wishers honored Nordic Air owner, Ron Clutter and his employees, joining the Ohio PTAC at a celebration of the awards and expansion last October in Harpersfield. The Governor recognized Nordic as an outstanding example of small business working hard to succeed and was pleased that the State of Ohio Procurement program was able to step up to plate and be instrumental in assisting Nordic to this culmination of activity over the past couple years.

Ohio Sen. George Voinovich's office presented Nordic with a plaque recognizing Nordic, the State of Ohio and the PTAC program along with others that as a team assisted Nordic Air. Also, the Cleveland SBA office presented Nordic Air with a small business award of distinction.

Ron Clutter lauded the efforts of the Ohio PTAC program. He especially thanked Bob Fenn, the Northeast Ohio center director and Jane Stewart, the center's government business specialist, who worked tirelessly to assist Nordic in its quest for government business. "We had Jane and Bob on the phone and here at our facility constantly. It took a lot of work and a lot of their time, but together we did it," said Clutter, who told the crowd he is famous for not taking "no" for an answer.

All branches of the military (active and in-active duty) participated in a special flag-raising ceremony held at the event, completed with a gun salute by the local VFW and patriotic songs played by the local high school band.

A Little History

This success story began in 2003, when Bill Calhoon, Nordic Air's vice president of sales and marketing, called the PTAC's Northeast Ohio sub-center (NEO PTAC) for assistance in making the jump from a sub-supplier for government contracts to prime contractor. NEO PTAC is one of five sub-centers across the state administered by Ohio's Procurement Technical Assistance Program, an arm of the state's Department of Development. The program is dedicated to providing low or no-cost assistance to businesses seeking to participate in federal, state and local government contracting. Last year, Ohio PTAC clients reported receiving over \$600 million in government contracts.

The very next month, NEO PTAC identified a pre-solicitation notice from the Marine Corp which seemed ideal for Nordic Air's capabilities. With the benefit of the pre-solicitation time frame and the help of the PTAC staff, Nordic Air was able to prepare the very technical proposal required by the solicitation. As part of that process, the NEO PTAC: reviewed and explained to Nordic the request for proposals (RFP) and all of its components/requirements and also provided buy history information on similar units being purchased by the government; assisted Nordic in posing 130 questions about the solicitation requirements to the contracting officer; and helped the company obtain their HUBZone certification. Nordic was awarded the \$45 million Marine Corp contract in July, 2004, and by invitation, NEO government business specialist Jane Stewart accompanied Nordic to the DCMA post-award meeting for support in meeting the post award requirements of the contract.

Though Nordic Air now had a major contract under their belt, their relationship with the PTAC was far from over. Thanks to their continued collaboration, a contract with the U.S. Air Force was awarded in January of 2006. After Nordic Air's failed attempts to secure a GSA Schedule contract with a private firm, they again turned to NEO for assistance in resubmitting the necessary documentation. NEO PTAC counselors even participated in conference calls with GSA in the final negotiations. In September of 2006, Nordic received approval of their GSA schedule contract, broadening their market to all government agencies.

"The Nordic Air story is a shining example of the excellent services being provided by our procurement sub-centers throughout Ohio," said Virginia Mullenax, State of Ohio PTAC Program Manager. "NEO's expertise and technical assistance literally equipped Nordic with the ammunition they needed to win these contracts and a GSA schedule. Bob and Janie are to be congratulated for their tremendous efforts and dedication to this program."

"PTAC programs across the country are boosting economic development and creating and retaining jobs by providing the technical assistance needed to understand government

contracting and the training and education that creates winning contractors,” Mullenax continued. The State of Ohio PTAC is one of 92 such programs operating in 46 states across the country. Last year, PTAC clients nationwide were awarded over \$14.188 billion in government contracts.



From left, James Manuel, Dep. Dir., Ohio Dept. of Development, Julie Smith, Gov.'s Outreach office representative, Gov. Bob Taft, Bob Fenn, NEO PTAC Ctr Dir, Ron Clutter, owner Nordic Air and ladies, Virginia K. Mullenax, Ohio State PTAC Program Mgr, Jane Stewart, NEO Government Business Specialist, and Cathy Haworth, Exec. Dir., Lake County Economic Development Center.



From left, Master Sgt. Theresa Terry, USMC, Gunnery Sgt. Michael Ragan, USMC, and Capt. Brett Clutter, USAF B-52 pilot and brother of Nordic Air's owner, Ron Clutter. The trio stands in front of Nordic Air's military ECU, a portable HVAC system, designed specifically for portability, rapid deployment and response with almost all of the over \$100 million worth of units being shipped to Iraq and Afghanistan.



Standing in front on Nordic Air's military ECU from left, Bob Fenn, NEO PTAC center director, Master. Sgt. Theresa Terry, USMC, Gunnery Sgt. Michael Ragan, USMC, Brett Clutter, USMC B-52 pilot and brother of Nordic Air's owner, Virginia K. Mullenax, Ohio State PTAC Program Manager and James Manuel, Deputy Director, Ohio Dept. of Development.

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