

Army Secretary makes first visit to Organic Industrial Base facility

By Gideon Rogers, McAlester Army Ammunition Plant Public Affairs 29 March 2022



Facility Improvement Specialist Amber Alexander explains how MCAAP supports JMC's 15-year modernization plan to ensure the OIB is postured to support surge and future force requirements to Secretary of the Army Christine Wormuth during her visit to M

MCALESTER ARMY AMMUNITION PLANT, Okla. — Secretary of the Army Christine Wormuth visited McAlester Army Ammunition Plant, one of 23 depots, arsenals, and ammunition plants that comprise the Army's Organic Industrial Base, March 22. The visit marked the top Army Civilian's first visit to an OIB site.

Wormuth was at MCAAP to see firsthand the work being done to advance the Army's priorities of people, readiness and modernization. She met with members of the workforce throughout the tour of MCAAP's outload facility, bomb production line and missile maintenance facility.

People

Wormuth met members of a four-man rail operations team that responded to an Army-wide call in

February to assist railroad support operations at Fort Carson, Colo. The team of volunteers faced challenges, including a severe winter storm as they assisted in the outload of rolling stock in support of the Army's mission.

Wormuth thanked Locomotive Engineer Loman "Moose" Parent, Conductor Randall Cate, and Braker/Switchers John Duke and Bret Parent, for their rapid response and successful support to the Army mission.

"MCAAP employees are like family. We're here for each other, but we're also here for the warfighter — that's our real job," said Parent, whose father was also on the Fort Carson mission. "I'm a fourth-generation MCAAP employee, so you could say it's in our blood."

Ammunition Analysis Team Chief Lacy Toby described MCAAP's Leader Investment for Tomorrow program, which targets employees with a strong work ethic, a commitment to learn and who exhibit leadership potential.

"MCAAP's LIFT program identifies and develops leadership talent and preserves corporate knowledge, technical competence, and skills through progressive professional development," said Toby. "Through LIFT, the MCAAP workforce improves skills and become more effective employees and future leaders."

Toby explained how MCAAP leverages educational and training opportunities to improve core competencies within the workforce.

"My career at MCAAP began in 2008 as a security assistant in at our Pass and ID office," Toby said. "Three years later, I joined the ammunition operations directorate, where I started as administrative assistant and progressed to manage two of our major bomb production lines."

Toby said that in 2018, she was selected for the LIFT program and completed it in 2019. Less than a year later she was selected as MCAAP's ammunition analysis team chief.

"Since beginning the program in 2018, we have completed three LIFT classes and the fourth is underway," said Toby.





Readiness

MCAAP Director of Shipping and Storage Brad Rutledge showed Wormuth MCAAP's primary outload pad where certified munitions are prepared for distribution. The secretary saw MCAAP's deployment and surge capabilities.

"We test our capability to meet ramp-up numbers by conducting outload exercises and truck and rail surge exercises," said Rutledge.

MCAAP stores conventional munitions for the Department of Defense. These munitions are certified by more than 30 ammunition inspectors, including 15 quality assurance specialists, to ensure safety and readiness.

At MCAAP's missile maintenance facility, Supervisor for the Precision Munitions Division Tim Easley and Electronic Integrated System Mechanic Leader Garret Rose showed Wormuth how missile systems are tested and recertified by MCAAP's electronic technicians.

The facility stands ready to provide missile systems support to joint service warfighters around the world.

"Having Secretary Wormuth tour the missile division at MCAAP left me with a sense of honor, gratitude and respect, not just for me, but the employees she engaged with along the way," said Rose. "For the Secretary of the Army to take time out of her busy schedule to visit us was really something special."





Modernization

The Commander of Army Materiel Command Gen. Ed Daly established an OIB Base Modernization Task Force to oversee transformational change and modernization across the OIB. Through a 15-year OIB Modernization Implementation Plan, AMC is modernizing facilities, processes and people to bring the OIB into the 21st century, apply industry best practices, and refine human capital structures to maximize the skills and capabilities of the workforce.

This includes developing an investment plan based on a prioritized approach to project development and execution. OIB Modernization Task Force Executive Director Marion Whicker and the Commander of Joint Munitions Command Brig. Gen. Gavin Gardner were also at MCAAP during the Secretary of the Army's tour.

"This was a great opportunity to showcase the importance of the OIB in supporting the joint warfighter. Investments in the modernization of the OIB enable the Army to successfully meet current demands, provide capabilities and capacities to surge, and sustain a Multi-Domain Operations force for Large Scale Combat Operations, reduce single points of failure in the supply system, and decrease reliance on foreign sources," said Gardner.

At one of MCAAP's bomb production lines, Facility Improvement Specialist Amber Alexander explained to Wormuth how MCAAP is postured to support surge and future force requirements.

"Each project must improve the safety of our workforce, the employees' work environment, and increase production efficiencies," said Alexander.

MCAAP's Multipurpose Load Facility is a project that is already in progress and is slated for completion within the year.

"In addition to enhancing the employees' safety and work environment, the MPLF will increase

efficiency in production by having multiple functions," said Alexander.

Wormuth said her first OIB visit was a positive experience, thanks to MCAAP Commander Col. Mike Hammond and his team.

"I am impressed by the incredible work being done across the OIB, and a lot of it happens here at McAlester," she said. "This visit allowed me to better understand the critically important work that our Civilians do to support the Army's mission."

Hammond said he was pleased to showcase the talent and dedication of MCAAP's workforce.

"Our people are the foundation of the strategic readiness and power projection of the Army and the Joint Force," he said.