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## **Access Control Point program in Europe proving successful**

**By Scott Farrow**  
**Public Affairs Office**

**HUNTSVILLE, Ala.** – The U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center-Huntsville's Access Control Point program is only two-thirds complete in Europe and already faster secured access to the upgraded installations is proving the program successful.

However, delivery truck drivers and daily commuters aren't the only people happy with the improvements at more than a hundred installation gates in Europe.

Edward Wells, physical security specialist and director of emergency services, U.S. Army Garrison-Hohenfels, Germany, said he's impressed with the security improvements designed to increase the protection of assets and personnel throughout U.S. Army Europe. He also said the final advantage of the upgrades is in reducing the costs associated with manning the gates.

Wells said the ACP project at USAG-Hohenfels will result in annual cost savings of approximately \$635,000. He said future upgrade projects will add another \$400,000 in savings there.

He said he was even more impressed with how attentive Huntsville Center and USACE Europe District engineers were in meeting his installation's specific needs.

"They allowed us (at the installation level) to provide the direction on how we wanted the ACP to be designed and to provide the most functionality for the garrison mission," Wells said. "As a result, we have achieved improved functionality, increased security and provided greater safety from the 'gate' we had (prior to the ACP upgrades)."

Realizing it's easy for the engineers who designed and implemented the upgrades and the people working in the security career-field to see the improvements in the processes relating to gate security, Wells explained that the greatest proof of improvement comes from the comments from people using the ACPs to gain access to the installation.

"I have heard from the guards that the people using the new ACPs can't believe how much faster it seems they (guards) can process vehicles through (the gates). Those improvements were long overdue and I know they appreciate everything that was done," Wells said.

With more than 100 installation gates receiving improvements to date, Huntsville Center and USACE Europe District engineers realize the importance of working closely with stakeholders to overcome obstacles and ensure delivery and installation of ACP equipment and facilities to meet the specific needs of the stakeholders.

According to Bill Samples, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Europe District ACP project manager, successful solutions are a combination of the critical information exchange between Corps ACP representatives and force protection officers, who must live with the solution and protect those who work and visit their compound.

Samples said because installations across Europe are usually embedded within a community, they almost never have the real estate available for increasing search areas and installing facilities required to process visitors through the gates.

“Here, and at many other installations (worldwide), the force protection solutions require careful analysis and equipment placement,” Samples said.

A perfect example, according to Samples, is NATO Support Activity-Brussels (an installation providing administrative and logistical support to U.S. agencies and personnel located in Brussels) is because it is a small installation with multiple ACPs located with a main thoroughfare on one side of the installation and a residential street on the other.

“In Europe solutions must often be innovative to provide the compliant level of protection, to facilitate safe travel in and out of the facility, and to meet the very stringent requirements of the customer regarding the use of their funds. Additionally, host nation requirements must be met, and they vary from country to country,” Samples said.

Wells said USAG-Hohenfels is a perfect example of how well all parties involved pulled together to achieve the mission.

“When we started this project, we needed to improve functionality, increase security, improve safety and reduce contract guard manning,” Wells said. “We’ve pretty much covered those areas.”

More than a year after the terrorist attacks of 9/11, the Army’s product manager for force protection systems selected Huntsville Center to plan and manage access point upgrades worldwide in response to increasing threats.

By 2002, Department of the Army Office of Provost Marshal General was given a special appropriation by Congress mandating development of updated access control point standards at all Army facilities worldwide.

According to Amber Martin, Huntsville Center’s ACP program manager, Huntsville Center was then tasked to plan and manage the gate update initiative to include survey, design, purchase and installation of ACP equipment all over the world.

“We then began working with stakeholders to provide physical and electronic security equipment to improve gate security and personnel safety, which in turn improved or maintained vehicle access through the gates,” she said.