



Insourcing Doesn't Hurt Contractor

By Derek Jordan

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SIERRA VISTA — The president of one of the military contractors with the biggest presence in Cochise County said that renewed efforts by the Department of Defense to scale back its use of contractors will have little impact on his company.

The president and CEO of TASC, Wood Parker, made the comments during a visit to the Sierra Vista office of the Virginia-based systems testing and evaluations company on Monday.

Much of the insourcing on the fort is being done in administrative and “lower-end” positions not typically associated with TASC employees, Wood said.

“Seventy percent of our people are scientists, or engineers or analysts, and it’s hard for the government to keep those people,” he said. “So, while we were affected in certain areas by insourcing, it was literally on the periphery of TASC, and we believe that, for the most part, the same things will happen in terms of the approach to the reduction of costs of support contracts.”

With more than 300 employees based around its efforts on Fort Huachuca, TASC is one of the county’s largest employers.

The impact on the company because of insourcing on post has been “almost nothing,” said Terry Wilson, TASC director of enterprise test and engineering enterprise systems in Sierra Vista.

The majority of the work TASC does for the federal government on Fort Huachuca is at the Joint Interoperability Test Command, whereas much of the insourcing is occurring with teaching positions at the fort’s U.S. Army Intelligence Center of Excellence.

It has been a year of change for the company, which recently severed ties with Northrop Grumman after the passage of federal legislation aimed at changing the way the government purchases major weapons systems.

The company’s former owner decided to sell off TASC to avoid any conflicts of interest.

The divestment has given TASC room to grow, Parker said.

“When we were part of Northrop Grumman, TASC was limited in what we could do in places like the Department of Homeland Security because that belonged to another part of the corporation,” he said. “Now that we’re separate, those restrictions don’t apply.”

Now the company can pursue contracts with all areas of the Department of Defense, like the Navy, where Northrop Grumman’s large ship-building operations may have prevented them before, and even in the civilian areas of the government, like the Department of Homeland Security.