

IOWA AAP Plant Tour/Board of Directors Meeting



As part of the Chapter's goal to increase visibility and communication with our membership, we held our Board of Director's meeting in Burlington, IA. The meeting was preceded by a plant tour at Iowa AAP. Ms Tammy Dean, a Chapter Director and Manager, Business Development, for American Ordnance (AO), LLC, the operating contractor for this Government-Owned, Contractor-Operated (GOCO) facility, orchestrated our visit as well as being our tour guide. In addition to the board members that made the journey, we were pleased to include three individuals from Rockwell Collins, also an NDIA corporate member of our Chapter. We are in the early stages of planning a similar visit/BOD meeting at Rockwell Collins next spring.

The tour included the 40mm cartridge line as well as the propelling charges for mortars. Ms Dean provided various other current and historical insights as we traveled within a small portion of the more than 19,000 acres that the AAP occupies. A short history of the facility is provided below.

Short History of the Iowa Army Ammunition Plant

The Iowa Army Ammunition Plant (IAAAP) traces its roots back to World War II. Land for the plant was purchased in 1940 at a rather innocuous site near Middletown, IA, whose population was a whole 134 then. The site is located 12.5 miles west of Burlington, IA and the Mississippi River. The Iowa Ordnance Plant (IOP), as it was known then, fit the mold for all the ammo plants being built for WW II of being separated from large urban populations but available to railroads which could supply materials for building the plant, shipping in raw materials and transporting the completed ammunition to wherever it was needed. As with most of the WW II ammunition plants production stopped at IOP at the end of the war but was begun again in 1947 when the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) assumed responsibility for it. The AEC Plant did final assembly on nuclear weapons at IAAAP until 1975, when assembly was consolidated at a plant in Texas. The IOP was designated the Iowa Army Ammunition Plant (IAAAP) in 1963.

In addition, conventional ammunition production began again in 1949 and has continued unbroken to today. In 1951 the plant was converted to a Government Owned, Contractor Operated facility and Mason & Hangar-Silas Mason Company was selected as the operating contractor. Contractor operations have gone through a few iterations and today the plant is operated by American Ordnance LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Day & Zimmermann.

IAAAP is a large industrial facility with over 19,000 acres, 5 production lines, significant ammunition igloo storage areas, 142 mile of roadway, 102 miles of railroad track, and 30 miles of steam distribution. At its peak in WW II IAAAP employed 13,000 employees and workload has varied over the years with employment today of approximately 700.

Today IAAAP is considered a critical resource by the Army in the following areas:

- Medium/Large Caliber (40mm –120mm rounds)
- Mortar/Artillery Rounds (60/81/120mm, 105/155mm)
- Warhead/HE loading (i.e. Hellfire, Javelin, Stinger, etc.)
- Propulsion Systems (Mortar and Artillery)
- Other High Explosive loading (IM/C4/MICLIC, etc.)

In fact IAAAP is the only facility left in the United States for the Load, Assemble and Pack (LAP) of both medium caliber and larger caliber ammunition.