

JOINT LOGISTICS INTEGRATION: DOD's Logistics Roadmap from an Operations Professional Perspective

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DC Metro Chapter #127

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understanding the terminology of DOD logistics with best commercial practices
2. Promote the concept of "Unity of Effort" as a foundation for Joint Logistics
3. Focus on the value of Visibility as a key enabler in DOD logistics
4. Understand Rapid and Precise Response's role in DOD's core logistics capabilities.

OVERVIEW

The 63rd NDTA Forum conducted its third consecutive professional development CEU program in Nashville with "Joint Logistics Integration: DOD's Logistics Roadmap from an Operations Professional Perspective, with the assistance of Joni Holeman from APICS DC Metro and Irvin Varkonyi, American Military University and chairman of NDTA's Professional Development Committee. Nearly 70 conference attendees pre-registered for the event. The University of Alabama at Huntsville awarded Continuing Education Units for participants who successfully completed the course.

DOD's Logistics Roadmap¹ was issued 16 months ago on 13 July 2008 by the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology & Logistics (USD AT&L). Under strategic direction from 2008's Guidance for the Development of the Force (GDF), the Roadmap details an action plan for developing a streamlined workforce of Joint Logisticians. Target date for completion of this initiative is 2015. At this writing, 6 years remain to adapt a population of some 614,687 logistics em-

ployees² into using lean supply chain replenishment processes.

The twofold purpose of this 3-hour workshop was to compare DOD's supply chain with best commercial practices and to build Roadmap awareness. Attendees included civilian and military employees of DLA, Air Force, Navy and TRANSCOM, along with personnel from two commercial 3PL suppliers, the National Institute of Health and American Military University. This presentation stimulated highly interactive discussions with wide-ranging perspectives on the challenges and constraints, and was very well received according to workshop evaluations.

The Roadmap supports three Portfolio Logistics Goals established by the GDF for DOD's logisticians: *Unity of Effort, Visibility plus Rapid & Precise Response*. These goals were contrasted with commercial practices observed over my career in manufacturing, distribution and value engineering. I've spent the past 11 years teaching operations and supply chain principles to businesses, several government agencies and DOD service branches.

UNITY OF EFFORT

This first section is the product of successful unified action, even if the participants are not part of the same command or organization. To achieve this, DOD logisticians must develop a clear understanding of how joint and multinational logistics processes work, know the roles and responsibilities of the providers executing those tasks, and ensure that proper DOD enterprise members have visibility into these processes. Collaboration should begin at the national level and span activities from early planning

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

through execution. With operations and logistics information integrated across Combatant Commands, each of the services and DOD agencies, logisticians can better forecast and respond in support of effective mission requirements.

Commercial process equivalents to *Unity of Effort* include cross-functional integration, communication and Strategic Plan alignment. In my personal opinion, marketplace dynamics and competition have forced commercial companies to become more internally integrated than DOD. In terms of enterprise-wide communication of mission objectives and focusing resources on common outcomes, DOD's processes and organizational structure are vastly superior to the private sector.

VISIBILITY

This second section fundamentally answers the Combatant Commander's questions of where, how and when. It optimizes logistics capabilities, maximizes outcomes, increases readiness, provides access to authoritative information and allows rapid response to changing requirements.

Commercial process equivalents to *Visibility* include IT compatibility and systems integration. Software advances in network simulation and ERP bolt-ons such as Supply Chain Event Management (SCEM) give businesses the upper hand over DOD towards achieving this goal.

RAPID & PRECISE RESPONSE

The final section looks at the ability of DOD's core logistics capabilities to meet the dynamic needs of the joint force, as measured by the key performance indicators of speed, reliability and efficiency.

Commercial sector comparisons include core competencies, competitive advantages, and distribution network optimization. Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software today can enable companies to anticipate client expectations, moving them from reactive

1 230-page download available at http://www.acq.osd.mil/log/sci/roadmap/Executive_Overview

2 DLA Enterprise presentation 01 Feb 2009. Demographics current as of 8/30/09, per Defense Civilian Personnel Data System (DCPDS), Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC), and Military Services

3 Extracted from http://www.acq.osd.mil/log/sci/roadmap/Executive_Overview, Volume 1, Chapter 2, page 2-6.

TABLE 1				
LI#	ROADMAP OBJECTIVES, ALIGNED TO JOINT CAPABILITY AREA (JCA) THEY SUPPORT	Supply—JCA	Maintenance—JCA	Deploy & Distrib—JCA
1.1	Efficient procurement processes	●		
1.2	Effective procurement processes	●		
1.3	Align maintenance operations metrics with warfighter outcomes		●	
1.4	Use commercial transportation resources to the maximum extent practicable, integrated with organic resources			●
1.5	Adopt enterprise-wide metrics that promote common goals and interoperability	●	●	●
1.6	Develop and implement a DOD Logistics Human Capital Strategic Plan for a competency-based enterprise logistics workforce	●	●	●
2.1	Visibility into customer materiel requirements and available resources to meet those needs	●		
2.2	Visibility of emerging maintenance workload and in-process resources to meet customer requirements		●	
2.3	Visibility of in-transit, in-storage, and in-process units and materiel for optimized movement planning and execution			●
2.4	Implement information technology strategies for improved visibility and interoperability	●	●	●
2.5	Establish a single authoritative data set for informed logistics decision making	●	●	●
3.1	Affordable availability in both peacetime and war	●		
3.2	Retrograde and disposal processes aligned to DOD's needs	●		
3.3	Identify and sustain requisite core maintenance capability		●	
3.4	Sustain a highly capable, mission-ready maintenance workforce		●	
3.5	Ensure an adequate infrastructure to execute assigned maintenance workload		●	
3.6	Continuously improve availability, quality, flow days, and cost of maintenance operations worldwide		●	
3.7	In conjunction with Systems Engineering, become the advocate for the design and production of reliable weapons systems and equipment		●	
3.8	Establish a seamless process between deployment and sustainment phases			●
3.9	Position stock and warehouses to provide effective and efficient readiness			●
3.10	Optimize transportation network			●
3.11	Drive acquisition processes to focus on sustainment key performance parameter (KPP) and key system attributes (KSA) as well as implementation of Performance Based Logistics (PBL) strategies	●	●	●

Source: Defense Roadmap Volume 1, Chapter 2, page 2-6 (modified for format only)

positions into proactive innovation and marketplace leadership.

My observations reflect that although both sectors have a sense of urgency, nothing in the commercial sphere compares to DOD's level of focus. However, I do believe that businesses consistently execute more quickly, and at a far lower cost.

Most participants were aware of the Roadmap's existence, but details of its 22 Objectives³ (shown in Table 1) seemed to be introductory. Line items highlighted in bold font indicate cross-functional steps shared by all Joint Capability Areas (JCA). Only the wording references to warfighters, peacetime, war and weapons distinguish DOD's objectives from any commercial business's continuous improvement targets.

In summary, DOD's Roadmap portends sweeping changes for Logisticians. I foresee a convergence of software tools, expected retirement/attrition rates and federal budget cuts coming over the next 6 years. My contention is that by 2015, the population of DOD logistics employees could shrink from 614,687 to only 100,000! Here are some questions to ponder:

- What's your department's plan for implementing these changes?
- Have you considered the training, metrics design, career transition and process documentation needs necessary to complete your present workload with only 84% of your present staff?

For any commercial firm, these ramifications would be enormous. Significant discovery, budgeting and planning within every functional area of an enterprise would have to begin immediately to achieve such important goals. **DTJ**

Joni Holeman is President of Affirmation Training Inc. and a co-owner of Seeds4Success Inc., providers of operations and supply chain best practice training along with human potential principles. Joni has over 25 years of planning, materials management and manufacturing experience in businesses ranging from custom lighting, value engineering, electronic equipment and remanufacturing. Joni writes online and instructor-led curricula, develops interactive Workshops and is a frequent conference speaker. She may be reached at jwhitewadc@aol.com.