Top 100 Conduct Acquisition Programme Process Reviews Evaluate System Prototype Performance Quality

1/17/2018

Navy is building new rapid acquisition office to 'short-circuit' traditional DoD acquisition system with mission to translate new technologies into actual weapons systems much more quickly than the Navy and Marine Corps can do today. The new organisation primary purpose will be to better connect the science and technology research that's already being done in Navy research facilities with the short-term, real-world equipping needs of sailors and marines.

Navy has a very strong technical base. but must better leverage it and line it up more tightly with the fleet and the Marine Corps to short-circuit the long process that involves everything currently tasked now, from requirements definition to the budgeting process to ultimately get something into a programme of record.

Navy take on a rapid acquisition office is tasked to incorporate promising technologies from across DoD and its industrial base contracts primarily focused on delivering new capabilities to the service combat fighters and aircraft.

The Navy approach will look for ways to prototype new technologies that might have applications across any
mission areas.

Navy is going to bring the best technical experts to tackle the highest priority current requirements by launching now into experimentation and prototyping that matters to a given threat or technology, and do it at the same time the machinery is starting up to define budgets and requirements.

By the time traditional budget cycle starts there will be firm understanding of the technical possibilities, and much greater awareness of the contract costs to point the industrial base toward the solution. Progress can be made in the interim while developing the technology and then reduce the amount of time it takes on the back-end to field the ultimate solution.

Navy budget proposal will include a request to allow more testing and prototyping of new technologies within the funding lines that pay for large programmes of record such as ships and airplanes, similar to the flexibilities the Navy already has within the research and development accounts that fund research and other science and technology-heavy organisations.

Funding flexibility is common theme since under the current process, it takes DoD a full

year to prepare a budget, another year to present the merits of spending plan and another year to actually expend the money once funds are appropriated into extremely rigid buckets.

That's a challenge. imagine moving through the process to buy a combat vehicle or a tactical truck. If industry or DoD applied research comes up with a new transmission that can reduce fuel consumption it will be another year before Navy can flex that programme to incorporate the new technology because of the way funding lines are identified. With some flexibility, what is already happening through open systems architecture can at least start the process to plug that new transmission in now.

Once DoD releases its formal budget proposal it plans to follow up with a series of informal briefings to appropriating committees explaining how it plans to use prototyping to integrate new technologies onto major weapons systems.

Part of the message will be that many prototypes will fail, but that DoD needs more latitude to fail early instead of building large programmess of record which rely on promised but yet-unproven technologies.

The challenge in conducting more prototyping will be convincing Congress that DoD is not squandering money in the process and put out approach in terms of how to increase the amount of funding allocated to experimentation and prototyping.

Military also needs more freedom to spend on technologies even when they don't have an obvious connection to the major programmes of record that make up the bulk of DoD acquisition funding.

The notion of risk becomes really important when you look at technologies that are hard to integrate right away or that aren't mature enough, and all too often the budget process forces DoD to walk away from those.

Unless those technologies are mature enough to plug in right away, it's hard to defend the funding both internally and across the department and with Congress. Battery technologies are an example. The load that dismounted soldiers carry on their backs is a huge issue, and it's growing as we put more and more
electronics on them. So it is imperative to invest in power technologies.

It is difficult to trace that investment to every programme that will use it, but there will be a number of programmes that will leverage the efficiencies that are discovered. Navy needs ability to experiment in those areas and then as contract processes get more definition, be able to apply it directly to a programme right away.

Best practice concerning weapons system programmes and contracts is to schedule regular reviews with your key stakeholders and contractors. Your communication plan must reflect the schedule for these reviews. Good communication is absolutely essential so you must schedule regular review.

Status updtes with stakeholder contacts provides an opportunity to discuss current performance with everyone involved in the programme. It also offers a chance to gain insight on projected changes that might require a change to the current contract. Being proactive is better than the best reactive strategy.

As performance periods advance, the acquisition team must assess the effectiveness of the strategy that was originally created to see if it is still achieving the required mission results.

What should be changed or modified during the next acquisition cycle to improve mission results? Keep a record of what improvements could be made the next time because before you know it, it will be time to start the acquisition process all over again.

Weapons systems programme contracts many times have performance periods lasting several years. Continuous improvement must be a primary goal for the acquisition team . For example, plan on regular meetings with the contractor to identify actions both parties can take to improve efficiency.

Programme progress from project initiation all the way to fielded product must include the identification of significant cost drivers allong with other important objectives and what improvement actions could be taken to identify more effective and efficient ways to measure and track the performance results over the life of the contract.

1. Build the Team to Assign Workload

2. Vision statement/charter

3. Develop rules of conduct

4. Create/update preliminary project plan/projected timeline

5. Document/Update key tasks

6. Identify schedule constraints

7. Tap multi-disciplinary expertise

8. Define roles and responsibilities

9. Identify gaps between workload and resources

10. Obtain contractor support to assist sourcing team

11. Identify/Estimate key industry cost drivers

12. Obtain approval and funding

13. Identify length of time required for support

14. Develop a solicitation or a task order

15. Identify stakeholders and build consensus

16. Identify interests, objectives, and possible objections

17. Develop communication plans

18. Plan and schedule topical risk/source teams

19. Identify current initiatives/contracts

20. Review and document current performance risks, ie cost, quality, schedule

21. Document current metrics

22. Detail user requirements, acquisition process, service steps, supplier functions

23. Understand the impact of contingency operations

24. Understand local command funding authority

25. Understand effects of bundling and/or consolidation

26. Review lessons learned from previous acquisitions

27. Determine availability, serviceability status

28. Determine disposition planned for current and future

29. Determine replacement costs, life cycle expectations, repair costs

30. Interviews determine current and projected requirements forecast

31. Review performance results with major users and suppliers

32. Contact vendors to gain staff level perspective of operational process

33. Define process if used in contingency environment

34. Develop a standardised interview guide

35. Conduct market research to include both providers and consumers

36. Look for opportunities for strategic sourcing with other Services

37. Identify capabilities

38. Address quality assurance

39. Assess recent innovations in technology and/or process

40. Determine abilities and dependability

41. Identify innovative approaches in delivering the service

42. Identify labour costs for services

43. Assess market trends for emerging suppliers and services

44. Conduct performance risk reviews

45. Mitigate internal/external threats to stability

46. Conduct a requirements assessment

47. Review mission objectives and vision

48. Define desired outcome/results

49. Review/ incorporate commercial quality standards

50. Consider type interaction with supplier ie, strategic vs. tactical vs. transactional

51. Build Requirements Roadmap

52. Define required high level objectives and performance tasks

53. Define required performance standards/measures

54. Determine acceptable levels for performance thresholds

55. Rely on commercial quality standards

56. Determine method and means of Inspection

57. Determine the source/method of performance measurement

58. Identify team to inspect/check

59. Determine availability of info and potential cost vs. benefit of inspection

60. Standardise requirements where possible to leverage market influence

61. Create Performance Work Statement

62. Identify the constraints

63. Summarise any key background/restrictions

64. Develop preliminary Quality Assurance Surveillance Plan

65. Assess projected funding against demand forecast

66. Determine spend projections

67. Identify organisational, systemic resistance to strategy

68. Establish review cycles for ensuring strategy is realized

69. Develop business and preliminary acquisition strategy

70. Review market research for suitable existing contract

71. Determine if existing contract can be used or new contract is required

72. Identify meaningful measures to judge strategic success

73. Validate preliminary business case and acquisition strategy with stakeholders

74. Apply contract-type order of precedence to best achieve performance results

75. Consider other incentive tools

76. Recognise the power of profit as motivator

77. Allocate team workload ensure you have the resources required

78. Communicate workload responsibilities based on the new strategy

79. Develop Source Selection Plan

80. Identify key evaluation factors and standards in Technical Evaluation Plan

81. Emphasise past performance in evaluation

82. Issue request for proposal

83. Conduct source selection

84. Review proposals and award the contract

85. Compete the solution use best-value evaluation and source selection

86. Finalise Quality Assurance Surveillance Plan

87. Agree on metrics with contractor to include quality assurance plan

88. Finalise Performance Measures/baselines

89. Communicate implementation/transition strategy and business rules

90. Conduct required training/education

91. Educate customers and any new contract administration team

92. Conduct implementation kickoff meetings

93. Monitor and manage contract transition

94. Assign accountability for managing contract performance

95. Develop process for overall management of task/delivery orders

96. Verify implementation/compliance

97. Update communications plan for meetings with suppliers/stakeholders

98. Monitor task order or delivery order performance

99. Submit Contractor Performance Assessment Reports

100. Monitor performance against supplier scorecard metrics targets