

## **Top 10 Survey Results Obstacles/Limitations to Product Support Performance Determine Best Logistics Actions**

02/20/2017

Site Visit Executive has responsibility to set up Logistics programme case studies setting out acceptable ranges of weapon system performance objectives. Corresponding product support capacity required to meet that level of performance was examined at kickoff sessions where objectives, timeline & skills set composition for strategy implementation were outlined.

Site Visit Executive sponsors Product Support Activities case study to delineate any limitations, constraints or boundary conditions so obstacles to executing coordinated field-level operations are reflected.

Baseline surveys were conducted to assess proficiency/experience of product support teams. Potential barriers include execution of appropriate timing, alignment of stakeholders, accurate tracking of sustainment costs and difficulties encountered in efforts to improve supply line performance.

Logistics programme efforts generally focus on establishing limited sets of outcome metrics based on performance — such as weapons system availability, mission reliability, extent of logistics footprint, and/or overall system readiness levels.

Site Visit Executive must design smart approach/activity so configuration control will be maintained. Specific factors lined up with Logistics programme activities include design rights, design responsibility, support concept, associated cost/benefit determination and risk mitigation.

Logistics programme strategies are constructed to incentivise desired product support outcomes covering both design & subsequent sustainment phases. Use of properly incentivised ranges of performance to define metrics can provide real flexibility essential to meeting field-level demand signals.

Site Visit Executive has examined processes utilised in identification of performance metrics. Two different outcomes can be pursued for availability: either defined level of supply line availability or requirement for parts to be delivered within a specified amount of time.

It is important to select an outcome so product support team has control, and can be held responsible for achieving outcome. For example, Site Visit Executive has highlighted potential of goals to shorten amount of time between logistics demand and delivery of parts.

When Site Visit Executive authorises standards for defined levels of support or performance, then responsibilities for decisions such as what items to repair & what quantity of items to procure transitions to support provider, along with risk determinations for achieving operational effectiveness.

But field-level objectives are not always directly stated as useful metrics because support provider sometimes does not control availability activities. Most Service logistics policies mandate preferences for organisational level maintenance & retail supply functions to be performed by Service.

Logistics programmes can contract effectively to increase capability/capacity of equipment work orders and address parts component non-availability challenges. Efficacy of Site Visit Executive action differs mainly in scale, covering broad range from part component level up to system platform level. On one end of the spectrum is an individual part, while at the other end is the entire weapons system.

Identification and cataloging of spare parts provides framework for integration/interoperability of logistics support during sustainment to serve as useful tools in systems engineering decisions and reducing logistics footprint. Screening serves to identify where new items must be designed or existing items need to be modified for improved performance.

Spare part type-specific work orders are usually easiest to implement since estimates for current baseline and level of support required are more readily obtained because sometimes only involves single supplier.

Weapons system logistics programme product support levels introduce higher degree of complexity. Not only must past costs/benefit determinations & reliability be captured for much larger array of parts, but more product support suppliers will contribute to effort.

When product support providers are rewarded for performance, not per item track, status advances are directly impacted so incentivised to reduce both number of repairs & cost of expenditures for utilised parts/labour. When support providers are not incentivised to make best use of parts for repairs, mission success is compromised.

Despite Site Visit Executive creation of smart concepts for plans & proactive budgeting, adjustments and reprioritisation of weapon system operational requirements are inevitable because mission demand signal scenarios are always changing.

Unreconciled mismatch between requirements and support funding results in Logistics programme instability in turn producing sub-optimal build, overhaul & maintenance resources.

Site Visit Executive must envision flexible design of useful case studies to derive establishment of product support level ranges so accommodation for fluctuating resources is allowed. Case studies serve as axis between requirements, allocation & sustainment processes in terms of defining weapons system support.

Logistics programme contracts with product support providers must include adequate exit criteria or 'off-ramps' should worst-case scenarios arise included as negotiated options for acquisition, transfer, or use of technical design rights, support tooling/equipment provisions, and conversion training required for reconstitution or recompetition of support work orders.

Here, we outline current intent, contents, and structure of obstacles and limitations of weapons system product support case studies. Over time, as smart logistics programme implement/apply models are derived from case studies, more corresponding guidance will be issued by Site Visit Executive. Limitations include:

1. No focus on tracking supplier source selection transition
2. Lengthy testing validate & tech insertion design process
3. Increased contract quote disconnect on demand signals
4. Lack of framework to guide tools for resource allocation
5. Little input/innovative push from field support end-user
6. Wide array of supplier schedules to integrate demand
7. Insufficient authority to promote interoperable systems
8. Services do not scope key prototype specs design
9. Inconsistent year-to-year funding risk level impact
10. Disconnect between DoD & Supplier expectations