Case Study

NITEWORKS

Direct Process Disseminate (DPD)

....Optimising the 'eyes and ears' of the battlefield

ISTAR is a key capability that generates and delivers intelligence to military personnel engaged on operations. It involves the collection, analysis and dissemination of a range of information from, for example, maritime, land, air and space-based platforms and deployed personnel. This is the innovative technology that enables the Armed Forces to fight smarter wars- however it is highly complex to design and manage.

Whilst investing in intelligence collecting capabilities such as air platforms and deployed personnel is a crucial aspect of effective ISTAR, also important is ensuring that assets are steered to fulfil military commanders' intent in the most efficient and effective way possible. It is in this area that the Niteworks *Direct, Process and Disseminate (DPD)* project has been focussing its attention.

Over the last few decades the equipment and methods for DPD have evolved along single Service lines and this has resulted in areas of duplication, overlap and a less than ideal use of assets. This, alongside the use of different acquisition approaches, has hindered the development of coherence across battlefield capabilities.

The DPD project, which was commissioned by the UK MOD in March 2010, was undertaken to properly understand the impact on military users of such duplication and overlap, and at the same time improve the process through which new equipment and methods are evaluated and subsequently introduced. Assembling a small team drawn from its industry members, Niteworks began by undertaking a short *QuickLook* project to examine MOD's current and proposed projects in the DPD space, set against national and multinational policies. The aim was to provide evidence over time of gaps and overlaps in proposed capabilities; this may sound straightforward but in practice it demanded a detailed knowledge of the projects in question and the ability to interpret swathes of doctrine and strategy. The result was a comprehensive survey of the situation and clear evidence that gaps and overlaps did indeed exist. This provided the foundations for a full DPD Capability Investigation in summer 2010.

The Niteworks team, peaking at around 15 members of staff, brought architectural, SME, information exploitation and modelling experience to bear on the problem. To promote joint working with the Customer area, the team was embedded in Abbey Wood, the headquarters of MOD's Defence Equipment & Support organisation. The result was a forum in which MOD staff could come together, supported by a range of Niteworks products and outputs, and make the difficult decisions about the DPD space. The Capability Investigation was underpinned by a number of principles, namely: that no new structures should be invented (in other words, that existing methodologies for managing capabilities should be used); that architectural and modelling work should be sufficient to facilitate visualisation of the problem and proposed approaches and not become an end in itself; finally, that all of this should be done in conjunction with experienced military practitioners. Niteworks held regular briefings to keep its industry members up to speed with developments and held workshops in order to get industrial input into activities.

Work reached a natural conclusion in autumn 2010, when the approaches developed were tested in anger in the run up to the Strategic Defence & Security Review. The results were encouraging and it became apparent that such an embedded approach, backed by appropriate tools and methodologies, could be applied to other complex portfolio programmes.

The DPD project has demonstrated how the MOD can reap benefits from the expertise of a mixed industry team, which can be quickly reconfigured as a project progresses through phases that demand different skill sets...and all of this whilst continuing to develop mechanisms that make even the most complicated problems understandable. Work continues and the MOD must now consider to what extent future activities like these form part of normal business. As a result of this work the MOD will be able to make more informed judgements about ISTAR programme choices and our soldiers, sailors and airmen can look forward to the delivery of more timely and effective intelligence.