AVIATION WEEK MRO MILITARY ROUNDTABLE

MID-YEAR CHECKPOINT: MRO MILITARY RECOMMENDED FLIGHT PLAN

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AVIATION WEEK'S MRO Executive Roundtable convened for an interim meeting October 30, 2008 in conjunction with the Defense Maintenance Symposium. This roundtable was called to assure progress is being made toward achieving the goals developed during the April 2008 MRO Military Conference Working Groups. These groups, organized around aircraft platforms, developed a series of recommendations designed to improve the total enterprise in a manner that promotes joint-ness and delivery of reliability and availability to the warfighter in a cost-effective and organizationally effective manner that is committed to continuous improvement.

The interim Roundtable was held in Denver, Colo., and included representatives of the Defense Dept. Acquisition, Technology and Logistics organization, military leaders from the U.S. Air Force Material Command, U.S. Army Aviation and Missile Command, and the U.S. Navy and Marine Corp

Fleet Readiness Centers, as well as the Defense Logistics Agency. Also participating were industry leaders from AIA/Textron Services, BAE Systems, Boeing Support Systems, Goodrich, Lockheed Martin, L-3 Communications Integrated Systems, Northrop Grumman, Pratt & Whitney, Sikorsky Aircraft, and Siemens PLM Software.

The 2008AVIATION WEEK Interim MRO Military Roundtable, hosted by AAI/Textron Services and Siemens PLM Software, was a check up of the initial findings of the MRO Military Conference planning process. During the April 2008 conference, military and industry leaders worked in a joint framework to identify the most critical actions needed to assure delivery of sustainment support to the warfighter. This April 2008 plan, known as the Recommended Flight Plan, included four key areas that needed immediate attention and action. The suggested overarching themes identified during the conference were:

1. Analyze and rationalize enterprise-wide MRO capacity/capability
2. Engage the supply chain in identifying and resolving critical issues (government/industry relationships)
3. Shift to a predict and forecast for sustainment operation versus fix and maintain operation
4. Apply lean concepts to the acquisition/PBL contracting processes

During May and June, members of the MRO Military Steering Committee briefed top military and Defense Dept. leaders on these themes and the associated actions to assure a "joint" approach and commitment. This process resulted in some refinement to total enterprise alignment and agreement.

The October 30 roundtable participants were organized into four new working groups reflecting these changes and to address the primary goals.

Over-arching Goal for MRO Military Enterprise = Effects Based Outcomes
Freedom of action for joint force commander; and (2) required fleet readiness with minimum logistics footprint

Objective 1: Effective and efficient national and deployable maintenance capability
Objective 2: Improve weapon system reliability, maintainability and availability

Following is a breakdown of the working areas and outcomes of discussion within each group at the October 30 roundtable.

MRO Capability/Capacity includes

. FY 2009 National Defense Authorization Act Study (MRO capacity/capability)
. 50/50 and Core Examination
. Continuous Process Improvement
. Incentives for core and non-core MRO providers

Siemens PLM Software

SIEMENS

Work group leader was Ross Marshall of USAF Air Force Material Command. The group narrowed the mission to focus on the initial requirement – analyze and rationalize the MRO Military enterprise to support decision-making regarding capacity and investment. The work group will work with the selected NDAA Study vendor to provide input, serve as an advisory board to the NDAA Study and assist in developing a study instrument that includes organic as well as industry capability/capacity (deployable and U.S.-based). The interim report in support of the NDAA is due in 12 months, final report in 22 months. The study will be expanded to include organic, as well as industry capability/capacity.

Secondarily, the group will capture/catalog/share continuous process improvement efforts across the enterprise.

MRO Government/Industry Relationships includes

. Contracting Strategies and Structures
. Partnering Strategies and Structures

Tim Madden, U.S. Marine Corps, led this group. Members took the initial action item list from April 2008 MRO Military working group and aligned to include

1. Develop a legislative proposal that expands the authority to establish DoD/industry partnerships across the broader definition of lifecycle.
2. Designate industrial/depot excellence examples – not by geography/location but rather a flexible capability to provide sustainment capability.
3. Pilot a system of partnership attribute definitions and operation at the system level of availability; proof and refine.
4. Establish a baseline of cost and people across the enterprise for sustainment; current cost models do not include people.

Acquisition/Sustainment Integration and Synchronization includes

. Managing key performance parameters and key system attributes
. Program Management and Logistics Command interaction
. Next generation sustainment strategies

Mr. Fowler was leader for this working group. In addition to taking the current definition of performance-based logistics to the next level, this group sees a need to define and establish a roadmap for next generation sustainment, and define sustainment KPP and KSAs as part of integrated acquisition model. Overall the group identified two near-term recommendations:

1. Press the July 31, 2008 memo establishing a lifecycle management framework to include institutionalizing sustainability metrics. The memo provides for comparison and resource decisions.
2. Working with program managers (acknowledging that this means multiple people over the life of a program) assure common language of sustainment metrics is maintained. This may include translating the July 31 memo into the acquisition model of the future.

MRO Decision Making, Modeling and Data includes:

. Condition-Based Maintenance-Plus strategies and implementation
. Standardization and access to lifecycle data

. LCC (stands for what) and reliability modeling
. Inventory distribution and level strategies
. Standardization of certification processes (critical to PLM adoption)

Work group, led by Garry Newton, USN Fleet Readiness Centers, participants cited the need for a flexible, consistent process that encompasses long-range planning and forecasting and that extends beyond supplies/parts to include maintenance.

The group also defined a need for process that allows data to flow across the theater of conflict through maintenance and the supply chain in a timely manner that allows for predictive analysis.

Until the process is defined, identifying enabling technology or tools is not possible. In terms of process, the working group discussed who owns demand forecasting and how information is shared. Part of this effort is included in the condition-based maintenance plus process. The Joint Aeronautical Commanders Committee also owns part of the process. The two need to be integrated to create a standard for the exchange of data.
The group also defined that the common data issue is not just engineering data; it also includes operational data and transactional data.
Next steps:

1. Using CBM+, define process for review/refinement by JALC
2. Complete process
3. Identify common data required and method for exchanging data as part of process.