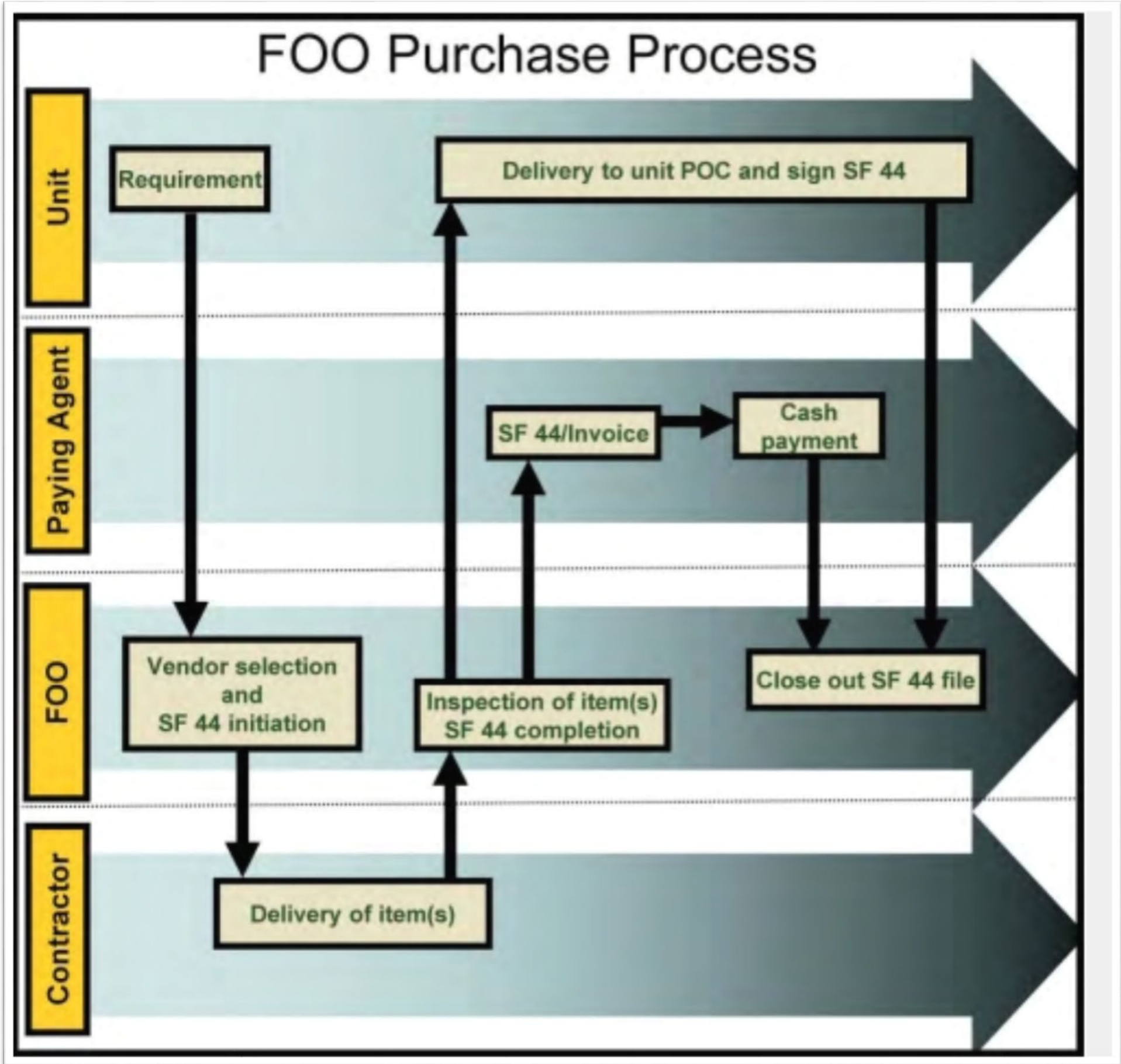


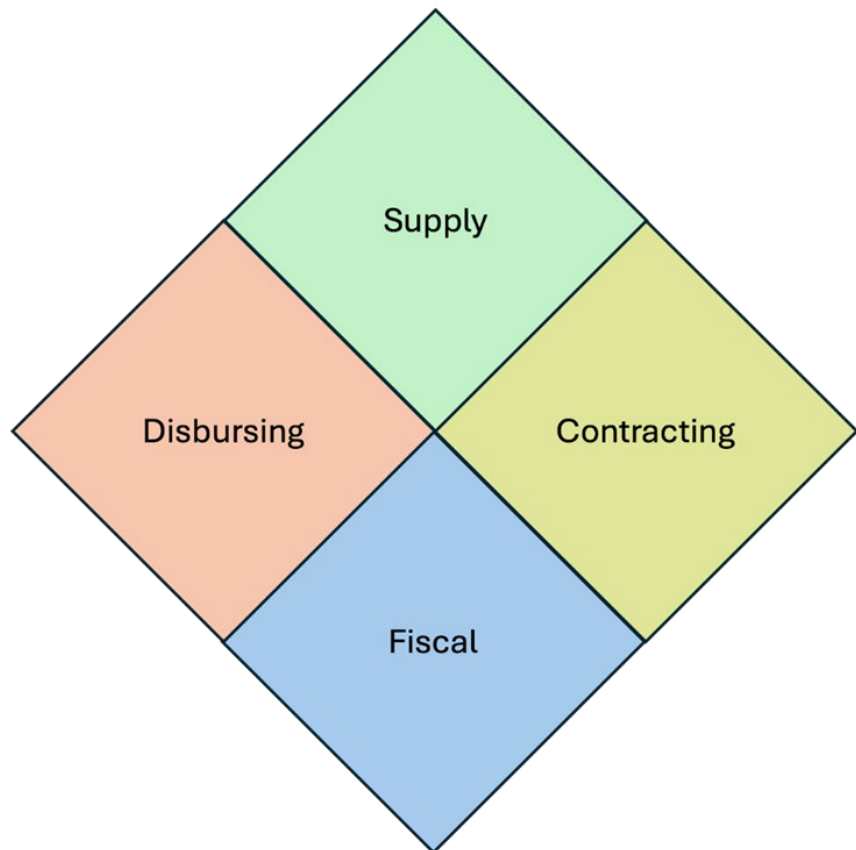
Abstract

The Marine Corps’ transition to Expeditionary Advanced Base Operations (EABO) as outlined in Force Design 2030 (FD2030) necessitates innovative approaches to sustainment and logistics, particularly for small, dispersed units operating in contested environments. The Field Ordering Officer (FOO) and Pay Agent (PA) program is a critical micro-purchase tool that can address sustainment gaps through local procurement. However, the program’s current implementation faces challenges in personnel readiness, system integration, and restrictive protocols that limit its effectiveness in austere and distributed environments. This study evaluates the FOO/PA program within the context of EABO using the Yoder Three Integrated Pillars of Success (TIPS) model to analyze personnel, platforms, and protocols. Data collected from after-action reports, interviews, and operational exercises highlight systemic issues such as inadequate training, high turnover among contracting personnel, reliance on connectivity-dependent systems, and outdated administrative procedures. The findings reveal a need for dedicated billets, expanded scenario-based training, improved interoperability of procurement systems, and modernized policies to enhance flexibility and responsiveness. Recommendations aim to optimize the FOO/PA program for EABO by addressing identified gaps, ensuring it becomes a reliable and adaptable tool for sustaining Marine Corps forces in future contested environments. This research contributes to the broader effort to modernize Marine Corps logistics and sustainment capabilities.



Methods

Keeping in mind that this study is, by design, exploratory and qualitative, we used a “quasi-delphi” method to collect our data. The Delphi method proper was originally developed by the RAND Corporation to gather expert knowledge and opinion regarding a specific topic or field that does not easily lend itself to traditionally quantitative means of evidence and analysis (Khodyakov, 2023). Our application of a modified or as we call it, “quasi-delphi” method, emphasizes two key attributes of the original method: the selective use of subject matter experts to answer questions and the determination of a collective response to elicit a consensus that can be used as evidence (Khodyakov, 2023).



Fiscal Diamond

Results & Their Impact

- Training for all Fiscal Diamond functional areas as well as for FOO/PA teams is not sufficient for effective utilization of the FOO/PA program in an EABO environment.
- Interoperability between relevant Information Systems and tools, such as Defense Agencies Initiative, Deployed Disbursing System, Procurement Desktop-Defense and the 3-in-1 Tool need to be improved in order to reduce the risk of human error, improve managerial oversight, enhance auditability, etc.
- Policies associated the FOO/PA Program need to be revised and updated to address current issues including cash-carrying amounts, risk-tolerance provisions, managerial oversight, purchase restrictions, etc.

