



## Innovation in Acquisition: Case Study of Marine Corps Manpower Information Technology Systems Modernization (MITSM) Portfolio

Panel #17 – Balancing Quality and Quantity: Innovation and Speed in Defense Acquisition Noelle Shott MITSM PEO MLB 8 May 2025

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## Introduction



#### **FOCUS AREAS** WHAT IS MITSM? Authority Authority **MITSM Prototype** to Proceed to Proceed Marine Corps Manpower Information MITSM is focused on modernized officer to Program (P2P) PHASE 3: PHASE 1: PHASE 2: Technology Systems Modernization and enlisted personnel models to better Process **MVP** Decision Decision **MVCR** (MITSM) program was established to balance retention and recruiting; modernize legacy manpower applications Point 1 Point 2 application of data analytics across the and develop new capabilities to PHASES recruiting and retention enterprise; operationalize the Commandant of the improved assignment of enlisted recruits Deliver Develop Define Marine Corps' (CMC) vision for a modern to military occupational specialties; talent management IT portfolio of leveraging lessons learned by the Army, capabilities that leverage data analytics to Navy, and Air Force to implement a optimize manpower management web-based talent marketplace to increase WHAT ARE WE DOING? **APP** outcomes. agency for Marines and Commands in the assignments process. MITSM solutions will enable the Marine Corps to recruit, support, and retain the right Marine at the right time and place with the right skills and abilities HOW? leveraging a modernized talent management portfolio of IT capabilities. **PROBLEM STATEMENT END STATE Agile Development** Currently, the USMC has "Antiquated, **Problem Definition/ Framing Prototype Delivered** Convergence Siloed, Manpower IT Systems HOW ARE WE DOING IT? The future M&RA IT portfolio requires a Human Centered Design **Analysis and Decision** Scaling Environments." The USMC Human Resource **Define To-Be Process** Organizational Change Mgmt. Phased Deployment revolutionary overhaul to migrate from its **Development Process (HRDP) IT Lacks:** Prioritization industrial era tools and methodologies Robust self-service technology, into the information age. The endstate is allowing each Marine more agency and to deliver a device agnostic, data driven, transparency in their careers and dynamic human capital management OUTCOMES Integrated capabilities designed for solution that meets the evolving needs of Digitize, Automate, and Data-Driven Talent **Business Process Assessment** flexibility and execution at speed the Marine Corps' talent-based work force. AI/ML Inform Management Solutions Consumption of financial, personnel, and Reimagination and training data from authoritative WHAT IS THE sources **EXPECTED OUTCOME?** Modern digital tools, processes, and analytics for use in personnel decisions

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MITSM's Prototype to Program (P2P) Process involves accelerating requirements development, reducing procurement time, increasing customer satisfaction, and allocating resources based on learning.

MITSM's first two efforts that used the P2P Process are as follows:

#### **Total Force Retention System (TFRS 2.0)**

- Other Transaction Authority (OTA) through Information Warfare Research Project (IWRP) Consortium.
- Software as a Service (SaaS) solution with existing Defense Information Systems Agency (DISA) Provisional Authorities.

#### Models Modernization Staffing Goal Model (SGM)

- Leverages enterprise services provided by DoD Chief Digital and Artificial Intelligence Office (CDAO) Advana Platform.
- SaaS solution with existing Authority to Operate (ATO) by CDAO.



## Background



- The Defense Business System (DBS) pathway requires a program to complete three phases, Capability Need, Solution Analysis, and Functional Requirements, and Acquisition Planning, before a contract is awarded to initiate program execution.
- The streamlined Software Acquisition Pathway (SWP) includes just two phases, a Planning Phase and an Execution Phase — removing the DBS pathway's multiple phases and barriers leading to program execution.



#### Adaptive Acquisition Framework

Accelerate program initiation to achieve speed in acquisition!

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- 1. Do opportunities exist for collaboration between defense, industry, and academia that will create an environment to rapidly develop, test, and transition ideas and solutions into practical applications?
- 2. Innovation by nature starts small, and current innovation efforts are happening in pockets across the DoD on a small scale. How can we build on this momentum to achieve more large-scale results? Is it possible to scale these efforts up across the DoD? Or is there another way to promulgate innovation while preserving the efficiency and creativity of small teams?
- 3. How do we collaborate with our industry partners, small and large, throughout the processes of development, testing, production, and sustainment to generate innovative technology and solutions? What does this collaboration look like from different roles in the acquisition community, such as contracting officers, program managers, senior leaders, engineers, and others?
- 4. How can changes to the Request for Proposal (RFP) process (e.g., length restrictions, demonstration requirements, contract structure) ensure that awarded contracts are mission-oriented and outcome-driven to drive competition and innovation opportunities, maximize utility of the product or system to the end user, and mitigate risk to the DoD?



## MITSM's P2P Process:

#### Accelerate Requirements Development





"We're making sure we build the right thing right, as opposed to building the wrong thing right. By putting our end users, mission owners and product owners at the center of our agile teams, we optimized our ability to make sure we built the correct application or capability that best met the end users' desires and fulfilled mission value objectives." – Col. Robert Bailey, previous MITSM Portfolio Director

Time	Day 1 Agenda: Empathy and Current Process	Time	Day 2 Agenda: Fu ture State
15m	Welcome & Opening Remarks	15m	Welcome Back, Recap Day 1,
25 m	Introductions and Icebreakers	60 m	Exercise #6: Industry Demonstration- Provide Audience with potential ideas for tomorrow's To-Be Process Mapping.
60m	Exercise #1: Modernization Inputs Framework to Agree on Problem Statement, North Star, and Goals	60 m	Exercise #7: How Might We Statements
15m	Break	15m	Break
45m	Exercise #2: Stakeholder Mapping / Empathy Mapping / Dot Voting to determine persona point of view for Journey Mapping	60m	Exercise #8: To- Be Process- If you were King or Queen for the Day- how should it work!
15m	Break	15m	Break
60 m	Exercise #3: Create As-Is Journey Map	30m	Exercise #9: Success Criteria- Identify on the ToBe Chart where business value will be gained from the Improvement in the process
60 m	LUNCH	60	LUNCH
30 m	Exercise #4: Pain Points-To identify if opportunities for improvement in the To-Be Process	60	Exercise #10: Product Backlog Write the Epic Ability Statements based on ToBe Process
30 m	Exercise #5: Problem Tree Analysis	15	Break
15m	Break	60	Exercise #11: PICK Chart- to Identify nearterm and long term actions and Innovations.
15m	Daily Wrap Up, Facilitated Open Discussion	15	Workshop Wrap-Up and Next Steps

Sample Design Thinking Workshop Agenda



### MITSM's P2P Process: Reduce Procurement Time





- Essential to have industry engagement throughout the Other Transaction Authorities (OTA) RFP process for the government evaluation team to learn and understand the latest technological advancements and innovative solutions and how to leverage them.
- Collaboration with industry leaders during oneon-one meetings and white paper evaluations enabled MITSM to tap into a wider range of expertise to update the RFP package, leading to better, more cost-effective outcomes.





This timeline is aggressive and requires commitment from the government evaluation team.



## MITSM's P2P Process: Increase Customer Satisfaction





- The MITSM P2P Process employs a usercentered design and agile methodology involving warfighters in the acquisition process.
- Ahead of each development sprint, warfighter feedback is gathered and incorporated into the software configuration plans.
- On the right is an example of a customer satisfaction metric we use to capture the Marine end users experience, while testing the breadth of the newly developed TFRS 2.0 functionality during each agile sprint.

"While this process is time and labor-intensive for SMEs, it maximizes user input throughout the development lifecycle, aligns with modern software development best practices, and ensures that critical design decisions are made by the end user, enhancing software viability and usability upon delivery."

LtCol Peterson, Headquarters Marine Corps (HQMC)
Manpower and Reserve Affairs (M&RA)





## MITSM's P2P Process:

Allocate Resources Based on Learning



The result of these prototypes allows MITSM and HQMC M&RA to quickly explore innovative technology options and learn whether the Minimum Viability Product (MVP) solution has enterprise viability, scalability, demonstrated business value, and if it will achieve user acceptance before making long-term investment decisions.



"Lean thinking defines value as providing benefit to the customer; anything else is waste." – **Eric Ries**, *The Lean Startup* 

Success criteria	TFRS Baseline Metric (Surveyed based on experience)	TFRS 2.0 Metrics (Surveyed at User Acceptance Test)			
Reduce process time of Reenlistment Extension Lateral Move (RELM) submission to final execution	On average, Career Planners (CPs) and Marines say RELM packages take 2-3 months to complete.	99% of Marines responded: TFRS 2.0 will reduce RELM Process Time.			
Decrease errors in reenlistment process	25% of CPs say they often encounter performance issues in TFRS.	93% of Marines responded: TFRS 2.0 will decrease errors in reenlistment process.			
Fully digital process that eliminates manual paper routing	93% of CPs don't have a fully digital process to submit RELM packages.	98% of Marines responded: TFRS 2.0 will eliminate manual paper routing of the reenlistment package.			
Increase productivity by minimizing external system data sources used by the Career Planner to prepare the reenlistment package	On average, CP spends 1 hour to prepare each reenlistment package.	97% of Marines responded: TFRS 2.0 will eliminate the need to access external data sources.			
Ease of use (i.e., System Usability Score)	SUS score was not tested for TFRS 1.0.	SUS score = 70%			
Increase in customer satisfaction from sprint demos to final UAT	64% of CPs say TFRS allows them to easily perform and complete tasks.	100% of Marines responded with a Customer Value Metric of Relative Perception: Able to achieve more with TFRS 2.0.			
Business Value Metrice					

#### **Business Value Metrics**



## **Results & Recommendations**



#### TFRS 2.0 MITSM P2P Results

- Reenlistment Extension Lateral Move (RELM) package processing time is now completed 2-3 months faster.
- Resulted in 75% efficiency and a better customer experience to the reenlisting Marine.

#### Models Modernization SGM MITSM P2P Results

- Timeline required to develop, review, and publish the Models Modernization SGM takes days now compared to the previous months.
- Resulted in 85% efficiency.

#### Recommendations

- Implement industry best practices by promulgating user-centered design, agile software development, and innovative acquisition processes — such as OTA agreements and existing enterprise services — to rapidly transition technology.
- Leverage the power of innovative partnerships through collaborative relationships with user communities and industry partners to enable rapid digital modernization.



# **Questions/Discussion**

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