



Electronic warfare training case study

In the modern combat and peace support operations environment, the electronic spectrum has almost become an additional dimension, so essential is it to the nature of military operations. Sensors, platforms, weapons and communications systems, among others, make major demands on the spectrum and on systems operators alike. The importance of electronic warfare in all its guises, therefore – electronic support measures (ESM), electronic counter-measures (ECM) and electronic counter-counter-measures (ECCM) – become ever more critical.

With this in mind, electronic warfare (EW) training at the Defence College of Communications and Information Systems (DCCIS) at Blandford Camp in Dorset was among that selected to be reviewed under the £31 million Early Training Transformation (ETT) contract awarded late in 2009.

Electronic Warfare Systems Operators have the responsibility for using of sophisticated equipment and systems to exploit hostile communications and to deploy counter-measures to disrupt them.

The five week Electronic Warfare Basic Recruit (EWBR) course at Blandford comes soon after the student has completed his 24-week Communication Systems Operator course at the Royal School of Signals and immediately before a 17-week Communications Exploitation course at the Defence College of Intelligence at Chicksands, Bedfordshire. It is thus a critically important component of the soldier's early training and, as such, needs to be as efficient and effective as possible.

The Metrix approach to courses selected for the review has been to deconstruct the work to its roots, re-examine it from first principles, taking all training needs analyses into account, and then to reconstruct the training with the objective of achieving enhanced efficiency and cost-effectiveness overall. The four principles against which the improvements and enhancements are measured are referred to as Compression, Rationalisation, Harmonisation and Distribution (CRHD).



Compression revolves around reducing training time through changing delivery methods and media, while Rationalisation provides for further reductions in training time through removal of superfluous content and overlap between different courses. Harmonisation addresses the potential for de-conflicting different courses and eradicating duplication of effort across the services and Distribution brings the potential for distance learning into play.

Taken together, these four principles form the core of the process through which MetriX intends to deliver enhanced training capability under the Defence Training Rationalisation contract, for which financial close is anticipated before the end of 2010. The benefits of treating a number of courses (nineteen in total) to an early examination process under the ETT contract has been not only to bring improvements to those courses but to benchmark the manner in which CRHD can be made to work in the wider context.

In the EWBR course, the ETT process has resulted in some significant improvements already with compression and rationalisation combining to provide a 47% reduction in technical training time and identification by the joint Authority and MetriX analysis team of what are described (by whom?) as “very good opportunities” for harmonisation. Subtle point which may be lost on reader new to this subject.

“The key lesson that emerges from this course is the necessity to ensure a very good relationship – a partnership between all parties with the same objective in mind,” said David King, MetriX Training Manager for the DCCIS courses, adding that Blandford’s early establishment of an ETT Governance Team had been “a very, very useful tool,” in achieving the level of success for the course. “We have operated a ‘no surprises’ culture on both sides of the partnership, which has been very effective,” he said.

The EWBR course content is rich in theory and it is therefore unsurprising that the shape of the course post-ETT will be predominantly Interactive Courseware (ICW) can we think of a better lay term?. “Our analysts learned some interesting lessons in working with a theory course and those lessons have application elsewhere,” said



Karen Goldingay, Metrix Supervisor for the DCCIS courses. “The ICW content has both written and audio aspects and is driven by both the individual and the machine,” King added.

Two accreditation options are available for graduating students of EWBR, providing for additional opportunities for further career growth as an added benefit of the training. Although only one component of the ‘pipeline’ of training courses an EW systems operator will undergo as he or she qualifies for operational duty, EWBR appears now to have been developed to the point at which it will have an important influence on trainees’ capabilities, which translates to enhanced operational capability in the front line.

About Metrix

Metrix is the consortium which has been appointed Preferred Bidder to transform three types of specialist training that is critical to the UK Armed Forces, and to manage, build and run what will become the UK Ministry of Defence (MOD) Defence Technical College (DTC) which will be based in St Athan, South Wales. Arising out of the Government’s Defence Training Review (DTR) in 2000/2001, which recommended a new approach to training, the DTR Package 1 Project will, when completed, have created a College which will be the largest vocational training operation in the country, and will provide the chance to deliver important changes in training delivery across all three armed services over the course of the next 30 years. Metrix is led by technology services company QinetiQ, and facilities management specialists, Sodexo. QinetiQ is a leading international provider of technology-based services and solutions to the defence, security and related markets. With over 14,000 employees, QinetiQ operates principally in the UK and North America and already has a significant presence in Wales through the test and evaluation facilities at Pendine and Aberporth, managed on behalf of the MOD, and the West Wales UAV Centre, operated in partnership with the Welsh Assembly Government. In the UK and Ireland, Sodexo employs 43,000 people and provides food and facilities management services to clients at over 2,300 locations in the corporate, education, healthcare, leisure and defence sectors.

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