

Proponents And Requirements Primer

CSC 1992

SUBJECT AREA Logistics

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Title: Proponents and Requirements Primer

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Thesis: Provide a written description of the Marine Corps requirements process.

Background: Modern, reliable equipment is essential to all Marines to maximize their warfighting capability. Acquisition of new warfighting systems is always a challenge, and if this acquisition battle is lost, the future warfighting capability of the Corps could be degraded. It is imperative that Marines become familiar with the processes of acquiring new systems and become masters of this new type of "warfare".

Despite all the extensive directives each Service addresses their approach to the requirements process differently. The foundation of the Marine Corps acquisition system is the Concept Based Requirement system (CBR). A key element of this system is the requirements process. This process is supported by the identification of deficiencies which are generated from numerous sources both within and outside the Corps.

The process is driven by the inputs and interrelationship between the Marine Air and Ground Task Force (MAGTF) Master Plan (MMP), the Marine Corps Long Range Plan (MCLRP), the CINC's Preparedness Assessments Reports (CSPARs), Mission Area Analysis (MAA) studies, Fleet Operational Need Statements (FONS), and lessons learned.

There are two major methods used to work deficiencies through the requirements process. First is the Remedial Action Program (RAP) and second is the Fleet Operational Need Statement (FONS). For clarity, while the RAP and FONS processes are different methods of identifying deficiencies, once they both reach the proponent, the actions from that point on are the same. The proponent plays an important role in staffing a requirement through the acquisition process.

Recommendation: By creating a greater awareness and understanding of the Marine Corps requirements process, Marines are provided another means to further improve the combat capability of the Marine Corps. The requirements process require months of tedious staff work, but the end result is a Marine Corps which will be better able to confront the treats of the future.

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PROPONENT & REQUIREMENTS PRIMER

Desert Shield and Desert Storm decisively displayed the warfighting capability of the United States against a foe who was threatening vital interests of this country. The United States Marine Corps played a major part in this war, and the Corps superb performance was a credit to Marines and their warfighting methods and material. Despite the success of the Gulf War the Corps continues the process of self examination, critical analysis, and assimilating of lessons learned. These efforts are focused on the goal of preparing the Corps to fight and win future conflicts. While there are numerous dimensions to this process, the focus of this paper is to examine the requirements process within the Corps. In *The Elephant's Child*, Rudyard Kipling wrote, "the most important questions are who, what, when, where, and why," and this paper will be an attempt to answer the 5 W's.

Modern, reliable equipment is, essential to all Marines to maximize their warfighting capability. Acquisition of new warfighting systems always a challenge, and if this acquisition "battle" is lost, the future warfighting capability of the Corps could be degraded. It is imperative that Marines become familiar with the processes of acquiring new systems and become masters of this new type of "warfare". Marines are already known as tenacious warfighters, who are goal and mission-oriented. The key in peacetime is to ensure those admirable warfighting characteristics are as abundantly applied to staff processes.

STARTING AT THE BEGINNING

In order to discuss the Marine Corps requirements process there must be a common understanding of what requirements planning means to the Defense community. Col Alexander P. Shine notes a problem of semantics in the Department of Defense (DOD) terminology: "Requirements can mean anything from something we are quite confident we really have to have in order to achieve battlefield success to something we sure would like to have if no one would fuss too much about it."¹ According to Glenn A. Kent, the only legitimate use of the word is to "say that we have a requirement to increase our capability to achieve some operational objective."² Further he notes "the requirements process centers on actions by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in conferring on, evaluating, advising on, and recommending operational requirements."³ There are baseline documents to

¹ Col Alexander P. Shine, "Theater Airlift 2010," Air Power Journal, Winter 1988, pg 9.

² Glenn A. Kent. "A Framework for Defense Planning," Rand Report R-3721-AF/OSD, January 1989 (draft) pg 48.

³ Ibid., pg 49

support the acquisition process and they are DOD directive (DODD) 5000.1. Major and Non-Major Defense Acquisition Programs, and DOD Instruction (DODI) 5000.2. Defense Acquisition Program Procedures. Despite all the extensive directives each service addresses their approach to the requirements process differently. There is not a commonly understood definition of the term.

INTRODUCTION TO THE MARINE CORPS REQUIREMENTS PROCESS

The foundation of the Marine Corps acquisition system is the Concept Based Requirement system (CBR) . A key element of this system is the requirements process. This process is supported by the identification of deficiencies which are generated from numerous sources both within and outside the Corps.

The process is driven by the inputs and Interrelationship between the Marine Air and Ground Task Force (MAGTF) Master Plan (MMP), the Marine Corps Long Range Plan (MCLRP) , the CINC's Preparedness Assessments Reports (CSPARs) , Mission Area Analysis⁵ (MAA) studies, Fleet Operational Need Statements (FONS), and lessons learned. An example of these interrelationships follows. The MMP currently identifies concepts

⁴ Equipment examples will be referred to as widgets. They will be intelligence oriented because of the interest of the author.

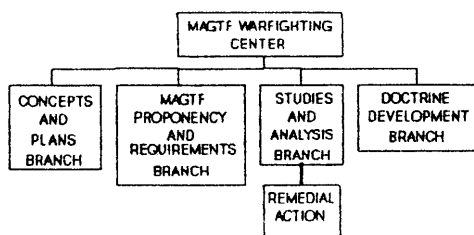
⁵ An assessment of the current or projected U.S. military capability to perform assigned missions. The primary objective is to identify deficiencies and determine a more effective means of performing assigned tasks.
AFSC PUB 1, The Joint Staff Officer's Guide 1991.

which are desired for the Corps of the future. Many of these concepts came into being because of judgements based on future threat studies and on lessons learned from experiences highlighted by the Fleet Marine Forces (FMF) . As needs are identified FMF FONS may be generated to make the tactical forces more combat capable. As more inputs are generated an MAA may be required to identify shortcomings in the system. This analysis draws from the concepts of the MMP and incorporates data searches

from all sources of information which could assist the study. A rich source of data is the lessons learned inputs contained within the Marine Corps Lesson Learned System (MCLLS). After a meticulous study is done through the MAA process, certain deficiencies or weaknesses will be highlighted. These now become the key foundational elements of the Marine Corps requirements process.

INTRODUCTION TO THE REMEDIAL ACTION PROGRAM

There are two major methods used to work deficiencies through the requirements process. First is the Remedial Action Program (RAP). Deficiencies enter into this process by first passing through the Remedial Action office, Lessons Learned Section, Studies and Analysis Branch, Warfighting Center (WF) , Marine Corps Combat Development Command (MCCDC) . This office manages the Remedial Action Program (RAP). The RAP was explained in a recent article of the Marine Corps Gazette, August 1991, written by Major F. G. Hoffman, USMCR. The name of the



article is "Why Reinvent the Wheel," and it explains that the

RAP is a Corps-wide correctional program that identifies items representing deficiencies or shortfalls that can be resolved. Deficiencies are identified through the review of lessons learned or after-action reports. These reports are generated from FMF commands, mobile training teams, and conferences. Other sources are MAAs, assessments, MCMP, MCLRP, and a catch-all category of "other." While identifying deficiencies is a large portion of the process, these sources also identify needed warfighting capabilities and opportunities to improve warfighting capabilities. The RAP is the process by which these problems are identified and actions directed to track the problem to a complete solution.⁶ As of March 1991, there are 930 RAP items logged into the RAP computer database.

THE REMEDIAL ACTION PROGRAM PROCESS

The deficiencies enter into the remedial action office where they are reviewed by the staff. This office conducts the initial screening of the deficiencies to highlight remedial action (RA)

⁶ Hoffman, Maj. F.G., "Why Reinvent the Wheel?", Marine Corps Gazette August 1991.

items.⁷ Some are noted and then filed as needing no further comment or staff action. Others are noted as requiring fixes and are collated by discipline for inclusion in the RAP committee process. The RAP concept is not a new concept, but it was implemented for the first time in the summer of 1991.

Core to the RAP are two committees: the RAP Working Group and the Steering Group. The RAP Working Group is a mid-level body which conducts the initial review of RA items potentially requiring formal remedial action. The Steering Group is a senior level decision making body, dealing with RA items influencing the entire Marine Corps.

The RAP Working Group is the first committee which starts the process. Before the RAP Working Group meets, the members are staffed advance copies of the potential remedial action items which will be discussed during the meeting. The RAP staff officer, before the advanced staffing, will make judgements on the anticipated Office of Primary Responsibility (OPR)⁸ and

7 REMEDIAL ACTION ITEM: A Remedial Action (RA) item is a written description of a deficiency or shortfall in existing doctrine, organization, training and education, or equipment.

8 OFFICE OF PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY (OPR): The OPR is the lead agency assigned to an individual lesson learned. The OPR is responsible for categorizing the item as Either noted, procedural, or as requiring remedial Action. Assigned to an item requiring remedial action, The OPR is responsible for generating a RAP report (per App A. encl 2, MCO 5000.17) outlining the solution.

other possible collaborators⁹ He considers whether the items fall into the sub-headings of training and education, doctrine, structure or equipment. The OPR is responsible for researching the item and providing initial comments back to the Working Group Committee on its validity. The OPR is another name for proponent.¹⁰ If, for example, the item dealt with intelligence equipment (a widget) the action would go the Command, Control Communications, Coordination, Intelligence, and Integration

(C4I2) Section, Proponency and Requirements Branch (P&R) , WF. The intelligence widget need is scrutinized by this office and analyzed for validity. Key questions are asked: is a fix required; is a fix already working or underway; or should a fix be initiated. Whether a piece of equipment needed, or not, the OPR sends written comments back to the RAP Working Group.

During the Working Group meeting each RA item is discussed. The expertise of the group allows many items to be screened out because of related items that are already working within the system. There are some items which are recognized as deficiencies and selected for further staffing. Within this process the RA

9 COLLABORATOR: The purpose of assigning collaborating agencies is to give the OPR the benefit of other perspectives and thus improve the final product. This process produces items with greater credibility, and a greater chance of generating remedial action if needed, and being of value to future operations.

10 PROPONENT: A proponent is defined as the officer with the responsibility to perform an advocate role in supporting a particular piece of equipment or a new organizational structure.

items are categorized. The four categories are validated Remedial Action items, Procedural items, Noted items and Tabled items. Tabled items are those the group could not categorize. Noted items¹¹ are deficiencies which the group analyzes as needing no further action. A Procedural¹² determination on an item provides comments back to the item's originator concerning the already proper established procedures and techniques, and the references to support them. Validated RA items are staffed back to the OPR. Within 60 days the OPR is required to prepare a decision brief concerning the RA item and present it to the Steering Committee

for final approval.

The Steering Committee is the final decision-making body concerning RA items. The committee is presented each RA item, and each is discussed and voted upon. If the majority vote is negative, the committees comments. are annotated on the package and the action is complete. If the majority vote is affirmative, the RA item becomes a Remedial Action Project (RA Project) . RA

11 NOTED: The OPR will provide comments which amplify, or as necessary, clarify the lesson. The Chairman of the Working Group includes those comments in the MCLLS database and returns to the submitter a letter detailing the action taken by the group.

12 PROCEDURAL; The OPR will provide comments which describe the proper procedures, techniques, and the references, the Chairman, Working Group briefs the Steering Committee and solicits concurrence. The exception is that if the procedure effects acquisition, or a change in force structure, doctrine, or training, the issue will be briefed as requiring remedial action. The Working Group will determine the appropriate category.

Projects are validated needs requiring further requirements processing. The OPR now has 60 days to produce a RAP report back to the Steering Committee on the progress made on the RA project. At this point a Missions Needs Statement (MNS) 13 is drafted. The MNS is necessary for any further requirements action.

THE FLEET OPERATIONAL NEEDS PROCESS

A second method of entering input into the requirements process is by Fleet Operational Need Statements (FONS). FMF units submit FONS through their chain of command to the WF Center, MCCDC. For example, if the FONS concerns an equipment item, it

will come into P&R Branch, WF and based on its function to the C4I2 section. The FONS is now validated without going through the RAP process. The validation is based on the experience and expertise of the intelligence desk officers assigned to the item. Again using an Intelligence example, a FONS for an intelligence widget may come directly to C4I2 and the intelligence representative will then decide how the deficiency may be solved. During this process all problem-solving alternatives are examined from the choices of available doctrine, training and equipment options. An equipment solution is always the least preferred, because other solutions are usually quicker and less costly. The intelligence officer working this issue has to examine the need

13 MISSION NEEDS STATEMENT (MNS): A MNS is a statement about the deficiency and what generally the proponent has in mind to solve the problem.

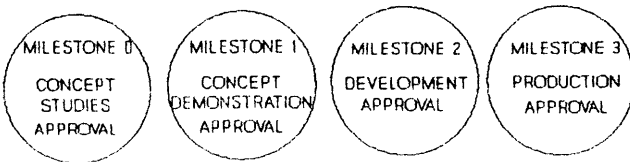
carefully to see if there is a hole in capabilities and if a widget is definitely needed. If an intelligence widget is needed, then the office assumes the responsibility of being the item's proponent and now has approximately two months to put together a draft MNS. For clarity, while the RAP process and FONS process are different methods of identifying deficiencies, once they both reach the MNS stage the actions from that point on are the same.

MISSION NEEDS STATEMENT PROCESS

Once the MNS rough draft is completed it is distributed to the proper offices for comment. The internal staffing of the rough draft normally takes one month. The noted comments on the

draft are analyzed and changes are made to the draft.

The coordinated draft MNS is now staffed external to the WF center and the Marine Corps. This normally takes two months and when the draft returns, it has either been concurred with or has appropriate editorial comments attached. The intelligence proponent now collates all of the comments and makes appropriate rebuttal comments as necessary. These comments are forwarded via the chain of command to the Assistant Commandant of the Marine



Corps (ACMC) for signature - This takes approximately one month - If the ACMC signs the MNS it is now a validated MNS. This allows the proponent to proceed in the requirement process and also to begin staff action within the Program Objective Memorandum (POM) process. The validated MNS establishes the condition where Milestone (MS) 0 in the DOD acquisition process has been met.

DEVELOPMENT OF OPTIONS

The proponent is now challenged to formally explore the possibilities available to correct the need. One method to accomplish this is to initiate a Cost and Operational Effectiveness Analysis (COEA). The COEA is process to identify options available to solve the problem and to begin to highlight the costs. The COEA study includes all options to solve the

deficiency, such as Product Improvement Programs (PIP), off-the-shelf purchases, or the development of a new system.

The COEA's detail can be related to the acquisition category (ACAT) the intelligence widget is expected to fall.

A brief explanation of the different categories are as shown.

ACAT 1 : Is a major System and it is costly and expensive. As a note the Marine Corps does not usually have many items in this category. These systems are normally 200 million or more in fiscal year 1980 constant dollars.

ACAT 2, ACAT 3, and ACAT 4: Are systems which cost less than ACAT 1. ACAT 4 equipment items involve the lowest amount of monetary outlays and are classified as systems which don't interact with the threat. Most intelligence systems end up in this category.

These categories are important because the staffing becomes more extensive if the widget is expected to be in ACAT 1, 2 or 3. These widgets will leave the Marine Corps and be staffed through the Navy Department and continue through the DOD. If the widget is category 4 the Commanding Officer at Marine Corps Systems Command (MarCorSysCom), which was formerly the Marine Corps Research and Development Command, can work the issue. For this example, the intelligence widget falls within ACAT 4.

The COEA is a key document and its findings are referred to often when attempting to make the transition from Milestone 0 to Milestone 1. With a validated MNS and a completed COEA, a decision can now be made on whether or not it is worthwhile or

cost effective it to continue the project. This decision is made in a Marine Corps Policy Decision Meeting (MCPDM) with representatives from MarCorSysCom, WF Requirements and Programs (R&P) HQMC, and other, For example, the intelligence widget is approved and MS 1 begins.

THE PROCESS CONTINUES

The requirements process continues and the proponent is now required to produce an Operational Requirements Document (ORD) which will replace the MNS. The ORD is like a term paper, while the MNS is the outline. The proponent also writes a Concept of Employment (COE) describing exactly how the intelligence widget is going to be used. MarCorSysCom writes, a Test Support Plan (TSP) and a Material Fielding Plan (MFP) to weigh the considerations of possible field tests, logistics support and maintenance associated with the widget.

During the MS 1 process MarCorSysCom will begin to spend research and development (R&D) funds to explore possible solutions. If the R&D for the intelligence widget shows promise a decision may be made to move the program into MS 2 where a demonstrator/prototype can be constructed. During MS 2, the proponent continues to analyze all available data to make Sure the project is still worth the effort. Further COEAs or Life Cycle Cost Estimates are frequently initiated to aid in analysis.

THE POM AND PROPONENTS

Intermingled within this process is the POM. While the

intelligence widget may be needed immediately it has to fit into the deliberate POM process. If it is just entering into the POM process today, the widget may not receive funding until Fiscal Year 1996. After MS 0, the proponent drives to have the widget entered into the POM. First, it demonstrates that the need is being seriously considered. Second, for MarCorSysCom to continue placing R&D funds against the widget, the widget must be in the POM.

Once the MS 1 Decision is made MarCorSysCom will begin conducting R&D for the widget. They will also produce a POM Initiative. This document advises how funds should be allocated to field the widget and the time it will actually take to acquire the complete capability. The POM Initiative is a further document which assists the proponent to get his item into the POM.

The next step is for the proponent to argue for the lineal precedence of the intelligence widget during the POM Evaluation Group (PEG). At this meeting all of the proponents place all equipment needs into a linear order of priority. Each POM item is supported by documentation and for the intelligence widget this includes, its relationship to intelligence operations and Marine Corps concepts. Costs and Benefits to the Corps are also considered in this meeting. The final product of this meeting is a Priority Listing Statement (PLS) for the Marine Corps. The PLS is then staffed to the FMF's where the FMF representatives discuss the PLS during an FMF PEG. As a result of the FMF PEG discussions and debate, the PLS is adjusted and re-staffed to the FMF. The PLS is then forwarded by MCCDC to HQMC. At Headquarters,

14 One way to do this is by relating the widget to the intelligence cycle (direction, collection, processing, production, and dissemination).

the Requirements and Programs Branch begins to staff the document and there are further boards where the priority list is reviewed. They are the Col and Deputy's POM Working Group and then the General Officers POM Working Group. The Commandant of the Marine Corps also screens the list and makes the final decision on the priority list.

Once the intelligence widget is part of the POM, it moves into MS 3. A benefit of being POM'ed and in MS 3 is that DOD funds can be re-programmed and can be expeditiously used. As an example, if there are DOD funds available at the end of the fiscal year, these funds can be spent immediately on items in MS 3. At this stage this item can be procured.

CONCLUSION

By creating a greater awareness and understanding of the Marine Corps requirements process, Marines are provided another means to further improve the combat capability of the Marine Corps. The requirements process require months of tedious staff work, but the end result is a Marine Corps which will be better able to confront the threats of the future. Winston Churchill's memorandum for the War Cabinet, dated 3 September 1940 states an opinion which still has validity today, "It is by devising new weapons that we shall best cope.

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