

ALTESS: A One-Stop Shop for the Acquisition Domain

LTC Fernando L. Torrent



Imagine the perfect virtual environment managed by a single program office for your enterprise domain. Imagine single sign-on access to all the authorized reporting data you can handle at nanosecond speeds. Then imagine a network-centric environment with integrated encrypted security that would take hundreds of years to break. Fantasy? No! In the works? Yes!

Acquisition professionals have been dreaming about this networked environment for quite some time and the Acquisition, Logistics and Technology Enterprise Systems and Services (ALTESS) program office is making that dream a reality for the acquisition community today.

Headquartered in Radford, VA, ALTESS also has functional and business elements in Washington, DC. It is chartered by the Army Acquisition Executive's (AAE's) authority and by Program Executive Officer Enterprise Information Systems (PEO EIS) designation, with delegated full-line authority of PEO EIS for centralized management.

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Why ALTESS?

In the past, the acquisition community shouldered considerable reporting workload directed by the AAE for mandatory and regulatory oversight reports required by HQDA, Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD), Office of Management and Budget and Congress. Many other Army requests for information resulted in reworking previously supplied information into different formats for the requesting organization. And yet, with all this information submitted up the reporting chain, there was often little or none to the field, even on major program decisions.

ALTESS was tasked to reduce this workload for the field, improve the use of existing information by HQDA and

provide timely feedback to field organizations.



Eileen Reichler (left), ACM, ASC's National Capital Region (NCR) CSO, watches as Pat Hale, Program Specialist, ALTESS, explains an AIM application.

Acquisition Information Management (AIM)

ALTESS' flagship program, AIM, provides automation system services to the AL&T Workforce to support planning, programming, management and execution of acquisition programs. Access to AIM is via the World Wide Web, specifically, the Non-classified Internet Protocol Router Network. Customers include Congress, Office of Congressional Legislative Liaison, OSD, HQDA, Army Materiel Command, Chief Information Officer (CIO)/G-6,

PEOs and program/project/product/managers (PMs). AIM provides the following applications and services:

- AIM portal and all associated infrastructure that bind together the underlying user applications.
- AIM Digital Library — applications, user team rooms and program document repositories.
- CIO Assessments and Certifications — the CIO reporting system supports the role of CIO/G-6 in compliance with the *Clinger-Cohen Act of 1996*.
- Command, Control, Communications, Computers and Intelligence Support Plan documents.
- Monthly Acquisition Program Report (MAPR) and Senior Army Leadership MAPR.
- Monthly Acquisition Report (MAR) — provides a simple Web interface to allow the PEO/PM community the capability to enter their MAR.
- AIM Information — a program-centric information display.
- Acquisition Category Reports.
- Acquisition Support Center (ASC) Web site hosting.
- PEO/PM listings.
- ASC reports.
- Acquisition Commanders/Senior Managers Directory.
- Military and Civilian Acquisition Position Listings.
- AIM user administration.
- Team Rooms — provides a central location for a team to share documents, send messages, assign tasks, manage calendar events and develop ideas through discussion forums.
- OSD Rapid Improvement Team pilot.

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Planning, Programming, Budgeting and Execution System (PPBES)

In addition to the above-mentioned applications and services, ALTESS integrates, supports and maintains applications to support the PPBES. First and foremost, the Web Army Research, Development and Acquisition (RDA) Budget Update Computer System (WARBUCS) is at the center of PPBES applications. WARBUCS is tightly integrated with other PPBES applications such as the PEO/PM RDA/Operations and Maintenance Army Ownership Package that allows PMs to track to the RDA budget. In addition, WARBUCS has achieved a tighter integration with Smart Charts, AIM and the Acquisition Database (ADB).

Smart Charts are managerial tools used to create, display and distribute

standardized charts that senior and RDA leadership use to support congressional and OSD activities associated with major weapon systems and communications, command and control information systems.

The Past Performance Information Management System (PPIMS) is the Army's automated repository for the collection and use of Armywide contractor Past Performance Information (PPI). It allows users to gather and maintain PPI on contractors for subsequent use in source selection. PPIMS provides unclassified/sensitive information to users CONUS and OCONUS 24 hours a day, 365 days per year via the Internet.



Betty Hearn (left), Information Technology Specialist, ALTESS, works together with Chris Rimestad, ACM for ASC's NCR CSO.

The Career Acquisition Personnel & Position Management Information System (CAPP MIS) is a set of tools developed to manage the AL&T Workforce. It is a combination of Web and client/server application modules that feature a relational database residing on a Microsoft® System Query Language Server 7.0. CAPP MIS is used by ASC (the proponent), ASC Customer Support Offices (CSOs), Acquisition Career Managers (ACMs), Army Human Resources Command Acquisition Management Branch, National Guard, Army Reserve and Army Medical Department Career Managers and the AL&T Workforce. CAPP MIS includes Individual Development Plans, Acquisition Career Record Briefs and Position Modules.

CODIFY

Most of these applications started in the past as stovepipes to better support upcoming requirements. However, ALTESS has integrated many of these applications under a single umbrella named CODIFY. CODIFY allows ALTESS to merge physical and logical database infrastructure into one coherent fully integrated entity — the ADB — to eliminate data redundancy and process duplication. The ADB enables full interapplication data flow, communication and standardization while providing for the easy exposure of our logical data infrastructure to other organizations. The ADB is a relational model based on Oracle® 9i.



ALTESS helps support ASC's videoteleconferencing needs. ALTESS Information Technology (IT) Specialist Gloria Sawyers (left) details the steps to run the videoteleconference equipment with Eileen Reichler (middle) and Chris Rimestad, both ACMs with NCR CSO.

The ALTESS intranet extends AIM to incorporate an enterprisewide intranet. AIM maintains and conducts office-specific business operations on the Web, and enables independent management of each work space. ALTESS defines, procures, installs and maintains intranet architecture components to ensure interoperability standards with PEO intranets. In addition, ALTESS' ability to reconfigure commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS) systems enhances decision support to the HQDA staff in program management, funding and financial control.

AIM and its next generation, ADVICE — the Acquisition Domain Virtual Integrated Collaborative Environment — will be the intermediate answer the AL&T Workforce has been looking for. The efforts and applications contained in ADVICE will prepare the field for the objective acquisition system, the Army Advanced Collaborative Environment. This initiative was accomplished by extremely determined and motivated ALTESS employees who continually strive to improve internal policies, modernize and maintain continuity for internal business processes.

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Modernization and Business Improvements

Annually, ALTESS invests a large portion of its budget in systems modernization and improvement. When an initiative lands outside the budget scope, either by dollar amount or time, it is placed on a Requirements Review Board list, also known as an Unfunded Requirement, and assigned a priority number. ALTESS is a centrally funded and reimbursable organization. Most of its operating resources are spent on modernization, COTS integration, enterprise generation and developing redundant systems to ensure operations continuity.

The ALTESS Management Steering Group (MSG) reviews and updates the

ALTESS *Strategic Plan* as necessary. The ALTESS *Strategic Plan* sets and communicates the goals, priorities and courses of action to ensure the continued vitality of ALTESS. Goals, objectives and plan accomplishments are monitored by objective measures and critical success indicators. The challenges and associated personnel issues will require efficiency, dedication and hard work over the next few years. The ALTESS MSG will

review and track progress toward accomplishing the *Strategic Plan's* goals and revise/update the plan on a semiannual basis.

The extent to which ALTESS achieves planned goals will determine the overall effectiveness of the modernization and business improvements envisioned for the AL&T Workforce. The ALTESS *Performance Measurement Plan* identifies the measures for each goal. The plan provides a common framework to measure how well ALTESS staff is doing against established goals. The performance measures will be updated as necessary to reflect evolution and change in strategies, goals and implementation plans for the organization.

The *Strategic Plan* was developed to define ALTESS' direction to accomplish its goals and objectives. The MSG has established the goals and objectives identified in the plan and the efforts to accomplish them are fully supported at all levels. Management is committed to providing resources in the area of personnel, cost, technology and support to facilitate this plan. The organization's employees will be provided with the knowledge and training necessary to accomplish the plan's goals and objectives. The following goals are based on ALTESS' priorities.

- Goal 1 — Maximize customer satisfaction.
- Goal 2 — Improve ALTESS processes.
- Goal 3 — Provide a stable and secure computing environment.
- Goal 4 — Maintain a highly competent staff.
- Goal 5 — Institute processes and policies for test, development and production architectures.

The ultimate goal is to provide our customers with reliable, effective



Doc Carter, IT Specialist, ALTESS, works with the new MS Exchange® servers being installed to run e-mail programs.

equipment and software for use in their jobs. With integrity, accountability and reliability at the forefront, ALTESS is dedicated to safeguarding its entrusted responsibilities. ALTESS continues to adhere to the high standards established for the integration and

development of our software initiatives, operating procedures and, most importantly, our people. Excellent customer service drives our work efforts and ethics. Throughout the entire process, our focus is customer-centric service and support. ALTESS is working to achieve Capability Maturity Model Integrated Level II by FY05.

ALTESS' motto is *Custos Portae*, which reflects ALTESS' role as the gatekeeper of acquisition data. To be the guard (*custos*) or guardian of the gate (*portae*) for such a critical resource as acquisition enterprise data carries with it the responsibility to ensure the integrity, reliability, dependability and security of the resource.

ALTESS actively supports transformation and the Army Focus Areas by

providing the right systems and services at the right time. ALTESS' current and future strategic planning and business processes will ensure it stays abreast of current and future policies to support the best warfighters in the world — American Soldiers.

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Next Generation Acquisition Information Management

Ronnie D. Jewell and Raymond S. Soroka



The Acquisition Information Management (AIM) system has been the flagship product for Program Manager (PM) Acquisition, Logistics and Technology Enterprise Systems and Services (ALTESS) for the past 6 years. It provides integrated Web-based automation services to the acquisition community to support management, planning, programming, budgeting and acquisition program execution. Its varied customer base comprises users from the Office of the Secretary of Defense, HQDA, Army Materiel Command, Chief Information Officer (CIO/G-6), program executive offices (PEOs) and PM offices.

In 2002, AIM's role expanded to provide an enterprise solution for the acquisition community. A primary objective was to enable all community members to proactively manage, report and analyze all aspects of programs throughout their life cycles. The AIM System's core is a relational database environment composed of standardized data elements and strictly enforced data access and control mechanisms. These provide conformance to DOD-mandated

data standards and also allow each PM to retain ownership of program data while providing data access to higher levels of the Army acquisition community and data aggregation to support statutory reporting requirements. By significantly reducing the level of manual effort needed to perform administrative PM duties and to monitor and report program data through the acquisition chain, AIM enables PMs to concentrate resources on successfully

developing and fielding systems. The Army Acquisition Executive; the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Plans, Programs and Resources; and PEO Enterprise Information Systems are the functional proponents for AIM.

The current system is application-specific with an emphasis on HQDA reporting. It is an umbrella application for a suite of integrated, Web-based products that focus on program