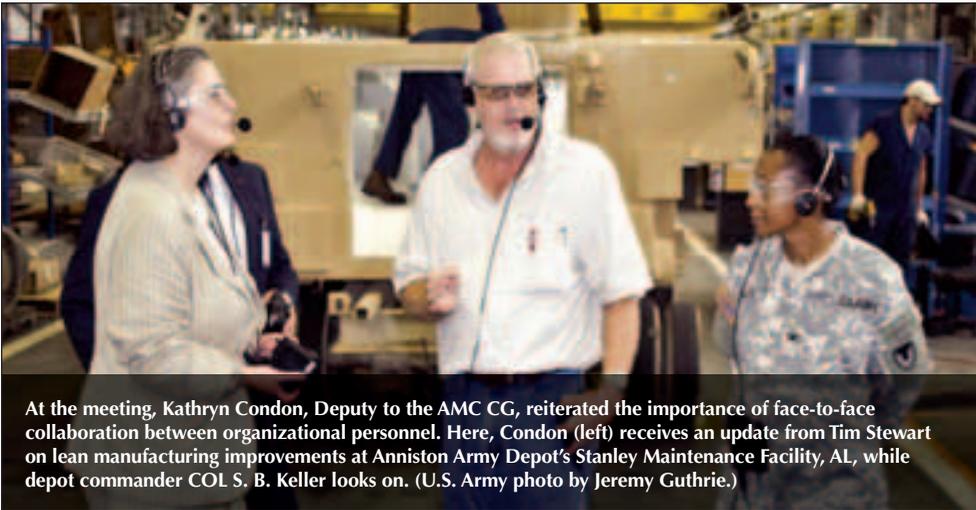


Materiel Enterprise Human Resources Offsite: ASAALT and AMC Collaborate to Achieve Better Outcomes

Kellyn D. Ritter

The missions of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics, and Technology (ASAALT) and the U.S. Army Materiel Command (AMC) are essentially the same: to provide unparalleled support to our Soldiers. While the individual tasks and responsibilities of each organization differ, there is much collaboration and overlapping work done between them. To accomplish their collective missions and ensure superior support to our Soldiers, ASAALT and AMC are working to establish a Materiel Enterprise (ME) Transformation Plan that will better define the roles, tasks, and coordination of the two organizations.

Under the ME's organizational roles, ASAALT, AMC, and the PEOs will collaborate during a system's life cycle to provide better overall support. Here, a Soldier uses the AN/PSQ-20 Enhanced Night Vision Goggles developed by PEO Soldier's Product Manager Soldier Maneuver Sensors. (U.S. Army photo courtesy of PEO Soldier.)



At the meeting, Kathryn Condon, Deputy to the AMC CG, reiterated the importance of face-to-face collaboration between organizational personnel. Here, Condon (left) receives an update from Tim Stewart on lean manufacturing improvements at Anniston Army Depot's Stanley Maintenance Facility, AL, while depot commander COL S. B. Keller looks on. (U.S. Army photo by Jeremy Guthrie.)

A core aspect of this plan is the development of a Human Capital Strategy. At an ME Human Resources Offsite meeting June 22–24, 2009, ASAALT and AMC personnel met to plan and discuss the strategy, which will enable personnel—ME's human capital—to jointly act as a community and create a core, succinct enterprise. Senior leaders and workforce members from both organizations contributed to the offsite meeting, and their candid participation and forward-thinking further developed the Human Capital Strategy and the ME Transformation Plan.

ME Transformation Plan

The Transformation Plan consists of five goal areas that will enable and support ASAALT and AMC. The organizations are in the process of defining each of those goal areas: roles and responsibilities, the industrial base, leadership, human capital strategy, and business processes and information technology.

Mark Rocke, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Strategic Communication and Business Transformation, explained the background of the Transformation Plan and steps taken thus far. He advised that the plan's goal is to establish a new awareness for department coordination and strategic relationship, and a more enterprise approach to include information sharing, transparency,

etc. The drafted ME Transformation Plan states: "We will accelerate our work to more fully adopt an 'enterprise approach,' in which we think and act collectively in a way that puts the needs of the Army and warfighters above the needs of individuals or organizations. We will better enable the Army Force Generation [ARFORGEN] model, better meet warfighters' needs, and support broader efforts to rebalance our Army. We will create greater effectiveness and efficiency, which will result in better products, shorter cycle times, and faster response times."

Together, ASAALT and AMC are creating a collaborative workforce with an organizational culture that harmonizes resources, requirements processes, etc. Rocke advised that the ME needs to improve how it acts as a community. "We've made a great deal of progress already; this offsite is an example of that," said Rocke, but he advised that there is still much more to do.

Defining ME Organizational Roles

Thus far, the ME has run several workshops and offsite meetings aimed at defining the Transformation Plan's goal areas. Teresa Gerton, Deputy Chief of Staff (DCS) for Resource Management, G-8, explained the progress of ME goal area #1 (to define the roles and responsibilities of the ME), the advances made in the establishment of ASAALT and

AMC responsibilities, and an example of the success of another offsite ME Transformation Plan meeting. She explained that during the collaboration between ASAALT and AMC, "It became very clear to the group that there was a lot of confusion about who was supposed to do what to whom in this business that we call ME." Gerton advised that it even took negotiation and compromise to reach common definitions of the ME and the individual organizations. Drawing a division of labor between ASAALT, AMC, and the program executive offices (PEOs) was one of the most important things accomplished in that goal area. "If you don't have a common understanding of your goals and responsibilities up front, maybe you don't have a common understanding of the definition of the words [life cycle, system, ME] you're supposed to use," said Gerton. "It's very easy to find places where many people were doing the same thing, and some places where nobody was doing anything."

In goal area #1, the group also discovered that from the very first life-cycle management step—materiel development decision—there were definitional differences between ASAALT and AMC. There has to be a partnership presence at this step or the life-cycle management process won't work, advised Gerton. There must be both AMC and ASAALT presence "to make sure the sustainability of the product is considered from the very beginning," she said. There was a lot of misperception on both sides about responsibilities and capabilities. The group decided that ASAALT will develop support agreements with AMC with the objective being to avoid surprises late in the life cycle. Each PEO and program/project/product manager will figure out the support they require and ASAALT/AMC will figure out the support they can give, coming to an agreement in a universally practiced manner. "These agreements are between AMC and ASAALT," said Gerton. "They are not

between one PEO and one Life Cycle Management Command. They're not between two staff elements. They're between the two organizations."

Offsite Meeting Collaboration

The ME Human Resources Offsite meeting provided a unique opportunity for information sharing, brainstorming, and collaboration. The benefit of ASAALT and AMC members meeting in an offsite centralized location enabled them to effectively work together in a previously unmatched fashion. During the offsite's first session, Craig Spisak, U.S. Army Acquisition Support Center (USAASC) Director, advised that those in attendance should set aside their differing perspectives and work as a collaborative team to develop a solution set. He stressed that although personnel were from different organizations, everyone was trying to solve the same problem. "Our expectation is that you come into this process and set aside any perspective that you have or may bring to the table from where you work and the organization you work for," said Spisak. "What we're looking for is to try and develop a solution set for our population—the human capital—that gets done what we do every day. To do that, we ask that you put aside or suspend your beliefs, if you will, and recognize that we are all trying to solve this from the same perspective."

Gerton advised that in the ME goal area #1 offsite meeting, ignoring the

preconceptions of organizational structure was the only way to make progress. "I encourage you not to make any pre-suppositions about commands or names of organizations or subordinate organizations," she said. Kathryn Condon, Deputy to the AMC Commanding General (CG), also reiterated the advice to leave behind preconceived notions. "Stop being personnelists, which is hard to do," Condon said. "We get so fixated with rules, processes, and pieces of paper that we lose sight of what we're supposed to do. ... We are so rigid in the way we do business that we will fail unless we transform and adapt."

William Marriott, DCS for Personnel, G-1, advised that a big piece of the overall ME Transformation Plan is "the human capital piece, or taking care of the people." He applauded the offsite environment, as it was conducted in an open forum with no stop time. Groups could work as long as needed or desired on their projects while in a relaxed, out-of-office setting. Marriott described the scope of the groups' input on their projects as having a "blank page." In addition, he advised the meeting was a great opportunity to meet counterparts from different organizations—people you work with, but don't necessarily know.

Condon reiterated the importance of face-to-face collaboration between organizational personnel. "The bottom line is you cannot do your job unless you get out and see what the job is," she

said. "You have to know the business you work in." Condon also expressed her enthusiasm for the Human Capital Strategy and the offsite meeting itself, which gave ASAALT and AMC personnel the opportunity to have direct input in the strategy that will affect them and their organizations now and in the future. "This is our opportunity to mold the future of the Army into what it needs to be," Condon said. Referring to leadership, Condon said, "We can't change things unless people tell us what needs to be changed. This is your opportunity to tell us what to change to make your job better."

Human Capital Strategy

The goal of the offsite was to further develop ME goal area #4 (establishment of a Human Capital Strategy). The balanced strategy should integrate ME talent across requirements, processes, and projects. This includes being able to supply the right personnel needed for the ME mission, create a collaborative culture that fosters communication and cooperation throughout the ME, and integrate the Human Capital Strategy across all business decisions and processes. The Human Capital Strategy Memorandum of Agreement between ASAALT and AMC reads: "To successfully manage the ME workforce through innovative, comprehensive, and collaborative Human Capital Management programs. Through this collaborative effort, ensure the enterprise leadership competitively recruits, retains, and sustains a well trained, educated, and experienced mix of the right people performing the right jobs in accomplishment of overarching enterprise goals."

LTG N. Ross Thompson III, Principal Military Deputy to the ASAALT, advised that, "Enterprise is about working better together so that we can achieve a better outcome. There are a lot of opportunities in the human capital area, and the reason we [leadership] really wanted to get this objective right



William Marriott, DCS for Personnel, G-1, advised that a big piece of the overall ME Transformation Plan is "the human capital piece, or taking care of the people." Here, Marriott speaks with members of the AMC Fellows program during a visit to Redstone Arsenal, AL, April 21–23, 2009. (AMC photo by Beth Clemons.)



The ME transformation plan will improve how ASAALT and AMC act jointly as a community to create a core, succinct enterprise. Here, Acting ASAALT Dean G. Popps (right) and AMC CG Ann E. Dunwoody are briefed by LTC Christopher D. Hardin, 3rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) Distribution Management Center Chief, in Balad, Iraq. (U.S. Army photo by SGT Alexander Snyder.)

up front is to have a better working relationship between ASAALT and AMC. ... If we don't get the human capital piece right for the long haul, then we won't accomplish what we need to."

Thompson continued, "It's all about people. It's all about getting the right people ... about integrating an environment where people feel like they can contribute to the work, where they are excited to come to work every day, where they're doing something meaningful, where they like the people that they're working with, where they are able to maximize their potential."

Condon stressed the future workforce aspect of human capital, advising that we need to build the workforce for the future generation and establish skill sets for the future. "We're fixated on today, but we also need to be [fixated] on tomorrow," said Condon. She expressed her concern that the civilian workforce skill set has atrophied. Condon advised

that to build the workforce we need for the future while still maintaining the workforce we need today, we need to bring skill sets back in house. "We are Soldier-focused; we are a people business. We need to put the emphasis back on people," she said.

Thompson stressed the importance of human capital in ensuring the future workforce is able to meet its mission requirements. "We have the opportunity to grow the size of the acquisition workforce. ... People will give you the foundation to do this," said Thompson. He advised that it will take 4–5 years to obtain the right people to grow the acquisition workforce. If we can establish a plan through the Human Capital Strategy now, we will be better equipped to have success in the human capital arena in the future.

The development of an ME Human Capital Strategy will address the concerns of Thompson, Condon, and other

senior leadership and offer solutions to the human capital challenges that the ME workforce faces.

Bob Szerszynski, USAASC Senior Program Analyst, reviewed each of the specific projects involved in the Human Capital Strategy. He emphasized the responsibility of the ASAALT/AMC collaborative groups for their projects. "The projects are now yours; you are the ones to carry these through," Szerszynski said. "Don't think of them as someone else's." A description of the projects follows:

- Project 4.1—develop a unified ME human capital strategy between ASAALT and AMC. This project is meant to be the foundation or "glue" that holds the other projects together. The development of the strategy is the first step, but it can be developed and implemented incrementally. The end state is to be a high-performing and motivated workforce that is prepared for its mission and eager to serve the warfighter, with the strategy being fundamental to any future ME success.
- Project 4.2—develop and implement a competency evaluation plan. This project has two phases: develop and pilot the competency evaluation process and then evaluate individuals within the targeted group to realistically assess their competence and performance against the required skills. The end state is to have a proven process with supporting automation that can be proliferated ME-wide for the next full rating cycle.
- Project 4.3—develop a standard new employee orientation process (the "on-boarding" process). This project is to ensure that each new hire has a positive entry into the workforce; it addresses all aspects of what industry calls on-boarding, to include badging, security issues, sponsorship, working space, first work projects, and other new hire challenges. The end state is to have a smooth and positive first day experience for all ME new hires.

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—LTG N. Ross Thompson III

- Project 4.4—improve ME hiring processes. This project is to make the hiring process from start to point of job offer a lean process, by correcting the ME's inability to quickly react to vacancies, changes to skill set requirements, and emerging mission requirements. The end state is ME staffing that quickly and flexibly responds to changing needs.
- Project 4.5—establish equity in compensation and award/bonus model. This project addresses and resolves differences in employee compensation practices by creating a uniform compensation approach that appropriately recognizes and consistently rewards the contributions of all ME team members. The end state is a proven process that achieves consistent, equalized, appropriate compensation

and reward across the ME.

- Project 4.6—establish uniform standards for the working environment. This project aims to correct the inconsistencies in the quality of life standards applied to the working environment. The end state is a proven process that achieves consistent, equalized, appropriate workplace standards across the ME.

The Human Capital Strategy Offsite meeting enabled ASAALT and AMC personnel to come together in an unparalleled fashion to determine how the roles, tasks, and coordination of the two organizations will be better defined to ensure that the ME can better carry out its mission. The organizations' accomplishments of breaking down barriers and developing better

relationships at the offsite will significantly enhance the ME as it moves forward. As Condon said, "In the end, it's not about ASAALT and it's not about AMC. It's truly about how do we operate in an environment where we collaborate, we share information, where everyone has the same data at the same time to make the best decisions."

To view briefings and materials from the offsite, go to <https://www.us.army.mil/suite/folder/17861625>. Army Knowledge Online login is required.

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CONCEPT OF THE MATERIEL ENTERPRISE (ME)

Bob Szerszynski

The ASAALT and AMC are developing an ME to promote a common working environment between the two organizations. Our mutual goals are to provide the Army's senior leadership with the most accurate information to facilitate timely and sound decision making at the appropriate level to optimize support to warfighters and other customers. The primary focus is to enhance collaboration and transparency between our organizations, as well as other key stakeholders, in the areas of the industrial base, ME workforce, resourcing/funding priorities, and systems and equipment sustainability to optimize support of the ARFORGEN process.

The successful operation of the ME requires an enterprise culture defined by core principles. These guiding principles are intended to create the desired behavior necessary to achieve success across

the Enterprise. Success is achieved when the ME is able to:

- Exercise good stewardship of allotted resources.
- Reduce overall cost and time to develop, produce, and sustain materiel without sacrificing quality.
- Achieve accountability for equipment and other resources.
- Maintain a trained and ready operating force and civilian workforce to provide the right capabilities at the right time to combatant commanders and other supported customers.

Success requires an enterprise-focused culture and full commitment by the ASAALT and AMC leadership.

We will adopt an "enterprise approach" where we think and act collectively in a way that elevates

the needs of the Army and warfighters above the needs of individuals or organizations. We must create greater effectiveness and efficiency, which results in better products, shorter cycle times, and faster response times to better enable and support the ARFORGEN model and warfighters' needs in the broadest sense to rebalance our Army.

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