DEFENSE ONE SUMMIT SPOTLIGHT SESSION

EVENT SUMMARY

On November 14, 2013, nearly 100 defense leaders joined a panel of experts from Booz Allen Hamilton to discuss how Mission Integration can help the government deal with budget shortages and rapidly put new technologies into the hands of warfighters.

The panel included Trey Obering, Lead, Acquisition and Program Management; Greg Wenzel, Lead, Advanced Enterprise Integration; and Steve Soules, Lead, Navy/Marine Corps C4ISR. Each represented a different viewpoint of the government customer: Obering as the acquisition buyer, Wenzel as the engineer, and Soules as the analyst and operator. Multiple military branches were also represented: Obering is a retired Air Force Lieutenant General, Wenzel served as an Army Combat Engineer, and Soules was a former Naval Flight Officer and Operations Analyst.

Based upon their diverse experiences, the panel offered recommendations for acquiring, developing, and managing a government-owned system of systems (SoS), including:

▸ Vest the authority for budget, requirements, and acquisition at the same level of command to allow for fair trade-offs and prevent requirements creep.
▸ Use SoS architectures to assist in making the tough decisions on what to keep, cut, and buy from a mission portfolio baseline.
▸ Think spiral, not linear, development. As soon as a capability is ready, get it into the hands of users, working to upgrade as you go.
▸ Prior to building new capabilities, look first to see if something is available for reuse. This allows for

Left to right: Obering, Wenzel, and Soules

continued mission success on a reduced budget.
▸ To get the best innovations, invert the engineering approach so that the government designs and owns the specifications that systems plug into. Acquiring smaller systems instead of larger, complicated ones can lead to more agile engineering.
▸ Build in interoperability from the start by defining standards up front and including operators in the engineering process.
▸ Create a test and evaluation environment to test large-scale systems integration and interoperability with multiple platforms.
▸ Empower people and hold them accountable.

Joe Logue, Lead, Defense Group, closed the session by stressing the need for trust. We need to move from a siloed operational model to one in which we trust one another to build interoperable parts, he explained. "The only way we're going to get over that is if we recognize one thing: it's about the warfighter...In the end, if the warfighter doesn't have what they need, we're not doing our job," said Logue. "That's why we're having these conversations."

This event was the first of four Smart Command Town Halls. Learn more at boozallen.com/smartcommand.