Headquarters U.S. Air Force

From Plugfest “Plus” to Open System Acquisitions
Evolving the Air Force Acquisition System

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Need for Change

- AF leadership is committed to maintaining global vigilance, reach and power today and for decades to come

- Weapon system costs are escalating and development times increasing at an unsustainable rate

- AF strategy calls for “strategic agility” in all acquisition activities

- Air Force Acquisition Enterprise directive to become the most agile and effective acquisition force in government

- Office of Transformational Innovation (OTI) and Bending the Cost Curve (BTCC) Initiative formed to spur dialogue, innovation, and action
OTI goal is to identify and execute broad sweeping changes within Air Force acquisition processes to deliver better capability, faster and cheaper.

“Transformational” Innovation:

- Results in marked improvement (> ~10%) over conventional practices
- Causes a fundamental paradigm shift in an activity or organization
- Requires as much effort to reverse as to enact
- Engages new stakeholders and/or old stakeholders in a new way
- Is disruptive to the status quo
Bending the Cost Curve Initiative

- BTCC includes a growing and evolving set of acquisition reform activities
  - All activities defined in collaboration with industry
  - Activities are focused on promptly achieving tangible actions
  - Emphasis on measurable outcomes

- BTCC activities identified in 3 categories:
  - Improve internal AF acquisition processes
  - Enhance interactions with industry throughout acquisition lifecycle
  - Expand competition among traditional and non-traditional industry partners
Transitioning Air Force systems to open architectures is a cost, schedule, and capability imperative. But why aren’t we there yet?

- Agreement on standards…or even basic principles of open architectures
- Archaic and cumbersome acquisition process
- Archaic and cumbersome accreditation & authorization process

Download an App using the Defense Acquisition System
- 2+ years to procure
- ~2 years for A&A

Would you buy the app…or the phone?
PlugFest Plus (PFP)

- PFP combines the PlugFest collaborative approach to open system development with an agile acquisition model developed by the Army Contracting Command

- Goal is to achieve 3 week time-to-award from PlugFest event and link to real program requirements (mission threads)

- Demonstrating acquisition concept with Air Force Distributed Common Ground Station (DCGS)
  - 17 companies participating in 10 teams
    - 14 of 17 companies identified as “non-traditional” defense contractors
  - Participants using virtualized DCGS environment on Hanscom AFB milCloud
    - Access to sample data, product testing, and developer resources
  - Acquisition event scheduled for week of 8 June at Joint Base Langley-Eustis

- Lessons from demonstration to be incorporated into Open System Acquisition (OSA) follow-on effort
Open System Acquisitions (OSA)

- We need a permanent, agile process to harvest operational and financial efficiencies of open architecture systems.

- Transitioning PFP to a formalized structure, called Open System Acquisitions
  - AFRL has released a DRAFT RFP for the first Air Force Open System Acquisition Consortium
    - View on FedBizOpps or www.plugfestplus.org
    - Agile acquisition vehicle with $99M cap per consortium
  - Capturing demonstrated acquisition best practices in templates
  - Seeking to integrate processes to expedite A&A completion
  - Agnostic to specific architectures
  - May be used for software and hardware integration
  - Intent is to expand beyond AF DCGS as sole customer

- Heavily leveraging COTS ecosystem to recreate and expand upon successes of PFP demonstration and ongoing PlugFest community
As with all BTCC activities, success cannot be achieved without significant collaboration with industry:

- Join the Open System Acquisition Consortium (or compete in the RFP process to establish the consortium)
- Evaluate the PFP process to determine areas of goodness and for improvement
- Tell a friend

Partnerships with other DOD and federal agencies is also critical:

- Open System Acquisition vehicle is available to all government entities
- Input from other potential government customers is incredibly valuable
- Tell more friends
Conclusion

- The Air Force is committed to identifying and implementing innovative business approaches to deliver better, faster, and cheaper capabilities to our Airmen.

- Open Architecture Systems are an integral part of Air Force goals, but current business practices are prohibitive.

- PlugFest Plus and the Open System Acquisition efforts aim to close that gap.

- Continued partnerships with industry (and other government agencies) are integral to building a viable acquisition process for the 21st Century.