

Transcript from Functional Area Managers/Command Information Officers Session held Jan. 27, 2011, at the DON IT Conference in San Diego

Mr. Halvorsen: Thank you all for coming. We have an issue with FAM, and I don't think that's a surprise to anybody. You could argue back and forth that some FAMs are better than others; I'm not going to have that argument anymore. I'm going to say that we're not making it work well. The evidence I have for it not working well is for the Sailors and the end users. It's not. We have more applications out there than we should, we have more variations of apps than we should, and the processes we are following to get the apps out are not being used well. One of the things we have to look at is how do we fix that. We are open to your questions on the FAM. For Echelon II CIOs that are here, you've got a big role in the FAM process. One of them is as the gatekeepers of the Echelon IIIs to get the discussions up to us and to help us with that is some of the Echelon III process. We have another supporter of the FAM review. Many of you have been in the meetings with Admiral [John] Harvey. He will have a dialogue with the Vice Chief, so we are going to have an even bigger dialogue about the FAM process for its inability to meet the Fleet requirements.

Janice Haith: I believe all of you know, at the request of the DON CIO, that we volunteered to lead the application rationalization business process and engineering, which is the FAM process. Mike Cricchio is here, and Mike is going to lead this for the DON, and we'll include the USMC. We need to do something and do something soon. I know Admiral Harvey has called another VTC to talk about this. We are not getting there fast enough. We've got too many applications; I've seen the list. I'm a little surprised we have so many versions of so many things. It's not helping people out in the field trying to complete the mission. We are going to try collectively to help this.

Audience member: Mr. Halvorsen, I have some statistics so we know where we are coming from. Right now the Navy has 1,500 systems, 5,000 apps, 300 plus networks and about 11,000 servers. We also have about 900 labs. The other problem we have is that a lot of applications we have support the back-end of these systems. If a program manager comes to me and says that they do not have the funding to upgrade to the new version of Oracle, I as a FAM cannot turn that version of Oracle off. If I do that, that will affect the system that is being used. On the COTS side, a lot of things get bought at the Echelon II level and gets deployed, and then somewhere along the line someone asks, "Did you ever register that in DADMS?" And people don't know that they were supposed to register in DADMS, so they put in a DADMS questionnaire, and I as a FAM am wondering why I am approving another network management tool when I have 27 already, but then if we disapprove it we get a phone call saying, "Why did you guys disapprove this, we are already using it." So the issue is not so much what we are doing but what happens around us.

Mr. Halvorsen: Yes, that's true, but I will not accept that as the only answer. We at the leadership level have screwed this up too. But we've got to ask ourselves some questions. If somebody calls you and says it's already deployed, you can say "OK, thanks, undeploy it." Here's what would happen right now if you said that – whoever deployed that without having

permission is going to have a really bad day. But if the system doesn't identify that problem to them, how do they know? How does the Fleet Command know if we don't tell them? We've got to tell them. Now, you made a comment about the program managers not having money. Since this was one that really bothered me, I went back and looked at how many times program managers kept that in their dollars and didn't cut that money to pay for something else. It's a pretty high percentage. I'm not saying it was a bad decision, but they owe it to everybody to say up front, "I have made a trade space decision and am taking the money that was supposed to pay for sustainment and putting it in something new that I'm going to field." What leadership and the Under are doing is getting especially tired of that answer. Somebody has got to sit on top of that decision process that says who made the decision. Who's accountable for saying, "We've made a trade-off; I'm not going to update something but instead field something new." Well, again, I don't say anything is wrong; we've just got to tighten that process up.

Audience member: I'm the Marine Corps DAA and one thing we can do to help with this is that when individuals try to pass on something they want accredited on the network, I'm starting to ask, "Has this been approved?" I actually had somebody come up and say, "We've got this new capability, we've been using it in the Army, and we want it approved." Well, that's fine, but I can't give you any accreditation unless the FAM has said that this is something that they want. There is a control mechanism, sir. Allow us to say that if this has not been worked out with the FAM that we are the first gate to stop this. We can help you.

Mr. Halvorsen: I just want you to know something that is going to happen; in the end game the DON CIO owns that policy and that approval authority. We delegate that to the two services. At a certain point, we are going to work with Janice and Kevin on a metric, and if we don't do what was just said, I'm going to un-delegate that approval authority. I will just not approve them. I get the ramifications of that. We are going to do that on that topic and on circuits too. So, Janice has got a tough one and she's working hard, but even on circuits, at a certain point, the answer that if you don't get your circuit accredited and you will have to turn circuits and users off, and you had six months to a year to get it accredited, I am going to say no.

Audience member: The process Navy has for DAA approval is identical to the Marines. The first thing that the Navy DAA asks is if it's FAM approved; that has proven to be ineffective. The vast majority of new apps that show up are coming up because there are well-meaning O6s, SESs, and Flag Officers that have money to spend, and get contractors in house to build an app to solve a particular business need. They spend the money on it, the contractor delivers it, and suddenly everybody loves it and they want to expand it and put it on the network, but we say they can't do it. The reason is that it hasn't been approved by the DAA. To do that they have to get FAM approval first, but then they want to know who the FAM is. And that's how they show up on our doorstep. It's not a process where we get time to look at the apps out there and compare; it's a "we need it now, now, now and I'm a Flag Officer and you're not." That's how most of the stuff shows up.

Mr. Halvorsen: I think that is actually what has happened in most cases. Now the process says that you have authority to deny. We could argue whether you really have authority to deny based on what you just said. One of the things that I am going to look at in terms of re-vamping the

policy and process is removing you where I can in that process and discussion. We have bought in whether we like it or not, or we haven't bought in as far as the sustainment, and then we all wonder how things get broken. I am going to ask all of you to work and help me with what is the right level of policy to make some of this work. What kind of authorities do the Deputy offices need that says, "You need to come here." There has got to be someone overall in charge of the FAM process; right now there is not. Applications are approved without looking to see what else is out there that could meet the same requirements. I don't think that's going to happen unless it is forced. My intent right now is to strengthen the authority of the Deputy DON CIO, not N2/N6. I want the Deputy DON CIO of Navy to be the final approving authority of all FAMs. We are looking at the Marine Corps process, and while it has its issues, it is still in better shape than the Navy. That's just a fact. We've got to at least get to that level, and then work to get beyond it. So if you've got thoughts, send those in.

Audience member: Couple of thoughts on this, first of all, through the FAM effort, which many of us enjoyed now for a couple of months, but the one takeaway we took at SPAWAR was our programs of record were actually in good shape, but what was happening was the unit COs were putting whatever they felt like on their ship's networks. We wanted to put in some opposing authority to stop those COs from just putting anything they want on the network, and that will make a big difference. Second, having programs of record that were rocked by execution year changes and reprogramming that had nothing to do with the program manager; if we can somehow stabilize the reiteration of programs you are going to get the updated program instead of it being delayed or eliminated.

Mr. Halvorsen: I take your point, and I will tell you that Fleet Commanders are writing some policy to pull back. That said, some of the non-programs of record have nothing to do with the Fleet. You just made a point about financial stability; one of the other things that has to happen is program managers have to be more visible in their trade space. It has happened where the program manager has decided to pull the money from the update and field the new version and live with two versions because that meets the program goal even though it makes it harder on the Fleet to operate. That's also got to stop. That exposure of the trade space has to be visible to everyone concerned. There is no one without sin in this process – all the way up.

Audience member: I would make the point that those decisions were made at the Echelon I level in very heated discussions with the program manager. And there are trade-offs; trade-offs between one program and another program. The impacts cause some of these problems. I'm not going to say programs don't cause some of these problems, but there are few cases where they are not at fault.

Mr. Halvorsen: That's very true, and you made a good point. There are times when I have been very vocal in my previous role where six months after they decided to cut something they finally told us in the Fleet and the only reason they told us is because we were asking around if they decided to kill something and not tell us. That's a bad position for all of us to be in. So, part of the takeaway is how do we get a process that exposes all of that? Right now the current processes don't expose that as much as they should. In about 30 days this gets really easy for me. I just have to pick up the phone and yell at Kevin [Cooley, Fleet Cyber Command/10th Fleet] and

Janice from the Navy side; they are the ones with money and must be screwing this up. Kevin's the operator, how can he be letting this stuff operate in an unsecure environment? Obviously we aren't going to do that, but we've got to get to where these two have visibility. I would stress Janice needs to get better, but we've got to get Kevin and Marine-Cyber visible across the board not just with FAM but with some of the other things too, talking a little bit about infrastructure.

You've got to be careful with this too; we've made some decisions to move and relocate activity, and I don't know how many people thought about the network when they made that decision. I know in the Navy there are going to be some moves to locations that do not have the network infrastructure to support what they're going to do, and it doesn't appear that anybody thought about that until 2 days ago. Somehow Echelon II CIOs, you've got to be involved in all of your people's move and activities. In some cases you can't fix it. The dollars and the technical infrastructure to improve buildings in some places is not there so we're going to end up with some really bad solution sets. One of the other things we need to get involved with is trying to write some policy. Echelon IIs, and the Marine Corps equivalent, must be involved in any major relocation, reassignment, and it's a hard policy to write. But we've got to get it down there and write that policy.

Audience member: Not a question, just a comment. I would really appreciate that policy because for NCIS we move people constantly and we've had more than one problem about that same thing. One of the things I am trying to do is get us involved before they start picking people up and moving them and then people are saying, "Where's my computer?" It is a big problem for me.

Audience member: To get back to the issue with the SES, if one of them comes to me and asks for an application, it's difficult to figure out using DADMS if that function is being covered by another application somewhere across the Department. It's difficult for us finding things when they come up with functions that they want to do.

Mr. Halvorsen: Yes, we're not going to fix that in the short term. Right now, we are defaulting to "yes" because it's too difficult, but we can no longer afford it. We are spending money on things that don't get us our best return. They are not helping us get to the end game. We are going to work on DADMS to get it better, but who puts the data in there? Echelon IIs do, and it is not entirely the fault of Echelon IIs, but we are guilty of letting people skate on putting in all the data. We've also got the system itself that is cumbersome to use, and we need to make it better.

Audience member: So I guess the answer now is to search DADMS on the function and to call the FAM that we think the particular application would fall under.

Mr. Halvorsen: Absolutely, and you might have to call a couple of FAMs to see what's out there. We've got to get the system better but that's how it has to work right now.

Audience member: First of all, what does it mean shut it off? The FAM does not have, from the Marine Corps side, we do not have that authority to shut it off. The FAM does not have the

authority to shut it off. That doesn't mean anything in the Marine Corps because there is no monetary attachment.

Mr. Halvorsen: Here's what I think, at least from my office, what I can do. I can absolutely influence the money. If I can't direct, it's a very short walk for me to put it in front of the person who can absolutely influence the money. I suspect that we are going to have to do that in a couple of instances. It will have to be the leadership who says, "You did what?" In terms of behavior on networks, both afloat and ashore, it unfortunately at the Fleet level took us one example of each, with a ship's CO and a Shore Station CO in a meeting with Admiral Harvey and then leaving his office no longer in command because of network behavior issues.

I think one of the things we have to recognize is there's certainly been an environmental change and a cultural change here. I know on the Navy side that Navy senior leadership is starting to get educated on the FAM process because their senior leadership has decided that has to happen. I suspect that is also happening on the Marine side, I just don't know. There is also another player now in this mix that's going to start exercising what is about to be COCOM authority. That's General [Keith] Alexander who believes he has a huge operational role in this because it effects the authoritative operation of his network. He is going to exercise some authority through his two component commanders, and I guarantee you that will get attention right at the senior level. So, that, in one way is going to help us, and in another way it's going to raise visibility of some issues if we don't fix the process.

Audience member: As a representative for BUMED, obviously we have a different type of funding, but we have our issues, and I'll give you an example. We had a doctor who gave up his practice at Lejeune for traumatic brain injury. He was used to a specific suite of software, didn't matter they didn't have that specific suite of software. Then we get the CIO of Lejeune telling us we need to get this doctor the suite of software he's use to because he's given up his life to help us. So we kind of get force-fed into that. Now the issue that we have is there has always been the comptroller's policy that has to be approved. So we have put that into our FAM approval process and what Mr. [Robert] Harden did is go to the regional commanders so that they could put it out to their comptrollers. We know there are some who have held it up but there are also some who haven't.

Mr. Halvorsen: I think that's a good approach right now and I can tell you, that right now as a comptroller that anything that can help save money I will hold it up. That may be a policy we want to look at more globally.

Audience member: My first comment is the policy and guidance seems to stop at the Echelon II level. The people who are giving the information to the Echelon IIs to enter into DADMS have no idea why they are doing it. They think it's just an IA exercise so that they can get it through the accreditation process. That's my first comment; people aren't educated on the process past the Echelon II level, so of course they have no vested interest in entering the information correctly. They don't understand that so they don't do their due diligence to make sure the information is correct. I also just had a comment about the gentleman that was talking about comparing applications inside of DADMS, and we do have a bit of a process for BCA rationalization, but it does need to be redefined. The other issue is we are not getting the information we need from the

people entering the information into the system. As people have mentioned, people kind of slip things under us as FAMs all the time. I think we really need to tighten down on that and make some people uncomfortable. Until we do that, the only hammer we have is the IA issue, and if they aren't going to put it on NMCI, they don't really care.

Audience member: Just a couple quick comments, the first one that strikes me as odd is we have individuals in this room responsible for handling these applications and portfolios but even more so it sounds like a lot of the PMs have POM level responsibilities. As a FAM you should be involved in the POM process. You are a direct representative of the deputy commandants, and you should be managing your capabilities as such. I'm just having a hard time understanding why, and I am from the Marine Corps.

Audience member: That's why. You have a single entity, I have no control. I am N2/N6 – over what N4 or N1 does and 99 percent of the time I've never been invited to a POM deliberation.

Audience member: Most of the time, these problems aren't happening in a well-defined acquisition community who knows how to make the DADMS entries. This is smaller apps that are typically done in a non-acquisition role, probably not even part of program of record.

Audience member: Yes sir, I do understand that, we do have rogue programs, and I'm not saying in the Marine Corps that we are all doing it exactly the same way. But what I am saying is that in order for FAMs to be effective, the line needs to be clear between what FAMs do and what program managers do. When the decisions are made, where a program manager makes a decision about re-routing funds, that should not be their decision to make. That should be the capability owner's decision to make because it should fall into some strategy for that functional area. We have to get that level of understanding on the program management side of the house. If they have that understanding that the capability managers at that level own the capabilities because we are the ones that consume the data, if the program were to get turned off tomorrow who would make that decision? We need to get that figured out. We just need to get on a common baseline across all of our functional areas to do it.

Audience member: Sir, two quick comments. I'd like to see more teeth in the application working group review. In the eight weeks prior to Christmas when we looked at 50 applications and then had the big four star meeting, we went through the list and I believe the criteria to keep them was the program had money, it had a POC, and they were going to do something with it in the next 12 months and they articulated something about why that program needs to remain. I'll pick two quick examples: there was a health records CHCS one that was allowed to stay and a unique travel scheduling travel system was allowed to stay. That required that the program was accepted by the group. I'm not sure that the baseline requirement, the requirement that says "Do the sailors in the Fleet need this?" was answered by the people who can best answer that question. We allowed the program managers and the programs of record to say, "We need this, it needs to stay." And then we moved on. I would like to see you and the team step up and say "No we don't."

And to the distinguished gentleman from BUMED, we're dealing with hospital ship modernization right now. We've had a group of distinguished medical professionals say they needed a certain application that they had on Mercy or Comfort and we've had to say no. We've had to say the network won't support that. There's a level of fortitude that I'm addressing here that I believe we could all do a little better at. That's all sir.

Audience member: One of the challenges I think we have is we do a lot of acquisition for aircraft. We have 30-, 40-year-old aircraft and everything in between. We've got to support a lot of the components and weapons systems throughout the ages that our sponsors give us and make us maintain. So we've got stuff that's 30 years old on the aircraft that we can't upgrade because the sponsor is saying we're going to put that in the next version of the aircraft. So we've got all sorts of applications because of the different make, model, series of aircraft and weapons systems. I'm not sure how we take those bundles versus the business systems, and some other areas, and think we are kind of lumping all that together. We sell our aircrafts to other countries, we still maintain them, and we've got different OPNAV codes giving us different directions. So I'm not sure how we handle some of that stuff.

Mr. Halvorsen: One of the things that has struck me that we may have to look into is to have some different types of FAM processes. There may need to be a separate FAM process for weapons systems that's a little different from the FAM process for business. I don't know. But what I think you could agree on from this discussion today is we have lots of issues with the FAM process. It is not serving us well. So this is the group that needs to pull your thoughts and ideas together, and I am happy to give you all of the support and top cover you need to do that, as is Janice and Kevin. We are going to have to get that done fairly quickly in terms of establishing some process. One of the things that the process has to do, there's going to be some time when we want to grant a waiver and we need to know when, and we are going to have to weigh all of the elements of that risk well. Today I don't think we do that very well. We tend to let the immediate drive us to a decision. We don't look at the back-end of how long that money is going to be required to sustain something or what even is the second level mission effect to saying yes to something that appears to meet a mission, but when you look downstream it actually complicates the mission. That's what I think you see from the Fleet dialogue, that no one did anything with the intent of doing something bad, but there are things out there now that are actually preventing us from our mission. I think you need to look at how do you write the process and don't worry about getting it perfect the first time out. You won't. Let's get it out. Let's get one that we think is 85 percent to 90 percent right. We'll start executing it and we'll probably make some mistakes. That's ok. And we'll judge where we make those mistakes and get it better. But we have got to start getting the process to work better now and we've got to agree on what is the process. If we need to put more teeth into that decision, I am happy to do that. If we need to elevate where that decision is, I am happy to do that. But we've got to get that done. So you will see, coming from us, and from Janice, a tighter timeline on how we start getting this process in place quicker. From my office when I write it, it will apply to Navy and Marine Corps so when we write it look at all of that.

It is apparent from this discussion that we have a problem. We've got to accelerate our solution set to that problem. Thank you for your time, I hope this was valuable. If nothing else, just sharing the discussion was valuable.