

Improving Military Readiness

OSD, Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation



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This Briefing is Unclassified

Overview

OSD CAPE

- OSD CAPE is part think tank, part consulting firm, and part investigative agency
 - Advises the Secretary of Defense but has no direct decision authority
 - Develops alternatives with unbiased analysis
 - Builds the Future Years Defense Program (FYDP)
 - Consists of 160 personnel including civilians, military, and contractors
- Aligning resources to readiness is a long standing DoD challenge
 - Services often argue for increased resources by citing readiness concerns
 - Arguments highlight readiness symptoms but don't outline root causes or mission risks
 - Results in generic programming that has no clear return on investment

Defense Annual Report FY79 – “We have not yet developed the methodological tools to show the precise sensitivity of readiness to change in our commitment of resources. But loss of readiness is a cumulative process that takes time as well as money to reverse.”

Readiness Analytic Challenges

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- Traditional data did not identify root causes for resourcing
 - Unit-level metrics aren't granular enough (e.g., 30% of Brigade Combat Teams are ready)
 - Long term trend analysis is complicated by business rule changes
 - Difficult to target funding to specific issues with people, equipment, or training
- Readiness goals weren't linked to warfight timelines and mission risk
 - Results in arbitrary goals tied to a "more readiness the better" mindset
 - Difficult to prioritize across mission area and platform
- Alternative data was not designed for analytics; results in "The Data is Bad"
 - Data spread across over 20 sources and 4 Services
 - Inconsistent definitions across the Services
 - Requires brute force integration of data
 - Data not previously approved by leadership

Lessons Learned

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- Expect your project to take some time
 - Will need to overcome data sharing issues with partners
 - Data won't be "shovel-ready" for analysis (e.g., regression)
 - Use descriptive data and visualization to uncover data issues and build trust with teammates
 - As data allows, use long term trends to put insights into context
- Robust sets of descriptive data will allow your community to:
 - Work together to improve data quality (e.g., F/A-18 supply vs. maintenance data)
 - Generate hypotheses to analyze in more detail (e.g., ship maintenance data)
 - Develop tools to explore policy and resourcing changes (e.g., enlisted infantry data)
- New approaches will fall under attack if insights challenge core beliefs
 - Anecdotes at the Senior level are hard to overcome without support at the action officer level