

LESSONS LEARNED/STRENGTHS

OPERATION TOMODACHI / OPERATION PACIFIC PASSAGE

Joint staffing of lead component increases successful engagement of joint forces.

Every effort should be made to add staff officers and Non-Commissioned Officers, from other services, to the staff of the lead component. This provides the lead component with the working knowledge of their respective forces and allows input from other forces based on a broader range of information to best maximize the management of contracting activities, regardless of the branch actually doing the purchasing. This provides the Senior Contracting Official with a point of contact who has a comprehensive perspective of the scenario and is familiar with the inner workings of each branch involved.

Ensure proactive staff actions and decisions are based on experience and historical precedent.

The use of experience and historical precedence should not be abandoned in the face of crisis or command pressure.

Embed a contracting professional within the main planning effort of the Combatant Command staff.

The main requirements generator, as well as the largest and most visible threat of Undefined Contract Actions, should have a contracting professional engaged in the relevant processes.

An increase in the number of Secret Internet Protocol Router Network (SIPR) drops will be required to handle future operations.

Pacific Air Forces (PACAF) Directorate of Contracting (A7K) determined that there were barely enough hard wired SIPR drops in the A7K offices to support a humanitarian assistance operation that was predominantly passing information on the "Low Side". If there were to be a true contingency and a subsequent increase in "High Side" email traffic then PACAF A7K's SIPR infrastructure would not be sufficient.

Dissemination of applicable contract thresholds will provide valuable information to the community.

Firm establishment and dissemination of applicable contract thresholds to all personnel in the contracting community allow our customers to be properly educated and ensure higher headquarters guidance will be adhered to.

Requirements need to have owners.

Unnecessary efforts can be eliminated for requirements that do not have a specific definition, funding, or owner. Situations that may appear to be an opportunity to "learn forward" may be situation at risk for unauthorized commitments or a distraction from actual mission requirements.

Organic solutions to problems eliminate reproductions of effort.

By using capabilities already in place, Contingency Contracting Officer's (CCO) can limit the waste of money and time by using organic solutions rather than seeking solutions via alternative means.

Planning assumptions for Operation Plans (OPLAN) are fatally flawed.

All OPLANs have the planning assumption that we will be able to contract for all needed supplies/services for items needed by incoming forces (e.g. linens, cots, beds, vehicles, generators, etc.) in lieu of maintaining higher levels of war reserve materials (WRM). This catastrophe highlighted that the Japanese economy/supply system cannot support a large unexpected rise in demand. Our installation In-Garrison Expeditionary Site Plan (IGESP) assumes that contracting squadrons (CONS) will be able to buy everything needed and it will arrive almost immediately. This is simply not the case as evidenced by the difficulty in procuring needed items on the local economy.

Same concept applies to local national (LN) personnel being available. With train, power, and fuel limitations, many of our LNs were not able to make it to work or were significantly delayed.

Need for a standing/current theater wide contracting contact list.

Document ensures up to date points of contacts for contingencies.

Need for a consolidated contract capabilities document.

Determine what the various contract offices have regarding supply/service contracts to facilitate expedited procurement.

Requirements development, many requirements were not developed prior to contracting involvement.

Multiple requiring activities consistently failed to exercise ANY due diligence regarding "market research" or provide funding. A lot of time was wasted on these science projects that did not go anywhere.

Remind customers of realistic contracting timelines.

■ CONS aggressively tackled some of the larger requirements (Bechtel pumps, etc.), US Forces Japan (USFJ)/Japan Self Defense Forces (JSF) was able to execute with a short turnaround time on many projects. However, as the operation continued, leadership began to expect "standard" (fully competed, etc) contracts within days and sometimes hours of receiving the indication to proceed.

In the absence of a true requiring activity, establish the USFJ/Operations Directorate (J3) as the default.

In both the Humanitarian (HA) and Consequence Management (CM) missions, requirements came down without a true requestor. While the supplies were likely needed, the specifics of their use were unknown, which put contracting activities in a difficult situation when soliciting offers. For example, in support of the HA mission, 100,000 liters kerosene were requested. After locating multiple sources that could provide the product, the requirement was stalled for approximately 1 week before being cancelled entirely. During this time, ███ CONS personnel spent a considerable amount of time trying to find the original requestor of kerosene which would not have been necessary had one central agency (J3) maintained responsibility for the request. This would also help greatly with duplicate requirements; a large surplus of water was ordered because several individual agencies were eager to “lean forward.”

We would like to see a charter created and clear outline of the roles and responsibilities of the Pacific Contingency Contracting Officer's Working Group (PCCOWG) as well as possibly an annual conference so we can become familiar with the other contracting professionals at the other organizations.

It appeared that many of the other organizations had some familiarity with each other, but the Navy was new to the party.

Funding Structure for Humanitarian Assistance

Because Overseas Humanitarian Disaster Assistance and Civic Aid appropriation (OHDACA) funding was reimbursement based, service components were required to pay for costs up front. However, many of the requirements came from a joint perspective, which while efficient from a doctrinal perspective, became very difficult to fund. Establishing a default requiring activity would alleviate some of the problems, but as long as services are required to pay individually, there will be issues present. Many units submitted requirements packages with no funding assuming that the amount will be charged to an OHDACA fund cite. This greatly delayed the procurement process. Solution: one step of the joint requirement review board (JRRB)/ Joint Effects Coordination Board (JECB) voting process was to ask the USFJ/J026 if funds were available, when in reality, the service component tasked should have been answering the question. Often, after requirements were solidified and ready to be funded, it became clear that money was not available and valuable time researching a solution was ultimately wasted.

Bilateral Coordination for Requirements

During the relief effort, many DoD contracting agencies invested a considerable amount of time investigating sources for unique local buys, when the Government of Japan (GOJ) was able to find the items significantly quicker. This time spent looking for items that were eventually not needed or acquired by GOJ sources detracted from other Operation TOMODACHI efforts.

Assign a contracting liaison officer (LNO) to the JJS for greater visibility on requirements in future contingencies.

Review and incorporate a combined JRRB-JECB concept for future operations and doctrine; The Operations, Logistics and OCS community should continue its ardent support for the JRRB process and JCSB; however, moving their support more towards incorporating the JRRB with a JECB.

In execution, the JRRB Charter belongs to the J3's of the world with co-ownership by the J4. The main reason the JRRB actually worked during Operation TOMODACHI was because the J3 wanted it to work; similarly, J3 involvement is what made the Joint Acquisition Review Board (JARB) concept work in OIF/OEF. Without J3 buy-in the JRRB devolves into a bunch of support folks sitting around a table; until a more robust J3 was established, this was the initial construct of the JRRB. Moreover, the marriage of the JRRB with the Joint Effects Coordination Board (JECB) is an excellent medium for the synthesis of operations to resource/funding. Many support personnel are content with just getting "J3 buy-in" for a JRRB. The fact the JRRB and JECB were conducted together re-sets the bar. That said, although Operational Contract Support (OCS) is only one arrow in the quiver of filling a requirement, the OCS community is a significant champion and often, the loudest advocate for the JRRB; however, they do not hold patent rights to it. On the other hand, the OCS Community owns the JCSB Charter, and if required, leverages it following a JRRB in order determine the contracting support organization required.

Technical Expertise for Consequence Management Purchases

In response to the Fukushima situation, several ideas were discussed as creative solutions to the problem. However, many of these solutions came to contracting without the level of detail required to actually procure any of the items. An example is lead blankets, where contracting activities were met with many questions from the industry while soliciting, and no technical POC designated to provide answers.

Create OPTs/POCs for technical requirements (not necessarily food, kerosene, etc.) that contracting activities can coordinate with to provide to best solutions from the commercial market.

Strengths:

Great teamwork and collegial environment of PCCOWG members (formal and new arrivals). Very fluid situation with shifting "requirements." Everyone researched what they could based on very limited descriptions and pushed information across the spectrum to keep everyone apprised of latest development.

JRRB/JECB once established, worked very well. It took almost two weeks to establish a flow/sense of purpose, but very well run once it took hold.

Telecon was smart move...Defense Communications Online (DCO) made the meetings difficult to understand the inputs

The JRRB JCSB FRAGO guidance proved to be the most useful direction for Op TOMODACHI. In many instances, this guidance saved Wing Commander (WG/CC) from burning through their budgets in hopes of seeking re-imburement from OHDACA funding. Additionally, it drove use of correct appropriation and averted a free for all with OHDACA re-imburement.

PACAF and [REDACTED] CONS did an outstanding job leading the contracting community for this effort.

We thought the planning model of PACAF being the designated lead for coordination of contingency efforts went very well. Appears the PACOM Area Of Responsibility (AOR) was better prepared, in terms of the contracting function, for something like this than some of the other COCOMs. We appreciated Col [REDACTED] and Lt Col [REDACTED] leadership during the crisis.

It was evident very early that local supplies and services in Japan for HADR items were quickly depleted after the earthquake. Having contracting offices in other countries such as Korea and Hawaii, USA, were very helpful as back up sources. For example, a lot of bottled water ended up being source out of Korea.

The slide identifying the Contingency Contracting Officers (CCO) in the AOR was very helpful. It was apparent that there was sufficient capacity readily available if an onsite CCO would be required. Suggest this slide be kept updated and shared on a periodic basis.

The Joint Staff (JS)/battle update brief (BUB)/ Situation Report (SITREP) input worked well. We all had up to date email and phone numbers.