Project AIR FORCE

AIR EDUCATION AND TRAINING COMMAND COST AND CAPACITY SYSTEM

Implications for Organizational and Data Flow Changes

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SUMMARY

The mission statement of the Air Education and Training Command (AETC)—"recruiting, training, and educating professional airmen to sustain the combat capability of America's Air Force"—provides a good starting point for developing information requirements for training management. Combat capability is directly affected by the quantity and quality of trained personnel. And the provision of sufficiently trained Air Force personnel relies upon effective management of training production and, in turn, the cost and capacity of the training system. Arguably, AETC currently has difficulty assembling and using cost and capacity data in managing its training pipeline, particularly for technical training. We find that this is partly due to an organizational structure that is both too complex and too unclear and has overlapping decisionmaking responsibilities.

We developed a four-level model of management to evaluate the flow of data in the AETC training pipeline:

1. The *corporate level* validates and arbitrates training requirements. (See p. 18.)
2. The *strategic training management level* concentrates on the training system's long-term effectiveness. (See p. 19.)
3. The *training management level* handles the day-to-day operations of training. (See p. 20.)
4. The *direct training level* delivers training in the classrooms. (See p. 21.)

Most data needed for informed decisionmaking in AETC exist at the bottom two levels but often do not flow adequately to the top two levels. Part of the problem is that strategic training management is split among multiple organizations: no central organization has the manpower to work capacity issues (e.g., addressing surge or limiting constraints), reduce Trained Personnel Requirements (TPR) shortfalls, evaluate quality information, develop cost methodologies for planning, and serve as the single advocate for technical training in the Air Force. As a result, data flow among training management organizations is ad hoc. (See pp. 33–53.)

We looked at how strategic training management was handled in other training organizations to help motivate our model and provide lessons for AETC. The Army has organized strategic training management at the functional level, with no intervening organizations between it and training management. Currently, the Navy has a very decentralized training operation but is conducting an extensive revision effort to correct disconnects discovered during its Executive Review of Naval Training. Our case studies of four major companies with large training programs show that although these companies employ different organizational designs, all have a clearly defined senior person responsible for organizing training and making strategic decisions. (See pp. 14ff.)

We recommend organizational and process changes at the strategic training management level (mostly residing in HQ AETC). We believe that a consolidation of the strategic management functions, within an organization probably headed by a two-star general, would, among other things, resolve many current data flow problems. We also recommend that methodological tools be developed, including simulations to evaluate tradeoffs in the training pipeline, in order to improve data combination and interpretation, particularly in the area of cost. It is also clear that AETC should have a central data "warehouse" for collecting cost and capacity data. We believe that a "real-time" minute-by-minute data tracking system is not warranted and would not be cost-effective. Finally, we recommend that cost and capacity data be fit into the AETC Decision Support System/Technical Training Management System (ADSS/TTMS) architecture already under development for training production data. (See pp. 56–60.)