Boeing Cuts Joint Strike Fighter Costs Through Electronic Acquisition Reform Initiatives

Using its proprietary Program Visibility System, the Boeing Joint Strike Fighter program is achieving the goal of the U.S. Defense Department to make "paperless" contract reporting a standard business practice.

Boeing and the U.S. Defense Department JSF Program Office are using the internet to bring the benefits of electronic commerce - with its real-time data transfers and instantaneous communication - to defense contracting. Boeing has been delivering electronic contract progress reports to the Program Office since February; other types of Boeing JSF data have been available electronically since December 1996.

Instead of taking paper delivery, government officials are given secure accounts on PVS, which allow them to display the contract reports on their computers and to print them if they choose.

"PVS saves money directly by avoiding the costs of copying, delivering and storing paper," said Curt Nohavec, director, Boeing JSF Business Management. "More significantly, PVS adds value to the entire enterprise by bringing us into closer contact with our customer. That invites innovation and makes cost savings possible in all areas of the program."

The system provides near-real-time updates, more complete data and clear accountability so that Boeing and its customer can identify and resolve issues faster. For example, Boeing recently submitted a contract modification using PVS.

"The full proposal and its supporting documentation were available to the DoD as soon as we were finished with them," Nohavec said.

PVS also features administrative information, such as organization charts and telephone lists, that simplify communication. Data queries bring up individual reports, specifications, drawings and test results. More than 15,000 stored documents are available.

"The customer can review our work in process, and preview contract-change activity, for instance, as well as the finished product," added Nohavec.

PVS's broad network connections give employees access to a single source of data without regard to their geographic location.

The Boeing network of lead JSF suppliers - the One Team - also has access to PVS. PVS unlocks the geographic and technical diversity of the Boeing One Team and makes its "design anywhere, build anywhere" philosophy a winning JSF solution.

PVS has many features of shared management visibility that helped the U.S. Navy and Boeing develop the F/A-18E/F on schedule, within budget and well within weight specifications upon first flight. This achievement garnered the first David D. Packard award for Excellence in Acquisition in 1996.

The Boeing JSF also is making use of best paperless practices from the C-17 and other Boeing programs. Many of these practices are being adopted under an initiative called Integrated Digital Environment for all three U.S. armed services. Boeing is one of three companies piloting the initiative so that new programs like JSF can profit from the lessons learned.

Boeing is competing to build the JSF for the U.S. Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps and the U.K. Royal Navy and Royal Air Force under a four-year concept demonstration phase contract that includes the production and flight test of two concept demonstrators. A competition winner is scheduled to be selected in 2001.

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