

# **Top 10 Steps for Standard & Repeatable Approach to Product Support Logistics Performance Execution**

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## ***1. Match Field-level Requirements & Product Support***

When considering equipment sustainment strategy, Site Visit Executive always starts in the same place: identifying Field-level mission requirements of Troops. In most cases, field-level requirement will consist of what equipment is to be available/reliable allocated by dispatchers at system, subsystem, or component levels. Key objectives of product support teams is to execute sustainment strategies to hit mission readiness capability targets. If sustainment objectives for equipment item platform have not yet been explicitly stated by Site Visit Executive, platform-level dispatchers must work with field-level units to establish product support quotes to designate top-level sustainment outcome metrics as appropriate. The first step for product support team strategy is to identify operational requirements for equipment system being supported — even if Site Visit Executive is considering product support team action at the subsystem or component level to utilise materiel use or operational availability as assigned metric. Product Support Team strategies for action are not “one size fits all,” so must be tailored to specific needs of programme as appropriate detail in assessment reports to assist dispatchers in creation, renegotiation, and/or new solicitations of product support action. So far, Site Visit Executive has realised sustainment process may require application more rigor since current policy is at times inadequate.

## ***2. Form Product Support Subject Matter***

Site Visit Executive to leverage the sustainment subject matter expertise supplemented by dispatchers responsible for dealing with component suppliers and other outside organisations. Dispatcher action forms collaborative working body comprising application of skills to realise product support solutions. Site Visit Executive maintains directive control of dispatchers in all programme phases, so teams are well prepared for milestone reviews & Logistics Performance Assessments. Site Visit Executive responsibilities include charge to ensure collective dispatcher input, expertise & support are leveraged to address required product support work order tasks interface with Logistics, Engineering, Contracting functional groups specific to field-level requirement response. Composition of structured dispatcher teams drives success of pre-execution efforts to include issuance of product support quotes. Meeting fiscal requirements can be among the most challenging issues Site Visit Executive faces when implementing smart programme processes.

## ***3. Baseline Product Support System***

Site Visit Executive has decided to assess “As-Is” product support strategies/plans to determines if more attention is warranted to change expectations for execution in current baseline. “As-Is” assessments identify both possible barriers as well as improvement opportunities.

Insight/Recommendation Generation Baselineing the System is quick assessment to give Site Visit Executive insight as to if logistics performance-based strategies is feasible. Additionally, assessments provide sufficient decision-making information utilised for determining extent to which dispatcher review is required. Confidence in assessment is limited by dispatcher ability to allocate performance measures lower than major subsystems e.g., structure, propulsion, mission equipment etc. For fielded systems, full scope of assets/services will be considered in potential design of new options. For instance, dispatchers must scope assessment to an appropriate level to consider product support elements to be included. Action will conclude with “Go/No-Go” recommendation for continued assessments based upon potential benefits realised with enact change in sustainment strategy coupled with product support quote feasibility. Site Visit Executive must review opportunities for field-level mission readiness improvements strategy would provide & explore potential redesign.

#### ***4. Identify Product Support Metrics***

Site Visit Executive has maintained establishment of limited top level sustainment metrics to measure if product support teams are doing good job delivering successful field-level equipment outcomes the Service is buying. Top level performance metrics must have specific targets established so sustainment providers will be evaluated based on if targets are met or instead fall short of expectations. Other metrics could be established to assist in promotion of dispatcher reviews aimed at understanding causative factors. However, many lower level metrics will not have targets, incentives or disincentives tied to them. Metrics for support should be identified early in strategy establishment and made more effective as programme progresses into implementation of Logistics Phases. Once Site Visit Executive has determined appropriate equipment system, subsystem, or component level support elements, selection of metrics can begin to measure performance against specific product support elements dispatchers can control. For example, if product support teams are responsible for performing aircraft system training, determining skill composition of qualified/certified maintainers is appropriate metric. One of most important considerations for selecting metrics sets is understanding how they link/contribute to top-level performance outcomes and each other. Therefore, in addition to understanding how metrics impact dispatcher control of outcomes, there are benefits to decompose metrics, so Site Visit Executive can begin to understand how metrics can be used to reinforce/complement each other.

#### ***5. Perform Product Support Value Assessment***

Once strategies promoted by Site Visit Executive are defined in sufficient detail to support smart assessments, next step is to determine relative cost/benefits & operational risk of changes to product support impact evaluation of performance, reliability, maintainability & supportability. If Site Visit Executive determines composition of factors with potential to override decision criteria, successful incorporation is realised by setting cost/benefit, risk & sensitivity values at useful levels. Objectives of product support cost/benefit estimation include compilation/forecast of factors impacting required product support tasks during specified periods of performance. Once compiled, estimates for each design can be compared so inclusion with other criteria can be utilised in determining Utility Scores. Similar to cost/benefit assessments, risk determination

must be tailored to field-level requirements by dispatcher action. Site Visit Executive has set out instructions for identifying, evaluating & characterising composite Risk Scores for each design. Many risk assessments techniques have been proposed as availabilities for programmes. Site Visit Executive must consider potential risk in order to incorporate conclusions into evaluation of the product support team design.

## ***6. Designate Product Support Integrate***

Once product support options have been assessed, dispatchers must be prepared to provide recommendations for Site Visit Executive approval. Selected product support team design is utilised to structure appropriate solicitations for Logistics Performance Provision. Dispatchers must evaluate product support requirements so follow on efforts are structured around achieving stated goals of requirement decomposition so appropriate allocation decisions are made at system subsystem and/or components levels. Performance outcomes/objectives are evaluated by metrics with defined threshold values so subsequent assessment are made possible. Some product support designs include information on timing/ phasing of operational risks. In addition to output from Product Support Value assessments, some political/organisational realities such as fiscal limitations or competing priorities can impact Site Visit Executive decisions. Site Visit Executive must be pragmatic when presenting support solutions to consider all aspects of critical programme impacts such as sensitivity of sustainment performance to product support elements providing links between fiscal requirements and readiness. Links can be utilised to establish fiscal transfers/transitions between acquisition and Service materiel commands. Dispatcher actions serve to integrate product support and monitor execution of provided product support solution utilised by field-level units to meet mission requirements.

## ***7. Select Product Support Providers***

Product support teams execute equipment upgrade/repair actions while dispatchers deal with suppliers under direction of Site Visit Executive. Within each dispatch element, work orders delineate into technical, hands-on & administrative tasks. As dispatchers evaluate sustainment options, the optimal product support options are identified. If engaged early in process, product support teams can influence design for reliability, maintainability & supportability to leverage supply line factors related to concurrent procurements, redesigns & upgrades. Dispatchers are also in a position to control service life extension impacts on equipment quality by utilising work order interactions with supplier purchases across multiple product lines. Product support teams provide expertise in improving equipment upgrade/repair process based on both product knowledge and experience. Site Visit Executive has clearly articulated unique quality of dispatcher capabilities-- no other source is capable of providing addition of new components or new users. Dispatchers have also demonstrated competence in resolving sustainment challenges by finding most optimal combination of additional spares, training, redesign, support equipment, upgrade/repair planning, etc. Site Visit Executive has presented clear framework for product support team interaction with dispatchers to accomplishing specific work order tasks required for field-level mission success. When Logistics arrangements with dispatchers includes equipment supplier base, Site Visit Executive must consider how integrate/provide teams will engage second/third tier suppliers in the execution of work order logistics performance assessments. There are many examples in Logistics programmes where failure to set up

dispatcher systems to consider supplier base issues has caused problems in executing the desired sustainment strategy. It is also important to consider integration/teamwork requirements between dispatchers and Site Visit Executive so successful product support operations are realised.

### ***8. Align Product Support Incentives with Outcomes***

Good Outcomes for logistics programmes require Site Visit Executive stability/priority and sufficient resources so requirements are met. Strategies establishing product support teams must consider multiple options to mitigate risks resulting from supplier and field-level unit disconnect making sure product support uncertainty/variability is accommodated by dispatcher skill sets. In addition to these considerations above, provisions of logistics programmes must provide both parties adequate adjustment flexibility so solid connections are maintained. Dispatcher process protections with suppliers establish structure so incentive remains to make appropriate investments in improvements, ultimately boosting field-level mission readiness. When determining most appropriate mechanism to fund sustainment operations, it is important to utilise Site Visit Executive guidance provided to source success in equipment component supply, upgrade/repair Job Site & transit activities. If dispatchers utilise equipment supply lines for subsystems or components, strong advocacy is required in sufficient amounts to maintain product support team consistency. Types of appropriation depend upon equipment service life phase-- usually initially RDT&E switching to O&M during sustainment. Direct appropriations have the potential to create multi-year logistics operations but Site Visit Executive must determine appropriate sourcing mechanism for setting up product support teams, keeping in mind consideration of request timing is critical to mission success. Paralleling variability of organisational approval team competence is inherent complexity making results of resourcing efforts championed by Site Visit Executive time consuming & challenging. So it is beneficial to begin process of determining product support initiation early in equipment service life to avoid any delays in providing resources to field-level units.

### ***9. Establish Product Support Team Assignments***

Chief objective of product support team establishment is to deliver on field-level requirement requests also to incentivise suppliers to innovate. Attributes of effective product support programmes arrangements include objective, measurable work order description to acquire successful product support outcome and establishing limited set of metrics number of metrics linked to desired field-level mission outcomes & efficiency goals. Smart evaluation of actual cost/benefit realities will provide dispatchers firm baselines for determining if supplier deals include advances in innovation and process improvements. For example, Site Visit Executive has established new requirements so actual performance criteria of meeting sustainment requirements is provided prior to follow-on dispatcher negotiations to ensure best value results. Deals including additional incentives to impact supplier behaviour means eligibility for additional periods of performance measure evaluation are a good way to incentivise /motivate suppliers. Product support team establishment also include mandates for supplier provision of innovative products so Logistics programmes can realise more field-level mission success and receive increased levels of equipment performance/reliability as direct result of improved strength of supply line connections. Specifics of product support team establishment must be

agreeable to all supply line connection stakeholders and align well with vision of Site Visit Executive equipment sustainment strategies for the programme.

### ***10. Implement Product Support Operations***

Tracking equipment supply line performance is critical part of Logistics programme administration, so establishment of product support teams cannot be “fire and forget” endeavours. Assuring Monitor of routine Quality Assurance reviews and performance assessments requires close collaboration between stakeholders if Site Visit Executive is to be successful in ambitious efforts to drive serious advances in Readiness outcomes for the Force. Proactive corrective measures based on changing field-level requirements or system design changes must be undertaken to meet performance targets. Executing product support activities is iterative process requires Site Visit Executive to monitor performance and assess perpetually changing conditions so optimal results are achieved. Product support teams are responsible for ensuring the quality of all work orders performed, while Site Visit Executive is responsible for monitor to address What gets measured, when, and who does it. Establishing processes to identify/address quality issues requires continuous activity designed to determine if work orders being performed meet or exceed quality performance standards. Chief objective is to prevent substandard work order execution, rather than correct for it later. Design rigor of quality assurance process must match programme goals to be major element in product support team control, focusing on insight, not oversight and independent of work order success being measured. Stakeholders must ensure Site Visit Executive is give resources/authority to review product support processes because simply reporting on measurement drivers will not ensure quality standards are maintained. Logistics Programme Assessments provide Site Visit Executive with objective view of product support planning to include equipment supportability & sustainability checks. Sharing lessons learned with administrators responsible for operations in the Services increases strength/competence of Performance Logistics cadre professionals in DoD. Product Support teams must establish frequent, internal & formal performance metrics reviews and execute work order level vision of Site Visit Executive. If product support teams encounter “off-track” performance, progress reports/meetings will be organised by Site Visit Executive to drive attention back toward field-level mission requirement targets.