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Simplify Innovation and Readiness

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Abstract:

Digital transformation, like military innovation often comes with the perception of a monumental technological leap attached to a billion-dollar price tag: The F-35 - \$915B; the Gerald R. Ford-class aircraft carriers - \$73B; the JLTV - \$24B. All of these billion-dollar costs are point solutions to enhance our greatest warfighting capability: Marines, Sailors, Airmen, & Soldiers. The purpose of this brief is to show how simple digital modernizations, like digitizing the in-bound and out-bound duty assignment process, can save hundreds of hours per warfighter, which can be devoted to improving operator proficiency and combat readiness. Time is readiness in waiting.

A single warfighter will typically transition from one duty assignment to the next (PCS, PCA, TAD) every one to three years. Due to the cumbersome, manually intensive design of the in- and out-bound processes, the three months preceding and succeeding a transition metamorphose into a time vampire on the individual warfighter, and on every signatory of a command's check-in and check-out sheets. These individuals spend very little time training on their Military Occupational Specialty or in preparation for the next conflict. That means that for every 12-, 24-, or 36-month assignment, the warfighter is mission-ineffective for 50%, 25%, and 17% of the assignment, respectively.

Making our individual warfighters more capable improves combat readiness more than any of the latest weapons systems—which ironically rely on the ability of the warfighters to operate and maintain them. Warfighter capability can only improve in direct proportion to the time made available for mission-oriented training. Freeing up time for mission-specific training is easier to accomplish than the building of a ship, orders of magnitude less costly, and can be done today, right now, with relatively little risk.