



## ACQUISITION RESEARCH PROGRAM

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# Announcement and Call for Graduate Student Researchers

Updated: 1 October 2009

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The Acquisition Chair, Graduate School of Business & Public Policy, Naval Postgraduate School supported the publication of this research topic and area of interests report.

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## ANNOUNCEMENT AND CALL FOR GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCHERS ACQUISITION RESEARCH PROGRAM

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The Acquisition Research Program of the Graduate School of Business & Public Policy at the Naval Postgraduate School announces a call for graduate student researchers to investigate the following topics provided by program sponsors.











- **Analyze strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT)** and build a business case for using CONUS web-based systems in a deployed theater.

**Sponsor:** BTA; POC: Keith Snider, [ksnider@nps.edu](mailto:ksnider@nps.edu)

- **Compare industry and Government staffing** for IT program offices; make recommendations and build a business case for a model program office by program level.

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- **Analyze benefits of SOA** implementations in industry and government.

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- **Conduct Enterprise Architecture project** to review our DBSAE portfolio (this would most likely be a group project). Conduct a search for redundancy between systems, and identify ways to streamline and simplify DBSAE systems by migrating existing functionality to other systems within the portfolio.

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- **Analyze DoD's new Business Capability Lifecycle (BCL).** Compare and contrast the BCL process to determine if, in fact, it actually streamlines the process of acquiring and deploying business capabilities in the DoD. (The BCL is in the DoD approval process—it is designed as a new integrated and streamlined process to identify and acquire business capabilities.)

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- **Produce a “Complexity Metric”** that measures design for complexity and links to cost estimates.

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- **Create a Ship Concept Study Postulate ‘XX% of fleet’ in a low-mix configuration,** and determine the best that can be done with that philosophy.

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- **Analyze Dashboard Development to Best Manage Oversight in Areas of Development, Testing, Deployment, Hosting, etc.**

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and design and production tools are utilized across the industry, making comparison of varying techniques difficult at best. Identify ship construction metrics that can be used by senior leadership to help drive cost reduction "best practices" across the industry. **Discuss the role that collaborative software tools can play in giving visibility to and driving process changes in the shipbuilding industry to achieve significant improvement in cost performance.** Address the role that common CAD systems across the US shipbuilding industry might play in achieving this end state. What must be done to enable cost metric comparisons between shipyards building similar or near identical hulls and also across shipyards building different hull forms?

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- **Examine Alternate Ways of Designing Distributed Systems.**

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- **Evaluate Requirements Creep**

Conduct an operational analysis study to identify fleet requirements that no longer contribute cost-effective capability and could be eliminated.

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## General Research Topics

- **Explore Technology Transition—S&T of New Electronic Technology to the PEOs (with Todd Weatherford, Dept. of Electrical Engineering)**

The DoD has had difficulty over the last two decades in transitioning new semiconductor technology to terrestrial and space systems. Several reasons for this difficulty are scientists are unaware of the applications; acquisition is concerned about reliability issues in the manufacturing process, and poor communication exists between 6.3 and 6.4 organizations. Gallium Nitride semiconductor technology, which is not yet locked into a specific manufacturing process, will make a tremendous impact in consumer (LEDs, wireless) and military electronics (EW, Radar, Comms).

We are looking for engineering students and acquisition students who would work with civilian DoD S&T scientists and acquisition personnel to determine the hurdles from each party's viewpoints and provide solutions in technical as well as manpower management and acquisition demonstration process. This effort would involve Government (from AFRL, ARL and NRL), a tri-service group to be proactive in finding and solving device reliability issues, contractors such as Raytheon and NG, plus top university researchers.

- **Conduct a study to identify near-term modularity opportunities** and develop a plan to progress, test, assess and later iterate these opportunities.



## Contract Management Topics

### Sponsored Research Topics

- **Recommend methods to integrate more performance-based contracts** (vs. time & materials or cost plus) into the acquisition process in line with DoD direction.  
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- **Investigate Obtaining and Managing the Correct Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) for System Components**

A key principle of Open Architecture within the Naval Enterprise is the concept of reusable software applications. Simply put, the Navy seeks to establish an environment wherein it pays to develop an application or capability once and then use it many times in different contexts and systems. In order to gather and share components for which the Navy has established the appropriate IPR, the Software Hardware Asset Reuse Enterprise (SHARE) repository was established as a pilot project to demonstrate reuse practices. At the same time, considerable effort has been expended in documenting suggested contract language to result in delivery of components that have the appropriate level of government license rights. This language is gathered and made available for PMs' use in an OA Contract Guidebook.

Experience with the SHARE repository has demonstrated that there are difficulties in managing how combat systems components are specified and delivered to the government:

hardware can result—providing a system that will maintain full mission capability even if some of the system components have failed during the mission profile. This renders any open cabinet maintenance shipboard unnecessary, as well as removing the requirement for onboard spares and the supply chain and organic infrastructure needed to support that maintenance. System operations remain fully normal and shipboard personnel are free to concentrate on operationally significant activities. By coupling the ability to monitor and adjust system configuration (or manage system restoral through soft means) remotely, restoral of any failed components can be either ignored or undertaken during the next in-port period, depending on the situation. Given a high enough reliability of the overall system, it is possible to postulate replacement of system components as unnecessary until a regularly scheduled technology refresh when the COTS components are routinely replaced with newer technology.

The MFOP concept was demonstrated in Los Angeles Class submarines with notable success, and is currently undergoing a surface ship pilot demonstration involving a large deck amphibious ship. An examination of the implications of this model on the life cycle cost of Navy ships and systems is desired.

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Program Management Topics

### Sponsored Research Topics

- Shipbuilding industry cost growth and control continues to be a major concern to Navy leadership. Numerous ship construction processes



▪ **Examine the Lifecycle Cost Implications of the Maintenance Free Operating Period (MFOP)**

Recent advances in technology and business practices have converged into a set of best practices wherein modular open architectures (powered by computing plants that take advantage of commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) hardware) have provided the opportunity to field and maintain Naval Weapons Systems more quickly and affordably than ever before. COTS components provide for rapid advancement of technology while offering exceptional reliability (very long mean time between failure (MTBF)) characteristics at costs a fraction of that required for military specification (MILSPEC) hardware. At the same time, the advances in technology over that represented by legacy specialty hardware has permitted larger numbers of more powerful computing equipment to be used in the same space, power, and cooling parameters of the old equipment. By combining these attributes with the modular nature of an open architecture that fosters ease of capability upgrade and modernization, some programs have been able to provide a number of redundant components with failover capability that can provide for systems that perform for extended periods without in-place maintenance without sacrificing mission capability and reliability. When the capability for remote monitoring, diagnostics and system reconfiguration and restoral is added, the concept of a maintenance-free operating period (MFOP) is put in place.

Within the MFOP boundary of a system, proper sizing of the computing plant in terms of both numbers and inherent reliability of computing

- Combat systems components are normally delivered as inclusive packages including all items that must be installed and configured to make the system work. While the code developed for specific applications may be new and come with Government Purpose Rights, less restrictive, other components (e.g., operating systems, middleware, etc.) that have historically been included in packages of deliverables likely have different license rights attached (open source, etc.).
- Distribution of components for reuse/redeposit by the government may be appropriate for items for which the government has rights; however, distribution of items with other rights is problematic.
- Deliverables to the SHARE library require scrupulous auditing for markings and embedded rights assertions before acceptance to ensure that the government has enforced its contractual rights.
- Small Business Innovative Research (SBIR) and other special situations also place limitations on what the government can provide from the repository.
- Many Program Managers and Contracting Officers are not experienced in management of IP, and a data rights analysis to articulate the proper rights to be specified in the contract is often not conducted.
- Even if contracts specify government ownership of rights to IP, such ownership is frequently not enforced by those who receive the deliverables.

More information on SHARE can be found on the Naval OA special interest area on the Acquisition Community Connection at (<https://acc.dau.mil/oa> ).

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- **Explore the History of Contract Types in Weapon System Procurement**

The federal government has struggled with how to manage and fund complex systems since the Revolution. While 19<sup>th</sup>-century approaches varied in their emphasis of either commercial providers or government-owned arsenals and shipyards, from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century onward, there was an increasing use of contracts with commercial firms. The latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century saw a pendulum swing between fixed-price arrangements and cost-reimbursement arrangements in an attempt to balance risks. Both approaches resulted in significant problems. While some documentation exists from each swing of the pendulum, there does not appear to be a single document which collects the history. This increases the danger of future decisions being made without knowledge of past lessons.

The student will compile a paper explaining the history of contract types, reasons for their creation and use, and describing trends and counter trends. Included in the paper would be discussion of early methods of acquisition (i.e., prior to 1860), the effects of each major mobilization from the Civil War through the Korean War on contract processes, and discussion of Cold War and subsequent trends and philosophies. The discussion of the last 60 years should include the following: analyses of the Truman Commission and its effects, the *National Defense Act of 1947*, Total Package Procurement, Reagan administration initiatives toward fixed-priced development and subsequent initiatives such as commercial off-the-

- **Explore the feasibility of a common, open architecture Machinery Control System for surface ships.**

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- **Conduct a study that updates load factors for electric plant load analysis studies, and explore alternate ways to perform electric load analysis to ensure that power generation and the distribution of equipment are sized properly.**

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- **Perform a study that examines the Department of Defense's handling of engineering/configuration change proposals in a performance-based logistics environment.**

Increasingly, program offices are focusing their attention on issues impacting performance or cost ceiling, while relying on PBL providers to make decisions impacting maintenance. The study should include 1) validation that program offices are shifting greater change proposal approval under PBLs, 2) analysis of why and whether this is appropriate, and 3) a determination of the extent to which the trend is impacting overall cost.

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- **Explore Total Lifecycle Management of MRAP (Mine Resistant Ambush Protected) Vehicles: Impact of Reliability and Maintainability on Military Readiness and Lifecycle Cost**

**Sponsor: HQMC;** POC: Dr. Keebom Kang, [kkang@nps.edu](mailto:kkang@nps.edu)



in place at US Navy (or DoD) Maintenance Activities (MA) to limit the effects of *RoHS*, and has it impacted the MA costs?

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- **Extend the Service Life of the Surface Fleet by 5 years.** Tie level of maintenance and modernization to an “assessed service life” and its impact on the 30-year ship-building plan.

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- **Explore vertical management of lifecycle-oriented functions** back to horizontal management to avoid duplication of effort, infrastructure, budget entitlement and manpower.

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- **Conduct a study to evaluate different methods to incorporate quality of service** into electric load analysis and electric plant design for the purpose of providing the highest reliability for electrical power at the lowest cost.

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- **Incorporate Zonal Design Methods into existing tools such as ASSET** to effectively and affordably incorporate survivability and reliability into the ship design process without relying on subjective or time-consuming objective analysis.

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shelf and lead system integrators. The paper need not be restricted to DoD examples.

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## General Research Topics

- **Analyze the Career Path Software tool.** Similar to our Career Pyramid and Career Roadmap diagrams used in the past, this Career Path Software would request users to input certain fields (possibly use drop-down menus, so a user can get smart on their options for Systems Contracting or Overseas Tours or SPEED programs, etc.), and it would take those inputs/career objectives, infuse our career pyramid/road map/gap analysis, and then project a 20-30 year career path that identifies jobs/locations, timing of IDE/SDE, deployments, timing of promotions, etc. The main intent is to show our young personnel all the variety, options, and exciting opportunities that await them. It would also allow them to get smart on these options in the process.

POC: Maj Timothy G. Hawkins, USAF, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, [tghawkin@nps.edu](mailto:tghawkin@nps.edu)

- **Improve Mentor Program.** Measure the effectiveness of current contracting mentoring (military and civilians), and develop methods for consistent improvement. Possibly develop a curriculum or online tutorial to assist leaders in building their own personal mentor program for a specific troop/team. Utilize initial, midterm, long-term goals. Provide suggestions over a 12-36 month period of time: 1-month exercises, 6-month status checks, 12-month measure of progress, etc.



POC: Maj Timothy G. Hawkins, USAF, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, [tghawkin@nps.edu](mailto:tghawkin@nps.edu)

▪ **Explore Procurement Law and Policy Topics:**

- There are research opportunities on topics of interest to the Departments of Defense and Homeland Security concerning **small business contracting and competition in contracting.**
- **Small Business Innovation Research Program:** Research opportunities include evaluating ways to better transition SBIR-funded innovations into the DoD acquisition programs.
- **Small-business-size standards:** Research opportunities include examination and development of alternative systems to set small business size standards in order to promote viable small business contracting partners for the Department of Defense and the Federal government.
- **Indian Incentive Act:** Research opportunities include assessment and development of criteria to incentivize participation of Native American firms in defense contracting.
- **Bundling under the *Competition in Contracting Act*:** Research opportunities include developing standards for defining anti-competitive bundling under the *Competition in Contracting Act* to address exclusion of small- and medium-size firms.

POC: Max V. Kidalov, Assistant Professor, Procurement Law & Policy; [mkidalov@nps.edu](mailto:mkidalov@nps.edu)

- **Examine how the integration of existing decision-support technologies** can assist Federal Government contracting officers in determining which vendor proposal offers the best overall value to the customer in competitive solicitations under the government's simplified acquisition procedures guidelines.

fill out most of the turn-in documentation and perform any necessary research). Identify the cost/benefit trade-off of exercising level-of-service options.

- **Using NAVSUP implementation of ERP during FY07, perform a study that identifies business areas in which efficiencies are gained, and quantify these gains in terms of time, manpower, or funds.**

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- **Perform a study that identifies the product areas in which the implementation of item-unique identification provides the greatest near-term impact.** The term *impact* is defined to include time, manpower, or funds saved as a result of item-unique identifier implementation.

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- **Perform a study that explores the impact of the European Union's June 2006 *Restriction on Hazardous Substances (RoHS)* directive—limiting the use of lead-free microelectronics—on the Navy's ability to repair systems at fleet level Maintenance Activities and on the DoD's supply chain.**

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- **Perform a study to determine if there has been any significant degradation of reliability/readiness in the US Military's fielded systems** since the implementation of the European Union's *Restriction on Hazardous Substances (RoHS)* in June 2006. What systems have been put



manufacturer instead of being destroyed. Determine the Government cost savings by returning the property to the manufacturer to rework or repair the parts instead of paying for demilitarization contracts. Also, identify the cost savings for reutilizing reworked/repared parts instead of new procurement.

- **Stop and Drop—Analyze the Level of Service Options for Turn-in of Excess Property to the DRMO**

Currently, the Military Service customer is required to fill out a large quantity of paperwork to turn in **excess** items to the Defense Reutilization and Marketing Service (DRMS). If the paperwork is incomplete, it can be rejected—resulting in extra time spent correcting paperwork for the military service and DRMS personnel. Due to Military Service members rotating frequently, a lot of time is spent in training as the new person comes up to speed. The Military Services may prefer an option that allows them to drop off the material with only the basic information, and the DRMS will take care of the rest. However, certain property would require the generator to give bare-item identification to ensure the DRMS was not receiving Ammunition, Explosives, and other Dangerous Articles (AEDA), classified, or hazardous property.

Determine if the military services would prefer the DRMS provide level-of-service options for turning in excess property. Determine the range of level-of-service required from basic service (in which generators would correctly fill out all documentation at the time of turn in) to generators paying for a higher degree of service (in which the DRMS would

- Recent requirements were fulfilled through innovative solicitation processes and by contracting vehicles such as the Multi-ship/Multi-option (MSMO) solicitation process and the Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP), multiple award IDIQ contract vehicles. **Perform a study quantifying the benefits of innovative contracting practices** and the impact to fair competition using economic analysis and a review of GAO protests.
- **Perform a study that explores the incentives driving the prime contractor's use of subcontractors.** Compare these incentives with those offered by the Government. Identify and quantify the range of benefits to the prime contractor as a result of its management of subcontractors. Identify and quantify the benefits to the Government as a result of the prime contractor's management of subcontractors across the same range. Establish if there is a correlation between the incentives and an optimal range of subcontractor usage.
- **Study the graduation rates of small business incentive programs** such as the Small Business Innovative Research Program. Determine key factors of success and best practices that can be shared across the DoD.
- **Develop an ID/IQ contracts guide.**
- **Analyze pricing in sole-source commercial situations.**
- **Develop a guide to Bare-base Construction Contracting.**



- **Perform a study that suggests ways for improving services contracting** or that identifies best practices in services contracting.
- **Research methodologies for non-acquisition personnel to conduct** and document contractor proposal technical evaluations.

## Financial Management Topics

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- **Conduct an implementation study for incorporating the Product-oriented Design and Construction cost model** into the standard way of performing cost estimation.

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- **Explore methods for estimating “contingency pricing”** of technical risks for acquisition programs.

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- **Explore the use of modularity to implement the Cost as an Independent Variable (CAIV) methodology** to provide the program manager with increased flexibility to trade performance for cost.

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- **Analyze a spectrum of DoD financial systems and assess which current DoD policies** are prohibiting the use of standard ERP across military services. **Sponsor: BTA;** POC: Keith Snider, [kksnider@nps.edu](mailto:kksnider@nps.edu)



- **Explore the Relationship of Navy Platform Type, Platform Maturity, Platform Complexity, Production Quantity, Initial Contract Cost and/or Contract Type on Overall Contract Cost Growth (1998 – 2008)**
- **Explore the Role of Modifications and Alterations as Sources of Cost Growth**
- **Investigate Third-party Collections**
- **Explore Using Modern Technology to Reduce the Need for Travel**
- **Investigate the Validation of Preponderant User for Plant, Property, & Equipment**
- **Analyze the Value of Improved Financial Information within a Transformed DoN Business Environment**
- **Explore the Lessons Learned from the Sea Enterprise efforts**

## Acquisition Logistics Topics

### Sponsored Research Topics

- **Investigate Weapon System/Common Weapon Parts Return to Manufacturer**

Currently, the Defense Reutilization and Marketing Service (DRMS) is required to destroy weapon systems and common weapon parts. The ability for DRMS to be able to return the property to the manufacturer to be reworked and/or repaired for future use could save Government dollars on demilitarization contracts or new procurement.

Determine those weapons systems and other common parts that could be returned to the



- Explore Outsourcing Base Functions
- Analyze Performance and Incentive Management
- Explore Predicting Aircraft Depot Maintenance Costs in Support of Contingency Ops
- Investigate Problems with Unliquidated Obligations in Relation to the O&M,N Cycle and the Length of Personnel Rotations
- Analyze Programming/Budgeting for "Fenced" Programs in MPN
- Explore the Promotion of Standard Requisitioning Processes that Keep Pace with the Rapidly Evolving Marketplace of Commercial Medical Products
- Explore R&D
- Analyze Recruiting
- Re-examine Officer Bonus Programs
- Evaluate Regional Disaster Costs
- Review Value and an Improved Format of the Application Private Sector Accounting (GAAP) and Auditing Standards to the Navy and Marine Corps
- Analyze S-curves
- Explore Science and Technology (S&T)
- Investigate Shipbuilding Outfitting/Post Delivery (OF/PD)
- Explore Software Cost Estimating
- Conduct a Study on the Price of Security: An Economic Analysis of the Naval-Marine Corps Intranet (NMCI)

## General Research Topics

For a detailed description and contact information for each topic below please visit the following website:

<http://www.finance.hq.navy.mil/fmb/nps/ViewThesis.htm>

**Note:** New Topics Added in 2009 Shown in Blue Text

- Investigate Accreditation and Use of Performance/Pricing Models
- Analyze Accrued Liabilities and the Budget
- Explore the Validity of Cost-savings Methodology Used to Estimate Acquisition Workforce Reductions
- Investigate Adjustment of Personnel Levels and Training to Changing Mission
- Conduct an Approach to Elicit, Model and Document Correlations among Metrics within the Navy's Probability of Program Success (PoPS) Framework
- Analyze Appropriate Accounting Procedures for General Plant, Property, & Equipment (PP&E) Assets in the Navy Medicine environment
- Evaluate Base Operating Support Contract Costs
- Investigate Combining DoN Programming and Budgeting Processes
- Explore Cost Analysis
- Analyze the Defense Reutilization and Marketing Service



- Investigate Developing an Agile Consolidated Supply Chain for Federal Disaster Response
- Analyze Documentation for Accounting Transactions
- Evaluate DoN Acquisition Programs
- Investigate DoN Safety Programs
- Explore DoN Unexploded Ordnance Program Costs
- Explore the Effectiveness of Financial Management Personnel
- Conduct an Evaluation and Ranking of Alternatives for Portfolio Analysis
- Examine the Financial Reporting Requirements for Operating Materials and Supplies (OM&S)
- Analyze Facility Investment: Sustainment vs. Periodic Recapitalization
- Investigate the Federal Employees' Compensation Program
- Evaluate the Fleet Hospital Program Cost Accounting Methodology
- Analyze Human Systems Integration for Network-centered Operations
- Evaluate the Impact of Multiple Service Financial Systems on Medical Logistics Integration/Transformation
- Explore Incorporating Non-constant Uncertainties into Earned Value (EV) Analysis
- Evaluate the Increased Costs Due to Postponing Ship Depot Maintenance

- Explore Industries' Lessons Learned on Controlling Cost Growth (1998 – 2008)
- Investigate the Influence of the Beneficiary's Choice of Methods for Filling Prescriptions
- Explore the Impact to DoN TOA if All MDAPs Were Funded to Their 80% Confidence Interval
- Evaluate the Benefits of Installing Appropriate Equipment under Changing Orders
- Evaluate whether the A-sub-0 is the Best Metric to Use for NECC Since So Many Forces Have Been Merged into One Enterprise
- Explore IT Government/Management
- Investigate the Link between Information Management and Information Technology in Navy Medicine
- Evaluate Management Military Construction SIOH Costs
- Analyze Medical Logistics Systems Collaboration with DoD and VA
- Investigate MILCON Inflation Indices
- Explore the Modeling of Large, Distributed Team Performance
- Explore Models for Resizing Imaging Requirements
- Evaluate Naval Aviation Depots Losses
- Analyze the Navy Enterprise Resource Planning Program
- Analyze the Navy Pollution-prevention Equipment Program
- Conduct an Operation and Services Analysis

