

Department of the Navy Chief Information Officer Dave Wennergren



Mr. David M. Wennergren serves as the Department of the Navy Chief Information Officer (DON CIO). Reporting directly to the Secretary of the Navy, he provides top-level advocacy in the development and use of information management/information technology (IM/IT) and creation of a unified IM/IT vision for the Navy-Marine Corps team. He develops strategies, policies, plans, architectures, standards, guidance and process reinvention support for the entire Department of the Navy. Additionally, he ensures the development and acquisition of IT systems are interoperable and consistent with the Department's vision.

CHIPS: *As the driving force for successfully implementing information technology (IT) and information management (IM) initiatives across the DON, what agencies do you work with?*

Mr. Wennergren: One of the most critical jobs for a CIO is this idea of “integrating.” Most of the initiatives that we work on are complex, with relationships and impacts across many organizations, so it’s really important that you have both a good internal team and a lot of external partners. Internally, my two closest friends, if you will, are my new Deputy CIOs — Deputy CIO (Navy), Rear Adm. Tom Zelibor and Deputy CIO (Marine Corps), Brig. Gen. John Thomas. Their teams represent the alignment of C4 and CIO initiatives, and our staffs work very closely together to craft and execute the IT agenda for the Department. There are obviously other key players who are working big initiatives that are very important to us in the DON, including, Rear Adm. Chuck Munns, Director of the Navy Marine Corps Intranet (NMCI) project and Monica Shephard, Commander, Task Force Web. So there is quite an elaborate network of organizations that we work with inside the Navy-Marine Corps team.

As you can imagine, we are more and more focused on “joint” solutions and interoperability with our allies and coalition partners, and we also collaborate across the federal government; so there is a lot of work that I have to do with our external partners too. I have very close working relationships with the CIOs for the Army, Air Force and Department of Defense, in addition to working with other Federal CIOs through the Federal CIO Council. We work together to make sure that we align IT initiatives that really deliver the best service to the taxpayers and enhance our warfighting capability.

Industry is probably the last piece of the relationship triad — internal government within the Navy-Marine Corps team, external government and then industry. The only way to be successful in implementing a robust transformational information management agenda in the 21st century is to align with industry best practices. So I spend a lot of time talking with peers and counterparts in industry and academia to make sure we move toward standard solutions that reflect industry best practices, and I think you can see that in some of the big initiatives we are working on in the Navy-Marine Corps. We have moved away from government-only solutions to solutions that really do leverage the best

that industry has to offer, so that industry as a whole can help bear the cost of bringing things to market with us.

CHIPS: *Can you talk about the DON CIO reorganization in terms of how the DON CIO is structured to perform its mission?*

Mr. Wennergren: Absolutely. I think the restructuring initiative for information management/information technology (IM/IT) for the Department that we have been undergoing for the last six to nine months has really done some powerful things to help better align the way we manage IT across the Navy-Marine Corps team. One of the key components of that, as I mentioned before, is the establishment of a formal working relationship with the Navy-Marine Corps chains of command rather than the ad hoc relationship that we previously had. So by designating the Navy and Marine Corps C4 directors to be dual-hatted as Deputy CIOs for the Navy and Marine Corps, we have been able to align command, control, communications and computers with CIO responsibilities to make sure that we have an integrated vision and strategy, and then aligned execution. Rear Adm. Zelibor, Brig. Gen. Thomas and their teams have done a great job of aligning vision with the DON CIO. Rob Carey serves as our Deputy CIO for Policy and Integration, and as a leadership team, we have all the pieces in place to allow us to move from good ideas to execution.

Another part of the restructuring was the further alignment down through the chains of command. So if you are an Echelon II or major claimant on the Navy side, or major subordinate command on the Marine Corps side, you now must have a formal working relationship with either the Navy or Marine Corps Deputy CIO. In this new view of the world, we look similar to the way things work at some large companies, like GE, Northrop Grumman, etc. As a Command Information Officer at a place like the Naval Air Systems Command, you need to make sure two things are happening. You need to make sure that the head of your business unit, the commander of NAVAIR, is happy with the IM/IT agenda for the command, but you also need to make sure that you are working with the Deputy CIO to be in sync with the overall alignment of technology initiatives across the Navy team. So this formal alignment of the Navy and Marine Corps Deputy CIOs to the DON CIO and Echelon II CIOs to the Deputy CIOs is helping us to align and integrate, and also to make sure that best practices and good ideas are being shared.

The third piece of the restructuring plan is what has been called an Enterprise Implementation Plan. It's currently being worked on, and will serve as an investment guide that feeds into the beginning of the programming and budgeting process. This is to make sure that all of our commands understand how they should be investing their IT dollars and know what constitutes a good investment that aligns with our portfolio and vision. As an example, we are moving toward a world of Web-Service solutions that are a part of an Enterprise Portal strategy that leverages Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) for strong authentication. These sorts of things are key to our roadmap of how we are going to complete the digital transformation for the Naval warfighting team, and must also be used as the basis for evaluating future investments.

CHIPS: What are some of the DON CIO's initiatives and products?

Mr. Wennergren: When we say DON CIO, I would like to emphasize that it is really about a very large group of people across the entire Navy-Marine Corps team who work on these initiatives. I'm really excited that most of the policy, products and tools that are developed represent the efforts of IPTs (Integrated Product Teams) and other teaming arrangements that involve key players from across the Navy and Marine Corps. I think the value of this strategy is that we find great minds throughout the organization to help create innovative solutions. I think the CIO team delivers two things, the first one is the most obvious and that is policy — policy and guidance about the vision, strategy and how we move into implementation of our major IT initiatives. Some of our recent policy efforts include the first XML policy in the federal government, and that has been a very successful effort; the policy on how we are going to move to an Enterprise Portal solution — the Navy Marine Corps Portal, smart cards, Critical Infrastructure Protection (CIP), Information Assurance (IA), and the list goes on and on.

But there is a second aspect as well. You need to deliver tools — tools to actually help commands make our vision and policies a reality. So people can actually “learn how to fish” themselves. We have spent a lot of time over the last several years developing tools for Navy and Marine Corps commands to use to turn themselves into knowledge-centric organizations. For example, to actually be able to perform vulnerability assessments under the CIP program, to be able to understand IT issues and know how to be an IT-literate workforce; and if you are an IT professional, how to manage your career, education and competency development, how to develop architectures and how to leverage standards. It is quite a robust set of tools that we have delivered, and they continue to improve as a result of the beneficial feedback that we get from organizations using the tools. One of the measures of success of these tools is that our knowledge management (KM) and IT Workforce tools have been embraced by the Federal CIO Council and implemented as government-wide tools.

CHIPS: Knowledge Management has always been a DON CIO passion. Can you talk about the progress of the KM pilot projects?

Mr. Wennergren: KM continues to be a DON CIO passion. The two core themes of the Navy-Marine Corps IT team are network-centric operations and knowledge dominance for the Naval warfighting team. Knowledge dominance is a critical component

— having access to the right information at the right time from authoritative data sources to allow rapid decision-making and collaboration. This is crucial to the success of our warfighting mission and is evident in the recent conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq. There are a lot of KM initiatives that the Navy and Marine Corps have put into place that have been great successes — Collaboration At Sea, which allows carrier battle groups to do real-time collaboration, the Knowledge Wall, the Knowledge Home Port developed by the Pacific Fleet...

The common thread is that operational forces recognize the power of collaboration and knowledge sharing — and have become champions for knowledge management. There is a lot of great work going on right now. One of the initiatives that I am excited about is at Submarine Group TEN in Kings Bay, Ga., under the leadership of Rear Adm. Gerald Talbot. It involves the Trident submarine “blue” and “gold” crews so that as a crew comes off deployment to shore they can still maintain their proficiencies and share and collaborate during that off-cycle time. At Commander, Naval Reserve Force there is a project to reengineer the entire Naval Reserve Force claimancy using knowledge management as the foundation for that transformational effort.

Vice Adm. Richard W. Mayo, Commander, Naval Network Warfare Command, recognizing the power of KM throughout the Navy-Marine Corps team, is leading a flag officer level knowledge management steering group to make sure we continue to embrace and deploy KM solutions. We are working closely with Vice Adm. Mayo on that initiative. I had the great pleasure of attending the most recent Information Professional (IP) Officer Community Summit where knowledge management was clearly front and center on the agenda of the IP Officer Community.

CHIPS: Can you discuss the NMCI legacy application rationalization and the role of the Functional Area Managers (FAMs)?

Mr. Wennergren: One of the wonderful things about having a Navy Marine Corps Intranet is that moving to a single enterprise network has provided a great “forcing function.” Unless you move to a single enterprise network you have no idea how many applications you have in an organization. As long as you have hundreds of disparate, local area networks you can develop applications, run them on a local area network and never comply with security rules and never think about the fact that you may be building the same application that other people already have developed. So you waste a tremendous amount of money; you have an insecure network — it is absolutely chaotic. And you make it very difficult for people to find the transactional databases and applications they need to get their jobs done.

By moving to NMCI we were able to say, “Show us all the applications you have in the Navy and Marine Corps so that we can get them on the network.” The awareness we gained was phenomenal because we found close to 100,000 applications, which is a number that you can't possibly deal with. So we had to get really serious about making sure we had the right portfolio of applications for our warfighting mission. We established Functional Area Managers, which is a really novel and important change for the



Navy and Marine Corps. Functional Area Managers are senior leaders for a functional area and they have a new set of responsibilities. The first is to approve which applications within their functional areas will be allowed on the NMCI network. We picked senior leaders in areas like logistics, administration, manpower, personnel — and the list goes on — for all the major functional areas in the Department, to work through these tens of thousands of legacy applications and pick those that really need to be on the network. We made great progress over the last year as we whittled that first list of 100,000 to 63,000 by eliminating duplication. Eventually we worked our way down to 7,000 applications, and now we are at about 5,000 and on our way down to a couple thousand.

This is very important work. We are going to have applications on the network that comply with security rules and we will have single best solutions rather than a lot of duplicative solutions. The Navy and Marine Corps need *the best* online small purchase solution — we don't need many online small purchase solutions. We can't afford to spend money on duplicative efforts. The legacy application rationalization work is a crucially important part of getting to single authoritative databases and best practice solutions. It has also been a wonderful way to move toward the type of applications we want in the future — Web-enabled, Web-Services solutions over the Navy Marine Corps Portal. As we have gone through this rationalization process, we have weeded out the standalone, legacy mainframe and client-server solutions that don't perform well in this Web-based world — the focus has been to deliver the best solution.

Getting back to the FAMS, we designated 24 Functional Area Managers, and their job is to work through all the applications within their functional areas. The FAMS are the ones who have actually done all that hard work of bringing down 100,000 applications to several thousand. I think it has been a hugely successful effort. I co-chair the Functional Area Manager Council with Vice Adm. Pat Tracey, Director of Navy Staff, and she has done a tremendous job leading the Navy effort to reduce legacy applications. The FAMS have all worked very hard on this, and a couple of our Functional Area Managers, Mark Honecker, who is the Logistics FAM and Scott Slocum, who is the Manpower FAM, deserve special recognition for their exceptional work in transforming logistics and manpower processes as a part of this rationalization process.

CHIPS: Are industry standards driving the importance of having a DON blueprint for a standard architecture? How does XML fit into the modernization plan?

Mr. Wennergren: Our eBusiness Operations Office, smart card and XML work are great examples of this. We have made great progress in the last couple of years in moving away from government-only solutions to industry best practices and standards-based solutions. This is crucially important. If you build it yourself you are responsible for all the research and development, caring and feeding, and maintenance solutions. Then you have to make sure your solution works with every other standard application in the world. If you embrace and leverage industry standards it is a different task, and one that is much easier and more cost effective.

So we have spent a lot of time making sure that we use stan-

dards-based solutions. Our XML work is a great example. As I mentioned, we are the first federal agency to have an XML vision, policy and developers' guide. We have made sure that the Navy-Marine Corps team has had strong representation in the national and international XML forums and standards bodies — OASIS, W3C, IETF — to make sure that our voice is heard and that we all work together to develop and operate consistently within standards.

In the smart card world, deploying the Common Access Card — which, when it is fully implemented will have 4 million users — is a huge initiative. And by having that large of an ongoing initiative, we have been able to help align industry standards. It's another example of success being integrally linked to recognizing industry best practices and working with industry to develop standards-based solutions.

CHIPS: Can you talk about the status and security benefits of the NMCI, CAC and PKI/E issuance and implementation across the DON?

Mr. Wennergren: I have a couple of great jobs. In addition to being the CIO for the Navy-Marine Corps team, I also get to chair the Department of Defense Smart Card Senior Coordinating Group, responsible for the rollout of the Common Access Card (CAC) across DoD. We have issued over 3 million CACs to DoD personnel, active duty military, Selected Reservists, civilians and contractors. Within the Navy-Marine Corps team we've issued over 1 million cards. The CAC is the carrier for our Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) digital certificates, which is a fundamental component of our enhanced information security efforts.

Let me share with you my experience with smart cards. I use the CAC to get into the building when I come to work in the morning. When I get to my office, I use the CAC to cryptographically logon to my NMCI workstation. Cryptographic logon is a much more secure way of gaining access to a network than user ID and password. Once I am on the network I use the PKI Digital Certificates on my Common Access Card to sign e-mails to prove beyond a shadow of doubt that it was Dave Wennergren who sent the e-mail. I use my digital certificate to access secure Web sites. Rather than the old practice where you had 30 or 40 Web sites, each requiring a separate user ID and password — which you might have securely kept on a yellow sticky note on your desk — you can now use your digital credentials to gain access to some Web sites. I also use the PKI certificates for digital signatures in systems like the Defense Travel System to file my claim and approve travel orders. The PKI certificates are not only key to the information assurance of the Department, but also to the deployment of eBusiness in the government as we move away from a paper world.

Deployment of the CAC and PKI is absolutely crucial to the Department's security posture. It goes hand-in-hand with the rollout of the Navy Marine Corps Intranet. When you get your NMCI workstation you will also get smart card readers and middleware so you can use your CAC card in the same secure environment that I described to you.

CHIPS: What is the status of the NMCI rollout?

Mr. Wennergren: NMCI rollout is a two-phase process. First, the EDS team goes to a command and assumes responsibility of the existing networks. Then, they bring in their own equipment, software, etc., in the "cutover" phase of the process. To date the NMCI-

EDS team has assumed responsibility for over 200,000 seats and has completed cutover of over 90,000 seats — that's on our way to about 365,000 seats.

CHIPS: What is the DON CIO's role in implementing the Navy Marine Corps Portal and NMCI across the Navy?

Mr. Wennergren: As the CIO I am the advocate for information technology across the Navy-Marine Corps team. For the NMCI, we are truly fortunate to have Rear Adm. Chuck Munns as the Director for NMCI. Rear Adm. Munns, in his former job as a Fleet N6 and from his operational career, has a vast wealth of experience about information technology and its importance to the Department's warfighting mission. He is the absolutely perfect choice to be responsible for the implementation of NMCI. As the senior information technology official for the Department, I work very closely with Rear Adm. Munns to make sure he is successful in his efforts to implement the NMCI contract and to make sure all of the necessary policies and oversight strategies are in place.

Hand-in-hand with the rollout of the NMCI, we also want to move to an Enterprise Portal solution. Just as we talked about the large number of legacy applications, we also have a number of portals in the Department. While the scale is not as large, we do have a similar situation. Lots of innovative people trying to do good things have been building portals to gain access to information, share knowledge and perform transactions. That's great. But the problem becomes too many portals, too much duplication of effort, too much redundancy; and people have to make too many choices about what data or knowledge they need rather than having a clear path to reliable knowledge and authoritative data sources.

Just as we had to whittle our way down through how many applications we had, we also have to whittle our way down through how many portals we have. I have been working with the Navy-Marine Corps team to implement the Secretary of the Navy's direction to move to the Navy Marine Corps Portal. This is an Enterprise Portal solution that will be a constituent portal strategy. It will not make every portal go away initially, but will instead, integrate what we need into a single portal structure where you will be able to find the intellectual capital of the Department, whether you are deployed or ashore, at work or at home.

To be successful in this we need our commands to focus on content management. I don't need command X in New England to be the 500th command to build a portal and worry about a customized look and feel, and channel delivery and those sorts of things. What I need them to do is to think about what content their customers need to access, put that content onto an Enterprise Portal structure and let us have one organization worry about customized look and feel. PKI authentication will be on the front end of the portal with common services provided to everyone.

CHIPS: What is on the horizon for Workforce Competency initiatives?

Mr. Wennergren: The success of the Department of the Navy is directly attributable to the outstanding men and women of our military and civilian service. We are truly blessed by an extremely intelligent and innovative workforce, and our IT professionals are up to the challenge of the 21st century digital revolution. But the world is changing rapidly, and the skill sets and knowledge

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required of our IT workforce is changing rapidly as well. As the IT workforce leader, I am thrilled to have worked with an outstanding group of individuals to put into place some very robust and groundbreaking tools to help our workforce assess their needs and develop competencies. Sandy Smith, as our CIO Workforce team leader, has championed the development of some outstanding career planning tools that have now been adopted by the entire federal government. We will continue to champion issues such as continuous learning, Web-based individual development tools, a virtual community workspace, and innovative scholarship and apprenticeship programs.

CHIPS: Let's talk about the DON eBusiness Operations Office.

Mr. Wennergren: It's one of the efforts that I'm most proud of. We had a vision several years ago to create an innovation center that would partner a small team of government professionals with private industry experts to help Navy and Marine Corps commands make the move from labor-intensive paper processes to the world of the Web and eGovernment. The Department of the Navy eBusiness Operations Office has been an unqualified success in accomplishing that goal. Under the leadership of Karen Meloy, and the outstanding work of Karen Gadbois, the entire eBusiness team in Mechanicsburg has made that vision a reality.

There are numerous examples where the consulting services and the 53 pilot projects that they have championed have produced tremendous value — with some solutions expanding across the Department of the Navy or even the entire Department of Defense. It is an outstanding example of how innovative Naval personnel, partnered with industry leaders, are reinventing processes, improving operations and reducing costs. It is also an excellent example of the need to move with speed, and develop solutions in months rather than years. The team has been recognized with numerous awards, and has recently been tasked to provide similar support to the Office of the Secretary of Defense in managing their new incentive pilot fund. The eBusiness team is a classic example of the importance of change management.

In the end, much of what we spend our time doing is leading change across this great organization. That's a responsibility of each of our IT professionals — military and civilian. It is a time of great change — which is viewed with consternation by some, but fortunately is embraced by many more as a time of great opportunity. Each of us must be change leaders. Each of us must be willing to do our part to leverage technology as a part of a larger effort to reinvent and reinvigorate our warfighting processes. At the recent IP Summit, the Chief of Naval Operations asked that group of IT professionals "to deliver tomorrow, today."

The combination of a need to understand and embrace the future, but to deliver results now, is right on target. Choosing to change means accepting risks; choosing not to change, in today's world, risks irrelevancy. I am honored to be a part of an outstanding Navy and Marine Corps team that has chosen to champion change. □