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Inside this Issue

This issue of the TMB Newsletter begins with a look at our continued support to the Office of Naval Research (ONR) Comptroller's Office (Code 08). The second page spotlights Robotic Process Automation and how it will affect our business. The Newsletter then provides information on our annual performance evaluations as well as employee milestones. Page three also reviews foreign travel requirements. The next page highlights some recent job fairs that TMB has attended. It also features the photos of our recent Spot Award winners. The Newsletter goes on to showcase photos of our recent Morale and Welfare events including the Tail Gate Party, Taco Tuesday, and our annual rooftop event. The next page features how TMB worked hard to become compliant with new Information Technology (IT) policies. The TMB Cinema Review showcases a review of the film "Avengers: Endgame." The Naval Traditions section provides some background on the Battle of Midway. The final page of the Newsletter continues to provide important TMB and community dates, so mark your calendars!

Content

TMB Still Going Strong Supporting ONR Code 08

On May 7, 2019, TMB marked the start of our eighth year providing uninterrupted financial management and accounting support to the Office of Naval Research (ONR) Comptroller's Office (Code 08). ONR Code 08 is responsible for budgeting, accounting and fiduciary reporting for the Department of the Navy (DON) Science and Technology (S&T) Program and other funding directly controlled by ONR as a Budget Submitting Office. Code 08 has broad responsibilities for budget execution, reporting, and analysis for Research, Development, Test and Evaluation (RDT&E) funding appropriated to support ONR mission functions. ONR has five S&T departments that fund basic research programs, primarily through U.S. universities; technology research programs, primarily through government and nongovernment laboratories; and advanced technology demonstration programs, primarily through U.S. industry and companies. The five departments support efforts spanning from combating terrorism to oceanography and from sea warfare to life sciences.

In support of ONR Code 08, TMB, led by our Program Manager Mr. Kamran Sarshar, processes incoming funding documents, including funding document research and creating draft funding documents in the Enterprise Research Plan-

Christian Ivory and Kamran Sarshar support ONR Code 08.
Not pictured: Janie Brothers

ning (ERP) system. We process obligating documents, purchase orders, work training requests and approvals, and Military Interdepartmental Purchase Requests (MIPR). We also verify the completeness and accuracy of accounting data. TMB professionals also investigate the legitimacy of Unliquidated Obligations (ULO) and associated financial risk for canceling funds review. We monitor the status of canceling funds and reconcile documents and contracts, including Military Standard Requisitioning and Issue Procedures (MILSTRIPS), to close these vehicles. TMB also creates Obligation and Disbursement correction packages, Standard Business Transactions, and the process for discontinued research. TMB supports the pre-validation of obligations based on requests from Defense Finance and Accounting Services (DFAS) and other paying offices. We assist in determining the causes of unpaid contractor invoices and suspended, unprocessed reimbursable billings, and we work with DFAS, program offices, and contractors to resolve these problems.

SPOTLIGHT ON Robotic Process Automation (RPA)

Robotic Process Automation (RPA) is a new and growing form of software that is taking the business world by storm right now. It's in its infancy, but many notable futurists and business leaders believe it is like the internet marketplaces of the 1990s: new and not perfect but set to change the world in many and unpredictable ways. It is also being marketed to the government, so it is inevitably going to affect TMB's business.

Traditional business process automation, like tools built to move data from one database to another, are usually built using scripts or an application program that pulls data from specific fields and then populates it into the equivalent field. This process requires that the programmer has access to the programming for both systems and understands which data fields correlate in the two systems. All of this also requires that a highly technical programmer be involved in any changes that are necessary and strictly limits the flexibility of the tool.

On the other hand, RPAs use "Artificial Intelligent Workers" or software robots to act like a normal human working on the system. The RPA will use the same Graphical User Interface (GUI) that you do, and it learns what decisions to make from the human operating the system. This has applications in many office environments. Here is an example based on systems and processes with which we are all familiar:

Jane is a BFM supporting the government. Part of her job is to receive Military Interdepartmental Purchase Requests (MIPR) in her e-mail, log the receipt of the MIPR into her Excel spreadsheet and then enter the relevant data from the MIPR into Navy ERP as a new source of funds. She then sends an e-mail to her government counterpart and the originator to notify him that the funds are available for execution.

If Jane had an RPA active, after a couple of times of doing this, it would learn the process, including the minor decisions she makes (i.e. Putting a MIPR from ONR into an RDT&E bucket account and one from Fleet Forces into an OMN account). Then, when Jane comes in to work in the morning, she turns on the RPA and it starts monitoring her e-mail. When an email comes with a MIPR, it opens the document, using the same interface Jane does. It then copies the appropriate data from the MIPR into Excel and ERP, making the relevant decisions regarding where to put the funds. The RPA would then draft the notification e-mail and send it to the appropriate people.

There are a few major advantages to this type of technology. First, it can increase the speed with which transactions are completed since the RPA only works on the things it has learned to do and is not distracted by hot taskers or bathroom breaks. Second, the RPAs can allow people to focus on tasks that require higher thinking, significant decisions and inter-personal skills. Third, the RPAs should reduce errors as they don't make typos or reverse letters. Fourth, RPAs do not require a programmer to adapt to changes in the policy or procedure; they can learn the new process from the people actually performing tasks. Finally, RPAs can scale quickly to take on large volumes of data transfers and clear backlogs of old work.

RPAs are already widely used in many businesses. Numerous American customer service companies have adopted them to improve service at call centers, which has actually led to the repatriation of jobs that had been outsourced to India and Pakistan. The RPAs can handle much of the data entry while an American can talk to the customer. Many finance and accounting firms are using RPAs to correlate data between customer IT systems and the finance firms, eliminating errors and allowing highly paid accountants to focus on the important financial issues of the customer firms rather than data entry.

There are risks associated with RPAs. If taught incorrectly, the RPA can rapidly make a typo into a catastrophic error. Organizations may use RPAs to cover over process or system flaws, which may work for a while but could hide major problems that need to be fixed. RPAs also have the potential to slow innovation in an organization. Since people eventually would be less familiar with the data, it is possible they could miss major opportunities based on that data. Finally, if not implemented correctly, an organization could end up with various, non-compatible RPAs which eventually could cause a problem similar to the Navy's ongoing issue with having too many archaic IT systems that are difficult to upgrade or eliminate.

To sum up, RPA is a growing field in the business world with great potential. It is likely that our customers will begin to demand some of these capabilities in the future. It is certain that some of our competitors will begin to offer RPAs as part of some future proposals. We must learn, so that we understand the capabilities and risks and can decide how to respond appropriately.

~David Kunselman

Further information: https://sloanreview.mit.edu/article/five-robotic-process-automation-risks-to-avoid/ & https://youtu.be/1SximAg9t4w

HR Corner

Annual Performance Evaluations

Felecia Chinn
Director of HR/FSO

TMB is reinstituting Annual Performance Evaluations this year. After four years of operating without them, we have concluded that the process provides tangible benefits for the company, such as:

➤ Performing annual evaluations provides us the data to go back to merit pay increases. Right now, we have no documentation to support increases other than across-the-board COLAs. This prevents us from rewarding those who are doing more and providing feedback to those who are not.

➤ Without a documented record of performance, we are at risk during a DCAA audit because we can't provide evidence to support any salary increases.

➤ Without a documented record of performance, it is harder to dismiss someone who is a poor performer.

➤ Performance evaluations provide TMB a process to establish criteria that we believe contributes to our success. We assume people know what we want them to do and that is not always the case.

➤ This process forces managers and employees to communicate expectations and provide feedback in a formal setting.

Each January, HR will send an email to employees asking that they gather data throughout the year to submit to their managers prior to their performance evaluation. Managers will provide Position Descriptions (PDs) to all employees by February 28th so that they have some guidance on what is required of them. By October 31st, all employees will provide their completed Performance Evaluation form to their managers to prepare for their performance evaluation meeting. In November, after considering employee input and documentation, managers will meet with employees to discuss their performance for the year. Approved salary increases then will be reflected in the January 31st pay date.

The Performance Evaluation Timeline and forms are all posted on the TMBnet site. Go to the Policies and Procedures page, and the link to Annual Performance Evaluations is listed under Human Resources.

Security Awareness

Foreign Travel Process

It's that time of year where many of us will be going on vacation and traveling to new and exciting places. For those of you who plan on traveling outside of the United States, please remember to take the following steps:

➤ **Report any Foreign Travel** – All TMB employees and subcontractors seated in our spaces are required to report foreign travel whether it be for personal or business reasons. If possible, please do so within 2 weeks of your expected travel.

➤ **Review the Travel Brief and Form** – You will be sent TMB's Traveling Abroad Brief and Traveling Abroad Information Request Form. Please review the brief and submit your completed form to Security prior to your travel.

➤ **Review Country Information** – Security will send you a link from the Department of State with information about travel to the country you will be visiting. Please take a few minutes to review the information as any travel warnings will be posted on the site.

➤ **Participate in Travel Debrief** – When you return from your travel, you will need to be debriefed. Security will contact you to schedule the debriefing upon your return to the office.

Please note – the foreign travel brief and form are not posted on the TMBnet site. They must be requested via phone or email to security@tmbhq.com.

TMB Job Fairs
Job Fairs Write-Up

Members of TMB recently attended job fairs in Patuxent River, MD and Springfield, VA in an effort to connect with talented professionals serving the US Navy. With a plethora of TMB "swag" to share, Dan Clague, Robin Long, Pamela French, Felecia Chinn, and Jim Hilson introduced TMB to military veterans, financial analysts, FMS professionals, engineers, and others with the skillsets TMB seeks to hire to serve its customers.

At JobZone's Pax River Job Fair on April 23rd, the team met with many attendees who have expertise supporting NAVAIR program offices, which they could translate well to NAVSEA's benefit as members of TMB. Robin Long and Pamela French, who live in Southern Maryland and commute to work at TMB in Washington, DC, drew on their local ties to speak to the opportunity that working for TMB in the District represents. Furthermore, TMB is actively pursuing opportunities to translate its success supporting NAVSEA to win work supporting NAVAIR, so we sought to build TMB's positive reputation within the Patuxent River community. By letting the community know that TMB is growing and ready to serve new customers at NAVAIR, the company can set itself up for successful entry into the new market.

Felecia Chinn and Jim Hilson also attended JobZone's Fort Belvoir/Springfield job fair on May 23rd. The significant presence of veterans at this job fair made for fruitful conversation about their experiences and TMB's support of the US Navy.

TMB will next attend JobZone's fair at Joint Base Andrews on August 15th. Please contact Jim Hilson (james.hilson@tmbhq.com) or Felecia Chinn (felecia.chinn@tmbhq.com) if you are interested in attending as a representative of TMB.

Jim Hilson, Pamela French, Dan Clague, and Robin Long at JobZone Pax River job fair

Jim Hilson manning the job fair booth

Spot Awards
For Exceptional Support

Tom Dority and Victor Policarpio
Spot Award for exceptional support to IWS 10.0

Tom Dority and Danilo Sandoval
Spot Award for exceptional support to IWS 4.0

Brenton Harris and Tom Dority
Spot Award for exceptional support to IWS 2.0

Sean Mizzer and Tom Dority
Spot Award for exceptional support to PMS 377

Wilfredo Romero and Tom Dority
Spot Award for exceptional support to Division 2

Company Events

Baseball Tailgate

TMB Tailgate Concession and baseball game set up.

Employees playing TMB baseball.

Employees waiting for TMB's famous nacho bar.

Winning baseball team: Rick Parker, John West, Tracey Sizemore, and Richard Friends

Taco Tuesday

John West in the bean relay

Winning relay team: John West, Lazbat Ladipo, Brittany Ecker, and Rick Parker

Employees listening to company updates.

Rooftop Event

Tom Dority speaking with the group on the rooftop.

Employees enjoying their sandwiches in the beautiful weather.

Gift Card Raffle Winners: Julius Caesar, Margaret Brown and Wilfredo Romero

NIST 800-171 Compliance Means We're Not in Kansas Anymore...

Let me begin with sincere apologies to the Wizard of Oz, Dorothy and anyone from Kansas! It does however seem as if developments of the last several years have ended an era where Information Technology (IT) offered the promise of endless benefits with no boundaries and no downside. We can be so much more productive at work, stay in touch with remote people and locations or collaborate on complex projects without being in the same room. For the past 20 to 25 years, open access has been prioritized, and we have come to expect unfettered data availability from any platform at any time; with the ability to share data and collaborate on files with anyone. More recently, we are seeing the darker side of open access as "bad actors" steal identities, loot bank accounts and spread disinformation.

What if some of these bad actors were hostile foreign governments and they could hack into the unclassified networks of private contractors just like TMB? Without adequate safeguards, it would be easy to take everything on those company's servers: files, deliverables, reports, emails, company records and employee personal information. Maybe a couple of emails to employees with malware might be all it would take to gain access. Once a foreign government had all this data, they could run it through special software looking for connections between the data being analyzed and their success elsewhere stealing classified information to learn about extremely sensitive weapons development programs. Classified information is not the issue; but rather what the DoD terms Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI) and/or Covered Defense Information (CDI). CUI/CDI can help fill in knowledge gaps of initiatives first gained through the theft of classified data. It is also assumed that any adversary would use employee personal data, merged with social networking, to target vulnerable individuals to try and exploit them as witting or unwitting assets.

DoD and the Navy are justifiably alarmed by the actions of "bad actors" and have over the past two years accelerated the flow down and implementation of new security requirements as contained in what is called NIST 800-171. DFARS Clause 252.204-7012 is now showing up in all contract solicitations and is a basic "flow-down" of our new SeaPort Next Generation contract. This is part of the broader push and pull between the "open access for all" people and the "lock down everything to keep the bad actors out" people. TMB has spent well over six figures to come into full compliance with the 120-130 guidelines of NIST 800-171 by hardening our security through new hardware, software, policies and procedures designed to prevent unauthorized access. Some of these changes have been easy to make such as confidentiality banners on the bottom of emails and disclaimers when first logging into our network. We have had to secure the door of our network room with a card reader to monitor who comes into the room and how long they stay. We have had to accelerate our investments in new laptops, operating systems, software and firewalls. We have fully implemented what is called Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) to prevent unauthorized access to TMB laptops and our VPN. Along with securing our networks and laptops, we have had to secure access to TMB email from any "endpoint" where email is received by an employee or subcontractor assigned a TMB email account. Now that we have come into compliance, the next steps are to stay current with the ever-evolving NIST requirements and ensure our Tier 1 subcontract partners are also in compliance through flow-downs and compliance audits.

This has cost TMB not only a tremendous amount of money but has made us rethink how we provide support to our customers. While this is part of the world we live in today, we must find a way to accommodate security without losing all the benefits of working remotely and collaboratively. Our customers have come to expect 24/7 access to our support and a rapid turnaround of tasks. The ability to securely telework also allows us to recruit and retain the best talent for our customers. We have to balance security and access if we hope to remain a vibrant, growing and successful company.

We may not be in Kansas anymore, but we can all agree that where we are is still better than having the house fall on us!

~ Tom Dority

TMB Cinema Reviews

"*Avengers: Endgame*" – 2019 – Fantasy - Action – Drama – Science Fiction. Actors: Robert Downey Jr – Chris Evans – Scarlett Johansson – Chris Hemsworth

Assuming you have seen the 2018 movie titled "Avengers: Infinity War", in the 2019 sequel and the entire Marvel Comic Book series finale "Avengers: Endgame" picks up right after the evil demigod Thanos has collected the six infinity stones of Space (Blue), Mind (Yellow), Reality (Red), Power (Purple), Time (Green) and Soul (Orange) to rid the universe of trillions upon trillions of living souls with a snap of his fingers to "create a new order." It is at the end of "Infinity War" where we saw several Superhero Avengers instantaneously disappear into a cloud of ashy dust to their seemingly improbable eternal demise.

In "Avengers: Endgame" we see the surviving Avengers Tony Stark (aka Iron Man), Thor, Black Widow, Captain America and Bruce Banner (aka The Hulk) trying to figure out a way to bring back their vanquished allies for an epic showdown with Thanos.

For young adults who have literally grown up with these movies, the experience may be emotionally overwhelming. But for the film purist, such as myself, I found this two-part series of the 4-part Avengers franchise to be an abundantly entertaining fantasy experience of the triumph of good over evil with bedazzling action, smart humor and a genuine zesty thrilling feeling that all is right with the world and the universe again.

~ Lester Jones

TMB Still Going Strong Supporting ONR Code 08

We have also provided critical value-added support on special projects. TMB provided extensive management support to ONR Codes 08 and 02 (Acquisition) in the migration of the entitlement of ONR Grants and Cooperative Agreements from Standard Accounting and Reporting System (STARS) One-Pay entitlement to Mechanization of Contract Administration Services (MOCAS) entitlement. Over 1,500 grants were migrated to MOCAS entitlement. TMB's support was critical in mitigating payment delays to grantees and posting errors in the applicable accounting systems. TMB personnel received special recognition from Code 02 for the support they provided in the migration effort. TMB was also part of the ONR Financial Improvement and Audit Readiness (FIAR) effort that was formally recognized by Dr. Susan Rayburn, Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Financial Management and Comptroller) (ASN (FM&C)), for exceptional performance in audit support. Most recently, TMB provided critical support in the April shutdown of the STARS – Headquarters Claimant Module (STARS-HCM) and the data conversion of remaining ONR unliquidated obligations in STARS-HCM to ERP.

What you may not know is that ONR's office at One Liberty Center is located in one of the most desirable locations in the DC Metro area – in the heart of the Ballston section of Arlington, VA. Ballston is the home to walkable stores and restaurants featuring food from around the world. One Liberty Center is also two blocks from the Washington Capitals practice rink, which is located on top of the Ballston Quarter mixed use office, retail and living complex.

TMB's President and CEO, Mr. Thomas Dority noted: *"ONR is a small organization with an incredibly collaborative workforce focused on the design and delivery of cutting-edge technologies for the Warfighter. Over the seven years we have been supporting their missions, I have developed a full appreciation for how lucky we are to support ONR. Once people go to work for ONR either as a Civil Servant or a contractor, they never want to leave. In fact, we have had two former employees who began their professional carriers working for TMB in support of ONR Code 08 who have been in-sourced into Government in Code 08 and who continue to thrive. That says a lot about the ONR culture and the desirability of the work and work location. As we mark the start of our eighth year supporting ONR, we look forward to a continued association."*

Navy Traditions

Salty Sam Q&A –

Quuestion: What was the Battle of Midway?

Answer: In 1942, the Japanese Navy was ascendant across the Pacific, rapidly taking over thousands of miles of sea and island, seemingly unstoppable. The Imperial Fleet had destroyed most of the U.S. fleet at Pearl Harbor and destroyed the bulk of the British Eastern Fleet near Malaya. Japanese aircraft were bombing Australia and no significant resistance existed in the Pacific.

In June 1942, the Imperial Fleet prepared to attack Midway Island, hoping to use it as an airbase to attack Hawaii and eliminate the remainder of the American fleet. Fortunately, U.S. Naval Intelligence broke the Japanese code and ADM Nimitz assembled all the aircraft carriers in the Pacific to prepare an at-sea ambush.

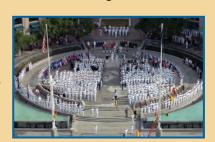On the morning of June 4th, Japanese aircraft attacked the island, and

by John Hamilton

U.S. Marine Corps fighter pilots, combined with anti-aircraft fire, mitigated damage but took heavy losses to aircraft and crews. Torpedo and bomber aircraft attacked the now-discovered U.S. carriers, inflicting heavy damage against the USS Yorktown, which stubbornly refused to sink. Air groups from the Yorktown and USS Enterprise bombed the Japanese carriers, destroying three of the four carriers within minutes.

Torpedo planes from the remaining carrier found the Yorktown once again and inflicted heavier damage as the crew abandoned ship. The ship still stayed afloat until June 7th when a Japanese submarine finally destroyed it. Meanwhile, American air crews located and destroyed the fourth Japanese carrier, as well as a heavy cruiser.

The attack effectively halted the seemingly unstoppable Japanese advance across the Pacific and changed the course of the war. The battle marked what is considered the turning point in the Pacific theater of World War II, when only seven months after Pearl Harbor, the outnumbered and outgunned American fleet halted the Japanese advancement across the Pacific Ocean.

The Navy celebrates Midway Day every year, usually on June 4th, with a variety of festivities. You will normally see many sailors dressed in whites for the day. There are always formal com-

Midway commemoration at the Navy Memorial

memoration ceremonies at the Navy Memorial in downtown D.C. and at many bases throughout the world. Bases with aircraft will regularly do flyovers of events in the local area and there are also "Midway Night" dinners and parties and many locations, which tend to be lively celebrations.

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Commitment.
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Coming Events