

Topic: Department of Defense & Gaming Joint Development  
Moderated by: Mark Stoklosa (US Army RDECOM)

In attendance:

Bruce Leistikow, AcuSoft; Chris Johnson, Atari; Doug Failor, US-JFCOM; Wayne Deviney, Cubic; Joe Bricio, VMASC; Lloyd Ashby, US-JFCOM; Ron Tarr, UCF IST; Priscilla Elfrey, NASA; McNamara, CHI Systems; Noah Falstein, The Inspiracy; Jud French, IEI; Michael Woodman, USMC PMTRASYS; Ben Quintero, Inland Studios; Paul Barath, SAAB Training Systems; Warren Katz, MAK; Doug Whatley, BreakAway Ltd.; Deborah Tillett, BreakAway Ltd.; Mike Mather, Raytheon; Chris Fasulo, Raytheon; Roger Arias, Destineer.

The DoD & Game Joint Development working group was moderated by Mark Stoklosa, from the US Army's Research, Development, and Engineering Command. Here, the attendee's discussed whether or not the Department of Defense should transition to gaming technology for their training simulation needs. The working group began with introductions and the identification of each of the attendee's goals. The attendee's discussed on how many of the corporations attending the summit where there as providers rather than consumers of training products.

*"When you use a game for training, don't suck the fun out of it."  
- Marc Prensky, CEO Games2train*

The moderator defined for the attendee's the acronym 'TDS': Tactical Decision-making Simulation. TDS' are important to the DoD to help train soldiers for extreme and/or violent situations. Generally, TDS' will never be commercially viable because they are just not fun. This is where the question arises, "What are the reasons for the DoD to try to transition to gaming technology?" Since there is no analysis model that exists to determine if games meet a particular training need, there appeared to be little reason to turn from the already established method of creating simulations. The attendee's offered suggestions that there were perceived lower costs and the output could be potentially higher quality. But none of the suggestions gave a suitable answer, so the working group proposed the action:

**1<sup>st</sup> Action – Need to develop a broad industry survey that details existing game companies and the associated games/capabilities.**

The survey would be vital to deduct whether or not the game industry could be turned into a training commodity. With Middleware costs so small compared to the labor costs required to actually develop the content of the game, it could very well be a possible alternative. The US Marine Corp (USMC) had tasked a captain for the last four years to review the USMC training requirements and would then solicit the gaming community for various games that reasonably fulfill some of those requirements. The DoD sees the viability of adding aspects of commercial military games to their training simulations.

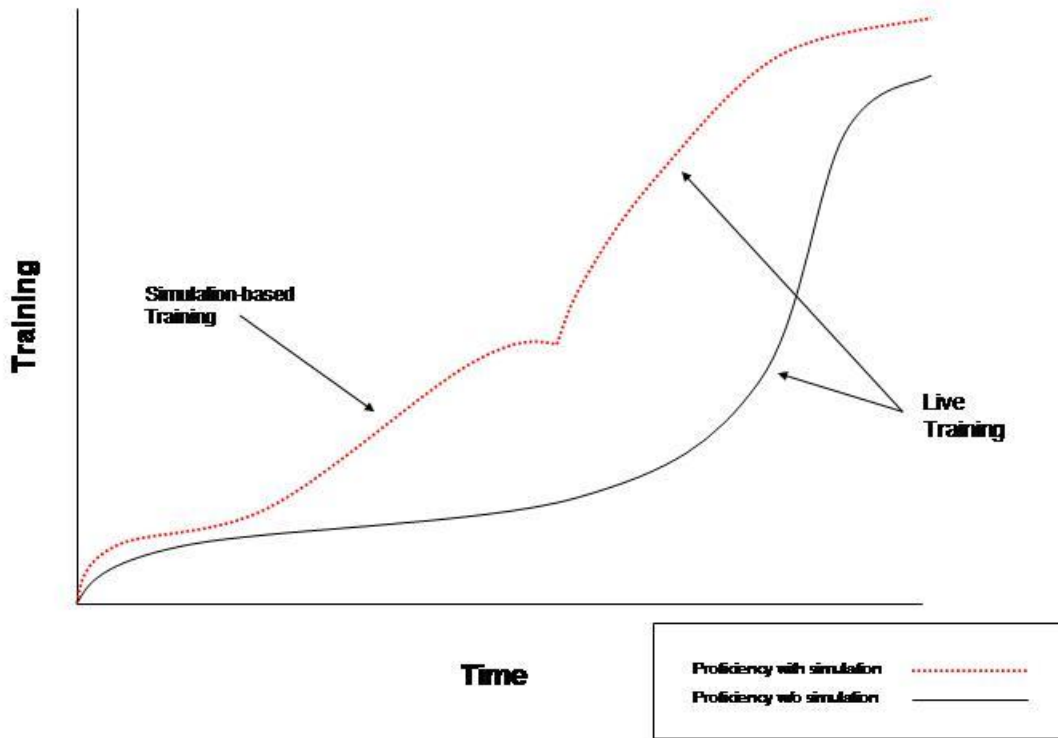
All the attendee's agreed that games will never be a panacea for the DoD's training needs. "Games are just not that flexible," said Doug Failor of US-JFCOM. He asserted that his investigations of the gaming industry have shown that there were no off-the-shelf solutions that satisfy the need for 'experimentation simulation'. Bruce Leistikow added that the US Army's OneSAF program catered to just that need (experimental simulation) due to its composable nature. Mark Stoklosa interjected, "But as soon as OneSAF is fielded it will already be old and dated. (by Ease-of-Use/User Interface standards and comparison with games technology) This exchanged prompted the second action of the working group:

**2<sup>nd</sup> Action – The Modeling and Simulation Community needs to improve knowledge dissemination of its own capabilities.**

Not one of the attendee's knew whether or not OneSAF had an open-source nature. Doug Whatley, BreakAway Ltd., added that the business dealings between the game industry and the training customers will have to be as financially attractive as the royalty model found in the commercial games industry. And would a game company be faster and cheaper than a traditional DoD contractor if given the same project to work on? The actual costs of labor seemed to be similar (i.e. a game engineer cost about as much as a simulation engineer) and DoD contractors have the advantage of already mastering the billing and communication aspects of working for the government. New game companies entering into the training space would have a steep learning curve. One of the biggest concerns would be how game companies deal with DoD over intellectual property rights (IPR) and risk models. Game companies want to retain their IPR while DoD own the IPR developed under government funding. Game companies accept high degrees of risk everyday as a part of doing business while DoD projects work to minimize risk because they are trying to keep soldiers alive by providing better training products rather than selling an amount of units.

Michael Woodman drew a graph to show how US Marine's task proficiency is improved when employing simulation based training aids.

## Marines in Urban Environment



The DoD & Game Joint Development working group conveys how the G.A.M.E.S. disciplines converge in real world applications. With the inclusion of game technologies to military TDS', the attendee's could see how the differences between training simulations and commercial retail games are dissolving. The DoD sees the importance in creating fun and exciting simulations to help prepare soldiers in the next generation of combat training. As games become more technologically advanced and strategy engines become more refined, the time seems right for the Department of Defense to transition to gaming technology to better enable their 'Tactical Decision-making Simulations'.