

## The Metrix Training Solution



*By David Anderson, Managing Director, Metrix Training*

Between them, the three colleges in package 1, DCEME Sultan, DCCIS Blandford and DCAE Cosford deliver over a thousand different courses each year. They range from short specialist Phase 3 courses lasting only a few weeks, to Phase 2 principle courses that can be over 18 months long. Some already use high-tech military equipment, simulators and e-learning. Most, however, use traditional classroom based learning with the instructor standing at the front of the room.

One thing they all have in common is that they produce some of the world's best trained military personnel. This one fact must be at the forefront of the minds of the Metrix training design teams as they work on enhancing the courses.

Course re-design is an essential part of the training transformation programme that DTR is expected to deliver for the MoD. Redesigning courses allows a much richer blend of modern learning techniques to be introduced, including simulations, interactive e-learning and web based collaborations as well as hands-on instructor led training. The exact blend will depend on the specific course, the ability of the trainees and the OPS requirement. Transformation of defence training will bring benefits to the trainees, the instructors, the colleges, and the Front Line Commands. Today's teenagers are much more familiar with electronic gadgets and the individual learning styles they allow. They are much more likely to be engaged by the far greater diversity of methods that the redesigned courses will bring. More motivated trainees will complete their training in a shorter time and return earlier to their operational units. Instructors will gain experience in the latest learning techniques, and Colleges will be able to operate with greater efficiency.

So how and where will all this course design take place? Well it has already started! The Metrix design team has been working with small groups at HMS Sultan, RAF Cosford and Blandford Camp to test the processes in a military environment. These groups have been introduced to powerful training design tools such as Architect and Advisor. Architect can analyse entire work streams and trade groups to separate out common training needs such as mathematics, physics and electronics from the more complex and unique parts relevant to a specific trade group. Courses can then be redesigned in a modular fashion to ensure the optimum match to the OPS and the needs of individual Services while at the same time providing a common approach to training delivery across all three Services.

Much of the hands on military equipment is expensive to acquire and maintain so it is not uncommon for a class of students to wait their turn while they watch one student practise disassembling a part. Here's where our other design tool, Advisor, comes into play. It helps recommend which of the many delivery methods to use. In this case, it may well recommend that students initially practise on a realistic three dimensional computer model. Then, when they move onto the real part later in the course, they find it easier to understand and it takes less time.

There will be both challenges and rewards as we embark on this effort - probably one of the largest ever training transformation programmes in the world. We seek people to work with us in the design group who have an open mind and are willing to embrace new methods and media. They have a chance to excel in an environment that has the very real potential to become a model for training in this country.