QINETIQ

Executive Summary

The Triangle of Trust

Author: **Alan Whittle MBE**
Director of Strategy and Plans, Inzpire

The evolving role of industry in defence training

Building trust among buyers, providers and users of defence training capability.

Then and now

Historically, simulators and synthetic training devices were built to enable procedures to be trained and practiced; aiming for a close approximation of the 'real thing', backed up by day-to-day hands-on experience of operating the machine concerned.

Today, and taking flight simulation as an example, in addition to the expense of operating 5th and 6th generation aircraft, their equipment and associated signatures cannot be used in operational modes because space-based and other intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) assets could be watching and recording every move.

Both individual and team training objectives are being enhanced with an operational imperative in mind and – as much as is technically feasible – the synthetic environment is being designed to more closely replicate the real world rather than simply simulate it. Across every domain, synthetic environments are now essential to all aspects of training, mission rehearsal, and debrief.

The importance of trust

Trust is a vital facet of military training as well as military operations. It is gained through the nurturing of relationships over time and can be built through the actions of individuals or teams, but is owned by the parent organisations and shared across the entire training enterprise.

Not only must the operators of complex military platforms have complete trust in the devices that train them, that trust must be extended to the instructors or White Force designing and inputting the training content – given that they are becoming the prime source of all training matters.

These training domains are manifested by technically complex, inter-operable, inter-dependable, synthetic training devices that depend on a deep and tacit understanding of the technology involved, coupled with a profound understanding of the training and enabling objectives required of them.

The benefits of a Whole Force approach

A wholly military training force, transient by its very nature, is not suited to the training environment outlined above. Instead, a Whole Force approach should be implemented. This requires total trust between industry partners and their military counterparts based on:

- Previous experience of designing, developing and delivering effective training.
- A proven and demonstrable history of engendering truth, honesty, and humility.
- A feeling of pride and mutual loyalty, grounded in shared experiences.
- An understanding of the importance of a positive training outcome.

Disparate branches of the different military domains are routinely operating together to create the most potent and effective results, with uniformed personnel focusing on front-line tasking. Industry personnel – most of whom have a military background in specialist areas and can therefore be trusted to have the necessary levels of commitment, honour, humility and experience – concentrate on delivering more of the training outcomes.

Building trusted training partnerships

Training, especially collective training, is wholly geared towards preparing war-fighters from all domains to conduct effective operations across the entire military spectrum of operations. The relationship between the trainers and the trainees transcends the transactional and becomes a shared enterprise, where both parties are professionally and emotionally attached to a common, positive outcome.

Trust is gained slowly, but eroded quickly, due to the turnover of both trainers and trainees, which leads to short corporate memories. However, there is a growing shift towards training in synthetic or Live Virtual Constructive (LVC) settings, where it will become increasingly efficient to use a blended team of industry expertise and military colleagues working in unison to provide the optimal training solutions. Consequently, wherever possible, military training events should be viewed as a joint enterprise between the MoD and industry.

Without trust, there would be no team. To achieve that trust, cultural barriers – based on a deep-seated suspicion of the motives that drive a commercial partner – should be broken down, and integrated working practices developed by including industry counterparts in a wide range of military exercises and collective training events.

Naturally, trust, and the building and maintenance of it, cannot be unilateral. It should be viewed as a mutually essential aspiration from both the side of industry and the customer. To encourage investment in the very best training, industry requires a long-term trusting partnership in order to make the venture viable to its stakeholders. When this commitment is given the results can be outstanding.

In conclusion

Clearly, there is a need for industry to sustain itself through the making of profit, otherwise the enterprise fails to the detriment of all stakeholders, but it is equally important to understand the non-monetised requirements of the military, and one of the most important of these is trust.

Once trust starts to break down it is lost quickly, to the detriment of the whole enterprise – although this breakdown of trust can be wholly avoidable through a shared ethos, vision and common purpose. However, a common picture of success can only occur when there is a shared understanding of the factors affecting all of the stakeholders.

As such, there must be a fully understood, agreed and approved set of requirements provided, which leave no room for doubt that they will lead to the desired training outcome for the end user.

All stakeholders in a professional and committed Whole Force must be capable of recognising problems, analysing the causes, prioritising the next steps, deciding on the best course of action, and acting with pace, before reviewing the new outcomes.

Whilst it would be impossible to contract for trust, due to its subjective nature, there is scope to contract for collaboration, co-creation, and ideation between the end user, the customer and the commercial partner. Training hard should guarantee success on operations, with trust as the common currency of the whole training enterprise.

QINETIQ