

Client: Project Office, Information Management Systems – Army
Prime Contractor: SRA International
Project: Installation Support Module (ISM) Modernization
Duration of TTC Involvement: Fall 2001 through Present
Contract Value to Tiger Team as subcontractor: \$3.5M (to date)



Description:


The U.S. Army's Installation Support Modules (ISM) provide applications and a network and systems management architecture that consolidates many monitoring and control functions at the Continental United States -Theater Network Operations and Security Center (CONUS-TNOSC) and reduces installation manpower requirements. Beginning in 1989, the ISM Project Management Office, with technical assistance from matrix support agencies, designed, developed, and deployed the original ISM applications. By the late 1990s, the information technology used to develop and field the system had become obsolete. In order to improve user access, enhance capabilities, and reduce costs, the Army decided to web-enable the ISMs, centralize the servers and create an enterprise-level soldier database.

In 2001, the initially selected vendor for the ISM Modernization implementation had fallen behind schedule significantly. The contract was put up for re-compete and was awarded to SRA International. After a few months of design and development work, SRA began to reexamine the database-centric solution that had been architected. They identified some troublesome weaknesses with the planned approach and began to consider alterations to the architecture. Tiger Team experts were asked to participate in the architecture review and SRA made a difficult decision to convert to a different approach.

As the project progressed, requirements were revealing themselves to be more complex than originally thought. Project managers realized that although 80% of the schedule had expired, only about 50% of the software had been produced. Unfortunately, a delivery of the Release 1 software was expected by the Independent Verification and Validation (IV&V) group within a short timeframe. SRA looked to Tiger Team to augment the team and over the course of a few weeks, a handful of TTC resources were incrementally added to the project. Our specialists worked side-by-side with the SRA staff, providing mentoring and leveraging our experience in the use of web application server technologies. With Tiger Team's help, SRA was able to meet their impending delivery deadline.

The success of this first major delivery was critical in establishing a solid relationship between SRA and the government client. In 2003, the final build of Release 1 went into acceptance test and the development of Release 2 began. The ISM Modernization effort is planned to continue into 2008. Throughout the project, SRA has continued to leverage Tiger Team experts on its dedicated ISM team. The methodologies TTC helped establish have defined the nature of Release 2 development and project execution.

Tiger Team is particularly proud of its accomplishments on the ISM project for several reasons. The challenges have been numerous and diverse. In order to ensure the system user needs were met, team members needed to understand both the existing ISM functionality and the reasons behind that functionality. The modernization included the creation of a unified database schema to be used across all modules and their respective user communities.



Overlaps and conflicts among applications and module owners (Subject Area Functional Proponents (SAFPs)) needed to be resolved. Data from regional systems needed to be consolidated into the enterprise-level system without significant interruption to ongoing operations. When Tiger Team joined the project, a rapid increase in productivity was required but the technologies were new to much of the existing development team. Our specialists were able to provide management with decision support related to staffing and assignment changes while serving as individual contributors to the software development efforts. Tiger Team was able to demonstrate the benefits of an incremental and iterative approach to software engineering and the practices our technical leaders helped put in place are still benefiting the project today.