



# Creating a Mission Readiness Posture For the Enterprise using the Mission Assurance Loop™

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## Abstract

The Mission Assurance Loop is a mission planning and execution methodology to ensure all organizational, technical and business functions achieve 100% mission success. This paper provides an overview of how to achieve mission assurance in a corporate environment using the Mission Assurance Loop. One of the distinctive characteristics of this methodology is that it was developed using elements of the U.S. Department of Defense Enterprise Integration Toolkit and the U.S. Army Enterprise Integration Guidelines but customized for use in the commercial workplace. The Mission Assurance Loop allows managers to apply a mission-centric approach to strategic planning, capability assessment, risk management and business execution.

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## 1. Introduction

The term Mission Assurance has been used within the defense and space communities for several years. The purpose of mission assurance is to ensure that all functions of an enterprise are identified, controlled and executed in such a way as to ensure mission success. Reiken Group created the Mission Assurance Loop (MAL) to address a critical need that cuts across all industry domains, with a holistic approach to ensuring mission success. It is our view that in order to exploit business opportunities and protect against environmental threats, the enterprise must employ a methodology that can be rapidly deployed and customized to fit its industry domain and business verticals and horizontals.

This paper presents an overview of how application of MAL methodology delivers mission assurance in any industry domain across all verticals and horizontals. The effectiveness of the MAL will be demonstrated using a case study after the following explanation of its components.

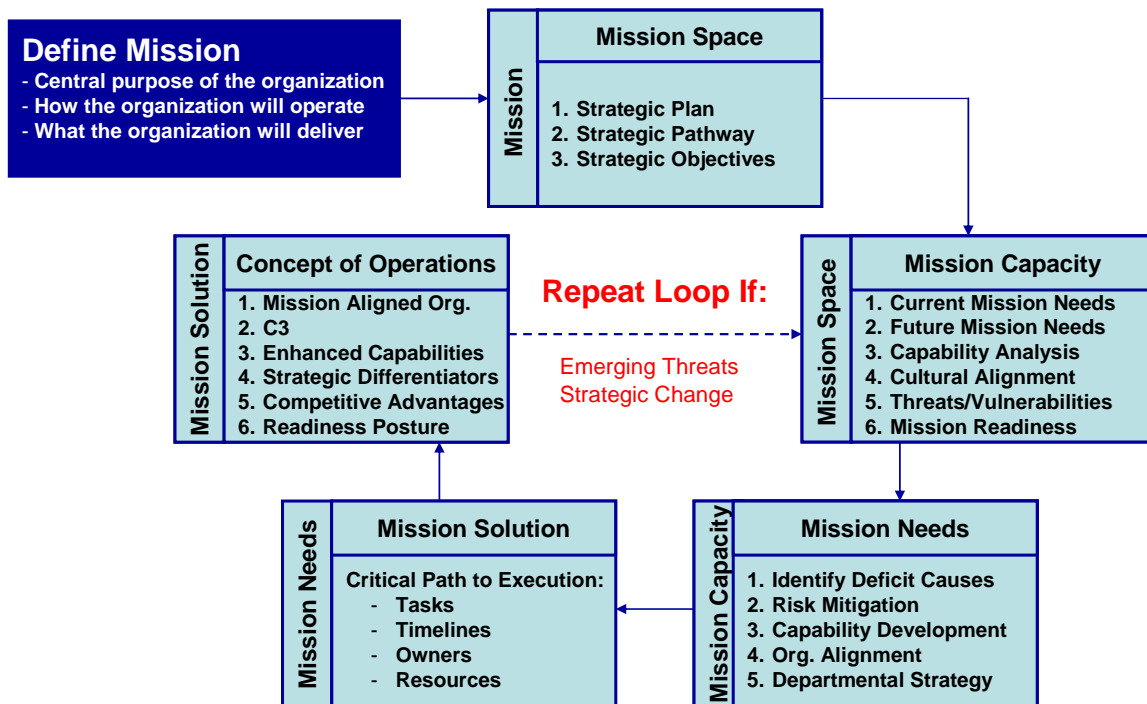
## 2. The Mission

The classical definition of a 'mission' stems from military roots and states: "A mission is the deployment of resources for strategic and tactical use, in a campaign or operations, to achieve a specific objective." The common commercial connection with a mission is to express the corporate intent to carry out business – the company mission statement. The company mission statement is typically one or two sentences with high level details on how the company intends to conduct business. An effective mission statement should reflect purpose of the organization, how the organization conducts itself while carrying out operations and what the company delivers.

Since the mission statement reflects the organization's intent to carry out business (its mission); the way in which the company plans, executes and delivers business to its customers or clients should be congruent and aligned to the mission. The MAL uses the company (or sub-entity unit, e.g. business division, department or program) mission as the baseline input for mission planning and mission execution steps.

### 3. The Mission Assurance Loop Structure

The MAL follows a 5 phase circular, closed-loop structure. The diagram below shows the MAL structure. The mission is the baseline input to determine mission planning, mission needs and mission execution in the five phases of the MAL. The MAL is circular, meaning that it is a repetitive methodology triggered by internal and external factors that can affect mission success.



As each phase of the MAL is completed, the data, information and results from that phase become baseline inputs for execution of the next phase. For example, the mission provides baseline inputs for executing the Mission Space and the results of the Mission Space become baseline inputs to the Mission Capacity.

#### **4. Phase One - The Mission Space**

The Mission Space defines the organization's strategic intent – how it will achieve mission success. This includes:

- Strategic Planning – how the organization will focus resources and capabilities (core competencies, differentiation, workforce capabilities, financial capabilities) on achieving strategic objectives and carrying out the mission
- Strategic Objectives – the long term goals that will achieve mission success
- Strategic Pathway – the strategic execution roadmap – what order of steps must the organization take to achieve its strategic objectives

#### **5. Phase Two – The Mission Capacity**

The Mission Capacity defines the organization's mission readiness posture. This means the ability of the organization to employ existing cultural attributes, capabilities and resources to meet both current mission needs and future mission needs. The strategic intent defined in the Mission Space is used to in this phase to ensure that mission readiness assessments are aligned to the company mission and organizational strategy. When there are gaps in readiness for current mission needs, readiness deficits are critical and require immediate mitigation. Where there are gaps in future mission needs, the organization must promptly mitigate the gaps to ensure strategic and mission success. Mission Capacity components include:

- Current mission needs analysis
- Future mission needs analysis
- Analytical Hierarchal Process to determine the core work processes having the greatest impact on strategic objectives - important to know for risk and optimization planning
- Full spectrum risk assessments across the strategic, functional and organizational layers of the organization
- A mission readiness/deficit management report that provides a summary of the organization's Mission Capacity – this is used to create a solution (in Phase Three and Four) for building mission assurance

#### **6. Phase Three – The Mission Needs**

Mission Needs are the controls, countermeasures and deterrents (CCD's) needed to correct the deficits in current and future mission readiness, identified in the Mission Capacity phase. CCD's may be required at the strategic, functional

and operational layers of the organization. These CCD's are wide in scope and may address deficits in the capabilities of the organization such as management expertise, organizational competence; command, control and communications (C<sup>3</sup>); security (can be physical, logical, operational), process and infrastructure, and resources. Mission Needs are tasks that are driven by the findings in Mission Capacity and may include:

- Identifying deficit causes – you can't fix deficits unless you understand what causes them
- A CCD rationalization analysis
- A capability development plan and execution roadmap
- Organizational alignment to develop command and control
- Management systems and departmental development, planning and integration

## **7. Phase Four – The Mission Solution**

The Mission Solution is a project plan for achieving the organization's mission readiness posture. The plan is a roadmap for implementation of CCD's in a work based structure. Tasks in this phase include creating a project plan for implementation of CCD's, including:

- Scope statement
- Gantt chart
- Resource leveling
- Risk mitigation plan
- Implementation plan

## **8. Phase Five – The Concept of Operations (CONOPS)**

The Concept of Operations (CONOPS) is management's blueprint that describes the organization after achieving a mission readiness posture. This is the change from the organization's 'current state' to the 'goal state'. The CONOPS outlines:

- Organizational alignments to the mission – position and role adjustments using a RACI (Responsibility, Accountability, Consult, In-the-loop) Matrix
- The C<sup>3</sup> - the enhanced command, control and communication structure
- The mission aligned capability set – new capabilities and competencies to fill mission needs
- Strategic differentiators – differentiators that provide direct contributors to strategic objectives and mission and tangible value addition to the client

- Competitive advantages – key new business accelerators and client value added services

### **9. Cast Study 1: *The Mission Assurance Loop Deployed for a US Government Contractor***

The company is a \$100,000,000 major provider of military training, support services and force multipliers to the U.S. Department of Defense. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan had been a windfall for the company accelerating annual revenue growth by over 50% year over year, for three years. The company's solutions are specific to intelligence, military operations and culture based subject matter expertise. The executive management team realized that although the company was doing well, it was exposed to extreme specific risk. Over 90% of revenue's were coming from the war efforts. If military operations were scaled back or ended, the company would be in dire financial trouble.

The company had decided that to reduce systemic business risk and to create future opportunity, they would leverage their existing know-how to build commercial products that met existing and emerging market needs. To do this effectively and with minimum risk the company enlisted Reiken Group to employ the Mission Assurance Loop.

Reiken Group representatives met with executives of the company and together defined the mission of the new 'Commercial Services Division'. The mission parameters were then incorporated into **Mission Space** planning. Together, stakeholders from the company and Reiken Group created the strategic intent of the new division for achieving strategic objectives and mission success. A strategic plan was created to: Align the company structure to the new commercial mission, add required critical capabilities to carry out the mission; and build product delivery, marketing and sales functions that leverage existing company capabilities in the government contracting domain.

Next, Reiken Group worked with company stakeholders and managers to determine the **Mission Capacity** of the company to build and execute the strategic plan. Existing capabilities were analyzed to determine the readiness posture for current and future mission needs. The Capability Assessment Process was carried out to determine which core work processes had the largest impact on strategic objectives. A full spectrum risk assessment was carried out incorporating the mission readiness deficits and findings from the Capability Assessment Process. A complete 360 degree picture of the company's mission readiness posture was revealed. Reiken Group found that the company lacked key structure and know-how in the command and control chain, failed to use technology as an enabler to process efficiency, lacked key management expertise, failed to meet security compliance requirements with an adequate security posture and lacked the proper planning and execution expertise.

In the **Mission Needs** Phase, Reiken Group used the information gained from the Mission Capacity to plan and deploy the required controls, countermeasures and deterrents (CCD's) to mitigate risks, correct capability deficits and protect the strategic intent of the company. Next, a rationalization process was conducted on the CCD's to ensure that they were cost relative (did not exceed the cost of vulnerability impact) and relevant to the mission and strategic objectives. An approved CCD list provided to management that addressed mission capacity deficits, risk elements and capability deficits. Some of the CCD's included:

1. Interviewing market domain players decompose their business needs to gather sales intelligence to determine 'buy points' and critical information for incorporation in sales/marketing and capabilities development
2. Implementing an OPSEC program to heighten information security and meet regulatory compliance requirements
3. Staff security awareness training and COMSEC measures in operations
4. TACTIKS training retention and quick reference tools for staff on OPSEC compliance
5. Red Team exercises to test the security posture and prove to clients that information is protected with layered defense
6. The hiring of client facing personnel with key expertise in commercial business and inside sales
7. Development of a client relations strategy to drive inside sales and leverage existing relationships for further business development
8. Creating a RACI Matrix for job responsibility clarity and succession and contingency planning
9. The implementation of an IT Business Continuity Plan
10. Single point of failure analysis on core work processes (based on findings from Analytical Hierarchal Process in Mission Capacity Phase)
11. The implementation of operational reporting and communications tools
12. Improvements to command and control to improve project and operational performance

Reiken Group and the company's management created a **Mission Solution** using the CCD's developed in the Mission Needs Phase. The Mission Solution was a project plan that clearly plotted the roadmap to implementing the CCD's and building the Commercial Services Division on time, within budget and meeting mission and strategic objectives. The project plan included a scope statement, resource planning, a deployment budget, Gantt chart and project management doctrine that identified all project participants; their roles, responsibilities and planned time commitments.

A **Concept of Operations (CONOPS)** was drafted, that described what the organization would look like after implementation of CCD's. This was a blueprint for the company's management team to explain the transition from current state to goal state, and what goal state would look like. These included:

- How the Commercial Services Division command and control structure would operate and integrate with existing organizational structure
- How the new department would leverage existing capabilities and resources to maximize efficiency and control costs
- The new strategic differentiators and competitive advantages of the company and how they should be leveraged
- New capabilities and how they would deliver value and contribute to strategic objectives of the company and the new commercial division
- A comprehensive overview of the readiness posture

After deploying the Mission Assurance Loop methodology, the company gained a 360 degree view of their competitive marketplace; mitigated strategic, functional and operational risks; filled readiness and capability gaps. Today, the company is moving forwards on its plan to introduce commercial products to the marketplace. The management team has a cohesive project plan they are executing to achieve strategic objectives within a mission assurance framework.