ARMY CIO/G-6

Army Enterprise Collaboration Services

What is it?

Army Enterprise Collaboration Services (ECS) will improve knowledge management and promote IT efficiency through the delivery of collaboration capabilities as a managed service. By using existing licenses to provide access to centrally managed versions of Microsoft SharePoint® and IBM FileNet®, the Army will enable team collaboration, content management, records management and business process management among all Army users, regardless of location. Importantly, these enterprise services will integrate with the systems used by Army forces during training and deployment. While the Army will retain oversight of ECS, its day-to-day management will rest with the service provider, the Defense Information Systems Agency (DISA).

Why is it important to the Army?

Today's collaboration environment is limited to local SharePoint® enclaves, making it both difficult and costly to share information across the Army. An enterprise collaboration environment will allow users at different locations to work together easily, improving overall Army productivity and efficiency. It also will help users find and connect with those who have the right expertise and experience.

In addition, ECS will create new opportunities to integrate enterprise information systems the Army already owns into a common set of Army Information Management (AIM) services. As individual Army organizations will not have to take on the extra cost and risks associated with server hosting, operation and maintenance, ECS also will generate savings.

What has the Army done?

The Combined Arms Center approved AIM requirements in 2010. The CIO/G-6, with help from Army Commands, has developed the initial enterprise collaboration baseline and received a service proposal from DISA. To smooth the transition, CIO/G-6 also has captured lessons learned by various Army service providers during their implementations of SharePoint® and FileNet®.

In 2011, the Enterprise Governance Board designated representatives from each command to serve on the ECS Tiger Team. The Tiger Team will shape the future phases of ECS by contributing to the development of the concept of operations and service-level agreements, and providing real-world use cases for testing in the enterprise environment.

What does the Army have planned for the future?

The ECS environment will come online in early fiscal year 2012. Over the next several months, the Army will continue to refine enterprise collaboration requirements and will determine the exact suite of capabilities to be offered. CIO/G-6 also will craft a basic plan for organizations to follow in the transition from individual instances of SharePoint® to the enterprise service, and will formally update Army-wide policy by 2013.

The ECS environment is linked to other CIO/G-6 efforts, including Army Data Center Consolidation, Enterprise Email and Enterprise Active Directory and Authentication.

For more information, and to participate in community discussions of this initiative, please visit: https://www.milsuite.mil/book/groups/army-sharepoint ■

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The Network of 2020: Powering America's Army

The individual warfighter and the collective Army rely more heavily than ever before on information technology to execute the mission. The data and capabilities Soldiers need – among them intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance, communications and command and control – are all obtained through the Network.

Today's versatile mix of tailorable, linked organizations operates on a rotational cycle and conducts wide-ranging, full-spectrum operations. For the Network to fulfill the requirements of this dynamic force – securely, on demand and as far as the tactical edge reaches – it must become a unified, global system.

The Army is laying the foundation for this global Network by standardizing the underlying architecture; consolidating and centralizing Network operation, defense and services; and reforming development, acquisition and fielding processes. Ultimately, these changes will produce a seamless, technologically modern Network that is always available and always trusted, regardless of location or environment. ■

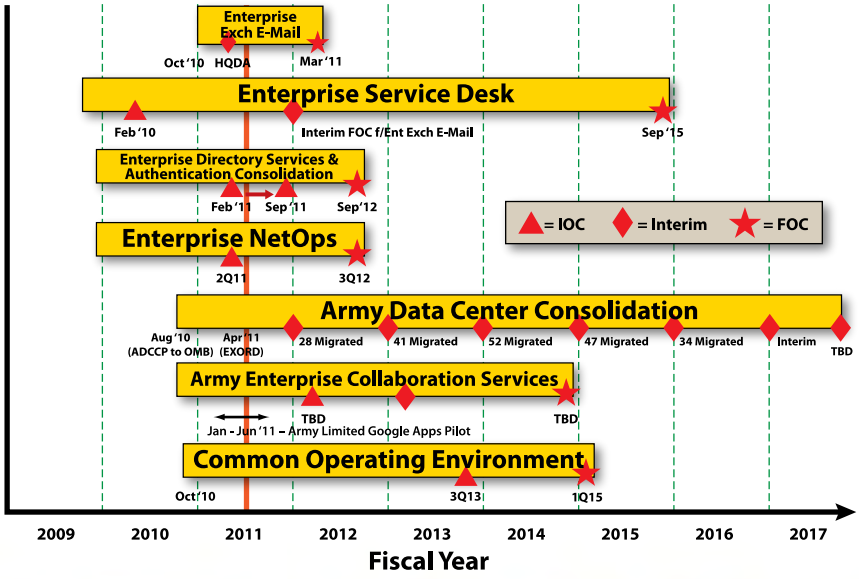
Why is LandWarNet important to the warfighter?

The ability to fight upon arrival is critical to enabling the predominantly CONUS-based Army to respond effectively to any threat in any environment. The Army's current networks, information systems and resources are not sufficient to support a true fight-upon-arrival capacity. Access to the Network and information technology resources is inconsistent; units must deal with numerous IT-related changes as they move from one physical location to another and one phase of the Army Force Generation cycle to another. However, by providing all warfighters universal access to their applications, data and collaboration and training resources, as well as one email address and telephone number, the Army will achieve this essential fight-upon-arrival capability.

Where Are We Now?

Over the past year, the Army has adopted standards and protocols, based on those of the commercial sector, for the Network's architecture and transmission means. The goal is to accelerate software development and increase network security. The Army also began to centralize Network management and services through initiatives such as enterprise email, collaboration, directory services and authentication, and data center consolidation. Additionally, the new Army Cyber Command assumed responsibility for operation and defense of the Network. With fiscal reality and the always adapting enemy in mind, the Army will continue to define and refine Network doctrine, tactics, techniques and procedures, and to incorporate technological advances, customer demands, national strategic objectives and process improvements. ■

Top Strategic Initiatives and Implementation Timeline



Enterprise Exchange Email & Calendar

Enterprise Service Desk

Enterprise Directory Services and Authentication Consolidation

Enterprise Network Operations (NetOps)

Army Data Center Consolidation

Army Enterprise Collaboration Services

Common Operating Environment

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