



RCAS NEWS



OCTOBER 2016

FY17 VOLUME I

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RCAS LEADS THE WAY WITH AGILE SOLUTIONS FOR DOD

The Defense Acquisition University (DAU) endorsed the Reserve Component Automation Systems (RCAS) Agile Solution Factory (ASF) as an experience-based best practice across the Department of Defense (DoD). Over the summer, members of DAU's Foundational Learning Directorate (FLD) and Capital and Northeast (CNE) Region met with members of the RCAS program to examine four specific areas of the RCAS ASF: the RCAS agile transformation approach, including the RCAS Innovation Engine; implementing agile at an enterprise scale, including optimizing agile; integrating information assurance across the agile lifecycle and implementing earned value management within agile. DAU is working with DoD on advancing agile in government and has advertised RCAS's work as a prime example of agile transformation.



Mr. Robert Reid, standing, Senior Program Director for the RCAS Prime Contract, opened the discussion with introductions of the DAU and RCAS staff. Photo credit: Mr. Pete Van Schagen, RCAS Support Contractor.

Mr. Robert Reid, Senior Program Director for the RCAS Prime Contractor, explained that RCAS successfully transitioned from a waterfall to an agile methodology within the first 45 days of the contract (during the contract transition phase). Robert talked about the transition to agile methodology and how the scrum teams went through storming-norming-performing phases in 45 days, to put in place the new agile development methodology. As the team began to implement automation (including test automation and continuous integration), the RCAS ASF started showing optimal performance within the first six months. The agile approach focuses on quick and responsive software development designed to optimize the use and effectiveness of the RCAS suite of applications for Soldiers. The implementation of agile has had far-reaching effects across the Army National Guard (ARNG) and the U.S. Army Reserve (USAR) by enabling RCAS to release high-quality products and services more frequently to meet stakeholders'

requirements on time and on point.

Having stabilized the operation within the ASF, RCAS is driving towards DevOps and further optimizing and measuring the performance of the ASF. At a cultural level, DevOps is a set of tools that breaks the wall between operations and development and molds a uniform team which results in an optimal solution for the warfighter. It focuses on automating as many tests as practical, provides early feedback, and includes security

from cradle to grave. This is an example of the constant innovation within the RCAS program.

DAU looked at the RCAS ASF model to see how other programs might use the agile approach to shape their future in a more effective and efficient manner. The key to RCAS's success is transparency with the stakeholders and a trusting relationship with its contractors. RCAS's agile management tool, VersionOne, provides a single, user-friendly system for planning and tracking all of the "epics" (ongoing implementation initiatives), sprints, user stories, defects, tasks, tests and issues. Being able to responsibly empower teams and create high trust/quality delivery environments has yielded significant benefits for RCAS. Software is released every quarter to accommodate ever-changing operating environments that demand innovative, adaptable information technology solutions. It also allows developers to satisfy key requirements through close collaboration with end users.

RCAS is excited to work with DAU to promote agile solutions and looks forward to sharing agile successes in the future. Those interested in learning more about implementing agile software development in government programs should contact Dennis J. Lujan, RCAS Product Lead, at (703) 806-3095 or Bob Skertic, IT Learning Director, DAU, at (703) 805-5281.

PL CORNER



MR. DENNIS J. LUJAN
RCAS PRODUCT LEAD

It is hard for me to believe that it has been over three months since I was introduced as your Product Lead – and I know you have heard this before: “Time flies when you are having a good time!” I sincerely thank all of you for making that statement an absolute truth!! As you may recall my immediate past duty assignment was with the Environmental Protection Agency which followed my active duty Army career – it is GREAT to be working with and for Soldiers and the outstanding civilians, family members and communities that support our units and organizations – I am excited to be part of RCAS team.

Over the past three months, I have had a great introduction to our RCAS stakeholders both at the National Guard Bureau (NGB) and the U.S. Army Reserve Command (USARC), as well as visits to a few organizations in the field. I am looking forward to participating in my first meeting with our RCAS “Board of Directors” – aka Requirements Control Board (RCB), which will convene later this month. I encourage you to read the article on the recognition by the Defense Acquisition University (DAU) of RCAS as a “Best Practice for Agile in Government”. Also please catch up on our continuing initiative to improve our application release process with the deployment of RCAS Release 7.1.0, which deployed on October 5, 2016.

I sincerely thank you for all you do for our Soldiers and their families and for your continued interest in what our team is doing – I pledge to you that together we will continue to make RCAS all it can be -- it is my honor to serve you.

RCAS RELEASE NEWS

RCAS Release 7.1.0 – October 2016



RCAS Release 7.1.0 was deployed on 6 October 2016 and given a major release version number since it requires that the operating system of the database server be upgraded to Server 2012 R2. Other enhancements, fixes, and updates that are part of RCAS Release 7.1.0 include:

- The Mobilization Planning Data Viewer (MPDV) application will now freeze the header that contains station names for a Soldier Readiness Processing (SRP), making it easier for administrators to assign operators to the correct station, especially for large numbers of operators. With the Total Army Personnel Database-Reserve (TAPDB-R) replacing the Regional Level Application Software (RLAS) for the U.S. Army Reserve (USAR); Unit Mobilization, Alert Notification Roster and Soldier Contact Information will now be obtained from the interface with TAPDB-R so the statement “No Value in RLAS” will not populate anymore.
- Safety and Occupational Health (SOH) includes a change of the Risk Assessment Code (RAC) 3 Description to Medium vice Moderate. There is also a regulatory verbiage change for Contact Type values for an Off Duty person in Ground Accidents.
- The Force Authorization Team has made a correction to Permanent Order Format 740 and now allows users to select multiple

regions at the same time within the Permanent Order System (POS) application. The Organizational Authority (OA) application now includes days left in management analytics, sections for providing comments and selection criteria page filters for National Guard Bureau (NGB) users within the Stationing Plan module.

Finally, the team expanded the Graphics Briefing Assistant (GBA) to run on Selected Plan which is also used exclusively for NGB Headquarters Level 1 users.

- The Personnel Application Team updated the Personnel Eligibility Roster and updated NGB Forms 4100-1A-R-E and 4100-1B-R-E. DA Forms 5500 (Male Body Fat Worksheet) and DA Form 5501 (Female Body Fat Worksheet) were put into an Adobe format. Finally, the Engineering Change Proposal Form ECP 15-044R was completed to allow for the publication of Special Duty Assignment Pay (SDAP) Orders for Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) 89D (Explosive Ordnance Disposal).

For more information on any RCAS Release, please contact Mr. Jim Cook, Chief, RCAS Software Sustainment Division by phone at 703-806-3071 or by email at jim.n.cook.civ@mail.mil.



**MEET YOUR NEW PERSONNEL
PRODUCT OWNER**



MAJ SHAKERNA L. EVANS

MAJ Shakerna L. Evans joined RCAS as a Personnel Applications Product Owner on 29 August 2016. MAJ Evans has over 18 years of experience in the Army National Guard as a traditional Guardsmen and Active Guard Reserve (AGR) Officer.

She has held various assignments on active duty as a Logistics Officer. One of her more memorable duty assignments included serving as a Deputy Support Operations Officer with the 148th Brigade Support Battalion (BSB), 48th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT) in Kabul, Afghanistan. She continued her logistics career by Commanding Alpha Company, 148th BSB out of Dublin, Georgia and served as the Fuel Operations Officer for the 224th Sustainment Brigade out of Long Beach, California for over four years, before joining the AGR program at the National Guard Bureau (NGB), Arlington, Virginia.

As a member of the AGR program, MAJ Evans managed service contracts for the Army National Guard G2/G5/G8 Directorates. MAJ Evans also served as the Joint Reception Center OIC during Ulchi Freedom Guardian 2014 in Seoul, Korea.

During her free time MAJ Evans enjoys reading, traveling and outdoor activities. She currently volunteers with the March of Dimes to end premature birth and Sickle Cell Disease Association of America to promote the search for a cure.

START TO FINISH — RELEASE SUSTAINMENT

Since August 2013 RCAS has used an agile Scrum methodology to sustain its software. Using this methodology, RCAS is able to distribute three to four new releases to the U.S. Army Reserve (USAR) and Army National Guard (ARNG) each year, which more than doubled our previous capability.

The release process takes 12 weeks to go from planning to deployment. Planning for the next release begins before the current release is deployed. It involves direct product owner coordination with our functional leads, who are representatives from the ARNG and USAR, that review and prioritize back log items like Engineering Change Proposals (ECPs) and defects for update in the next release. Once the priority list is finalized, the product owner provides the list to the business analyst on each product team. The business analyst, in collaboration with the product owner, Scrum Master and product team, decide what items from the priority list become part of the next release after all mandatory requirements are scheduled. Mandatory requirements are things like security vulnerabilities that must be migrated, tested and implemented; Microsoft Windows upgrades, browser upgrades, Oracle patches and automated test scripts to name a few. This process is identified as back log grooming.

From the priority list the development team, working with the product owner, begin to work on those items scheduled as part of the next release. Working in what is called Sprint Cycles

(RCAS works in three week Sprint Cycles), the team works on the mandatory requirements, enhancements and defects that have been identified. There are usually four Sprints per release. At the end of each Sprint cycle, the team meets with the product owner and functional leads to demonstrate the accomplishments, seek government acceptance of the changes and that they meet or exceed requirements and then review any pending items for the release. The Sprint review also permits priorities to be discussed should there need to be a change.

Once the demonstration is completed, the new enhancements and defects are placed into a testing or server environment that can be accessed by Government Subject Matter Experts (GSME). The GSMEs ensure the enhancements or defects work as designed. The testing goes on for a week after which the results are collected by RCAS and shared with the product teams. Should an item not pass GSME testing, the failed enhancement or defect is then re-scheduled in the current or next Sprint for correction.

After the fourth Sprint, release planning activities start all over again. It takes approximately one month after the last Sprint for a full Release to be deployed.

For more information on any RCAS Release, please contact Mr. Jim Cook, Chief, RCAS Software Sustainment Division by phone at 703-806-3071 or by email at jim.n.cook.civ@mail.mil.

VENUE FOR THE OCTOBER RCB - OCAR HQS

The Office of the Chief, Army Reserve (OCAR) Headquarters will be the venue for the 27 October 2016 Requirements Control Board (RCB) meeting, located at Fort Belvoir, VA. This will provide the opportunity for participants to visit this state of the art organizational headquarters which houses the Chief, Army Reserve and his primary support staff.

The October 2016 meeting will again provide the ARNG and USAR technical and functional representatives the opportunity to communicate directly with the Product Office team regarding both their current activities and other topics that are relative to supporting their respective information technology capabilities. Planned agenda items include Product Office updates on the FY17 budget and potential impacts to future operations. Program status reports will include general updates followed by stakeholder



OCAR HQs Building, Fort Belvoir, VA

assessments and comments.

RCAS Product Office Points of Contact are Mr. William Ware, Requirements Manager, by phone at 703-806-3212 or email at william.m.ware.civ@mail.mil, or Ms. Rita Bartholomew, Requirements Management Support, by phone at 703-806-3119 or by email at rita.g.bartholomew.ctr@mail.mil.

RCAS RELEASE 7.1.0 TOWN HALL

The RCAS Town Hall to introduce release 7.1.0 was hosted on 7 September 2016 by Mr. Max Dunn, Mobilization and Safety application Product Owner for the RCAS Software Sustainment Division via Defense Collaboration Services (DCS) for the Army National Guard community.



Certificate and RCAS Integrated Database (IDB) Connectivity; installation of RCAS applications; and RCAS database updates. If the field has trouble locating the RCAS Share package, please submit a trouble ticket to the National Guard Bureau (NGB) Help Desk at 1-800-821-3097 or send an email request to NGB-Helpdesk@mail.mil.

The majority of States and Territories were in attendance to discuss a number of topics related to the upcoming installation of RCAS Release 7.1.0 and Lessons Learned from the installation of RCAS Release 7.0.14. Mr. Dunn stressed that following installation procedures and submitting Pre and Post Health Checks are vital to the successful installation of RCAS.

Many more topics were addressed and may be viewed at the following location on Army Knowledge Online

(AKO) at <https://www.us.army.mil/suite/files/6748475>.

The RCAS Enterprise Software Installer (RESI) is now retired and is replaced by the RCAS Installer. RCAS Installer has the capability to check for the following: Secure Sockets Layer (SSL)

If you are interested in attending future Town Halls, please contact Ms. Rita Bartholomew at (703) 806 – 3119 or at rita.g.bartholomew.ctr@mail.mil. The community is encouraged to complete a brief survey at the completion of each release in order to assist RCAS in improving future deployment capabilities.

WORK IN PROGRESS — FY16 PRODUCT REFRESH

Thank YOU for the very aggressive support to this year’s Product Refresh effort. Your combined RCAS Requirements Management Team, consisting of government, program support and prime contractor staff, primary G6 staff members from the National Guard Bureau (NGB) with the States/Territories, and the U.S. Army Reserve Command (USARC), sincerely appreciate your continued support. We stand by to assist you in any way we can to improve both your organizational and individual Soldier operational capabilities.

Bartholomew, Requirements Management Support, at (703) 806 -3119 or by email at rita.g.bartholomew.ctr@mail.mil.

As you know, our FY16 program acquisition objectives focused on products and services to continue the savings that you initiated in FY14. This year’s product refresh improves overall system security, sustains your respective organizational infrastructures and delivers end user devices to support our units and Soldiers.



The system equipment and product requirement collection phase is complete; quantity and cost comparisons, consolidation and documentation of the total RCAS infrastructure are underway. This total enterprise documentation of direct support information technology requirements provide the Product Office with both accurate and acknowledged information that continues to be extremely important data for the formulation of the RCAS budget. Again – Thank YOU.

Staging Area for RCAS Product Refresh equipment at the RCAS Prime Contractor Warehouse facility in Chantilly, VA. Photo Credit: Mr. Lenny Ratliff, RCAS Prime Contactor, Project Manager.

RCAS Product Office Points of Contact for the FY16 Product Refresh are Mr. Saj George, Deputy Product Lead, at (703) 806-3099 or by email at sajjan.m.george.civ@mail.mil or Ms. Rita

RCAS PROVIDES ONSITE SRP SUPPORT

The RCAS Mobilization Planning Data Viewer (MPDV) Team continues to provide support for Soldier Readiness Processing (SRP) events. Mr. Max Dunn, the RCAS MPDV Product Owner, provided SRP support for the 812th Military Police (MP) Company at the U.S. Army Reserve (USAR) Center in Orangeburg, NY from 13-15 October 2016.

One of the most important aspects an SRP event occurs at the very beginning of every SRP, the check-in process. Using MPDV gives the SRP support staff the ability to manage and track their Soldiers in real time through all the SRP stations until they check-out at the end of the event.

The RCAS POC arrives at least a day before the start of the SRP event and provides the SRP support staff with specific onsite guidance on how to use the SRP support module of MPDV. Mr. Dunn guided the team through setting up the event and how to add the stations in MPDV that will track the "Ready" or "Not Ready" status of the Soldiers. Mr. Dunn also worked with unit



SPC Contrestra, 812th MP Company SRP Support Staff, processes a Soldier at the Medical, Dental and Vision station using MPDV to record his "Ready" or "Not Ready" status. Photo Credit: Mr. Max Dunn, RCAS MPDV Product Owner.



Ms. Figueroa and 1LT Kiren, 812th MP Company SRP Support Staff, check-in Soldiers into the SRP using MPDV . Photo Credit: Mr. Max Dunn, RCAS MPDV Product Owner.

leadership during the event to ensure they understood the tools, reports and real time tracking capability that MPDV provides.

The support provided had a very positive impact on the 812th MP Company's ability to capture accurate Soldier Readiness data for 229 Soldiers into the enterprise web-based MPDV application.

To assist unit personnel, unit administrators and commanders with the use of this time-saving MPDV tool, RCAS offers MPDV Leadership Workshops, briefings and SRP support for all levels of command. This support is fully funded by RCAS so there is no cost to the field.

Want to know more about MPDV and what it can do for you? Go to the RCAS homepage on Army Knowledge Online (AKO) at <https://www.us.army.mil/suite/page/207093>. There you will have access to the latest MPDV information, briefings, contacts, the MPDV schedule of events and much more.

To request MPDV SRP support or a project briefing contact Mr. Max Dunn, MPDV Product Owner, by phone at 703-806-3128, or by e-mail at max.g.dunn.civ@mail.mil.

UPCOMING CONFERENCE/EVENT SUPPORT

RCAS is exhibiting and/or providing support at the following events:

**Army National Guard and U.S. Army Reserve
Multi-Component Joint Assessment Conference (JAC) and
SRP Support Events**

Multi-Component JAC Support—Fort Leavenworth, Kansas
FY17, 7-10 November 2016

If you are planning to attend any of these workshops or conference events, visit the RCAS area for a software demonstration and to discuss RCAS products and services. The RCAS Team is available to provide briefings and answer RCAS related questions at various ARNG and USAR events.

To request RCAS participation at your next conference or workshop event, contact Mr. Max Dunn, MPDV Product Owner, by phone at 703-806-3128, or by e-mail at max.g.dunn.civ@mail.mil.

RCAS TRAINING CORNER



MAJ Shakena Evans prepares for her RPAM Training. Photo Credit: Pete Van Schagen, RCAS Product Owner Support.

Our newest Product Owner for the RCAS Personnel applications – MAJ Shakena Evans, is fully immersed in the latest RCAS training program initiatives. MAJ Evans’ new role is to not only communicate her vision of how the RCAS Personnel applications are designed, maintained and effectively perform, but to ensure the dissemination of targeted training for the ARNG. In September, MAJ Evans participated in the development of an RCAS application presentation created for the new RCAS Product Lead, Mr. Dennis Lujan. In October, MAJ Evans is scheduled to

participate and observe the Personnel Retirement Points Accounting Management (RPAM) course that will be conducted On-Site at Fort Belvoir, VA. Mr. Steve Longoria, a member of the RCAS Training Team, will present the introductory RPAM lesson. RPAM is just one of the PERS applications that Major Evans will support in regards to ARNG training. The table below outlines RPAM and the other RCAS Personnel applications that MAJ Evans is responsible for.

RCAS Personnel Applications	
MILPO Orders	Capabilities: Manage Orders Functions • Order formats • Order Number Sequence • Oder Searches • Reviews Orders • Report Generator
RPAM	Capabilities: Record retirement points Functions • Archives • Corrects and Uploads Points • Milestone Letters • Retirement Record Displays • Search
UPS/CMS	Capabilities: Manage personnel data down to the unit level Functions – Displays – Records • Awards • Education Records • Organization Assignments • Personnel Records • AFPT • Forms, Letters, and Reports

MAJ Evans looks forward to collaborating with training team members Ms. Catherine Kent, Training Manager and Ms. Tangela Powell, Instructional Systems Designer (ISD), as the RCAS Training Team implements the new training methodology that has been a proven success in student retention, content retention, student participation and increased used of the RCAS Suite of Applications.

Ms. Tangela G. Powell joined the RCAS team on July 18, 2016. She is the ISD for all RCAS applications. Her role is to support the RCAS Training Program in the capacity of curriculum development,

multimedia support, and administrative tasks that maintain training milestones and initiatives.

Originally hailing from Memphis, TN, Ms. Powell has a total of 22 years of combined experience as a secondary and collegiate Applied Mathematics instructor, curriculum developer and instructional designer.

Ms. Powell is a graduate of Rust College in Holly Springs, MS and holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Applied Mathematics. She is also a graduate of The University of Memphis in Memphis, TN and holds a Master of Arts degree in Curriculum and Instruction.

Ms. Powell has extensive experience supporting the Department of Defense and its mission to evolve its advancement of technology and its use by military personnel. Ms. Powell has stated that her responsibility as a Training Development team member is to never lose sight of what matters most – the effective and efficient training of the military customer. Ms. Powell believes - regardless of whether the individual customer is given orders to report for Wartime Theater or temporary duty, being well trained is vital for daily sustainment of operations, the safety of our military personnel, the morale of our US Forces, and the successful completion of US military directives.

Look for either of these very talented members of the RCAS Team at your next RCAS training experience.

To schedule training for your organization, contact Mr. Robert G. Medley, RCAS Training Director, at 703-806-3163, Robert.G.Medley.civ@mail.mil, or contact Ms. Catherine Kent, RCAS Training Manager at 703-434-6231, Catherine.Kent@caci.com. Alternatively, you can submit a “Request for RCAS Training – APPLICATION NAME” helpdesk ticket through the NGB Helpdesk at ng.ncr.arng.mbx.helpdesk-ngb@mail.mil, or 800-821-3097. For the USAR, contact your Major Subordinate Command Point of Contact for RCAS application training.



Ms. Tangela Powell. Photo Credit: Ms. Catherine Kent, RCAS Training Manager.



We are on the web at

<https://www.us.army.mil/suite/page/207093>

Want to provide input to RCAS News or be added to the distribution list, contact Mr. Robert G. Medley at robert.g.medley.civ@mail.mil.
Reserve Component Automation Systems, ATTN: RCAS, 6010 6th Street, Building 1465B, Fort Belvoir, Virginia 22060