



# SFIA plays a role in countering weapons of mass destruction

## DTRA uses SFIA to transition from being technology focussed to that of 'collaborative innovation'.

The "IT" world is rapidly changing. In fact, when it is **not** might be a more accurate statement of fact: now is particularly evolutionary. The "DTRA 2210 IT/Cyberspace Workforce Development Guide"...explains this further by saying:

"Within a broader Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction (CWMD) mission-oriented context, the IT practitioner's role will increasingly move from one of policing and enforcing to encouraging and advising. Therefore, the IT role, particularly within a CWMD context, will transform from a strict "technology" orientation to more collaboratively 'innovating together.'"

It was felt that the Skills Framework for the Information Age (SFIA) was a good fit to help transition the department from being technology focused to that of collaborative innovation.

### Introducing SFIA to DTRA J6

J6's CIO, Mr Burton Post, had already identified SFIA Principles and Practices as "the wave of the IT future". On further investigation it was noted that the key objective of DTRA as a whole is knowledge management - which dovetails neatly with exactly what SFIA represents - the need for a future skillset that applies integration of information into true expert knowledge for success; not just within the IT community.

BSMimpact was initially asked to conduct an accredited "**Understanding SFIA**" training course for 11 attendees. This would give a selected sample of personnel in J6 a solid understanding of the framework and show how it could help transition the organization forward.

After the training was completed, a number of personnel were asked to perform a **SFIA Self-Assessment** using BSMimpact's online tool. It was felt that these people would likely serve as the "best" ambassadors for the resulting changes that were going to be necessary within the IT culture.

*"Our thinking was extraordinarily consistent with the SFIA approach to information use, information sharing, knowledge generation, knowledge services, and ultimately achievement and consequential employment of true 'wisdom' when it came to a significant US national security priority - the combating and countering of Weapons of Mass Destruction",* commented Donald Minner.

"Matthew was a great instructor, experienced and insightful in his sharing of important SFIA-driven procedures and practices for world-class IT professionals. And the SFIA concepts appear to be a great fit for what our DTRA J6 is trying to accomplish—transition us to the brave, new world of future IT concepts and practices".

- Donald Minner, DTRA J6 Information Operations Lead, Quality-Analysis-Synchronization Team

Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA) has one main focus: to keep Weapons of Mass Destruction out of the hands of terrorists and other enemies by locking down, monitoring, and destroying weapons and weapons related materials. DTRA J6, Information Operations, serves as the underlying information technology and knowledge services entity for all of DTRA.

With a vision to "inspire the exchange and creation of knowledge by providing quality solutions and capabilities that are aligned to CWMD mission performance", J6 provides all IT related services and capabilities necessary to meet DTRA and SCC-WMD mission requirements.

### Moving Forward

The plan moving forward is to use the SFIA Framework as the underlying framework to determine professional training for the entire DTRA J6 workforce.

Each of the attendees of the 'Understanding SFIA' training course currently serve as advocates for SFIA within J6; employees are encouraged to use these people for assistance, guidance in understanding their skills and what they need to achieve to update or improve those skills.

SFIA now forms the basis for explicit skills categories and their descriptions are now contained within the recently updated DTRA IT/Cyberspace Functional Community Manager Workforce Development Guide. They will also use the SFIA Competencies as the framework for updating and developing specific position descriptions and to revise and update the organisation's internal roles and responsibilities.

To further integrate the use of SFIA within the organisation, J6 is capitalizing on SFIA in parallel with an expert US Federal Government consultant, Commonwealth Center for High Performing Organizations to help insert and instill behavioural changes within the J6 workforce. This includes organizational change, leadership and management development, and team skills, all delivered through seminars, consulting interventions and coaching.

*"We are currently conducting cross-cutting exploratory development of a practical, internal J6 'operating concept' that draws upon SFIA, CCHPO, PFM and other process improvement mechanisms to push process improvements into the J6 workforce for improving mission performance; not easy to do, yet we are making forward success in doing so, and the incremental small wins are encouraging and constructive".*