Lessons Learned on Cooperative Government/Industry Appraisals 

aka Registered Appraisals

Melanie G. Benhoff
Integrity Applications, Inc
mbenhoff@integrity-apps.com
Cooperative Appraisals

A definition:

- Government members or representatives participate on a corporate assessment
- Goal is to establish additional confidence in impartiality and objectivity of assessment results
- Results signed by government members to assert that objective appraisal process was used in conformance with the instrument’s method description
- Results (including findings) “registered” with SEI
  - Registration “certificate” confirms “fact of” and receipt of appraisal materials / details / results and compliance with defined appraisal process
  - May be useful in lieu of customer conducting their own evaluation of the appraised organization
Impetus for Initial Interest in Cooperative Appraisals

1. OSD Policy, Jan 2001, requiring Level 3 Evaluation in order to compete for DoD Acquisitions
   - Not corporate assessment, but government (or representative) evaluation
   - ACAT1 programs, but some services applying policy to other programs

2. Discomfort/unwillingness to rely solely on corporate appraisals for understanding corporate capabilities & process maturity

3. Resources and schedule implications on government evaluations during source selections

Program Offices could accommodate best practices / policy influences through increased collaboration in corporate assessments for process improvement
Collaborative or Registered Appraisals

1. Appraisers representing government offices participate on corporate assessments as equal member of appraisal team
   - Trained/qualified appraisers supplied and sponsored by government office

2. Results “registered” with SEI
   - Contractor can make registered results available to prospective customers/government offices
   - Could be used in lieu of SCE-like evaluation for acquisition while retaining objective perspective of appraisers not sponsored by corporate organization
Who can be a “Government” Member of Cooperative Appraisal Team?

1. **Government employee**
   - Program office member
   - DCAA rep
   - DCMA rep
   - Other

1. **FFRDC**

1. **CAAS/SETA Support to Program Offices or Agencies**

Key Criteria
- Proper training and experience
- Participation Sponsored By (Paid for By) Government Agency

As long as no consulting relationship to appraised organization for process improvement implementation
Role of Government Representatives on Appraisal Team

1. Understand corporate objectives for appraisal
2. Bring experience / appraisal knowledge/ model knowledge as full-fledged member of appraisal team
3. Fulfill responsibilities as full-fledged appraisal team member
   - Not merely an observer of the appraisal team
   - Ensure their vote/voice counts as much as every other appraisal team member

After appraisal:
1. Sign registered appraisal forms
   - Attesting to completeness/validity of process used for appraisal
2. Respond to questions from prospective “consumers” of appraisal information during next 2 years
   - Government program offices seeking maturity level information in support of acquisition
1st Registered Appraisal -- Context

1. First cooperative appraisal conducted Summer 02
   - Appraisal Method: SCAMPI V 1.1
   - Reference Model: CMMI SE/SW, Staged, Level 5

2. Scope of appraisal, Lockheed Martin, M&DS

3. Size of team: 6
   - 3 of the 6 were SEI-authorized lead appraisers
   - 2 of the 6 were SCAMPI lead assessors

4. “On Site” Window:
   - 3 days team training/readiness review
   - 10 days of on-site appraisal activities
Factors Affecting Effectiveness of Cooperative Appraisal

1. Early identification and involvement of Government appraisal team members
2. Planning
3. Qualifications of team members
4. Composition/Responsibilities of mini teams
5. Interpersonal dynamics of appraisal team members
6. Readiness of the appraised organization
Lessons Learned

1 Early Identification/Acceptance of Government Appraisal Team Members (6 months or longer before appraisal)
   - Ensure entire appraisal team is balanced/optimized
   - Will drive appraisal team approach
     - Match mini teams to complement experience/expertise of all appraisal team members
     - Organizational overviews and documentation needs
   - Allows for optimized PA assignments
   - Preserves appraisal schedule with early lock-in
   - Allows time to identify and resolve any training needs
   - Allows time to look for alternatives if nominee lacking critical training/experience
Lessons Learned

1. Effective Planning
   - Involve government-sponsored appraisal team members AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE in corporate planning activities
     - Helps build shared understanding of corporate objectives and expectations
       - Senior management’s focus on process improvement and maturity level rating
       - Historical background of organization in their process journey (what has worked, what hasn’t)
     - Address team building, training, appraisal focus issues early without disruption to corporate assessment plans
Lessons Learned

1. **Qualifications of Government Team Members**
   - Must have strong experience with formal appraisals
     - Must be a lead appraiser or candidate lead appraiser
   - Must have strong foundation with reference model
     - Experience using same model in appraisals
   - Must have ample experience with relevant development & engineering activities
     - 10-15 years system development
     - Similar business/technical domain a plus

Government Members represents credibility of appraisal to other Government Agencies

\[\checkmark \text{the credibility of their affirmation is limited by their credibility as an appraiser}\]
Lessons Learned

1. Composition/Responsibilities of Mini Teams
   - SCAMPI concept of mini-teams does not directly support concept that government members of cooperative assessments can attest to process and be comfortable with results
     - Mini-team activities can be much more diffused than in CBA-IPI or SCE
       - Allows for more “in-parallel” data gathering and consolidation
     - Make sure Appraisal Plan allows for sufficient “in serial” data gathering and processing to accommodate Registered Appraisal objectives
     - Make sure team data consolidation and consensus activities allow for sufficient time to share information across mini-team
       - Mini Teams responsible for justifying characterizations at project level to rest of the team during consensus…
   - Not just counting types/pieces of objective evidence
     - “Red-teaming” project characterizations across mini-teams in preparation for team consensus…
Lessons Learned 4 (continued)

1. Composition/Responsibilities of Mini Teams
   - Put considerable thought into how to organize mini teams given participation of government representatives
     - Most controversial PA’s will be those at higher maturity levels
     - Government members will have less familiarity with organizational aspects of processes
   - Don’t put government members on same mini team
   - Don’t put government members only on less controversial or less stringent PA’s
   - Don’t organize mini teams by maturity level
     - Doesn’t balance work across mini teams
   - Consider organizing mini teams by process category or some other method to balance appraisal work by a conscious theme
     - Project Mgmt (6)  Engineering (6)
     - Process Mgmt (5)  Support (5)
Lessons Learned

Interpersonal Dynamics of Appraisal Team Members

- High probability government members have not been on an appraisal with rest of team members before
- High probability government members not as familiar with organization’s policies, standards, processes, terminology, etc as rest of team (which more than likely will have experience appraising this organization)
  - Team building and team communication is crucial to successful appraisal
  - Make time for these tasks during planning and training activities
- Model interpretations need to be normalized across team
  - Even with team of well-qualified, experienced evaluators
- Objective evidence interpretations and definitions of sufficiency need to be consistent and reasonable
  - What’s a Direct Artifact versus Indirect Artifact versus Direct Affirmation?
  - What kind of objective evidence is sufficient to demonstrate “fully implemented”?
    - One direct artifact (i.e. minutes from one meeting)? There are many types of direct artifacts… so what will be sufficient
Lessons Learned

1. Readiness/Maturity of the Appraised Organization
   - Meeting the intent of the model as well as the “letter of the law”
     - Conservative Mapping of Organization/Project Processes and Artifacts to Model
     - Organization doesn’t try to stretch processes to apply to higher level process areas
   - Availability of additional objective evidence and people to respond to appraisers’ questions
     - May be more questions/info requests than in typical corporate assessment
   - Organization welcomes an objective appraisal
Output of Registered Appraisal*

Appraisal Findings
• Outbrief
• Characterization of Organization by PA
• Significant Strengths and Weaknesses

Statement of Appraisal Results
• Organization/Division
• Projects Appraised
• Appraisal Model
• Appraisal Method
• Signatures
  • Sponsor
  • Lead Appraiser
  • Government Reps (& contact info)

Registered results valid for 2 years

SEI Repository for Registered Appraisal Results

*For further information contact SEI Customer Relations at 412-268-5800 or customer relations@sei.cmu.edu
Remaining Policy Issues

1. Degree to which registered appraisals used in source selections
   - Education/awareness/motivation

2. FAR implications for competitions
   - If not all offerors in acquisition have cooperative appraisal results available/registered

3. Near term staffing drain on government agencies to get initial cooperative appraisals registered
   - Rely on FFRDCs and CAAS/SETA
Summary

1. Age-old question: Does sponsorship and appraisal team composition affect outcome/results of appraisal?

2. Age-old constraints:
   - Staffing/resource constraints for implementing OSD policy
   - Impact of Government Class A appraisals on acquisition schedules

3. Solution sets:
   - Other than SCAMPI Class A Appraisals
     - SCAMPI Class B Appraisal Evaluation Method *(to be defined early 03)*
     - System / Software Risk Evaluations
     - Process Benchmarking Evaluations
     - ........
   - Cooperative Government/Industry Appraisals with Registered Results