

Part 3: Commitment to Effective Continuity of Government

Motivated by the President's Management Agenda goal to make organizations more cohesive and efficient, as well as the Missile Defense Agency Director's charge to establish a world-class engineering organization to better support internal MDA customers and the Warfighter, Mr. Englander's vision, creativity, and leadership resulted in a streamlined, highly productive organization attuned to the Agency's operational tempo with an engineering structure consistently exceeding the information requirements of both internal and external decision-makers. What makes this an exceptional accomplishment is that Mr. Englander managed this feat in the face of three major challenges.

First, the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure commission required the shift of essentially all engineering and management functions from the National Capital Region to Redstone Arsenal in Huntsville, Alabama. With only about 20% of the engineering workforce choosing to relocate, Mr. Englander faced the prospect of simply not having enough experienced people to do the job and a serious degradation in engineering skills critical to this complex development program. Through exceptional determination and innovation, Mr. Englander mitigated these challenges by implementing a phased shifting of functions from Washington to Huntsville, making sure a critical mass of personnel was in place before each function transitioned; formulating cooperative agreements with several engineering colleges to promote recruiting and research opportunities; doubling efforts to obtain new employees through the MDA Career Development Program to fill developmental positions outside Washington; assigning senior executives as mentors; expediting the hiring process to fill government vacancies; and maximizing the use of in-sourcing initiatives to retain exceptionally qualified contractors. His leadership and tenacity preserved critical engineering skills and services, and through these comprehensive strategies he ensured a flawless execution of the President's PAA strategy.

The second major challenge to maintaining the integrity and effectiveness of the engineering workforce resulted from the Agency's decision to adopt matrix management of MDA personnel. With the goal of improving professional development, standardizing processes, and eliminating duplication of services, the Director gave responsibility for hiring, allocating, evaluating, and improving the competency of all engineering personnel to Mr. Englander. Overnight, Mr. Englander's workforce went from 400 people to over 2500. Faced with the challenge of putting in place a commensurate management infrastructure to "care and feed" such a huge workforce, Mr. Englander took aggressive measures. He defined an engineering Competency Management structure and produced an Engineering Career Guide. He identified critical processes and process owners and issued warrants specifying responsibilities and authorities---a first within the Agency which set the gold standard for process improvement. He totally restructured a vertical, stove-piped organization to a flattened one supervised by three senior executives which, when combined with the Director's designation of him as the Agency's single technical authority, greatly improved the Agency's ability to integrate all technical aspects of the program and to clearly establish a single technical voice for the BMDS. Mr. Englander used this authority to assign a Chief Engineer and lead Systems Engineer to each element program, working as a team for the element program manager. This bold stroke resulted in improved communication, expeditious identification of issues, a clear chain of authority, and improved engineering services.

Finally, Mr. Englander embarked on a massive effort to transition critical engineering niche contractor support seamlessly as the Agency consolidated several hundred individual support contracts into a few performance-based contracts. This consolidation initiative saved many millions of dollars by reducing overhead costs and centralizing management of contracted advisory and assistance services. The specific challenge is not only to clearly articulate the engineering products required, but to transition legacy service contract efforts in a way that avoided any breaks in critical engineering support. Mr. Englander continues to meet this challenge by dedicating key personnel to write the engineering performance work statements and measurement criteria; requiring weekly updates including plans of action and milestones; and developing creative ways to combine engineering sub-areas to minimize the number of task orders required. His exceptional vision and unique ability to cut through distracting contracting complexities to target core technical issues has saved thousands of person-hours and kept the program on track.

Mr. Englander's leadership contributions were key to MDA being recognized with the Undersecretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics 2012 Workforce Development Award, recognizing organizations that achieve excellence in career-long training and development for their employees.

Mr. Englander's sustained and continuing achievements as a member of the Senior Executive Service in the face of significant management challenges led to the establishment of the first truly effective defense against ballistic missiles, providing the nation a capability that protects its citizens, deployed forces, and allies, and significantly enhances the nation's security in an increasingly uncertain world.