

# Lessons Learned from a Rapid Acquisition Integration and Test Program with Recommendations for Future Programs

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# Overview

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- Introduction
- Objectives of the Presentation
- Background
- Organizational Impacts
- Lessons Learned
- Recommendations for Other JUONs
- Result and Conclusion

# Introduction

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- Non-attribution
- Published in March issue of *The ITEA Journal*
- Two Government contractors
  - Platform manufacturer
  - Payload manufacturer
- Joint Urgent Operational Need (JUON)
  - High-priority defense program
  - Highest-priority program for each contractor

# Objectives of the Presentation

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- Explain the impacts and challenges of a JUON program as experienced by several participants
- Offer insights and lessons learned from the collaborations of multiple organizations
- Offer recommendations for other JUON programs

# Background

What Is A JUON?

Performance Measurement

Program Planning and Execution

Program Priority

# What Is A JUON?

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# What Is A JUON?

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... They should not involve the development of a new technology or capability; however, the acceleration of an Advanced Concept Technology Demonstration or minor modification of an existing system to adapt to a new or similar mission is within the scope of the JUON validation and resourcing process.”

– Defense Acquisition University

# What Is A JUON?

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- A JUON demands product delivery to the warfighter as rapidly as possible, specifically fewer than twenty-four months in duration.
- The full program schedule (design, production, and test) is aggressive yet possible theoretically
  - It assumes a perfect world and that all goes according to plan
  - Input from both contractor and subcontractor(s) is incorporated in the plan

# Performance Measurement

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- Any project or program is measured in terms of its cost, schedule, and performance – specifically in terms of its
  - *Cost performance* within budget
  - *Schedule performance* to meet milestones or other deadlines
  - *Product or technical performance* to the specification requirements

# Performance Measurement

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- Mindset of “Schedule first!” did not ignore cost or product performance
  - Satisfactory product performance was assumed, leaving cost performance at contractor risk

# Program Planning and Execution

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- Creativity in planning
- “Think smarter!”
  - How to get tasks accomplished more efficiently while complying with processes and procedures that have time-consuming potential
  - Some technical risk, such as a design approach or production sequence, is assumed that is not assumed under normal development schedules
  - Schedule risk to some extent is certain
  - Safety risk is never acceptable
  - “Schedule first!” implies some cost risk

# Program Planning and Execution

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- “Think smarter!” (Cont’d.)
  - Budgets are finite, but what if ...
    - Defects are found in early testing?
    - Product performance cannot be verified within schedule?
      - Customer will find a different product solution!
      - Critical time will be lost unless an alternative solution is under simultaneous development



# Program Priority

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- OSD T&E Special Interest Oversight List
- Objective was to modify and integrate a proven payload with a proven platform and deliver ARAP
- Other urgent-need programs at the test site during POP; this one was second priority
  - No conflict with #1
  - Efforts made to de-conflict with other programs
- Received much attention

# Organizational Impacts

Program Structure

Organizational Relationships

Challenges

# Program Structure

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- Platform Prime Contractor (PLAT) was teamed with the Payload Prime Contractor (PAY)
- Different Special Program Offices (SPO)

# Program Structure

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- A JUON requires a new way of doing business as well as a new way of thinking
  - Organizational impacts and maybe culture change
  - Routine tasks taken for granted need not be immune
- Definitions
  - PLAT: Platform Prime Contractor
  - PAY: Payload Prime Contractor
  - RTO: Responsible Test Organization
  - PTO: Participating Test Organization
  - TEO: Test Executing Organization

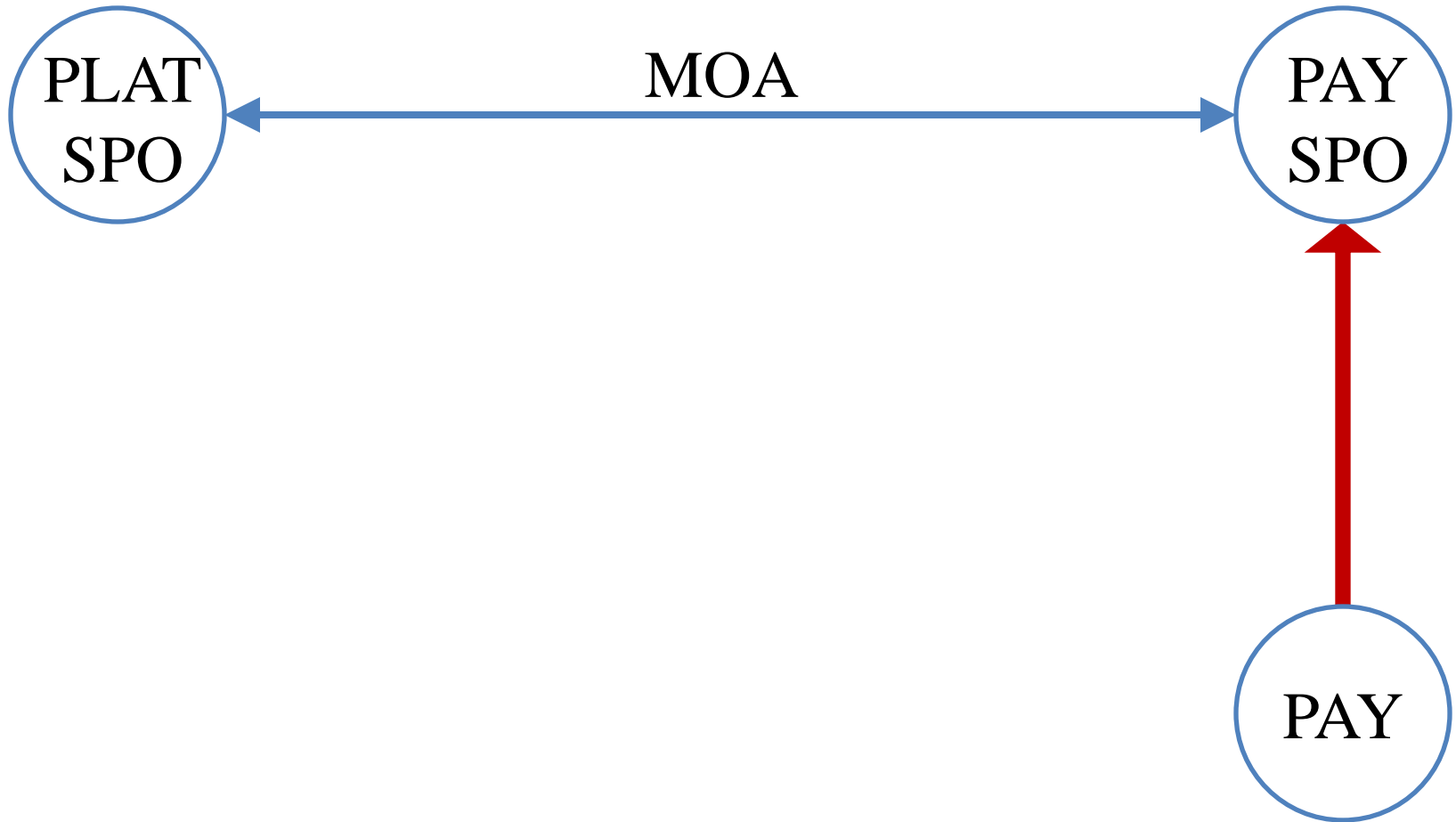
# Organizational Relationships

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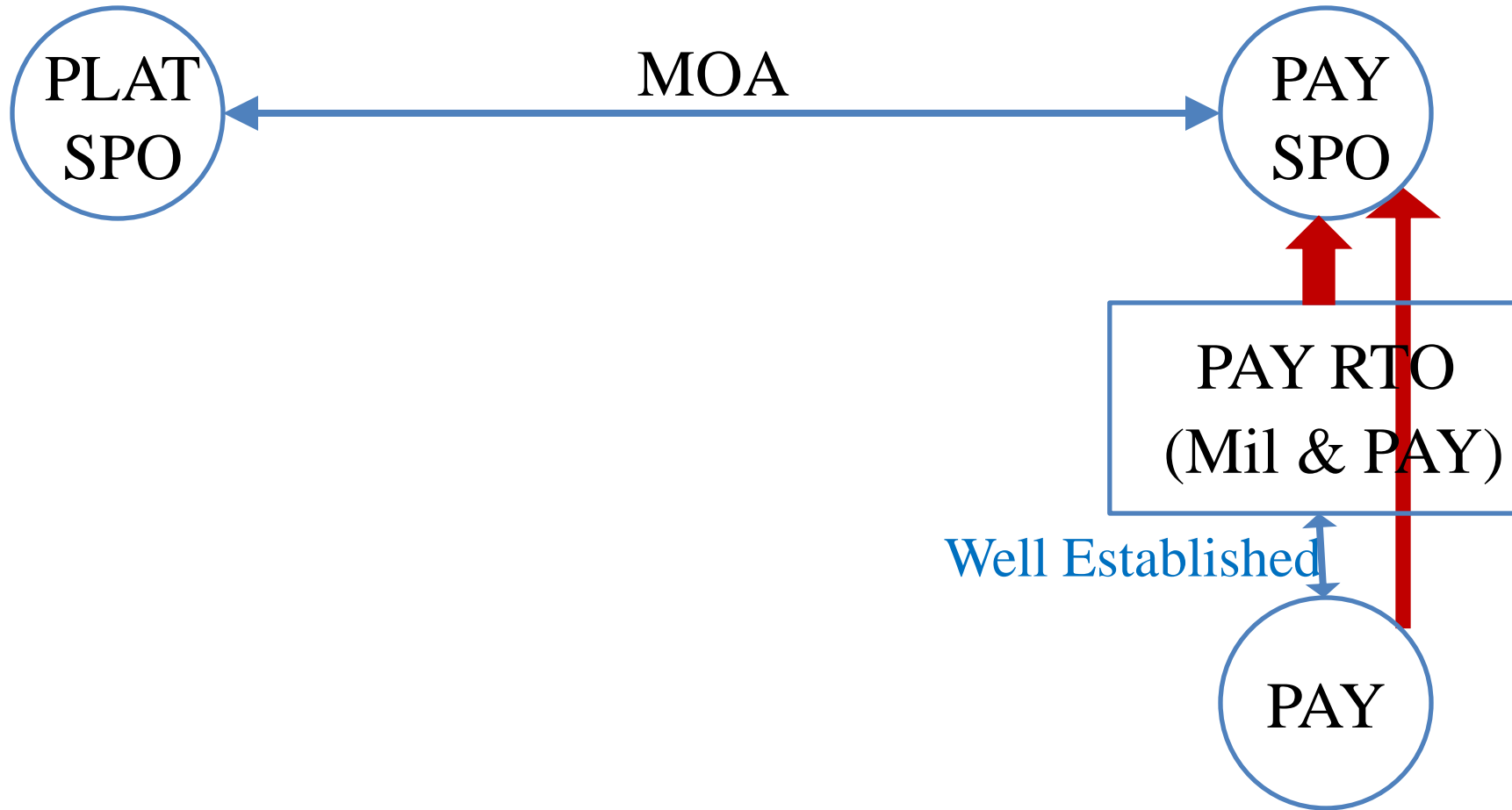
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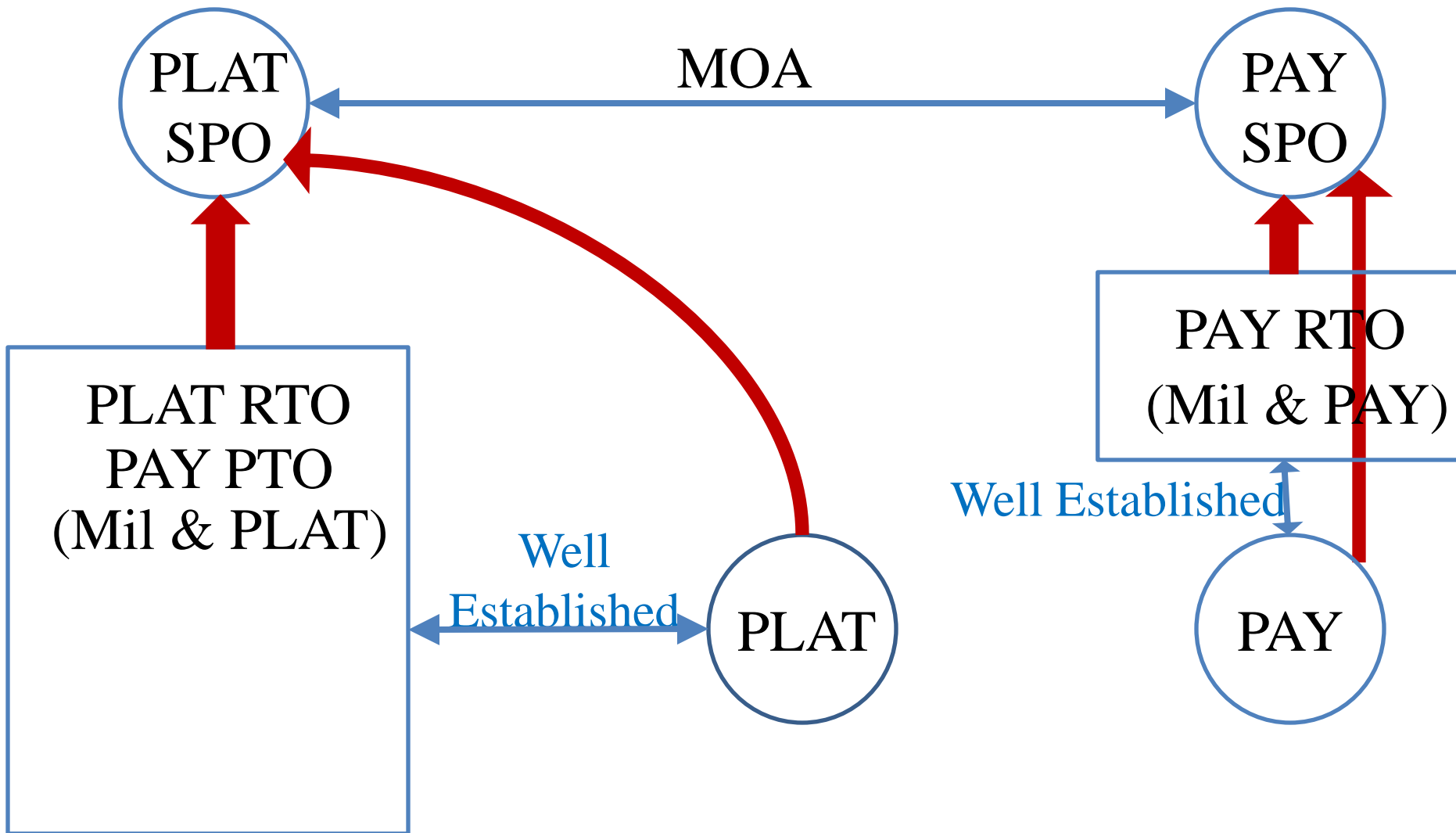
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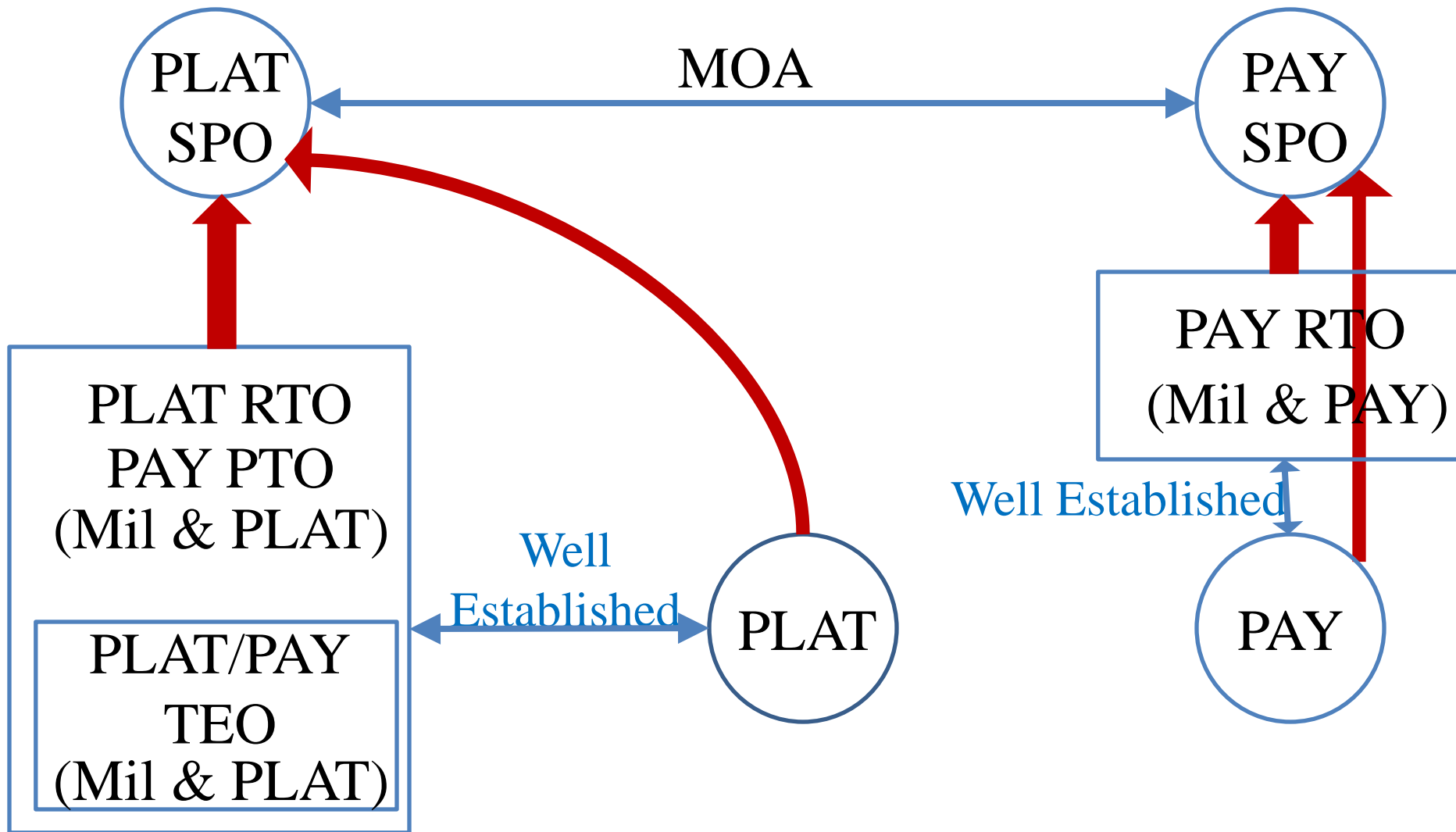
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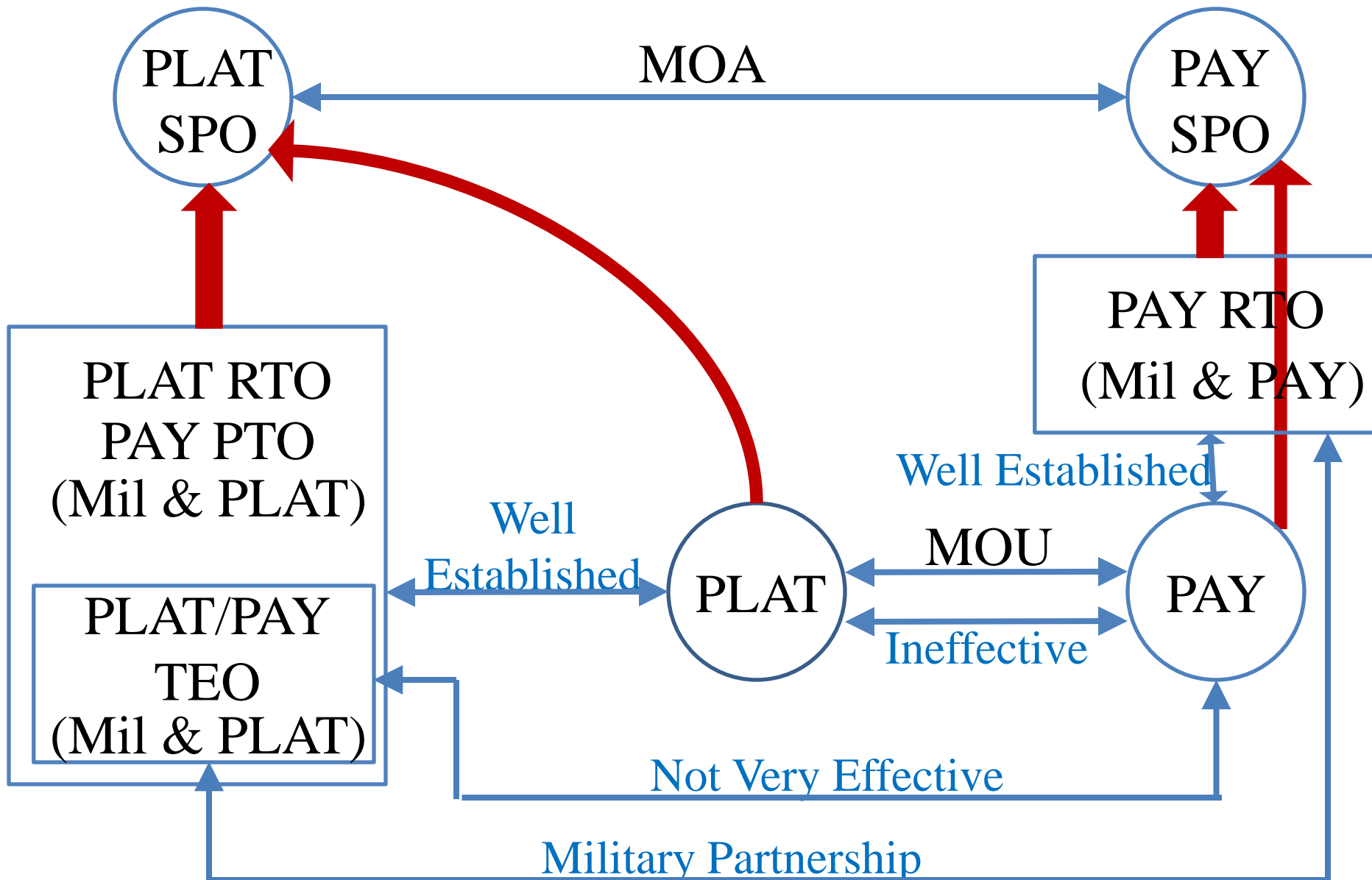




# Organizational Relationships



# Organizational Relationships



# Challenges

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- Solid contractual and working relationships already existed among some of the organizations
- Organizational issues
  - Number of organizations and their complex interrelationships
  - Contrary to usual way of doing business
  - New team to the dynamics

# Challenges

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- Streamlining efforts
  - Acceleration of processes
  - Compression of schedule
- Team approach
- Communication and coordination
- Management and leadership
- Schedule
- Personnel backgrounds

# Lessons Learned

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- Expect surprises
- Communication and the coordination of communications are extremely important
- Re-think standard ways of doing things
- High-priority of a JUON invites involvement from multiple organizations
- PAY could have and should have used the PLAT more than it did
- Lack of understanding of TEO processes by the PAY equated to ignoring those processes

# Recommendations for Other JUONs

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- Conduct a kickoff meeting at the highest level of the participating organizations (or higher)
- It is of paramount importance to remind all parties that they share the common goal of delivering an exceptional product to the warfighter – the ultimate customer – as rapidly as possible
- Allow each teammate to do the job expected of that teammate

# Recommendations for Other JUONs

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- Continuously examine different schedule-minimizing approaches
- Emphasize:
  - Effective communication through the proper chain(s) of command and
  - Respect for established protocol
- There needs to be strong leadership at the customer level by a seasoned professional
- Staffing profiles must be carefully considered

# Recommendations for Other JUONs

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- Ensure:
  - All engineering disciplines are involved during all phases of the program
  - Each discipline is adequately funded and the process for approval of additional funding, if required, will be fast
  - Consistent coordination between Government and contractor representatives
- There must be only one Integrated Master Schedule, and it must be updated continuously



# Recommendations for Other JUONs

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- Stand firm on adherence to standard processes and documentation in the face of a rapid schedule

# Result and Conclusion

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- The program achieved its goal, effectively supporting the warfighter and doing so prior to the contractual requirement
- At least four awards have been granted to the integration and test teams and to individuals as a direct result of the success of the program
  - Industry associations
  - Employers

*Thank You!*

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