NAVAL AIR SYSTEMS COMMAND, PATUXENT RIVER, Md. – Trust and focus on the fleet are key to a weapon system’s successful operability.

That’s according to Kevin Meagher, Naval Air Warfare Center Weapons Division (NAWCWD) lead assistant program manager for Logistics.

Meagher, a Naval Air Systems Command Logistics Management Integration Department employee, was recently named the Admiral Stan Arthur Civilian Logistician of the Year for his leadership leading to the quick delivery of capabilities to the fleet. The Admiral Stan Arthur Awards for Logistics Excellence recognizes Navy military, civilians and teams whose contributions enhanced the combat capability of operating forces.

The ability to develop effective solutions for difficult changes earned Meagher the nomination, according to his supervisor, NAWCWD China Lake Logistics Management Integration Department Division Head Paul Dosen. “He spent his career in the forefront of advanced technologies, process improvements and incorporating logistics innovations in support of the Chief of Naval Operation’s Advanced Joint Combat capabilities. His efforts in developing innovative logistics process are always quickly adopted into new and older weapons systems,” Dosen said.

Meagher, who heads a team embedded in a joint program office, was recognized for leading the first weapons program to attempt and complete a joint Independent Logistics Assessment (ILA). Instead of conducting two completely separate review processes for each service (which was common practice), Meagher formed a team of 22 experts to conduct one ILA. In 90 days, the team assessed more than 250 checkpoints across 12 Product Support Elements. The team also developed several Logistics use cases—methodologies comprised of possible sequences of actions or events between systems and/or users to identify and organize system requirements. This enabled the program office to identify and mitigate negative programmatic issues prior to deployment.

Dosen said Meagher’s technical and logistics knowledge has earned him the respect and trust throughout the joint logistics community. “That respect and trust enables him to focus the team on requirements as they work through conflicts and achieve consensus among the stakeholders,” he said.

Meagher knows firsthand that trust goes both ways, especially in a joint environment. He said he believes teams that work to find similarities and focus on agreed-upon goals will eventually find common ground and have a greater likelihood of reducing programs’ costs and resources. “As we put together requirements while trying to understand what benefits each particular branch of service brings to the table, it’s a learning curve for all the services,” he said. “We operate differently and from different platforms but it’s all for the same reason—the warfighter.”
Collaboration with users across a weapon system’s entire acquisition phase is essential to its operability. “Our teams make sure we get buy in from both the Navy and Air Force warfighter leadership, keeping them informed along the way,” Meagher said. “It’s a ‘win-win’ for everyone when all stakeholders work together as a joint team to accomplish the mission.”

He was also recognized for his efforts to ensure his program’s long-term supportability and affordability. For instance, his team developed an organic depot repair strategy to ensure technical data and data rights are delivered to the services, potentially reducing total depot costs by more than $20 million each year. A second team, in collaboration with the Air Force, established local capability for test sets. More than $45 million in cost avoidance is expected as a result of this initiative.

Meagher credits his ability to balance the demands of the “now” and the expected needs of the future to teamwork. “Keep it simple and do what makes sense,” he said. “Surround yourself with the best and turn them loose. I believe in considering every idea proposed by my teammates. Not all of them can be developed, but when they are voiced, the team can turn them into greatness.”

He said managers who encounter similar issues must build a knowledgeable team and embrace their joint counterparts. “Trust each other and help one another understand the other’s requirements and points of view,” he said. “When you trust each other’s capabilities, big things happen.”