

Invited Talk  
Government Help Desk and Training Conference  
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Short Description of Session:  
Electronic Performance Support for Operational Systems: A Case Study of the Link  
Monitor and Control Operator Assistant

Session Summary:

For complex operational systems, help needs to come from the inside out. It is often not realistic to call a help desk for problems that need immediate attention, especially for tasks that put a heavy cognitive load on the system operator. This session addresses the issues associated with providing electronic performance support for operational systems, including situations where the system is already fielded and can only change through evolution rather than revolution. We present a case study based on our experiences in developing the Link Monitor and Control Operator Assistant for NASA's Deep Space Network (DSN). The goals of the Operator Assistant are to improve the operability of the system and increase the efficiency of mission operations. To accomplish this we sought ways to reduce the cognitive load placed on the operators by automating tedious tasks and placing the knowledge of mission procedures at their fingertips. The Operator Assistant is an ongoing project that is having an impact on the way we think about system design and operations.