



THE BRITISH ARMY

Maintaining Readiness in the Post-Cold War Era



Staying at full readiness in the post-Cold War era requires the British Army to be both cost effective and efficient in training its personnel. With a tightly controlled budget and 85,000 men and women in uniform, the military service has to manage its resources carefully to keep its troops ready for rapid deployment.

In order to cut costs, the Army contracted Electronic Data Systems (EDS) to develop a scheduling system for allocating resources. Called TAFMIS (Training Administration Financial Management Information System), the ILOG-based application is part of a 10-year, multimillion-pound project in which the Army Individual Training Organization (AITO) plans to better prepare its fighting force for crisis situations like the Bosnian conflict while simultaneously reducing costs by a projected £145 million.

The British Army uses ILOG optimization in protecting the Realm.

"ILOG's components provide the flexibility for EDS developers to deal with complex scheduling algorithms."

■ **Geoff Richmond**
TAFMIS Program
Director
EDS

Electronic Data Systems

Founded in 1962, EDS is a professional services company that applies consulting, information and technical expertise to enhance its clients' business performance. Its approximately 100,000 employees apply a range of ideas and technologies to help clients succeed in many growing industries, including energy; communications; manufacturing; distribution and retail; finance and insurance; travel, transportation and logistics; health care; and government services. Its revenue in 1996 was \$14 billion.

About ILOG

ILOG is a leading provider of advanced C, C++ and Java software components for graphics and resource optimization.

ILOG products deliver high performance data visualization for user interfaces; integer, linear and constraint solvers for resource optimization, scheduling, logistics and planning applications; dynamic rule systems for intelligent agents and real-time data flow control; and components for integrating modules with real-time and relational data sources.

ILOG was founded in 1987, and now employs approximately 390 people in seven countries.

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Tank crews training for rapid deployment

Cutting costs in defense of the Realm

It is the task of AITO to maintain its structured approach to training by ensuring all personnel undergo training appropriate to their duties. Army courses managed by AITO range from academic and highly technical subjects to physical and combat training. The previous scheduling system depended on a variety of manual and technical systems that worked at the local level but could not encompass the Army's entire training program. TAFMIS enables AITO to coordinate training schedules almost instantly, making vital information such as curriculum details and necessary resources such as tanks readily accessible throughout the 34 AITO training sites. ILOG Solver, with its constraint-based engine and modular structure, is at the core of the application. It has significantly lightened the administrative load for AITO personnel by analyzing and scheduling complex, multivariate data such as costs, equipment, personnel and time slots. The application leaves personnel free to perform a more strategic role within the planning process. TAFMIS enables the Army to remain ready to deliver a quick response to changing situations and emergencies, and ILOG Solver's flexible software guarantees the same quick response in matching the application to resource and fiscal demands.

Project

The application runs on Windows NT platforms operating within a local area network (LAN) at each training center. The centers are linked through a wide area network (WAN).

Benefits

TAFMIS became fully operational in March 1998. A private finance initiative, the project is being run on a return on investment basis in which the developers are paid in line with the benefits realized by the user. The application has already proved its reliability in placing people and equipment in the right place at the right time. Also as changes in budget and resources have occurred, TAFMIS has shown itself ready to adapt to the new needs of Britain's modern army.