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(This section must be signed and returned to Carole.Hedden@AviationWeek.com)

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Thank you for participating,



Gregory Hamilton
President
Aviation Week Network

Acknowledged, agreed, and submitted by



Nominee's Signature

Date

06/26/2020

Nominee's Name (please print):

Angela Cough (on behalf of Defense Digital Service)

Title (please print):

Digital Service Expert / Product Manager

Defense Digital Service, DoD

Company (please print):

NOMINATION FORM

Name of Program: Rogue Squadron (Defense Digital Service - C-sUAS Portfolio)

Name of Program Leader (s):

Inception - February, 2020: Mark Jacobsen, Ryan Beall / February, 2020 - current: Savan Kong, Angela Cough, Jeff Clark, Eli Foner, Elliott Wilkes, Dan Flack

Phone Number: 206-679-0257 (Angela Cough - Direct, DDS)

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- Customer Approved
 - o Date:
 - o Contact (name/title/organization/phone):
- Supplier Approved (if named in this nomination form)
 - o Date:
 - o Contact (name/title/organization/phone):

CATEGORY ENTERED

Refer to definitions in the document “2020 Program Excellence Directions.” You must choose one category that most accurately reflects the work described in this application. **The Evaluation Team reserves the right to move this program to a different category if your program better fits a different category.**

Check one

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Special Projects | <input type="checkbox"/> OEM/Prime Contractor Sustainment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> OEM/Prime Contractor Systems Design and Development | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Supplier System Design and Development |
| <input type="checkbox"/> OEM/Prime Contractor Production | <input type="checkbox"/> Supplier System Production |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Supplier System Sustainment |

Point Distribution

Executive Summary: Make the Case for Excellence (15 pts)		
<p>Metrics</p> <p>10 pts</p> <p>Predictive Metrics (10)</p>	<p>Program Volatility/ Uncertainty/Complexity/ Ambiguity</p> <p>25 pts</p> <p>Describe overall VUCA (10)</p> <p>Cite examples of team response (15)</p>	<p>Organizational Best Practices & Team Leadership</p> <p>40 pts</p> <p>Innovative Tools and Systems (15)</p> <p>Unique Innovative Processes for People Development/Knowledge Transfer (15)</p> <p>Unique Practices for Customer Engagement (10)</p>
<p>Value Creation (10 pts)</p>		

ABSTRACT

In 150 words or less, why is this program excellent in terms of execution?

(12 pt. Times Roman)

Established in late 2017, Rogue Squadron (RS) counter small unmanned aerial systems (c-sUAS) group began as an effort to evaluate incoming c-sUAS proposals on behalf of the Defense Innovation Unit (DIU). Subject matter experts (SMEs) were hired, and this effort was boot-strapped into a fully-funded group of 14+ individuals over two years that attacked a variety of problems.

This program has defined excellence through seeing and filling a need quickly, utilizing agile development processes informed by private-industry best practices, and focusing on iterative, customer-based feedback to drive feature development and theater-relevant functionality. Effective prototypes were fielded and have been adopted by agencies with tremendous success.

Through identification of real deficits within the c-sUAS space, RS developed solutions and merged with Defense Digital Service (DDS) within the Department of Defense (DoD) to continue its efforts in an environment that encouraged, supported, and funded the goal of solving complex technical problems.

PURPOSE

Provide a 150-word description of the purpose of this program, spelling out all acronyms and correct acronyms

(12 pt. Times Roman)

The Defense Innovation Unit Rogue Squadron was founded to provide the Department of Defense relevant, operational, capable, fieldable, and trustable counter unmanned aerial systems capability at high speed; all while maintaining the ability to rapidly change course to what will impact the warfighter the most.

As the program has matured over the past few years, our initial portfolio of capabilities has been refined into those most necessary for the department. These are the capabilities we've focused on while transitioning to become the Defense Digital Service Rogue Squadron (DDS); the next stage of our journey. Our purpose as DDS Rogue Squadron, however, remains steadfast -- to provide high quality, usable, and reliable products to those who need them, when they need them.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: MAKING THE CASE FOR EXCELLENCE*(Value: 15 pts)*

What is the vision for this program/project? What unique characteristics and properties qualify this program for consideration?

(12 pt. Times New Roman)

RS is here to serve as an advocate for adopting smart, agile practices across all aspects of the DoD with respect to C-sUAS programs and development. As a group within Defense Digital Service, we are in a unique position to execute upon this directive with executive-level leadership support.

We are uniquely poised to provide feedback, guidance, and collaboration within the DoD and partner agencies in addition to support as needed in theater and beyond. We build alongside the end-user instead of for the end-user - to ensure that products and systems developed serve their needs and solve real problems. We can facilitate tough discussions, access the upper ranks and break down barriers to achieve real progress.

We can serve as both technical liaison, step in to manage product development if necessary, or simply join existing efforts to promote collaboration across multiple workstreams. We are currently supporting several areas within the C-sUAS space and will continue to fulfill needs as identified.

(Do not exceed 10 pages in responding to the following four descriptions; allocate those 10 pages as you deem appropriate, but it is important that you respond to all four sections.)

VALUE CREATION *(Value: 10 pts)*

Please respond to the following prompt:

- Clearly define the value of this program/project for the corporation beyond profit and revenue
- Clearly define the value of this program/project to your customer
- Clearly define the value of this program/project to members of your team
- Clearly define the contribution of this program/project to the greater good (society, security, etc.)

(12 pt. Times Roman)

VALUE: BEYOND PROFITS

Our key value driver is to save lives. We are not a profit-based organization so our motivation is not monetary.

VALUE: TO OUR CUSTOMER

We are here to serve the needs of the warfighter. We're here to listen, provide guidance, develop and deploy solutions, and then rapidly incorporate iterative and critical feedback to ensure meaningful and relevant outcomes are met.

VALUE: TO MEMBERS OF OUR TEAM

We are here to provide unique challenges, opportunities to stretch existing practices and processes and to learn. Members of Rogue Squadron are challenged daily to really stretch their thought process surrounding problem solving, identifying the real problem(s) at hand, and to pursue maximally viable solutions.

VALUE: TO THE GREATER GOOD

We're here to save lives and support our Nation's security. What we do matters and has a broad impact on society as a whole by providing real, fieldable solutions.

METRICS *(Value: 10 pts)*

Please respond to the following prompt:

- How do your predictive metrics drive action toward program excellence?**

(12 pt. Times Roman)

Agile processes and incremental delivery harness change for the customer's competitive advantage and reduce the need for predictive metrics. By aligning rapid delivery and critical feedback with end-user needs, we were able to provide and improve upon solutions quickly without much of the unnecessary overhead commonly associated with traditional prediction and measurement activities.

We've always planned for what is real, using long-term goals and timelines to help guide and inform the process. Material value was driven by - and relied on - real-time feedback to enhance incremental delivery that met the immediate need(s). If the warfighter has an ask and we are able to rapidly deliver a solution, they now have another tool in their arsenal to execute better, faster, and safer.

Real-world requirements change, and our agile approach enabled us to modify our practices to accommodate a shifting landscape. Ultimately, predictability and measurement are less applicable when delivering against a healthy feedback loop.

DEALING WITH PROGRAM CHALLENGES (VOLATILITY, UNCERTAINTY, COMPLEXITY, AMBIGUITY, OR VUCA) *(Value: 25 pts)*

Please respond to the following prompts:

- 10 pts: Describe overall VUCA faced by your project/program.
- 15 pts: Cite specific example(s) and how your team responded. *(12 pt. Times Roman)*

The C-UAS space is rapidly evolving and regularly challenged by policy and fear of the unknown or unproven. DoD system infrastructure can create hurdles to sharing data and findings. Efforts abound across several agencies with little communication. Needs and asks of those in theater v. those defending national security sometimes align, oftentimes result in differing challenges, risks and considerations.

Several challenges faced during the evolution of Rogue Squadron included:

- **Basic Infrastructure:** the origin of RS was that of consultation by SMEs - it evolved into a project/program - with no physical location, budget allocation etc. RS had to establish its value, negotiate space to operate, and identify where it could be most successful and execute while doing so. This process spanned multiple months, including contract negotiations, budget arguments, space allocations, and many more discussions. From going without a functioning bathroom for months, to having a single AT&T hotspot as a service provider; Rogue Squadron every day presented a new challenge.
- **Blanket Policy Application:** New technologies always present growing pains, fear of adoption, and a host of other issues and challenges. Rogue Squadron worked at the forefront of these types of issues, advocating for the warfighter at every turn and even when failure appeared obvious, to provide the department with the best capabilities available.
- **Organizational Politics:** the original founders of RS were hired to provide subject matter expertise. This effort evolved into a project that was producing real results, but ultimately needed to find a home where it could continue to pursue its mission - because the DIU was not intended to support this level of effort. Their pursuit of a home with DDS shows real ambition - and - calculated effort to provide the proper oversight and access to continue successfully in fielding meaningful solutions within the C-sUAS space.

ORGANIZATIONAL BEST PRACTICES AND TEAM LEADERSHIP *(Value: 40 pts)*

Please respond to the following prompts:

- **15 pts: In executing the program, what unique and innovative practices, tools and systems frame your program and help you achieve program excellence?**
- **15 pts: What unique and innovative processes and practices are you using to develop people and transfer knowledge and how do you know they are working?**
- **10 pts: What unique practices are you using to engage customers and how do you know?**
(12 pt. Times Roman)

We responded to the needs of the warfighter: quickly, deliberately and iteratively. Our methodology was simple: rapidly develop something that is quality - but not the final ultimate solution. Field that solution and collect feedback from the end user. Incorporate that feedback into the next release and repeat this process so that we can get real-time feedback and correct in real-time. The quote General Mattis: "The Speed of Relevance" - technology evolves far faster than we can oftentimes keep up. We have to be proactive and predict our next move.

We were able to field products with folks quickly through utilizing supportive channels within the DIU and DoD and - most importantly, because what we were building and developing was responding to a real need in-theater. After fielding we were able to establish in-theater and agency partners that were interested in having input in developing the tools and systems that they really want - instead of allowing a program office to dictate usability for them.

After delivering useful results including both physical products and software solutions that solve problems as identified, we were able to and still continue to acquire buy-in by folks in theater and at the agency level, to continue to assist and provide solutions that actually make a difference.

We have direct pathways for real-time communication through Slack channels, Mattermost or other real-time tools, we hold regular standing customer feedback meeting loops and continue to build *with* the end user, instead of *for* them. The result is successful implementation and real value immediately upon adoption.