



ROBOTICS TECHNOLOGY CONSORTIUM

Continuous Process Improvement: Improving Robotic Technology Acquisition



In May 2008, DoD entered into an Other Transaction Agreement (OTA) with the Robotics Technology Consortium (RTC), composed of large and small traditional defense contractors, non-traditional contractors and academia. The intent of this effort is to create an environment in which DoD and the commercial and academic sectors can collaborate on ground robotics technology development.

The goal is to reach innovative technology development partners by opening the door to participation in Department research planning. This enables DoD to leverage Independent Research & Development (IR&D) and gain insights from this mutual planning and lower entry barriers for small companies regarding the acquisition process. With increased interest and reliance on robotics and with the Department's need to broaden the approach by which technology is matured, the OTA is a timely merger of resources.

Investing in Innovative Technology Development

The OTA is one of the means by which the Department is able to contract with a significant array of experienced and innovative companies and institutions. Of the 110 plus members of the RTC, 68% are small businesses who can easily partner with larger, more experienced defense companies and academia to contribute robotics R&D efforts.

The OTA is initially planned for a period of performance of 7 years, with a ceiling price not to exceed \$175M. The OTA is intended to accomplish:

- ★ Ground robotics technology development and maturation
- ★ Current ground robotics performance improvement
- ★ Autonomous tactical behavior development
- ★ Robotics standards development and maturation

To preserve trust in and the integrity of the effectiveness and value of the OTA, this Continuous Process Improvement effort will be assessed against a set of Defense acquisition metrics:

- ★ Does the OTA...
 - Enable better investment planning by the Department?
 - Facilitate the reach to new/small/non-traditional companies that have promising technologies?
- ★ Does the consortium engage a sufficiently broad segment of the innovators, developers, suppliers and integrators within the robotics industry?
- ★ Is the consortium providing greater insights into and awareness of ground robotics technologies emerging from the private sector?

Activities and Accomplishments

1. Members of the Consortium have participated in the identification of potential technology development efforts which will provide the Department with material solutions for capability gaps.
2. Consortium based technology recommendations have been included in the proposed FY 2009 technology development slate.
3. The RTC is organized to participate in the DoD technology assessment process to inform the FY10-17 planning horizon.

