

CHAPTER 13

Systems Engineering Fundamentals - in Eight Pages

MODELING AND  
SIMULATION

13.1 INTRODUCTION

A model is a physical, mathematical, or logical representation of a system entity, phenomenon, or process. A simulation is the implementation of a model over time. A simulation brings a model to life and shows how a particular object or phenomenon will behave. It is useful for testing, analysis or training where real-world systems or concepts can be represented by a model.

Modeling and simulation (M&S) provides virtual duplication of products and processes, and

represents those products or processes in readily available and operationally valid environments. Use of models and simulations can reduce the cost and risk of life cycle activities. As shown by Figure 13-1, the advantages are significant throughout the life cycle.

Modeling, Simulation, and Acquisition

Modeling and simulation has become a very important tool across all acquisition-cycle phases and all applications: requirements definition; program management; design and engineering;

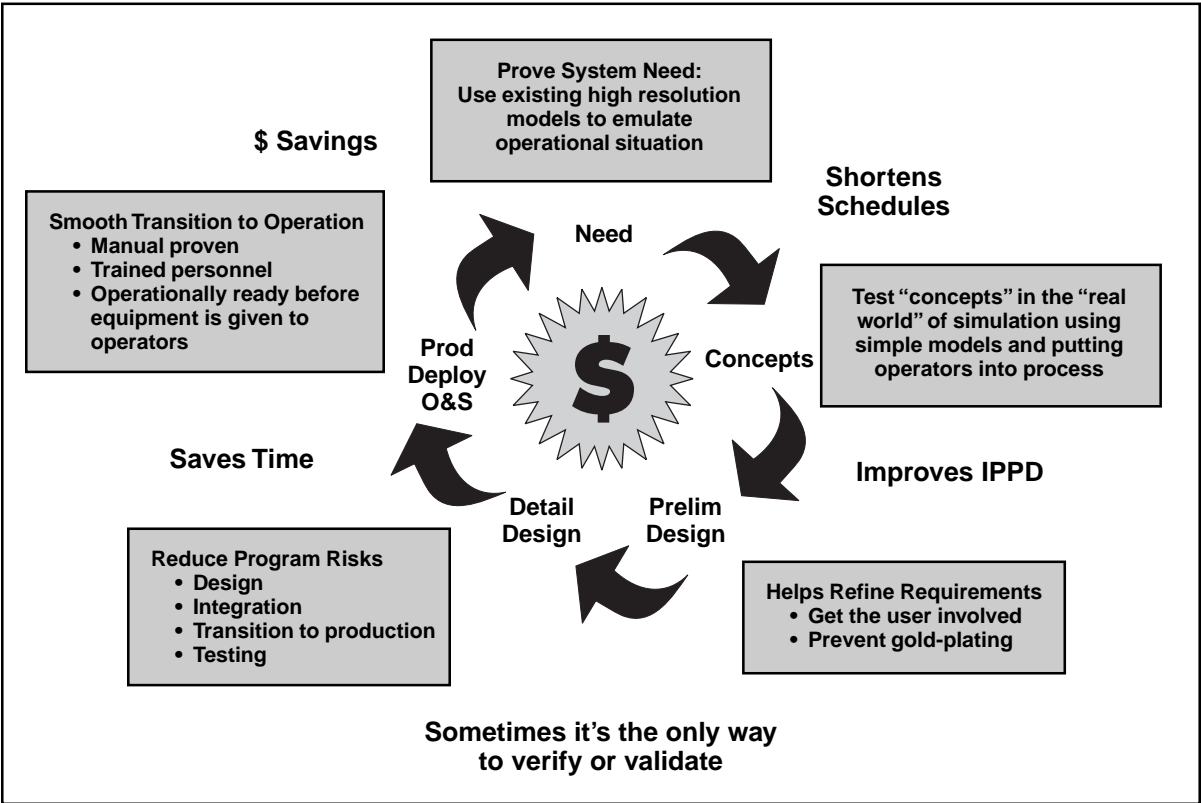


Figure 13-1. Advantages of Modeling and Simulation

efficient test planning; result prediction; supplement to actual test and evaluation; manufacturing; and logistics support. With so many opportunities to use M&S, its four major benefits; cost savings, accelerated schedule, improved product quality and cost avoidance can be achieved in any system development when appropriately applied. DoD and industry around the world have recognized these opportunities, and many are taking advantage of the increasing capabilities of computer and information technology. M&S is now capable of prototyping full systems, networks, interconnecting multiple systems and their simulators so that simulation technology is moving in every direction conceivable.

### 13.2 CLASSES OF SIMULATIONS

The three classes of models and simulations are virtual, constructive, and live:

- **Virtual** simulations represent systems both physically and electronically. Examples are aircraft trainers, the Navy's Battle Force Tactical Trainer, Close Combat Tactical Trainer, and built-in training.
- **Constructive** simulations represent a system and its employment. They include computer models, analytic tools, mockups, IDEF, Flow Diagrams, and Computer-Aided Design/Manufacturing (CAD/CAM).
- **Live** simulations are simulated operations with real operators and real equipment. Examples are fire drills, operational tests, and initial production run with soft tooling.

#### Virtual Simulation

Virtual simulations put the human-in-the-loop. The operator's physical interface with the system is duplicated, and the simulated system is made to perform as if it were the real system. The operator is subjected to an environment that looks, feels, and behaves like the real thing. The more advanced version of this is the virtual prototype, which allows the individual to interface with a virtual mockup

operating in a realistic computer-generated environment. A virtual prototype is a computer-based simulation of a system or subsystem with a degree of functional realism that is comparable to that of a physical prototype.

#### Constructive Simulations

The purpose of systems engineering is to develop descriptions of system solutions. Accordingly, constructive simulations are important products in all key system engineering tasks and activities. Of special interest to the systems engineer are Computer-Aided Engineering (CAE) tools. Computer-aided tools can allow more in-depth and complete analysis of system requirements early in design. They can provide improved communication because data can be disseminated rapidly to several individuals concurrently, and because design changes can be incorporated and distributed expeditiously. Key computer-aided engineering tools are CAD, CAE, CAM, Continuous Acquisition and Life Cycle Support, and Computer-Aided Systems Engineering:

**Computer-Aided Design (CAD).** CAD tools are used to describe the product electronically to facilitate and support design decisions. It can model diverse aspects of the system such as how components can be laid out on electrical/electronic circuit boards, how piping or conduit is routed, or how diagnostics will be performed. It is used to lay out systems or components for sizing, positioning, and space allocating using two- or three-dimensional displays. It uses three-dimensional "solid" models to ensure that assemblies, surfaces, intersections, interfaces, etc., are clearly defined. Most CAD tools automatically generate isometric and exploded views of detailed dimensional and assembly drawings, and determine component surface areas, volumes, weights, moments of inertia, centers of gravity, etc. Additionally, many CAD tools can develop three-dimensional models of facilities, operator consoles, maintenance workstations, etc., for evaluating man-machine interfaces. CAD tools are available in numerous varieties, reflecting different degrees of capabilities, fidelity, and cost. The commercial CAD/CAM product, Computer-Aided Three-Dimensional

Interactive Application (CATIA), was used to develop the Boeing 777, and is a good example of current state-of-the-art CAD.

**Computer-Aided Engineering (CAE).** CAE provides automation of requirements and performance analyses in support of trade studies. It normally would automate technical analyses such as stress, thermodynamic, acoustic, vibration, or heat transfer analysis. Additionally, it can provide automated processes for functional analyses such as fault isolation and testing, failure mode, and safety analyses. CAE can also provide automation of life-cycle-oriented analysis necessary to support the design. Maintainability, producibility, human factor, logistics support, and value/cost analyses are available with CAE tools.

**Computer-Aided Manufacturing (CAM).** CAM tools are generally designed to provide automated support to both production process planning and to the project management process. Process planning attributes of CAM include establishing Numerical Control parameters, controlling machine tools using pre-coded instructions, programming robotic machinery, handling material, and ordering replacement parts. The production management aspect of CAM provides management control over production-relevant data, uses historical actual costs to predict cost and plan activities, identifies schedule slips or slack on a daily basis, and tracks metrics relative to procurement, inventory, forecasting, scheduling, cost reporting, support, quality, maintenance, capacity, etc. A common example of a computer-based project planning and control tool is Manufacturing Resource Planning II (MRP II). Some CAM programs can accept data direct from a CAD program. With this type of tool, generally referred to as CAD/CAM, substantial CAM data is automatically generated by importing the CAD data directly into the CAM software.

**Computer-Aided Systems Engineering (CASE).** CASE tools provide automated support for the Systems Engineering and associated processes. CASE tools can provide automated support for integrating system engineering activities, performing the systems engineering tasks outlined in

previous chapters, and performing the systems analysis and control activities. It provides technical management support and has a broader capability than either CAD or CAE. An increasing variety of CASE tools are available, as competition brings more products to market, and many of these support the commercial “best Systems Engineering practices.”

**Continuous Acquisition and Life Cycle Support (CALS).** CALS relates to the application of computerized technology to plan and implement support functions. The emphasis is on information relating to maintenance, supply support, and associated functions. An important aspect of CALS is the importation of information developed during design and production. A key CALS function is to support the maintenance of the system configuration during the operation and support phase. In DoD, CALS supports activities of the logistics community rather than the specific program office, and transfer of data between the CAD or CAM programs to CALS has been problematic. As a result there is current emphasis on development of standards for compatible data exchange. Formats of import include: two- and three-dimensional models (CAD), ASCII formats (Technical Manuals), two-dimensional illustrations (Technical Manuals), and Engineering Drawing formats (Raster, Aperture cards). These formats will be employed in the Integrated Data Environment (IDE) that is mandated for use in DoD program offices.

### Live Simulation

Live simulations are simulated operations of real systems using real people in realistic situations. The intent is to put the system, including its operators, through an operational scenario, where some conditions and environments are mimicked to provide a realistic operating situation. Examples of live simulations range from fleet exercises to fire drills.

Eventually live simulations must be performed to validate constructive and virtual simulations. However, live simulations are usually costly, and trade studies should be performed to support the balance of simulation types chosen for the program.

### 13.3 HARDWARE VERSUS SOFTWARE

Though current emphasis is on software M&S, the decision of whether to use hardware, software, or a combined approach is dependent on the complexity of the system, the flexibility needed for the simulation, the level of fidelity required, and the potential for reuse. Software capabilities are increasing, making software solutions cost effective for large complex projects and repeated processes. Hardware methods are particularly useful for validation of software M&S, simple or one-time projects, and quick checks on changes of production systems. M&S methods will vary widely in cost. Analysis of the cost-versus-benefits of potential M&S methods should be performed to support planning decisions.

### 13.4 VERIFICATION, VALIDATION, AND ACCREDITATION

How can you trust the model or simulation? Establish confidence in your model or simulation through formal verification, validation, and accreditation (VV&A). VV&A is usually identified with software, but the basic concept applies to

hardware as well. Figure 13-2 shows the basic differences between the terms (VV&A).

More specifically:

- **Verification** is the process of determining that a model implementation accurately represents the developer's conceptual description and specifications that the model was designed to.
- **Validation** is the process of determining the manner and degree to which a model is an accurate representation of the real world from the perspective of the intended uses of the model, and of establishing the level of confidence that should be placed on this assessment.
- **Accreditation** is the formal certification that a model or simulation is acceptable for use for a specific purpose. Accreditation is conferred by the organization best positioned to make the judgment that the model or simulation in question is acceptable. That organization may be an operational user, the program office, or a contractor, depending upon the purposes intended.

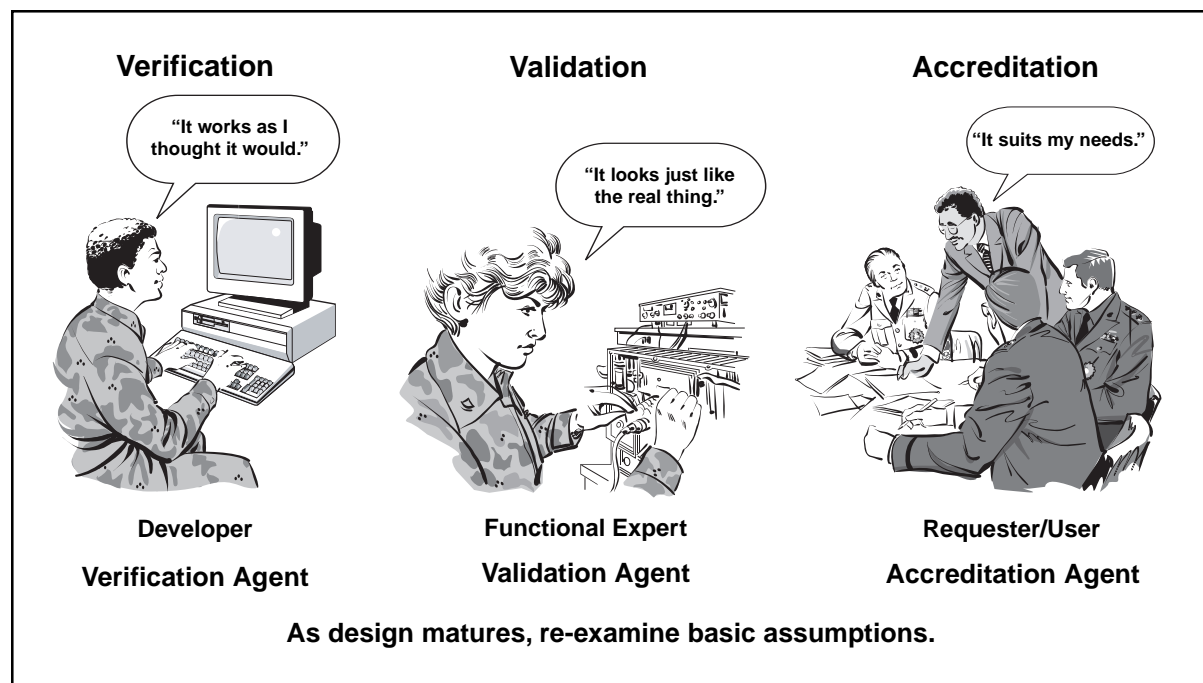


Figure 13-2. Verification, Validation, and Accreditation

VV&A is particularly necessary in cases where:

- Complex and critical interoperability is being represented,
- Reuse is intended,
- Safety of life is involved, and
- Significant resources are involved.

### VV&A Currency

VV&A is applied at initial development and use. The VV&A process is required for all DoD simulations and should be redone whenever existing models and simulations undergo a major upgrade or modification. Additionally, whenever the model or simulation violates its documented methodology or inherent boundaries that were used to validate or verify by its different use, then VV&A must be redone. Accreditation, however, may remain valid for the specific application unless revoked by the Accreditation Agent, as long as its use or what it simulates doesn't change.

## 13.5 CONSIDERATIONS

There are a number of considerations that should enter into decisions regarding the acquisition and employment of modeling and simulation in defense acquisition management. Among these are such concerns as cost, fidelity, planning, balance, and integration.

### Cost Versus Fidelity

Fidelity is the degree to which aspects of the real world are represented in M&S. It is the foundation for development of the model and subsequent VV&A. Cost effectiveness is a serious issue with simulation fidelity, because fidelity can be an aggressive cost driver. The correct balance between cost and fidelity should be the result of simulation need analysis. M&S designers and VV&A agents must decide when enough is enough. Fidelity needs can vary throughout the simulation. This variance should be identified by analysis and planned for.

**Note of caution:** Don't confuse the quality of the display with the quality of meeting simulation needs! An example of fidelity is a well-known flight simulator using a PC and simple joystick versus a full 6-degree of freedom fully-instrumented aircraft cockpit. Both have value at different stages of flight training, but obviously vary significantly in cost from thousands of dollars to millions. This cost difference is based on fidelity, or degree of real-world accuracy.

### Planning

Planning should be an inherent part of M&S, and, therefore, it must be proactive, early, continuous, and regular. Early planning will help achieve balance and beneficial reuse and integration. With computer and simulation technologies evolving so rapidly, planning is a dynamic process. It must be a continuing process, and it is important that the appropriate simulation experts be involved to maximize the use of new capabilities. M&S activities should be a part of the integrated teaming and involve all responsible organizations. Integrated teams must develop their M&S plans and insert them into the overall planning process, including the TEMP, acquisition strategy, and any other program planning activity.

M&S planning should include:

- Identification of activities responsible for each VV&A element of each model or simulation, and
- Thorough VV&A estimates, formally agreed to by all activities involved in M&S, including T&E commitments from the developmental testers, operational testers, and separate VV&A agents.

Those responsible for the VV&A activities must be identified as a normal part of planning. Figure 13-2 shows the developer as the verification agent, the functional expert as the validation agent, and the user as the accreditation agent. In general this is appropriate for virtual simulations. However, the manufacturer of a constructive simulation would usually be expected to justify or warrant their

program's use for a particular application. The question of who should actually accomplish VV&A is one that is answered in planning. VV&A requirements should be specifically called out in tasking documents and contracts. When appropriate, VV&A should be part of the contractor's proposal, and negotiated prior to contract award.

### Balance

Balance refers to the use of M&S across the phases of the product life cycle and across the spectrum of functional disciplines involved. The term may further refer to the use of hardware versus software, fidelity level, VV&A level, and even use versus non-use. Balance should always be based on cost effectiveness analysis. Cost effectiveness analyses should be comprehensive; that is, M&S should be properly considered for use in all parallel applications and across the complete life cycle of the system development and use.

### Integration

Integration is obtained by designing a model or simulation to inter-operate with other models or simulations for the purpose of increased performance, cost benefit, or synergism. Multiple benefits or savings can be gained from increased synergism and use over time and across activities. Integration is achieved through reuse or upgrade of legacy programs used by the system, or of the proactive planning of integrated development of new simulations. In this case integration is accomplished through the planned utilization of models, simulations, or data for multiple times or applications over the system life cycle. The planned upgrade of M&S for evolving or parallel uses supports the application of open systems architecture to the system design. M&S efforts that are established to perform a specific function by a specific contractor, subcontractor, or government activity will tend to be sub-optimized. To achieve

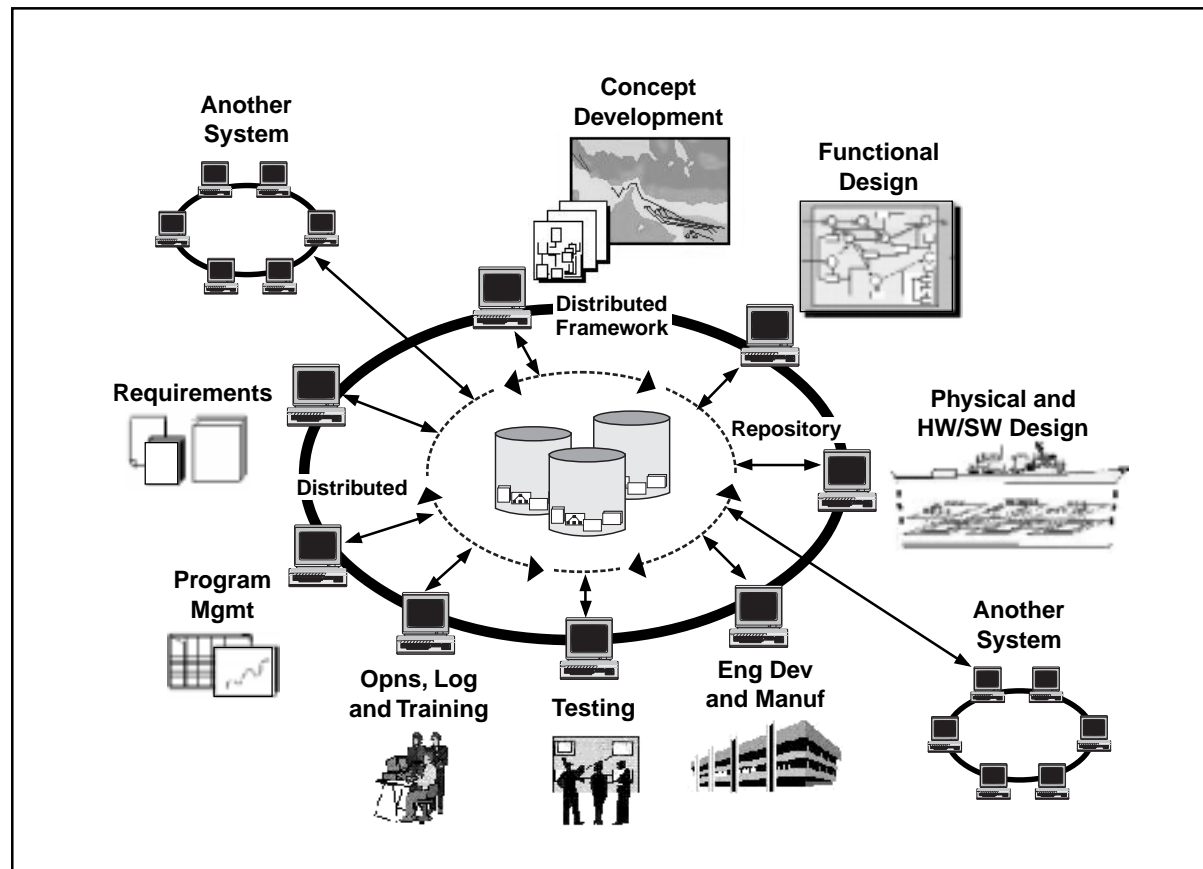


Figure 13-3. A Robust Integrated Use of Simulation Technology

integration M&S should be managed at least at the program office level.

### The Future Direction

DoD, the Services, and their commands have strongly endorsed the use of M&S throughout the acquisition life cycle. The supporting simulation technology is also evolving as fast as computer technology changes, providing greater fidelity and flexibility. As more simulations are interconnected, the opportunities for further integration expand. M&S successes to date also accelerate its use. The current focus is to achieve open systems of simulations, so they can be plug-and-play across the spectrum of applications. From concept analysis through disposal analysis, programs may use hundreds of different simulations, simulators and model analysis tools. Figure 13-3 shows conceptually how an integrated program M&S would affect the functions of the acquisition process.

A formal DoD initiative, Simulation Based Acquisition (SBA), is currently underway. The SBA vision is to advance the implementation of M&S in the DoD acquisition process toward a robust, collaborative use of simulation technology that is integrated across acquisition phases and programs. The result will be programs that are much better integrated in an IPPD sense, and which are much more efficient in the use of time and dollars expended to meet the needs of operational users.

### 13.6 SUMMARY

- M&S provides virtual duplication of products and processes, and represent those products or processes in readily available and operationally valid environments.
- M&S should be applied throughout the system life cycle in support of systems engineering activities.
- The three classes of models and simulations are virtual, constructive, and live.
- Establish confidence in your model or simulation through formal VV&A.
- M&S planning should be an inherent part of Systems Engineering planning, and, therefore, pro-active, early, continuous, and regular.
- A more detailed discussion of the use and management of M&S in DoD acquisition is available in the DSMC publication *Systems Acquisition Manager's Guide for the Use of Models and Simulations*.
- An excellent second source is the DSMC publication, *Simulation Based Acquisition – A New Approach*. It surveys applications of increasing integration of simulation in current DoD programs and the resulting increasing benefits through greater integration.

