File 20110725.1800: Notes from the second demo today: ten executives, all high level. Kevin Miller demonstrated Radiant Mercury. He noted that demonstrating cross domain systems is difficult because there is not much to see. (Jeff Dutoit lamented something similar to me last week.) This new demo, a live map-symbology–updating display, is intended to represent a Common Operational Picture scenario. It shows lots of little aeroplane and ship and tank and radar symbols flitting around a battlespace map, with ellipses of uncertainty updated live with their semimajor axes pointing at the sensor, unless RM has been configured to fuzz the data, as is seen with the red and green coalition partners. Red sees only blue and red tracks, does not see the blue sensor, and sees large circular areas of uncertainty. Green sees only blue and green tracks, with smaller but still circularised areas of uncertainty. Blue sees red, green, and blue tracks with ellipses of uncertainty aligned with their semimajor axes pointing towards the sensor. This is all being updated in real time. Kevin described six VMs running on the laptop; for the demonstration we simulated our own communicating endpoints. The map display was written in Java. One audience member commented concernedly on the simulated security classification labels; she was assured they are classified for demonstration purposes only. (That is still a commonplace problem when giving demos. I think we need a swappable `label_encodings` file.) Jim Quinn sat up front and asked penetrating questions. He noted that Microsoft Word or Notepad can do the simple stuff like redacting 'BZA'; it was more impressive, he said, when the tool spotted 'Mbps' in a sentence and inferred that that was performance-related and should be redacted. Synonym recognition, word ending insensitivity, and inference were the functionality that impressed this audience. One executive was already trying to figure out what to charge for it: 'a penny a document?' and 'what is your business model: licensing the software or operating it as a service?' They keyed on something I said, which was that other government agencies have already approached us saying they have warehouses full of documents they need redacted, and can Lockheed help?

Before the demo, Craig Christensen asked me to keep it short, to cut my introductory remarks to 30 seconds and go right into the slides and demo. The reason is because the executives were running late, it's already past dinnertime for them, and this was the last demo of their day. I think we did a good job of keeping it admirably brief, whilst still covering everything we wanted to say. I modified my introduction to give the 30-second version at the beginning, followed by the Google, Web 1T 45-gram corpus, LDC, University of Pennsylvania, $800K, and 'in the next phase we are looking for sponsorship' pieces over the first content-containing slide of the pack. I skipped over many of Tom's slides about the details of the security classification guidance and went right to the demo, explaining why each redaction rule fired. Tom's script was invaluable.

After the demo, Kevin Miller asked if Tom Marso could improve the demo script to do a few more of those impressive feats. Marso noted earlier in the day that he will be working on it even though he's on travel now, because there is absolutely nothing to do in Buffalo. Craig Christensen said I didn't talk too fast, but I do start to repeat myself under stress. Watch out for that tendency.

Kevin says the CDTAB on Monday morning at the UCDMO conference is the awesomest part of UCDMO week. I am looking forward to it.

References