The problem statement should capture an issue related to Life Cycle issues in your organization or career field. Participants are grouped into teams that will each work on a common problem statement drawn from those submitted for the course. Each team will consist of four to seven participants of varying backgrounds with similar interests where possible. All teams will report out to a panel and discuss their handling of the issue with the entire class at the end of the week.

The following is a sample Life Cycle problem statement dealing with the role of IT solutions in joint logistics:

Problem: As the logistics information technology (IT) portfolio ages and the benefits of Defense-wide interoperability and integration become more apparent and feasible, we should consider the possibility that the time has come to move the services away from Service-specific logistics solutions and toward joint-capable and/or fully-joint-enabled systems. Making that decision requires an understanding of the current state of the individual service's logistics IT, considering plans and programs already underway, and the state of joint or cross-service systems deployed and planned.

Extracts from problem statements related to life cycle:

DoD IUID initiative example:

IUID, when fully implemented, is purported to provide timely data about each uniquely identified item throughout the DoD supply chain, provide end-to-end tracking, life-cycle analysis, reduction in administrative costs (shipping/receiving/inventory), and opportunities to reduce stock levels through improved inventory management. Test cases have shown that a realization of 90% reduction in labor and 30% reduction in inventory held is achievable. What hurdles do we face when attempting to scale the success of those test cases to all of DoD? What is a reasonable expectation of labor reduction and inventory while maintaining effectiveness?

A Coast Guard example related to the struggle over based upon OEM estimates the new maritime patrol aircraft program has insufficient aircraft sparing to support forecast programmed flight hours (PFH). Ensuring that a minimum level of spares is on hand is essential to achieving full operating capability. Failure to provide requisite spare parts funding will increase programmatic risks and delay parts acquisitions, many with exceptionally long lead times (up to 440 days from the execution of the purchase to actual delivery).

An initial provisioning engineering v-metric analysis established the base sparing model to meet operational readiness requirements. These estimates may understate actual sparing needs since v-metric calculations are based upon Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) estimated component life cycles. These projections represent optimistic, best case scenarios which do not incorporate actual wear and tear data that aircraft accumulate operating in highly corrosive environments. Until our fleet accrues substantial flight time and accumulates operational data, component life cycle performance data may vary significantly from estimates.

The acquisition office is at odds with the sustainment office as to what is the correct amount of acquisition sparing burden. What is the best method of determining initial base sparing requirements, and when should the initial sparing obligations of a multi-year acquisition program cease and the sustainment sparing burden begin?