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PRACTICAL EXERCISE

# EX-40J



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## EX\_40J — Program Manager (Technical)

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*Practical Exercise — SL 4J Proficiency*

HEADQUARTERS  
UNITED STATES ARMY EUROPE AND AFRICA  
(USAREUR-AF)  
Wiesbaden, Germany

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## EX\_40J — PROGRAM MANAGER (TECHNICAL)

### PRACTICAL EXERCISE — SL 4J PROFICIENCY

Field	Value
Version	1.0 — March 2026
Prerequisite	SL 3 REQUIRED; SL 4J — Program Manager (Technical) Technical Manual (and SL 1 through SL 2)
Duration	2–3 hours
Environment	MSS with project tracking access; access to a sample project record — see ENVIRONMENT_SETUP.md

### COMPANION RESOURCES

Resource	Reference
Technical Manual	SL 4J — Program Manager (Technical)
Syllabus	SYLLABUS_TM40J
Pre-Exercise Exam	EXAM_TM40J_PRE
Post-Exercise Exam	EXAM_TM40J_POST
Continuation Track	SL 5J — Advanced Program Manager

### WFF AWARENESS

The PM exercise centers on a data pipeline that directly serves WFF track personnel (TM-40A–F) as end-users — the LOGSTAT aggregation feed described in the scenario is a sustainment and maneuver reporting tool. Participants should recognize that delivery failures have operational impact across multiple WFF tracks, not just within the data team.

## SCENARIO

You are the technical PM for a data pipeline project: an automated LOGSTAT aggregation feed currently 6 weeks into development. The pipeline engineer has hit a blocker — a source system API is rate-limited and the pipeline is missing its delivery milestone. Assess the project status, update the plan, communicate the risk, and run a sprint retrospective.

**Training materials:** Pre-loaded synthetic project record (located in

`training_data/EX_40J_project_record_package/`): - `pipeline_definition.md` — pipeline architecture, tech stack, source systems - `milestone_tracker.md` — 8-week project plan; week 4 milestone marked missed - `open_tickets.md` — 4 open tickets including the rate-limit blocker (Ticket #EX40J-007) - `project_charter.md` — original scope, stakeholders, success criteria

## TASK LIST

### Task 1 — Project Status Assessment (30 min)

- Review the sample project record: identify current milestone, percent complete, and open blockers
- Produce a 1-page SITREP (BLUF, current status, blockers, recommended COA)
- Identify whether the missed milestone is a schedule slip or a scope change

Standard	Criteria
Go	SITREP is accurate vs. project record; slip vs. scope correctly classified
No-Go	SITREP contains factual errors or misclassifies the problem type

### Task 2 — Risk and COA Analysis (30 min)

- Identify the top 3 risks to delivery given the API rate-limit blocker
- For each risk: assess likelihood (H/M/L) and impact (H/M/L)
- Propose a preferred COA with rationale (one paragraph)

Standard	Criteria
Go	3 risks identified with likelihood/impact assessments; COA is actionable
No-Go	Fewer than 3 risks or COA is not actionable

### Task 3 — Revised Milestone Plan (30 min)

Produce a revised milestone table with four columns:

Column	Content
Original Date	As planned
Revised Date	Updated per current status
Delta	Days slipped
Reason	Root cause

- Identify any downstream milestones affected by the slip
- Flag whether commander approval is needed for the scope/schedule change

Standard	Criteria
<b>Go</b>	Table is complete; downstream effects identified; approval flag is correct
<b>No-Go</b>	Downstream effects missed or approval flag is wrong

### Task 4 — Sprint Retrospective Facilitation (30 min)

- Prepare a sprint retrospective agenda (15–20 min format): went well, blockers, improvements
- Conduct the retrospective with your evaluator playing the role of a pipeline engineer
- Produce 2–3 written action items with owners and due dates

Standard	Criteria
<b>Go</b>	Retro covers all three sections; action items have owners and dates
<b>No-Go</b>	Action items lack owners or dates; retro is evaluative not constructive

### Task 5 — Stakeholder Communication (15 min)

Draft a 5-sentence stakeholder update email. Required elements:

1. What happened
2. Impact
3. What you're doing
4. Ask of stakeholder
5. Next update date

Standard	Criteria
Go	All five elements present; tone appropriate for an O-5/SES audience
No-Go	Missing elements or inappropriate tone

## EVALUATOR NOTES

**Scoring:** 5 tasks. Go on 4 of 5 = overall Go. No-Go on Task 1 = automatic No-Go (project assessment is the foundational PM competency).

### Pre-Exercise Checklist

- Confirm the synthetic project record is pre-loaded and accessible to the training account
- Review the project record before the exercise — know the correct answers for Task 1
- Prepare the evaluator scenario card for Task 4 (see ENVIRONMENT\_SETUP.md) — you will play a pipeline engineer

### Common Failure Modes

Task	Common Failure	Evaluator Guidance
Task 1	SITREP missing BLUF	Ask participant what the first line of an Army SITREP should be; BLUF is doctrine
Task 1	Slip vs. scope misclassified	Slip = same deliverable, later date; scope = requirements changed; read the project record carefully to verify the answer
Task 2	Fewer than 3 risks identified	Prompt once: "Are there any risks beyond the immediate blocker?" — if still < 3, No-Go
Task 2	COA is not actionable	Vague COA ("explore options") = No-Go; must include a specific recommended action with owner
Task 4	Retrospective becomes blame-focused	Most common failure for participants without facilitation experience; evaluator should respond as a defensive engineer and observe how participant handles it
Task 5	Email missing the "ask of stakeholder" element	Very common omission; mark Task 5 No-Go and coach on stakeholder communication structure

## Timing Notes

- Task 4 (retro facilitation) varies widely by background — 15 min for experienced facilitators, 40+ min for first-timers
- Task 3 (revised milestone plan) is often underestimated; budget 40 min
- Consider asking participant to narrate their SITREP before reviewing the written version (Task 1)

## NEXT STEPS

Participants who receive an overall Go on EX\_40J are eligible to enroll in **SL 5J — Advanced Program Manager**. SL 5J extends into portfolio-level program management, enterprise governance, and cross-functional delivery at scale. SL 5 is G–O (advanced specialist tracks).

## Evaluator Role-Play Card (Task 4)

You are a pipeline engineer, 6 weeks into this project. Attitude: frustrated but professional.

Behavior	Condition
Defend your technical approach when asked	Always
Do not volunteer information about the rate-limit workaround you found	Unless participant asks the right questions
Become less cooperative	If the facilitator becomes evaluative ("why didn't you catch this sooner?")
Gradually become more engaged	If the facilitator is constructive

## SUPPLEMENTAL — BUILD WITH AIP OFFICIAL TUTORIALS

Tutorial	Key Concepts	Relevance
Platform Governance App (Platform SDK)	Metadata management, linter alerts, admin workflows	Project governance, compliance
Obfuscate Data with Cipher	CipherText properties, GDPR/HIPAA patterns	Data protection compliance
Building a Data-Rich Custom Object View	Customizable data presentation hubs	Stakeholder dashboards

Install via [build.palantir.com](https://build.palantir.com) — search "Examples (Build with AIP)" in the application drawer.

## ENVIRONMENT SETUP

See [ENVIRONMENT\\_SETUP.md](#) for full setup instructions.

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