December 2025

NAVY SBIR TRANSITION PROGRAM

SPOTLIGHT

Company: Aspen Consulting Group Inc.
Website: www.aspenconsultinggroup.com
POC: Steven Pizzo, Chief Engineer/Vice President
Phone: 732-722-7878
Address: 1500 Meeting House Road #5
Sea Girt, New Jersey 08750

Aspen Consulting Group delivers JF-12-certified electronic warfare training system under Navy SBIR Phase I program

In a major milestone for Aspen Consulting Group, the company's STINGRAE electronic warfare (EW) training system received military JF-12 certification in July 2025. This certification is required for operating any technology that produces radio frequency (RF) emissions. "It is rare for a Phase I prototype to be granted the JF-12 certification, and even more remarkable that the certification process was completed in only three months; typically, it can take a year or more to receive certification for a new RF-emitting system," said Aspen chief engineer and vice president, Steve Pizzo. "Without the JF-12, units planning to use the training system would need to apply for a special temporary authorization (STA)." Having the JF-12 in place means that the STINGRAE can be used throughout the military at multiple installations, smoothing the technology's path to transition.

While many SBIR companies worry about the infamous valley of death looming at the end of their SBIR Phase II contract, Aspen is poised for transition success. As the New Jersey-based small business continues to develop STINGRAE under a Navy SBIR Phase II contract that began in January 2025, the technology prototypes developed during the SBIR Phase I project are already being used by the Marine Corps.

"In Phase I, usually you do paper design studies, modeling and simulation, and sometimes a brass board or benchtop prototype," said Mr. Pizzo. "We actually built four hardened units in Phase I, delivered three of them to ONR, and they've been in use since February of 2025. Aspen originally intended to deliver just one unit," he added, "but there was so much interest that we ended up delivering three, retaining one for development purposes."

Image provided by Aspen Consulting Group

STINGRAE system employment.

The technology Aspen is developing is a programmable RF device that serves several roles in testing and training exercises. It provides both targets for sensors and contested environments for communications and other systems to replicate the real-world EW conditions Marines face during tactical operations. Previous

systems were costly, which meant they were only made available in limited numbers. Additionally, they were constrained by size, weight and power (SWaP) and required specialized operators. Aspen's system is low cost, low SWaP, and easy to use, supporting multiple attack vectors and multiple modes of operation through a simple programming interface.

Mr. Pizzo explained that the Phase I prototype units the Marine Corps is currently using are not fully ruggedized but have held up well under harsh operating conditions. "We haven't passed a MIL STD 810 environmental test or a shock and vibration test, but the units have survived shipping, transport, and operations by Marines for almost a year with no failures. They're operating 24/7 in the hot desert and getting thrown around in the field."

The goal for Phase II is to build out the basic unit into a complete system while also incorporating additional modes of operation and expanding the system's frequency range.

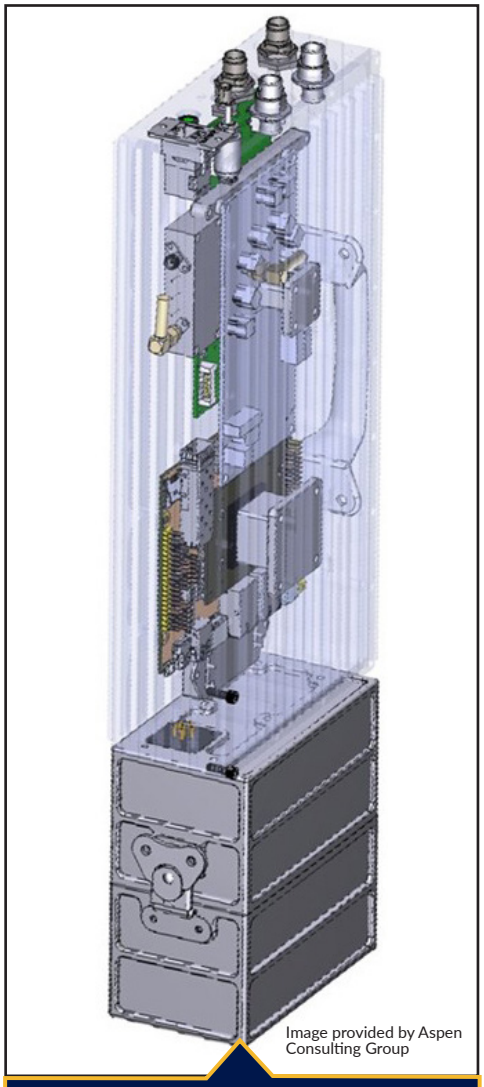

Image provided by Aspen Consulting Group

Modular STINGRAE building blocks.

Aspen, founded in 2001, originally focused on providing on-site engineering services to Army clients at Fort Monmouth, New Jersey. Over the years the company has performed development or program execution for every military service as well as additional federal agencies. Aspen only recently began applying its expertise to the SBIR/STTR programs, winning its first Phase I contract from the Army SBIR program in 2019. Compared to non-SBIR defense contracting, Mr. Pizzo finds the SBIR program "more streamlined and easier to get things done quickly."

That has certainly been the case in the development of STINGRAE, although Mr. Pizzo acknowledged that "it's not the typical SBIR. We have users that already want the system and we're engaged with a bunch of different stakeholders." Any service or agency that needs to operate in contested environments could benefit from the capabilities that Aspen's low cost, portable and user-friendly system provides.

Aspen first learned about the Navy SBIR Transition Program (Navy STP) through LinkedIn and joined after recognizing it as a valuable resource for accelerating technology transition.

Aspen Consulting Group has locations in both New Jersey and Maryland serving multiple military and government agencies. Aspen staff members are skilled in a wide range of technical disciplines and experienced in RDT&E, production, and deployment of complex DoW ISR, avionics, and EW systems. For more information visit www.aspenconsultinggroup.com.

ASPEN
CONSULTING GROUP INC