**CHALLENGE**

The Regional Proficiency Assessment Tool (RPAT) was commissioned by the Defense Language and National Security Education Office (DLNSEO) to provide an understanding of the regional proficiency of the military workforce. As developed and prototyped by CASL, the RPAT will allow the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) to assess, track, and manage the regional proficiency of its military personnel, enhancing its ability to meet regional proficiency requirements.

**SOLUTION**

CASL's RPAT prototype consists of the Data Collection Module, which gathers biographical information from individuals, and the Data Viewer, which displays this information to decision makers. A complex algorithm and set of business rules combine each individual's biographical data to provide a regional proficiency assessment for each of the DoD's world regions.

Previous work on the RPAT involved a usability and face-validity study. That study revealed several areas for improvement, resulting in broader inclusion of region-focused experiences, relaxed requirements for formal education, and clarifications to the instructions. These changes have been incorporated into the CASL prototype.

DMDC has developed and launched a production version of the Data Collection Module. Through its initial data collection, DMDC has provided necessary personnel data for CASL to test the prototype's validity, sensitivity, and utility. The next version of the RPAT will be informed by analyses of the tool's sensitivity, and new questions will be incorporated. Its criterion validity will be determined by comparing regional proficiency assessments from the RPAT with experts' assessments.

The RPAT combines biographical information into five cluster scores, and then evaluates the cluster scores against a set of minimums. To be rated at a given regional proficiency skill level, individuals must meet cluster-specific requirements for that level and a minimum on a weighted average of the five clusters.

**WHAT IS REGIONAL PROFICIENCY?**

Regional proficiency represents “an individual's awareness and understanding of the historical, political, cultural (including linguistic and religious), sociological (including demographic), economic, and geographic factors of a foreign country or specific global region” (DoD Instruction 5160.70).

More at www.casl.umd.edu/RPAT