



Executive Summary: 2026 Sustainment Management System (SMS) Virtual Summit

Introduction and Summit Overview

The 2026 Sustainment Management System (SMS) Virtual Summit, held on September 1-2, 2026, convened Department of War (DoW) facility managers, asset management practitioners, and industry partners to discuss the modernization of the department's infrastructure management capabilities. Hosted by the SMS Technical Center of Expertise (SMS-TCX), the summit provided critical updates on the development and impending launch of the Enterprise Sustainment Management System (E-SMS), a unified platform designed to consolidate legacy systems like BUILDER, RAILER, and PAVER into a single, cloud-native environment.

The event focused on the strategic importance of data-driven asset management, providing live demonstrations of the E-SMS application, and outlining the path forward for migrating historical data and user communities to the new platform. A key theme throughout the summit was the urgent need for accurate, comprehensive, and accessible data to inform investment decisions at all levels of the department, from tactical execution to strategic budget formulation.

Enterprise SMS (E-SMS) Development and Platform Update

The summit opened with a detailed update on the significant progress made on the E-SMS platform over the past year. Key developments highlighted the system's readiness for its enterprise-wide rollout.

- **Rapid Development Cycle:** The development team has published 36 new releases since the previous summit, adding 90 features, addressing over 600 bugs, and over 200 additional changes. This rapid and responsive development tempo has been greatly enhanced by the use of AI tools.
- **Integration of Artificial Intelligence:** The team has successfully leveraged AI tools (including GenAI, Ask SAGE, and Agentic AI) in the development process. This has accelerated feature development, bug identification, and code review, contributing an estimated 4.175 man-months of work and enhancing overall productivity.
- **E-SMS Field Application and Workspaces:** A new "Workspace" concept allows for the creation of "sandboxed" datasets for field data collection. Assessors can sync a defined scope of work to their mobile devices, perform offline inventory updates and condition assessments, and sync the data back for quality control and approval before it is merged into the main production database. This workflow greatly improves data quality and management for field assessment projects.
- **Platform Migration Readiness:** A "crash test" instance of E-SMS was created, successfully migrating over 356,000 assets and 7.8 million components from across the DoW. This full-scale test allowed the team to optimize performance, with a full data roll-up calculation for the entire department taking approximately six hours—a significant improvement over legacy systems. The official production rollout is scheduled to begin on a service-by-service basis in October 2026.



Application Demonstration and Features

Attendees were given a comprehensive tour of the E-SMS web application, highlighting its modern user interface and powerful features designed to empower users at all levels.

- **Unified and Customizable Interface:** The platform provides a single point of access for all infrastructure domains (buildings, utilities, pavements, etc.). A major enhancement is the ability for users to create highly customized grid views, save filtered configurations for quick access, and export tailored data sets to CSV, allowing for personalized and efficient data analysis.
- **Integrated Reporting and Analytics:** E-SMS features a new reporting hub with embedded Power BI dashboards. This allows for the creation of both standardized, department-wide reports and specific, custom reports for individual Services or Agencies. Bookmarks provide quick access to views that replicate legacy BUILDER reports, easing the transition for long-time users.
- **Map-Based Navigation:** The application includes an interactive map view that allows users to visually navigate and select sites, assets, and linear components, providing an intuitive alternative to list-based navigation, particularly for utilities and pavement networks.

Keynote Remarks by Mr. Mark Sinder

Mr. Mark Sinder, Deputy Assistant Secretary of War for Infrastructure Modernization and Resilience, delivered a pivotal keynote address stressing the critical importance of the SMS platform to the Department of War's strategic objectives. His remarks were structured around four key areas:

- **Informing Budget and Investment Strategy:** Mr. Sinder emphasized that with statutes directing a significant increase in Facilities, Sustainment, Restoration, and Modernization (FSRM) investment, leadership requires high-quality, objective data to make smart decisions. He stated that SMS is used on a "weekly, if not daily basis" to answer leadership questions, forecast requirements, and inform investment plans. He delivered a clear message: "The better the data, the more money the military departments are going to get."
- **Driving Tactical Execution:** Beyond high-level strategy, he underscored the value of SMS as a go-to tool at the installation level. He expressed a strong hope that it is being used to guide tactical investment decisions, ensuring that local funds are maximized and spent on the highest-priority needs.
- **Underpinning Military Construction (MILCON) Reform:** Mr. Sinder's office is pursuing major reforms in facility acquisition, such as bundling projects and standardizing systems. He explained that the rich, component-level data within SMS is essential for enabling these more holistic and efficient strategies. For example, SMS data could allow planners to proactively group all HVAC replacements on an installation into a single, cost-effective project.



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- A Challenge to "Go Faster": Mr. Sinder issued a direct challenge to the SMS community. Given the platform's immense value and the urgency of modernizing the department's infrastructure, he stressed the need to accelerate E-SMS to 100% maturity as fast as possible. He also called for innovative and creative ways to improve the accuracy of the underlying data, acknowledging that simply adding more people and money is not a viable solution. He concluded by reiterating that his office is open to any and all ideas from government and industry partners to improve the system and the processes it supports.

Domain-Specific Demonstrations

Following the keynote, Day 1 of the summit provided deep-dive demonstrations of E-SMS capabilities tailored to specific infrastructure domains. These sessions showcased how the unified platform accommodates the unique requirements of different asset types, including:

- Buildings: A session focused on lessons learned from the BUILDER data migration, the current status of the transition, and a detailed look at new E-SMS features of particular interest to the buildings community.
- Utilities: A demonstration highlighted the E-SMS features and workflows from the perspective of the site utilities domain.
- Rails, Fuels, and Water Control Structures: The final session of the day provided a demonstration of E-SMS functionality for these specialized domains, further illustrating the platform's comprehensive scope.

Integration, Innovation, and Future Capabilities

The second day of the summit was dedicated to exploring the extensibility of the E-SMS platform and showcasing the forward-looking research that will shape the future of asset management.

- Commercialization and Integration: The day began with a session from the USACE Office of Research and Technology Transfer, which outlined the patent licensing agreement process for E-SMS. This session was aimed at industry attendees interested in utilizing the powerful E-SMS application outside of the federal context. This was followed by a presentation on the third-party integration framework, which detailed the tools and documentation available for integrating E-SMS with other platforms, demonstrating the system's open architecture and potential for creating a connected data ecosystem.
- Strategic Optimization (FSRM-O): A key presentation focused on the Facility Sustainment, Restoration, and Modernization Optimization (FSRM-O) project, a collaborative effort with Mr. Sinder's OSW office. This session provided an update and demonstration of a new capability designed to help leaders find the right balance between sustainment investments and recapitalization/modernization projects, directly addressing the need for more objective, data-driven investment strategies that Mr. Sinder highlighted in his keynote.





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- The Future: AI and Innovation: The afternoon sessions provided a glimpse into the "skunk works" of the SMS-TCX. One presentation, in partnership with AFIT and a professor from FAMU-FSU College of Engineering, focused on leveraging AI and Large Language Models (LLMs) for assessor training. The final session was an "SMS Innovations Lab" showcase, which peeled back the curtain on cutting-edge research projects, including:
 - Advanced degradation modeling.
 - Using AI to automatically identify components and assign condition ratings from images or reports.
 - Other "skunk works" projects aimed at automating and improving the accuracy of the entire asset management lifecycle.

Conclusion and Path Forward

The 2026 SMS Virtual Summit successfully articulated a clear and compelling vision for the future of DoW infrastructure management. The progress on the E-SMS platform, its imminent production launch, and the forward-looking innovation in AI and data analytics demonstrate a strong commitment to modernizing the department's capabilities. The strategic imperatives laid out by Mr. Mark Sinder—coupled with the technological advancements showcased over the two-day event—underscore a pivotal moment for the DoW's asset management community. The successful transition to E-SMS is not merely a technical upgrade but a strategic necessity, providing the data-driven foundation required to optimize historic levels of investment, enhance installation readiness, and secure the long-term health of the department's vast infrastructure portfolio. The continued collaboration between the SMS-TCX, service partners, and industry will be essential to realizing this vision.



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