



RESEARCH
AND ENGINEERING

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

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WASHINGTON, DC 20301-3030

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MEMORANDUM FOR: SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Policy Memorandum for Independent Technical Risk Assessments for Major Defense Acquisition Programs

- References:
- a) Public Law 114-328, Section 807, "National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017," December 23, 2016
 - b) DoD Directive 5134.01, "Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics (USD(AT&L))," December 9, 2005, as amended
 - c) DoD Instruction 5000.02, "Operation of the Defense Acquisition System," Change 3, August 10, 2017
 - d) "Department of Defense, Risk, Issue, and Opportunity Management Guide," January 2017
 - e) "Framework for Risk Categorization," June 2018

Purpose. This policy memorandum:

- Establishes Department of Defense (DoD) policy for the conduct of Independent Technical Risk Assessments (ITRAs) in accordance with title 10, United States Code (U.S.C.), section 2448b.
- Is effective immediately; it will be incorporated into the next revision of DoD Instruction (DoDI) 5000.02.

Applicability. This policy applies to the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Military Departments, the Defense Agencies, the DoD Field Activities, and all other acquisition organizational entities within the DoD (referred to collectively in this memorandum as the "DoD Components").

Policy. It is DoD policy that:

- ITRAs will be conducted on all Major Defense Acquisition Programs (MDAP) before any decision to grant Milestone A or B approval and any decision to enter into low-rate initial production or full-rate production, regardless of when the program was initiated. ITRAs will also be conducted when the Secretary of Defense, Deputy Secretary of Defense, the Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering (USD(R&E)), the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment, or the Milestone Decision Authority (MDA) considers appropriate.
- The ITRA will consider the full spectrum of Technology, Engineering and Integration risk and the potential impacts to cost, schedule and performance. ITRAs provide a view of program technical risk, independent of the program or Service, while

facilitating establishing program cost, schedule, and performance goals as required by title 10 U.S.C., section 2448a.

- ITRAs prior to Milestone A will include the identification of critical technologies and manufacturing processes that need to be matured. At subsequent milestone or production decisions, ITRAs will identify critical technologies and manufacturing processes that have not been successfully demonstrated in a relevant environment.
- ITRAs will be provided to the MDA to support reporting to Congress in accordance with title 10, U.S.C., sections 2366a, 2366b, and 2366c.

Responsibilities.

- ITRAs will be conducted or approved by the USD(R&E).
- The designated Service, Agency, and Program Manager will support the ITRA execution, to include access to programmatic and technical information and facilitating ITRA team visits to the program office, product centers, test centers, and contractor(s) as necessary.

Procedures.

- The Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering (OUSDR&E) will conduct ITRAs. However, USD(R&E) will determine whether to delegate the ITRA to the Service or DoD Components on a case-by-case basis.
- The ITRA lead will form a team, taking under advisement any recommendations from the Service/DoD components, for OUSDR&E approval. The team must possess relevant technical and domain expertise and be drawn from appropriate independent, non-advocate organizations to include offices within OSD, the Joint Staff, the Services, Federally Funded Research and Development Centers, University Affiliated Research Centers, and other qualified sources as deemed necessary.
- ITRA teams will be composed of technical experts with in-depth domain knowledge of design considerations, technologies and manufacturing processes associated with the program under assessment. Team members should not be currently or recently employed or obligated to the program under assessment.
- The ITRA team should be established for each applicable program as early in the program lifecycle as possible to allow team participation in ongoing and recurring program activities. Regular participation in program events will facilitate ITRA execution and the development of the assessment as a natural outcome of accumulated knowledge, reducing impact on the program.
- The ITRA will leverage existing program information, documentation, modeling and simulation, analysis results, prototyping activities, test and evaluation reports, artifacts, and any other information deemed appropriate. The ITRA team will also leverage ongoing program and technical reviews, and wherever practical, collaborate with any Military Department or Agency assessments being conducted in parallel.

- ITRAs will assess technical risk as described in the ITRA Framework for Risk Categorization (<http://www.acq.osd.mil/se/pg/guidance.html>).
- The team lead will prepare an ITRA Preliminary Assessment summarizing the key technical risks and any actionable risk mitigation recommendations, as appropriate. The team lead will review the assessment with the Military Services/Agency Single Technical Authorities and Government Program Manager to ensure transparency, accuracy, and allow expeditious implementation of any mitigation actions deemed appropriate by the Program Manager.
- The team lead will submit a Final Assessment to the USD(R&E) not later than 30 days prior to the Milestone or Production decision. The assessment may be updated immediately before the milestone or decision to adjust for relevant program changes or new information including source selection results.
- Documentation will be archived to support further congressional committee inquiry as required.
- For programs for which an ITRA is conducted, a Program Support Assessment would be redundant and will not be conducted.

Releasability. **Cleared for public release.** This memorandum will be available on the internet from the DoD Issuances Website at <http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives>.



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