



THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

3010 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-3010

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ACQUISITION,
TECHNOLOGY
AND LOGISTICS

MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS
CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF
UNDER SECRETARIES OF DEFENSE
DEPUTY CHIEF MANAGEMENT OFFICER
COMMANDER, U.S. SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND

SUBJECT: Configuration Steering Board

Configuration Steering Boards (CSBs) provide a senior level forum for acquisition and requirements officials to review and assess requirements to balance cost, schedule, and performance to achieve effective and affordable military capability. For more than 2 years, affordability caps have been required for Major Defense Acquisition Programs (MDAPs). Under the Better Buying Power set of initiatives, this policy will continue and needs to be enforced through tradeoffs of capabilities. As the Department of Defense moves forward in an austere budget environment, our communities must collaborate to maintain the right balance of performance and affordability over the lifecycle. To that end, the acquisition and requirements communities must work together to control costs at all acquisition category levels.

CSBs institutionalize Military Service, Office of the Secretary of Defense, and Joint Staff collaborative reviews of potential requirements tradeoffs and significant technical configuration changes for MDAPs and Major Automated Information Systems (MAIS). As mandated by section 814 of the Duncan Hunter National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2009 (Public Law 110-417), CSBs are charged with: (1) preventing unnecessary changes to program requirements and system configuration that may have adverse effects on program cost or schedule; (2) mitigating impact of required changes to program cost or schedule; and (3) ensuring optimum capability is delivered to the Warfighter either at or below the program baseline. It is incumbent on all CSB members to identify requirements changes that have the potential to significantly impact cost or schedule.

In recent months the Joint Requirements Oversight Council (JROC) and Service requirements authorities have increased emphasis on their title 10 responsibilities to ensure that appropriate tradeoffs are made among lifecycle cost, schedule, performance, and procurement quantities objectives. As the requirements approval authorities, their continuous review of these and additional trades identified in CSBs and other reviews is necessary as programs progress through Milestone A to Milestone C. In my statutory JROC advisory capacity, I am fully engaged in the JROC program requirements and review actions, and Service Acquisition Executives (SAEs) are expected to be likewise engaged.

Active requirements community engagement in CSBs, and acquisition community engagement in JROC and Service requirements and performance reviews, are critical to maintaining an effective and affordable military force. In the current fiscal environment, the Department must intensify efforts to closely monitor every military requirement for cost

effectiveness and affordability. I work closely with SAEs to leverage CSBs for MDAP and MAIS program reviews, and ask that they assess CSB effectiveness to reevaluate engineering and technical requirements priorities and tradeoffs as needed. In addition, I now ask the Services to employ the CSB construct for all Acquisition Category levels, including Urgent Operational Needs that transition to programs of record. With effective support of all stakeholders, and coupled with other program review tools, CSBs can provide timely insights to inform potential military operational capability and derived engineering and technical requirements decisions throughout the programs' lifecycles.

Finally, to assure our combined support to the Department's efforts to maintain an effective force and control costs without adding to bureaucratic churn, the Vice Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, Director, Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation, and I will hold Quarterly Leadership Forums along with senior stakeholders in the requirements, acquisition, and budget processes. These forums will focus on getting major acquisition decisions right through frank and open discussion on recent and pending near term decisions, ensuring that any roadblocks to success are promptly addressed. Our singular objective is to better align the Acquisition communities by collectively focusing on the affordability of our mission capabilities.



Frank Kendall

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- SAE, Navy
- SAE, Air Force