



ACQUISITION,
TECHNOLOGY
AND LOGISTICS

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

3010 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-3010

MAY 11 2011

MEMORANDUM FOR COMPONENT ACQUISITION EXECUTIVES

SUBJECT: Improving Technology Readiness Assessment Effectiveness

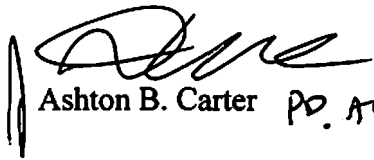
As I noted in my "Better Buying Power" memorandum last year, the process for conducting Technology Readiness Assessments (TRAs) has strayed from its original intent and should be reformed. TRAs should focus only on technology maturity, as opposed to engineering and integration risk, and the responsibility for ensuring that technology maturity risk is adequately identified and mitigated should rest with the Program Manager (PM), Program Executive Officer, and Component Acquisition Executive, subject to ASD(R&E) review.

New instructions for conducting TRAs are contained in updated "TRA Guidance" (<http://www.acq.osd.mil/ddre/publications/docs/TRA2011.pdf>). Some of the significant changes from prior TRA procedure are as follows:

- A TRA is required for Major Defense Acquisition Programs (MDAPs) at Milestone (MS) B (or at a subsequent milestone if there is no MS B) to support the independent review and assessment by the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering (ASD(R&E)). The ASD(R&E) will determine whether the technology of the program has been demonstrated in a relevant environment to support the MS Decision Authority (MDA)'s certification under 10 U.S.C. § 2366b. TRAs for the ASD(R&E) are not required for Major Automated Information System programs, non-MDAPs, or MDAP MS C decisions, except for MDAPs entering the acquisition system at MS C. However, MDAs for all programs are required to ensure that technology risk has been reduced to acceptable levels prior to entering engineering development or design for production. Acquisition Category II- IV programs should conduct TRAs in accordance with relevant Component direction by tailoring the "TRA Guidance" as appropriate.
- A TRA will be conducted and reported by the PM who will select a team of subject matter experts to assist in conducting the TRA. The PM will align the process by which critical technologies are identified and evidence of technology maturity is acquired with the program's schedule and resources.
- A preliminary version of the TRA final report will be presented at the pre-MS B MDA Review prior to RFP release for the EMD phase.
- The PM will submit a TRA final report through the appropriate Component Acquisition Executive to the ASD(R&E) who will evaluate the report as part of the basis upon which the ASD(R&E) will make recommendations to the MDA. Based on the advice of the ASD(R&E), the MDA will determine whether to certify technology

maturity, whether the program needs a technology risk mitigation plan, and whether a waiver to 10 U.S.C. § 2366b should be issued.

The new TRA process is effective immediately. MDAPs that have already begun to prepare TRAs using prior guidance should contact the Office of the ASD(R&E) to determine whether they should shift to the new TRA process. The new TRA process will be documented in the "Defense Acquisition Guidebook" (<https://dag.dau.mil>) and institutionalized in the next update to DoDI 5000.02 (<http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/500002p.pdf>). Please share this guidance with the appropriate offices in your organization. My point of contact is Dr. A.M. van Tilborg, OASD(R&E), at 703-695-0598.


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