



DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
1010 DEFENSE PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1010

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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.
- Supersedes the Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering memorandum with the same subject, dated June 18, 2018.
- Is effective immediately and 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) prior to Milestone A, Milestone B approval, and any decision to enter into low-rate initial production or full-rate production.
- ITRAs will be completed in a timely manner to facilitate milestone or production decisions by the Milestone Decision Authority (MDA), and every effort will be expended to prevent any unreasonably delay.



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- 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 Component. When conducted in the first instance for each covered program the ITRA will facilitate the MDA's establishment of program cost, schedule, and performance goals as required by title 10, U.S.C., section 2448a.
- An ITRA conducted prior to Milestone A will identify 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 the determinations, certifications, and reporting to Congress in accordance with Title 10, U.S.C., sections 2366a, 2366b, and 2366c.

#### Responsibilities.

- The Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering (USD(R&E)) will conduct or approve ITRAs. This responsibility may be delegated.
- The designated Service, Agency, and Program Manager will support the ITRA execution, to include providing access to programmatic and technical information and facilitating ITRA team visits to the program office, product centers, test centers, and contractor(s) as deemed necessary by the official conducting the ITRA.

#### Procedures.

- The DoD Component will provide USD(R&E) advanced notice of milestone or production decision dates requiring the of an ITRA so as to permit the avoidance of unreasonable delays in milestone or production decisions (at least six months prior to the planned decision is preferred).
- The USD(R&E) will designate an ITRA lead who will form a team, taking under advisement any recommendations from the Service/DoD components, drawing from appropriate organizations that are independent from the program under assessment. Appropriate organizations include other 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. DoD Components can provide recommendations as they desire.
- 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 have substantial connections 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.
- To the fullest extent possible, 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, whenever practical, collaborate with any Component assessments being conducted in parallel.
- ITRAs will assess technical risk consistent with 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 Program Manager and MDA to ensure transparency, accuracy, and allow expeditious implementation of any mitigation actions deemed appropriate by the Program Manager.
- Not later than 30 days prior to a Milestone or production decision, the USD(R&E) will provide the MDA a Final Assessment. If the ITRA cannot be completed according to this timeline, the USD(R&E) shall inform the MDA and shall complete the ITRA as soon as possible. The assessment may be updated at any point 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 Technology Readiness Assessment (TRA) will not be conducted.

Releasability. **Cleared for public release.**

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Fatimah M. Shandana". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "F".

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