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MEMORANDUM FOR SENIOR PENTAGON LEADERSHIP
COMMANDERS OF COMBATANT COMMANS
DEFENSE AGENCY AND DOD FIELD ACTIVITY DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: Reforming the Joint Requirements Process to Accelerate Fielding of Warfighting Capabilities

Rebuilding our military and establishing credible deterrence require the Department to field new technology and capabilities faster. To help achieve these goals, Executive Order 14265, "Modernizing Defense Acquisitions and Spurring Innovation in the Defense Industrial Base," directs the Office of the Secretary of Defense, in coordination with the Secretaries of the Military Departments, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to complete a comprehensive review of the Joint Capabilities Integration and Development System (JCIDS) with the goal of streamlining and accelerating acquisition. The review is complete and this memorandum directs a significant reform of DoD's process for joint requirements determination.

Our objectives with this reform include:

- Streamlining and accelerating the identification of the top priority Joint Force needs and the solutions required to fulfill them;
- Earlier and more rigorous engagement with industry as DoD works to solve operational problems and convert capability gaps into fielded capabilities; and
- Greater integration of requirements determination and resource prioritization to ensure budgeting decisions are focused on the most critical needs and can deliver an integrated and effective Joint Force.

To implement this comprehensive reform, we direct the following actions.

The Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (VCJCS) will:

- Effective immediately, commence the disestablishment of JCIDS and direct the Joint Requirements Oversight Council (JROC) to cease validating Component-level requirement documents to the maximum extent permitted by law. Military Service requirements determinations shall be the Military Services' responsibility. Within 120 days, instructions and manuals governing JCIDS will be rescinded, and essential Joint Staff acceleration activities will be transitioned per Attachment 4.
- Within 120 days, re-orient the JROC as the Department's single forum for identifying and annually ranking Joint Force Key Operational Problems (KOP) and associated capability gaps that flow from the National Defense Strategy, the



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Joint Warfighting Concept, Joint Force Design activities, and other strategic guidance as appropriate.

- Within 120 days, in coordination with the Director of Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation (CAPE), establish a new forum called the Requirements and Resourcing Alignment Board (RRAB), to be co-chaired by the VCJCS and the Deputy Secretary of Defense. Each budget cycle, the RRAB shall select topics from the top-ranked KOP and nominations from the co-chairs to perform analysis, issue programming guidance, and recommend allocation of funding from the Joint Acceleration Reserve (JAR). By exception, the RRAB may identify a Component-specific requirement or activity for modification or termination.

The Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering (USD(R&E)) and the USD for Acquisition and Sustainment (USD(A&S)) will:

- Within 120 days, establish a Mission Engineering and Integration Activity (MEIA).
- As KOP are prioritized by the JROC, use the MEIA to rapidly engage with industry, conduct mission engineering analysis to refine capability requirements, and conduct rapid integration of capabilities and structured and iterative experimentation campaigns addressing the KOP. These activities will create opportunities to integrate industry contributions and innovations as well as Military Service capabilities and to support the development of new operational concepts and non-materiel solution elements.
- As appropriate, report on the results of experimentation campaigns and make recommendations for JAR funding for validated solution elements to the RRAB.

CAPE will:

- Within 120 days, working with the Joint Staff, support the RRAB.
- In each budget cycle, working with the USD(Comptroller)/Chief Financial Officer of the DoD, establish a CAPE-maintained JAR in Fiscal Guidance to be used to program for the funding of both prioritized KOP as recommended by the RRAB and approved by the Deputy Secretary of Defense and the validated outputs of the MEIA. These funds reserved to the JAR will be critical to address the “valley of death” for impactful joint capabilities by allowing for the alignment of JAR funding to Military Services in DoD’s annual budget request.

Secretaries of the Military Departments will:

- Within 90 days, launch reviews of Military Service requirements processes, identifying reforms to expedite outcomes, strengthen force design, enhance industry engagement, and enable experimentation-led approaches.

The USD(A&S) will:

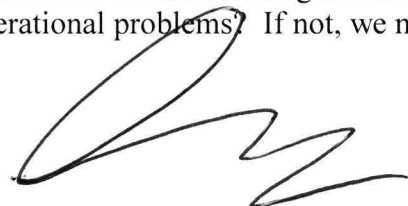
- Update all relevant policies and regulations in accordance with the changes directed in this memorandum, including removing references to JCIDS in DoD Directive (DoDD) 5000-series directives, DoDD 7045.20, and associated instructions and manuals as necessary.
- Lead the development of a revised DoDD 7045.20 and a new DoD Instruction 7045.20 for Capability Portfolio Management (CPM) to align CPM processes with the objectives of this memorandum, in coordination with the Joint Staff, CAPE, and USD(R&E). These updates shall be synchronized with other acquisition modernization activities.

In carrying out these actions, no new review layers or other bureaucratic processes that may impede timely fielding of new technologies or capabilities will be created. The attached implementation guidance provides additional detail for each line of effort. Dr. John Whitley, Senior Advisor to the Deputy Secretary of Defense, is our point of contact for actions directed by this memorandum.

This is a decisive change intended to improve the Department's ability to prioritize, act, and execute with urgency. We expect every Component to support the transition in the same spirit. Every organization must now meet a simple test: Are we accelerating the delivery of integrated capabilities to solve our most pressing operational problems? If not, we must adapt or be realigned.



Pete Hegseth
Secretary of Defense



Steve Feinberg
Deputy Secretary of Defense

Attachments:

1. Requirements and Resourcing Alignment Board
2. Mission Engineering and Integration Activity
3. Joint Acceleration Reserve
4. Interim Joint Requirements Guidance and Instruction Updates
5. Service Requirements Process Review

ATTACHMENT 1 - REQUIREMENTS AND RESOURCING ALIGNMENT BOARD (RRAB)

The Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (VCJCS), in coordination with the Director, Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation (DCAPE), will establish the RRAB, which will be the Department's single decision forum for aligning fiscal resources to the Joint Force's most pressing joint operational problems, presented as a ranked list of Key Operational Problems (KOPs), synchronized with the annual Program and Budget Review process. The DCAPE and the Director, Joint Staff Force Structure, Resources, and Assessment Directorate (J-8), will serve as the executive co-secretaries of the RRAB, convene meetings, and prepare integrated recommendations.

Responsibilities of the RRAB Executive Co-Secretaries (DCAPE and Director, J-8):

1. Within 120 days, deliver to the RRAB co-chairs a charter and governance plan that defines membership, advisors, analytic support, decision protocols, and a meeting rhythm synchronized to the Program and Budget Review schedule. For each RRAB session, the executive co-secretaries will select an advisory group suited to the agenda, drawing as appropriate from the statutory JROC advisors and any additional officials whose expertise is relevant to the topic under consideration. The governance plan shall detail how the Capability Portfolio Management process and the integrated and cross-functional contributions of the Military Departments, the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment (USD(A&S)), and the Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering (USD(R&E)) will contribute to the analysis, decomposition, and consideration of each considered KOP when informing recommendations.
2. Each Program and Budget Review cycle, present recommendations on the highest-ranked KOPs, plus any topic the co-chairs separately nominate and approve, to the Deputy Secretary and VCJCS for decision. Recommendations may include program starts, realignments, terminations, other program changes, and proposed Joint Acceleration Reserve allocations.
3. Present all recommendations to the RRAB co-chairs for decision. Unless otherwise directed by the Deputy Secretary, joint decisions will transition directly into the budget build without additional review layers. Nothing in this document alters or supersedes the Deputy Secretary's statutory authority over resourcing.

ATTACHMENT 2 - MISSION ENGINEERING AND INTEGRATION ACTIVITY (MEIA)

The USD(R&E) will establish the MEIA and will serve as the single Principal Staff Assistant for the MEIA. The USD(A&S) will provide integration and interoperability expertise and support for the MEIA through the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Acquisition Integration and Interoperability (DASD(AI2)) and other offices as necessary. The USD(R&E) will provide mission engineering and experimentation expertise and support through the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Mission Capabilities (ASD(MC)) and other offices as necessary.

1. Within 90 days, the USD(R&E) and the USD(A&S) shall provide an integrated charter, implementation plan, and industry engagement plan for the MEIA to the Deputy Secretary and VCJCS. The ASD(MC) shall provide the mission engineering and experimentation facilitation aspects of MEIA. The DASD(AI2) shall provide system-of-systems integration and interoperability functions for the MEIA activity. The implementation plan will identify the resourcing strategy for the MEIA and how requested funds shall support all necessary activities.
2. The MEIA shall consider the top KOPs as ranked by the re-oriented JROC, and other matters assigned by the RRAB. For each such KOP, the MEIA shall conduct mission engineering activities to refine problem understanding and solution suitability, providing this analysis to the RRAB. The MEIA may draw upon external analysis as appropriate to inform its efforts.
3. The MEIA shall develop an industry engagement plan to facilitate active industry engagement by clearly communicating a suitable version of each KOP to industry, promoting continuous dialog, ideation, concept development, technology experimentation, and rapid prototyping efforts explicitly aligned with solving these joint operational problems. The MEIA shall coordinate with relevant government stakeholders including Service laboratories to gather additional inputs, and, together with the Joint Staff, organize government participation in industry engagements. The MEIA industry engagement plan shall ensure that such engagements are in accordance with applicable statutory and regulatory requirements and outline an approach to facilitate the award of an appropriate contract or agreement for the use of industry capabilities if needed.
4. The MEIA, leveraging its integration function and other resources, shall identify relevant Military Service capabilities and identify and implement relevant integrations that advance technical interoperability of the joint force.
5. The MEIA shall organize experimentation campaigns for considered KOPs, to include consideration of insertion of relevant capabilities from Military Services, Defense Agencies and Field Activities, and industry, and for exploration of new concepts. Such experimentation shall consider and involve stakeholders for the KOP of interest as well as members of the Joint Staff and shall account for command-and-control and interoperability considerations. Use of industry capabilities in an experimentation campaign shall be effectuated in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations, to include those relating to procurement and federal ethics requirements.
6. Brief MEIA results to the RRAB and recommend solution components for JAR funding allocation.

ATTACHMENT 3 - JOINT ACCELERATION RESERVE (JAR)

DCAPE, in coordination with the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller) (USD(C)), will implement a JAR beginning with the Fiscal Year 2027 Budget cycle.

The DCAPE will:

1. Propose a portion of topline Fiscal Guidance to be withheld to create the JAR each cycle.
2. Allocate JAR funding during the Program and Budget Review cycle based on RRAB decisions.
3. Ensure all other elements of the Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Execution (PPBE) system shall continue. JAR actions shall integrate with, not delay, those established timelines.

ATTACHMENT 4 - INTERIM JOINT REQUIREMENTS GUIDANCE AND INSTRUCTION UPDATES

Effective immediately, as JCIDS enters terminal phase-out, the Joint Staff will execute only those requirements validation functions expressly required by section 181 of Title 10, United States Code (U.S.C.), or other law.

1. As interim guidance, a capability document only qualifies as a “joint performance requirement” upon receipt of a signed VCJCS memorandum citing the appropriate legal basis requiring such classification and providing suitable justification of necessity. All other validations devolve to the sponsoring Military Service.
2. The Joint Staff will adjudicate qualifying submissions (i.e., capability documents formally routed to the Joint Staff that meet the criterion in paragraph 1 above) within 15 days with a single round of comment resolution; non-qualifying submissions will be returned to the submitting Military Service without action.

As JCIDS is disestablished and the JROC is re-oriented over the next 120 days, the Joint Staff shall identify any JCIDS-related functions that must continue due to statutory obligations or because they directly contribute to timely delivery of capability and integrate them into other Joint Staff-managed processes or procedures. Within 30 days, the Joint Staff shall deliver a termination-or-transition plan enumerating remaining JCIDS-derived activity.

1. The Joint Staff shall continue to receive and prioritize Combatant Command needs.
2. The Joint Staff, in coordination with the Joint Rapid Acquisition Cell (JRAC), is directed to assess and simplify the Joint Urgent Operational Need (JUON) and Joint Emergent Operational Need (JEON) process and provide recommendations to ensure this process and its execution aligns with the principles laid out in this memorandum. The USD(A&S) is directed, through the DASD(AI2) and the JRAC, and in coordination with other stakeholders, to enhance its support for urgent joint technical needs and may recommend additional authorities, resources, or funding mechanisms needed to enable agile and timely solutions.
3. The Joint Staff shall revise the Capability Portfolio Management Review process, as needed, to support the objectives of this memorandum.
4. The Joint Staff shall rescind or revise Joint Staff Instructions or manuals as needed to reflect the requirements set forth in this memorandum within 120 days. The Joint Staff shall provide drafts of new instructions or manuals consistent with the intent of this memorandum within 90 days.
5. The Joint Staff shall identify the information sharing tools and approaches that support their responsibilities in accordance with this memorandum.
6. The Joint Staff shall support a re-oriented JROC in delivering an annually updated ranked list of KOPs and associated capabilities and supporting analysis.

7. It is my expectation that the disestablishment of legacy JCIDS processes and structures will free personnel for realignment to these higher-priority activities.

ATTACHMENT 5 – MILITARY SERVICE REQUIREMENTS PROCESS REVIEW

As JCIDS is disestablished, the JROC re-oriented, and the RRAB established, the Military Departments will provide the Joint Staff with approved requirements and program data to support this transition and the Joint Staff's statutory duty to assess joint military capabilities. Further, the Military Departments will commence reviews of Military Service requirements processes within 90 days. The objectives of such a review shall be to accelerate delivery of effective capability to warfighters.

1. Strengthen the role of Military Service force design activities, with proactive identification of needs and clear requirements prioritization derived from operational problem statements.
2. Engage industry earlier around key Military Service needs and provide a demand signal that supports industry innovation.
3. Increase agility in acquiring capabilities, including accommodating buy-before-build or experimentation-led approaches.
4. Provide more flexibility to acquisition professionals for making performance trades to enhance speed of delivery or reduce cost or take advantage of recent technological developments.
5. Incorporate engineering-led methods of driving scalable technical interoperability with the Joint Force.
6. Enhance alignment between requirements and resourcing.
7. Remove low-value-add review, approval, staffing, documentation, or certification processes.
8. Share approved requirements, program data, and force design activities with the Joint Staff, the OUSD(A&S), and OSD CAPE to support Joint Force Design, RRAB analysis, Capability Portfolio Management, and other statutorily required activities, and identify an approach to share data relevant to mission engineering with the MEIA.
9. Submit a summary of initial findings to the Deputy Secretary of Defense within 180 days of this memorandum and detailed actionable reform implementation plans to the Deputy Secretary of Defense within 90 days after submission of the initial findings.
10. Provide regular updates to the Deputy Secretary of Defense of the progress in implementing these changes.