



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
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SECNAVINST 5420.188E  
ASN(RD&A) ABM  
11 December 1997

SECNAV INSTRUCTION 5420.188E

From: Secretary of the Navy

Subj: ACQUISITION CATEGORY (ACAT) PROGRAM DECISION PROCESS

Ref: (a) DoD Directive 5000.1 of 15 Mar 96 (NOTAL)  
(b) DoD Regulation 5000.2-R of 15 Mar 96 (NOTAL)  
(c) SECNAVINST 5000.2B of 6 Dec 96 (NOTAL)  
(d) SECNAV Memorandum of 22 Aug 94 (NOTAL)

Encl: (1) Program Decision Principal Advisors  
(2) Program Decision Briefing Guidelines

1. Purpose. To provide policy and process for making Department of the Navy (DON) ACAT acquisition program decisions. This is a revision to reflect the content of references (a), (b) and (c) and should be read in its entirety.

2. Cancellation. SECNAVINST 5420.188D.

3. Applicability. This instruction applies to all weapon system and information technology (IT) acquisition category (ACAT) programs defined by references (a), (b) and (c).

4. Background. As delineated in reference (c), the DON Acquisition Executive (NAE) is the Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Research, Development and Acquisition) (ASN(RD&A)), and is responsible for all research, development, and acquisition conducted in the DON. Program Executive Officers (PEO), Commanders of Systems Commands (SYSCOM Commander), Direct Reporting Program Managers (DRPM), and other ASN(RD&A) designees are responsible, for assigned programs.

5. Policy. A Milestone Decision Authority (MDA) shall conduct milestone reviews for all assigned DON ACAT acquisition programs.

a. ACAT ID and IAM Programs. DON acquisition program managers for ACAT ID or IAM programs shall, unless waived by ASN(RD&A), provide an acquisition program briefing to ASN(RD&A) or designee to coordinate the DON position and prepare ASN(RD&A) for an Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) milestone review. The program decision meeting (PDM) process is used to conduct this DON acquisition program briefing. It is done concurrently with the efforts of the OSD overarching integrated product team

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(OIPT) to ready the program for presentation to the MDA which is either the Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition and Technology) (USD(ACT)), or the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Command, Control, Communications and Intelligence (ASD(C31))).

b. ACAT IC, IAC, and II Programs. ASN(RD&A) is the MDA for all ACAT IC, IAC, and II acquisition programs under DON cognizance, and may delegate this responsibility as authorized by law and regulations. The PDM is the ASN(RD&A) milestone review forum. When conducting the milestone review, the MDA shall invite each Program Decision Principal Advisor (PDPA) to attend, or send a representative. Enclosure (1) lists PDPAs.

c. ACAT III and IV Programs. For ACAT III and IV programs, the cognizant PEO/SYSCOM Commander/DRPM/designee, as program MDA, shall chair the milestone review. PDPAs may choose not to attend or they may send a representative to the milestone review. Reference (c) provides MDA delegation policy for ACAT III and IV programs.

d. Acquisition Coordination Teams (ACT). Under references (c) and (d), an acquisition coordination team (ACT) shall be established for each DON ACAT IC, IAC and II program. The ACT for such programs shall be co-chaired by the cognizant Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy (DASN) or DASN action officer and the Program Manager (PM) (or a PM's representative). Prior to the assignment of a PM, the ACT shall be co-chaired by an appropriate resource sponsor (or a resource sponsor's representative). For ACAT ID and IAM programs, an ACT is not required since its role resides with the OSD OIPT as described in reference (b). ACTs for ACAT III and IV programs are encouraged, but their use remains at the discretion of the MDA.

The ACT is a team of stakeholders from the acquisition, requirements generation, test and evaluation, and planning, programming and budgeting communities who represent the principal advisors to the MDA. In addition to organizations deemed appropriate by the ACT co-chairs or the MDA, the PDPAs listed in enclosure (1) shall be invited to participate on the ACT. ACT members shall be empowered and authorized by the executing commands to make commitments for the organizations they represent, and are responsible for keeping their principals apprised of the program status. The ACT does not replace the PM's functional integrated product teams (IPT) and it shall not abrogate the responsibility of the PM nor delay or prevent unresolved issues from being raised to the MDA.

e. Proaram Decision Brief (PDB). Programmatic issues and the status of the program shall be fully addressed and presented at the milestone review by means of a PDB. The PDB documents the program at a specific time and is part of the official program decision record. For ACAT IC, IAC, II, III and IV programs, enclosure (2) provides a list of topics that must be considered for inclusion in the PDB, with the understanding that some of these topics may not be applicable to a particular program. Additional topics may be added by the MDA, the PM, and/or the ACT. Issues not resolved shall be identified in the core PDB presentation to the MDA. Issues that have been resolved need not be specifically addressed in the core presentation, but should be included in the PDB backup material. The presentation used at the acquisition program briefing should follow the PDB format and content that will be used at the milestone review.

f. "Paper" Milestone Reviews and "Paper" Acquisition Program Briefings. When there are no unresolved program issues, the MDA may elect to hold a "paper" milestone review in lieu of a formal milestone review. Likewise, ASN(RD&A) or the cognizant PEO/SYSCOM Commander/DRPM/designee may have a "paper" acquisition program briefing in lieu of a formal acquisition program briefing for a program whose MDA is at a higher level.

(1) For an ACAT ID or IAM program, a "paper" acquisition program briefing (the PDM) requires that a copy of the PDB be provided to each of the PDPAs listed in enclosure (1). It shall be each PDPA's responsibility to review the PDB and note any exceptions or unresolved/controversial issues to the executive secretary (see paragraph 7h).

(2) For an ACAT IC, IAC, or II program, a "paper" milestone review (the PDM) requires that a copy of the PDB be provided to each PDPA listed in enclosure (1) well in advance of signing the Acquisition Decision Memorandum (ADM). It shall be each PDPA's responsibility to review the PDB and note any exceptions or unresolved/controversial issues.

(3) For an ACAT III and IV program, a "paper" milestone review requires that a copy of the PDB be provided to each PDPA well in advance of signing the ADM. It shall be each PDPA's responsibility to review the PDB and note any exceptions or unresolved/controversial issues.

g. Milestone Information. Milestone information shall be prepared and presented to the MDA not later than the milestone review. Required milestone information for ACAT programs is

defined in references (b) and (c). Tailoring milestone information format and content for ACAT IC, IAC, II, III and IV programs is discussed in reference (c). Should circumstances warrant, a milestone review may be held prior to obtaining review, comment and approval on all milestone information. In such cases, the PM is responsible for obtaining appropriate review, comment and approval prior to a date acceptable to the MDA, as stated in the ADM.

h. Requirements Documents. The Mission Need Statement and the Operational Requirements Document shall be validated and approved by the requirements generation organization before scheduling a milestone review. Milestone reviews are not appropriate for requirements decisions.

i. Acquisition Decision Memorandum. The MDA shall record program decisions and directions in an ADM, preferably within 2 business days following the milestone review. A copy of the signed ADM shall be distributed to all PDPAs.

## 6. Procedures

a. General. Milestone reviews shall be chaired by the MDA. Reference (b) provides direction on milestone review attendance for ACAT ID and IAM programs. For milestone reviews and acquisition program briefings chaired by ASN(RD&A), the PDPAs identified in enclosure (1) shall be invited to attend. PDPAs may elect to not attend or to send an empowered individual to represent their organization. Additional attendance shall be determined on a case-by-case basis by the responsible DASN. For ACAT III and IV programs, attendance shall be controlled by the MDA.

For ACAT ID and IAM acquisition program briefings and for ACAT IC, IAC, and II milestone reviews, an advance copy of the PDB shall be provided to the Department of the Navy Program Information Center (DONPIC) at least 7 work days prior to the acquisition program briefing or milestone review. Failure to meet this deadline can result in rescheduling. DONPIC shall distribute an advance copy of the PDB to all PDPAs. The PDM executive secretary shall act on ASN(RD&A)'s behalf to ensure a coordinated process.

b. ACAT IT and IAM Programs. For ACAT ID or IAM programs, the cognizant PEO/SYSCOM Commander/DRPM/designee shall notify ASN(RD&A) when the OIPT considers the program ready for a

milestone review. At that time, ASN(RD&A) will decide whether to conduct a formal acquisition program briefing; a "paper" acquisition program briefing, or waive the briefing. In the event of a "paper" acquisition program briefing for ACAT ID or IAM programs, ASN(RD&A) shall:

- (1) review the PDB,
- (2) review the acquisition program briefing ("paper" or otherwise) results from the cognizant PEO/SYSCOM Commander/DRPM/designee, if held,
- (3) review the Commander, Operational Test and Evaluation Force (COMOPTEVFOR)/Director, Marine Corps Operational Test and Evaluation Activity (MCOTEA) assessment (as appropriate),
- (4) sign appropriate milestone information, and
- (5) provide guidance to the Department's OIPT representative and the cognizant PEO/SYSCOM Commander/DRPM/designee as the program moves toward its milestone review.

When the ASN(RD&A) acquisition program briefing is a formal briefing, it shall be held as described in paragraph 6a. The milestone review processes for ACAT ID and IAM programs are discussed in references (a) and (b).

c. ACAT IC, IAC, & II Programs. The cognizant PEO/SYSCOM Commander/DRPM/designee shall notify ASN(RD&A) via the cognizant DASN that the program is ready for a milestone review (the PDM) and may recommend that ASN(RD&A) conduct a "paper" milestone review in the event there are no controversial or unresolved issues.

In the event of a "paper" milestone review, ASN(RD&A) shall:

- (1) provide copies of the PDB to the PDPAs,
- (2) review the PDB,
- (3) review the acquisition program briefing ("paper" or otherwise) results from the cognizant PEO/SYSCOM Commander/DRPM/designee,
- (4) review the COMOPTEVFOR or Director, MCOTEA assessment (as appropriate),

- (5) review comments received from PDPAs,
- (6) approve the appropriate milestone information, and
- (7) document the milestone decision in an ADM.

When the ASN(RD&A) milestone review is not a "paper" process, a formal milestone review shall be held as described in paragraph 6a.

d. ACAT III and IV Programs. The cognizant PEO/SYSCOM Commander/DRPM/designee is responsible for conducting milestone reviews following the general principles of this instruction, except where this instruction provides specific requirements for ACAT III and IV programs.

e. Acquisition Coordination Team. The ACT shall:

- (1) identify and resolve issues at the earliest time and lowest level possible to facilitate program execution,

- (2) participate early and continuously with the PM to develop and implement a tailored acquisition strategy and streamline the acquisition process, and

- (3) review milestone information and provide its recommendation to the MDA on proceeding to a milestone review and whether it should be a "paper" or formal milestone review.

f. Acquisition Review Boards (ARB) . As detailed above, PEOs/SYSCOM Commanders/DRPMs/designees are required to conduct milestone reviews for ACAT III and IV programs and acquisition program briefings for ACAT IC, IAC and II programs. Procedures for conducting these milestone reviews and acquisition program briefings are at the discretion of each PEO/SYSCOM Commander/DRPM/designee, although they must not conflict with the requirements of this instruction. Several PEOs/SYSCOM Commanders/DRPMs use a forum called an ARB to conduct such milestone reviews and acquisition program briefings, and also use the ARB to informally review ACAT ID or IAM programs proceeding to an OSD-level milestone review. The ARB forum may continue to be used for these purposes.

## 7. Responsibilities

a. ASN (RD&A). ASN(RD&A) is the MDA for DON ACAT IC, IAC, II and, if not otherwise delegated, IT ACAT III and IVT programs. ASN(RD&A) may delegate this responsibility as authorized by law and regulation. As the MDA, ASN(RD&A) shall review and approve all appropriate milestone information, review the PDB, chair the milestone review (the PDM) and sign the ADM. ASN(RD&A) may delegate the responsibility to chair acquisition program briefings.

b. DASN. For ACAT IC, IAC, and II programs, the cognizant DASN is responsible for:

(1) co-chairing or appointing an action officer to co-chair the ACT,

(2) ensuring that tailored milestone information is complete and has been submitted to appropriate review and approval authorities prior to scheduling a milestone review (the PDM), or addressed in accordance with paragraph 5g of this instruction, and

(3) preparing and obtaining signature on the ADM preferably within 2 business days following the milestone review. A copy of the signed ADM shall be distributed to all PDPAs.

c. Department of the Navy Chief Information Officer (DON CIO). As appropriate, the DON CIO shall:

(1) participate on ACTs and attend acquisition program briefings and milestone reviews, and

(2) identify information management/information technology issues including architecture, standards, and interoperability, and ensure compliance with the requirements of Division E of the Clinger-Cohen Act of 1996 (formerly titled the Information Technology Management Reform Act) and the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.

d. Chief of Naval Operations (CNO)/Commandant of the Marine Corps (CMC) or designee. CNO/CMC shall:

(1) participate on ACTs and attend acquisition program briefings and milestone reviews,

(2) co-chair the ACT prior to assignment of a PM, and

(3) identify and propose solutions to requirements, funding, affordability, or test and evaluation issues in support of program decisions.

e. PEO/SYSCOM Commander/DRPM/designee. Responsibilities include:

(1) ensuring establishment of ACTs for ACAT IC, IAC, and II programs. ACTs for ACAT III and IV programs may be formed at the discretion of the MDA,

(2) ensuring that all issues have been addressed; resolved issues shall be included in the PDB backup section, unresolved issues shall be included in the core PDB,

(3) chairing acquisition program briefings (e.g., ARB), for ACAT IC, IAC and II programs, and documenting the results prior to milestone reviews with ASN(RD&A),

(4) when MDA, conducting milestone reviews in a manner consistent with this instruction and signing/distributing the ADM,

(5) notifying the executive secretary (see paragraph 7h) to schedule the milestone review (the PDM) when ASN(RD&A) is the MDA, or to schedule an acquisition program briefing with ASN(RD&A) when USD(A&T) or ASD(C31) is the MDA, and

(6) publishing, at least monthly, a schedule for all milestone reviews, including "paper" reviews, and acquisition program briefings, including "paper" briefings. A copy of this schedule shall be provided to the DONPIC.

f. P M. The PM is responsible for:

(1) co-chairing the ACT, when applicable (replaces the CNO/CMC co-chair referred to in paragraph 7d),

(2) developing an overall approach to conduct the milestone review,

(3) preparing and presenting the PDB,

(4) ensuring that appropriate reviews and approvals are obtained on all required milestone information in accordance with reference (c) and paragraphs 5g and 5h of this instruction, and



(5) when MDA has been delegated to the PM, conducting the milestone review in a manner consistent with this instruction and signing/distributing the ADM.

g. COMOPTEVFOR/Director MCOTEA/IT Testing Agent or designee. COMOPTEVFOR; Director, MCOTEA; or, for IT programs, the designated testing agent is responsible for participating as a member of the ACT, when established. For all ACAT programs other than ACAT IVM, COMOPTEVFOR/Director, MCOTEA/designated testing agent for IT programs shall also prepare a briefing that:

(1) 'summarizes early involvement and operational testing plans,

(2) identifies concerns raised from observation of testing or review of test data and results, and

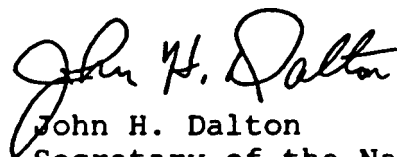
(3) presents operational test results, issues and recommendations.

This briefing shall be a part of the presentation associated with the milestone review and with the acquisition program briefing prior to the milestone review.

h. Executive Secretary. An ASN(RD&A) staff member shall be appointed Executive Secretary for milestone reviews chaired at the ASN(RD&A) level. The Executive Secretary shall oversee the milestone review process to ensure uniformity and discipline. The Executive Secretary shall advise ASN(RD&A), Principal DASN (RD&A), cognizant DASN, and the PDPAs regarding process matters or issues and scheduling of milestone reviews at the ASN(RD&A) level. The Executive Secretary shall also provide information to the briefing coordinator (see paragraph 7i) regarding scheduling. In the case of a paper PDM, the Executive Secretary shall coordinate PDB comments from the PDPAs.

i. Briefing Coordinator. The Director, Executive Support, DONPIC or the Commander, Marine Corps Systems Command (COMMARCORSSYSCOM) shall assign a briefing coordinator for milestone reviews chaired at the ASN(RD&A) level. The briefing coordinator shall coordinate attendance with the cognizant DASN action officer, advise PMs on the briefing preparations and assist the executive secretary as required.

j. DONPIC. DONPIC shall publish a weekly meeting schedule for all DON milestone reviews and acquisition program briefings prior to milestone reviews.

  
John H. Dalton  
Secretary of the Navy

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## PROGRAM DECISION BRIEFING GUIDELINES

TOPIC AREAS	MILESTONES			
	O	I	II	III
A. Purpose and required decision	x	x	x	x
B. Operational requirements and existing capabilities shortfall (revalidated at each milestone)	x	x	x	x
C. Key unresolved issues (e.g., programmatic legal, Cost Analysis Improvement Group, Congressional and/or Office the Secretary of Defense)	x	x	x	x
D. Acquisition strategy (historical, current and future) (e.g., incentives to reduce development, procurement and support cost; cost-performance tradeoffs; cost as an independent variable (CAIV); international considerations; environmental, safety and health considerations; information technology considerations such as acquisition strategy and contracting approach)		x	x	x
E. Program execution status				
1. Satisfaction of exit criteria		x	x	x
2. Program cost, schedule and performance (program and contract(s)) compared to acquisition program baseline (APB)		x	x	x
3. Test and evaluation (includes program manager and operational test agency positions)		x	x	x
4. Affordability (funding profile and anticipated cost (future years defense plan plus outyears))		x	x	x
5. Life-cycle acquisition logistics support		x	x	x

TOPIC AREAs	MILESTONES			
	O	I	II	III
F. Information technology statutory compliance (e.g., compliance with the Information Technology Management Reform Act (ITMRA), Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), and the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA))	x	x	x	x
G. Net overall risk assessment		x	x	x
H. Treaty compliance	x	x	x	x
I. Industrial base	x	x	x	x
J. Recommendations				
1. Exit criteria for next phase	x	x	x	x
2. Other recommendations	x	x	x	x



SUGGESTED BACK-UP AREAS	MILESTONES			
	O	I	II	III
A. Congressional and OSD guidance or requirements	x	x	x	x
B. Commercial and non-developmental items evaluation/status		x	x	x
C. Alternatives assessed and results				
1. Alternatives and life cycle costs		x	x	x
2. Joint/international program potential		x	x	x
3. Most promising alternative and rationale (including supporting affordability analysis)		x	x	x
4. Information technology performance measurements		x	x	x
5. Information technology (IT) capital investments		x	x	x
D. Cost drivers and major trade-offs expected in the next phase		x	x	x
E. Plans to reduce risk				
1. Design/test/manufacturing issues		x	x	x
2. cost, schedule, performance risk management plans		x	x	x
F. IT statutory compliance				
1. Functional issues:				
(a) Outsourcing analysis (e.g., summarize analysis that refutes notion that function to be supported by the system should be performed by the private sector)				X

SUGGESTED BACK-UP AREAS	MILESTONES			
	O	I	II	III
(b) Business process reengineering (e.g., summarize the process analysis/reengineering performed in advance of automation)	x	x	x	
(c) Performance measurement (e.g., cite the specific goals and objectives in current Department of the Navy (DON) Performance Plan which this system will help to achieve, and performance measures which will be used to track progress and to measure the impact of IT on the business function)	x	x	x	x
2. Overview of relationship and consistency with the DON IT strategic plan (e.g., specific contribution to achieving goals and objectives in DON IT strategic plan)	x	x	x	x
3. Technology aspects:				
(a) IT architecture				
(1) design, operational environment and consistency with DOD and DON common operating environment and common data environment		x	x	x
(2) use of data management, and planned methods to accomplish interoperability		x	x	x
(3) expected use of shared computing platforms or commercial computing resources		x	x	x
(4) telecommunications (e.g., expected use of local area networks, Defense Data Network, or special purpose telecommunications)		x	x	x

SUGGESTED PACK-UP AREAS	MILESTONES			
	O	I	II	III
(b) Security (indicate sensitivity range of information processed, threat analysis and planned security protection strategy)	x	x	x	x
4. Deployment strategy/status			x	x
5. Also see DOD Deskbook for OSD memo of 1 May 1997, Subj: Requirements for Compliance with Reform Legislation for Information Technology (IT) Acquisitions (Including National Security Systems)	x	x	x	x