



DAU Center for Defense Acquisition Research

Research Agenda 2015-2016

The Defense Acquisition Research Agenda is intended to make researchers aware of the topics that are, or should be, of particular concern to the broader defense acquisition community throughout the government, academic, and industrial sectors. The purpose of conducting research in these areas is to provide solid, empirically based findings to create a broad body of knowledge that can inform the development of policies, procedures, and processes in defense acquisition, and to help shape the thought leadership for the acquisition community.

Each issue of the *Defense ARJ* will include a different selection of research topics from the overall agenda, which is at: <http://www.dau.mil/research/Pages/researchareas.aspx>

Measuring the Effects of Competition

- What means are there (or can be developed) to measure the effect on defense acquisition costs of maintaining an industrial base in various sectors?
- What means exist (or can be developed) of measuring the effect of utilizing defense industrial infrastructure for commercial manufacture in growth industries? In other words, can we measure the effect of using defense manufacturing to expand the buyer base?
- What means exist (or can be developed) to determine the degree of openness that exists in competitive awards?
- What are the different effects of the two best-value source-selection processes (tradeoff vs. lowest price technically acceptable) on program cost, schedule, and performance?

Strategic Competition

- Is there evidence that competition between system portfolios is an effective means of controlling price and costs?
- Does lack of competition automatically mean higher prices? For example, is there evidence that sole source can result in lower overall administrative costs at both the government and industry levels, to the effect of lowering total costs?
- What are the long-term historical trends for competition guidance and practice in defense acquisition policies and practices?
- To what extent are contracts being awarded noncompetitively by congressional mandate, for policy interest reasons? What is the effect on contract price and performance?
- What means are there (or can be developed) to determine the degree to which competitive program costs are negatively affected by laws and regulations such as the Berry Amendment and Buy America Acts?