

Remarks

FROM THE EXECUTIVE EDITOR



Welcome to this very special commemorative issue of the *Defense Acquisition Review Journal (ARJ)*. In 2008, the Defense Acquisition University Alumni Association (DAUAA), along with the DAU Research Department, initiated the annual DAUAA 2010 Research Paper Competition for the DoD acquisition community, including all members of the Defense Acquisition Workforce, the DAU faculty, and the entire commercial defense industry. In 2010, the DAUAA Research Paper Competition was completed for the third consecutive year, and winners will be recognized at the DAU Acquisition Community Symposium on April 13, 2010. The theme for research papers in the 2010 competition is “Achieving Excellence in a Changing Acquisition Environment.” The top three papers will receive the Hirsch Award and cash prizes of \$1,000, \$500, and \$250 respectively. A panel of subject matter experts reviewed all submitted research papers and selected the top three winners. This research paper competition results from a special relationship between the DAUAA, the DAU Research Department, and the *ARJ*.

I am extremely pleased and proud to publish the three winning papers for the third annual DAUAA 2010 Research Paper Competition in this issue of the *ARJ*, along with four other outstanding papers that were nominated for awards. The theme for the 2010 competition was very broad, and you will see many diverse topics in this issue. A total of seven papers was selected for publication in this issue.

The first place winning research paper for the DAUAA 2010 Research Paper Competition is “Acquisition Leadership: An Opportunity Lost for Acquisition Excellence?” by Michael J. Kotzian. Many scholars believe that leadership is one of the most important factors—if not *the* most important—that an organization must possess to be successful in today’s global environment. The defense acquisition management system has continued to be questioned in terms of delivering cost-effective and timely complex weapons systems that meet warfighter requirements. As a means to improve this ongoing dilemma, this paper posits that increased attention across the acquisition community should be paid, not to improved processes and procedures, but to leadership. The importance of leadership competency is reviewed from the perspective of the Service’s Professional Military Education institutions. As the organization responsible for training the acquisition, technology, and logistics workforce on the complexities of the defense acquisition management system, the DAU is called upon to

improve its entry and mid-level course offerings associated with acquisition by providing meaningful instruction regarding foundations of leadership competency.

The second place winning paper is “The Product Support Manager: Achieving Success in Executing Life Cycle Management Responsibilities,” by Bill Kobren. In October 2009, President Obama signed the Fiscal Year 2010 National Defense Authorization Act (Public Law 111-84). The legislation contained a provision in Section 805 entitled, “Life Cycle Management and Product Support,” requiring: (1) the Secretary of Defense to issue comprehensive guidance on life-cycle management, and the development and implementation of product support strategies for major weapon systems; (2) that each major weapon system be supported by a product support manager (PSM); and (3) that each PSM position be performed by a properly qualified member of the armed forces or full-time employee of the Department of Defense. The research paper examined the intent, importance, and implications of this provision, and offered recommendations for implementation by the Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Logistics & Materiel Readiness, which drafts DoD policy to implement this new statutory requirement.

The third place winning paper is “How Well Are PMs Doing? Industry View of Defense Program Manager Counterparts,” by Roy L. Wood. Large, complex defense acquisition programs have been plagued by cost overruns, delayed schedules, and subpar performance. Much of the responsibility has been attributed to weaknesses in competencies of government program managers (PM). This article, based on the author’s doctoral dissertation, provides a new perspective on government PM competencies by surveying 146 defense industry managers who work with the government PMs. These industry managers rated the importance of common PM competencies and assessed how well, from their perspective, their government counterparts met those competencies. The data gathered from this survey revealed several insights, including a conclusion that government PM performance on several key technical skills may need improvement. The results of this study will be useful in assessing training and development strategies for government PMs.

Four additional research papers were nominated for publication in this commemorative issue. The next paper is “Improving Defense Acquisition Decision Making” by COL William R. Fast, USA (Ret.). This research investigates evidence and tests the hypothesis that the linkages between the defense acquisition management system,

the requirements process, and the budgeting system are not sufficiently defined to enable the success of acquisition programs. These disconnects contribute to weapon system cost overruns, schedule delays, and performance problems, and are exacerbated by the ever-changing global security environment and rapid pace of technological advancement. Through historical research, qualitative and quantitative analyses, and a comprehensive review of current policies and procedures, this research illuminates these areas of disconnect and proposes specific recommendations to fix them.

The fifth research paper selected for publication is "It's Time to Take the Chill Out of Cost Containment and Re-Energize a Key Acquisition Practice," by Col Robert L. Tremaine, USAF (Ret.) and Donna J. Seligman. Little will change regarding the prospect of future weapons systems acquisition successes unless PMs continue to tackle their programmatic major hurdles head-on, but one more than others—cost containment. Otherwise, the DoD might have fewer products and fewer services to offer its warfighters. The United States can ill afford any decrease in its preparedness when the nation is currently waging war on two fronts. To better understand some of the obstacles, the authors examined cost containment in the context of Total Life Cycle Cost Management. They believe a more thorough understanding and aggressive application of cost-containment strategies could conceivably shift acquisition outcomes to a more cost-effective posture. Responding to a survey conducted as part of this research, 887 DoD acquisition professionals provided input on cost containment, including tool types and associated processes.

The sixth research paper in this issue is "A New Alpha-Omega Map for Acquisition Test and Evaluation," by George Axiotis. Department of Defense Acquisition Test and Evaluation (T&E) has been the gatekeeper to Major Defense Acquisition Program production since its formalization over 25 years ago. Yet, the landscape of the types, methods, and sources for warfighting systems has significantly evolved. The department has studied and recommended action for Acquisition Reform for decades, while only "tweaking in the margins" for T&E. The time is right for DoD to consider a new approach to T&E, steering away from the "buy" decision to the more relevant "acceptance" and "operational" domains. This paper outlines the issues and proposes a new "Alpha-Omega" map for T&E for the way we actually procure DoD systems.

The final research paper in this special issue is "The F119 Engine: A Success Story of Human Systems Integration in Acquisition," by 2ndLt

Kevin K. Liu, USMC, Ricardo Valerdi, Donna H. Rhodes, Col Larry Kimm, USAF, and Lt Col Alvis Headen, USAF. The Department of Defense recently mandated the incorporation of Human Systems Integration (HSI) early in the acquisition cycle to improve system performance and reduce ownership cost. However, little documentation exists of successful examples of HSI within the context of systems engineering, making it difficult for the acquisition community to disseminate and apply best practices. This paper presents a case study of a large Air Force project that represents a successful application of HSI. The authors explore the influence of both the Air Force and the project contractor. Top-level leadership support is identified for integrating HSI into systems engineering processes as key to HSI success, reinforcing the importance of treating HSI as an integral part of pre-Milestone A activities.

And now, please allow me a few parting thoughts ... I will be moving to a new position soon, and Dr. Larrie D. Ferreiro will be taking over as the Executive Editor of the *ARJ*. It has been a true pleasure to be associated with some of the finest acquisition professionals from all walks of the DoD and defense industry, and to be able to share thoughts and philosophies with you. My tenure as Executive Editor of the *ARJ* began in August 2005; since then, the DAU Press has worked with me to bring you 15 issues. Between teaching, consulting, managing individual research projects, and overseeing the DAU Research Enterprise, I was always challenged to find the time and inspiration to publish a fresh, quality product ... and I certainly didn't do it alone! I have benefitted greatly from the knowledge and professional judgment of many folks at DAU, and I'd like to mention three of them specifically by name: Norene Fagan-Blanch, managing editor; Collie Johnson, technical editor; and Ed Boyd, Director of DAU Visual Arts & Press. Without their dedication, help, and advice, I would not have lasted this long. Dr. Ferreiro will be taking over as Executive Editor starting with the next issue (No. 55). Like me, Larrie comes from the Naval side of the DoD, but 5 years at DAU have given him a "purple" outlook. Please continue for Larrie the excellent support and flow of articles that I have enjoyed from many of you over the past 5 years.



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