

Promoting Transformation with Ideas from the Acquisition Workforce

DoD Looking for Initiatives From the People Who Best Know the Acquisition Process

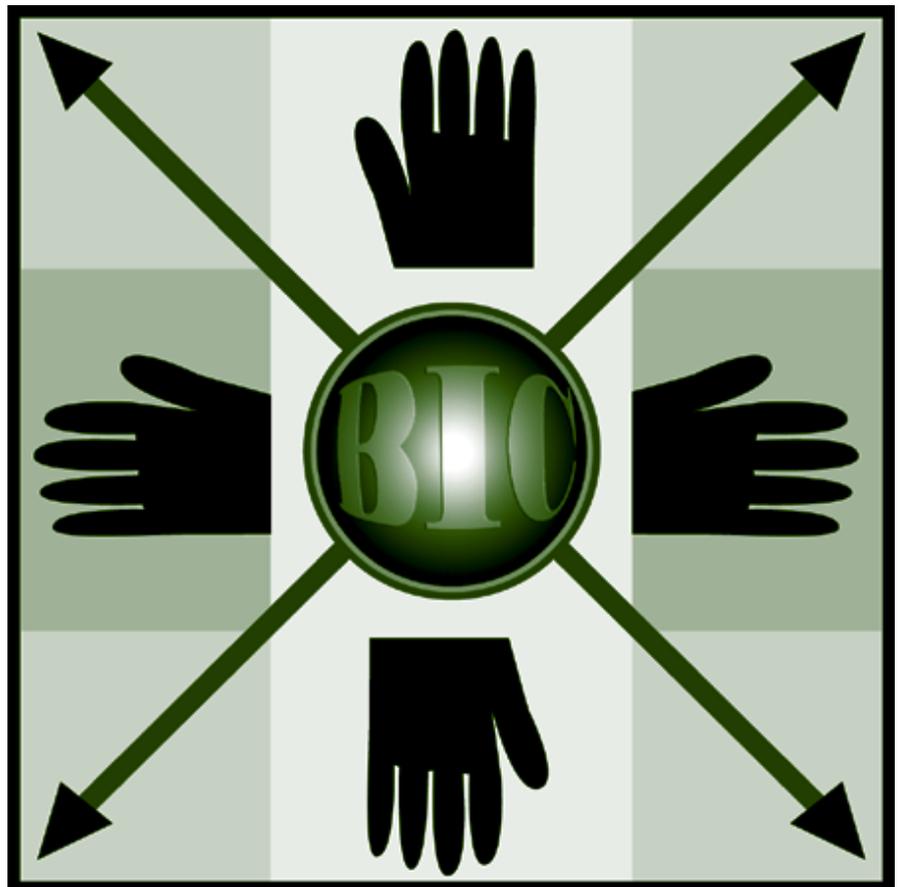
STEVEN J. MANCHESTER

Many in the acquisition community misunderstand the intended meaning of transformation, a word repeated endlessly throughout the Department of Defense over recent months. Some believe it is merely the “flavor-of-the-week” synonymous with acquisition and logistics excellence. Others have jumped solidly on the bandwagon, zealous new converts to the idea of transformation. However, their declarations are suspect because many are not aware of what has already changed within the DoD. Thus, the question arises; how is transformation being applied to the acquisition community? The answer is: *by establishment of the Business Initiative Council (BIC).*

The purpose of this article is to provide a quick snapshot of how the BIC works and to issue a call for new acquisition management initiatives.

Many Advocates

In July of last year Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics) Edward C. “Pete” Aldridge Jr., formalized the establishment of the BIC. The mission of the BIC is: “... to improve the efficiency of Department of Defense business operations by identifying and implementing business initiatives that create savings to be reallocated to higher priority efforts (i.e., people, readiness, modernization, and transformation).” When a DoD com-



The major difference between the establishment of the BIC and previous acquisition improvement initiatives is that the BIC has advocates across the entire Department.

Manchester is the Director of International Programs for the Marine Corps Systems Command, Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va. He holds a bachelor's degree in International Studies from George Mason University, a master's degree in National Resource Strategy from the Industrial College of the Armed Forces, and completed the DoD Senior Acquisition Course. Manchester is a Senior Fellow in the Council for Excellence in Government, and a graduate of the Federal Executive Institute.

ponent implements an initiative, and thereby generates savings, it will retain both the savings and the ability to reallocate their use.

The major difference between the establishment of the BIC and previous acquisition improvement initiatives is that the BIC has advocates across the entire Department. The Service Secretaries, the DoD Comptroller, the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, and the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff all staffed and signed the BIC Charter.

Structure of the BIC

The BIC has five tiers with membership ranging from Process/Functional Boards to the Senior Executive Council headed by the Secretary of Defense. (Figure 1).

The benefit of this structure is that it allows ideas on how to improve the DoD to flow quickly both up and down the tiers. No longer do good ideas have to go through arduous levels of staffing, often being lost in bureaucracy or rejected due to a lack of advocacy. The BIC now affords a platform for acceptance and advocacy of great ideas to go forward to transform the way business is conducted in the Department.

The Flow of Initiatives

Initiatives move into the BIC structure in two ways. They can start at the grass roots level, through submission to one of the seven Process/Functional boards (i.e., Acquisition Management). Alternatively, the top tiers can forward initiatives or ideas—often industry recommendations or practices—to the Process/Functional Boards for review and buy-in. All initiatives eventually start at the Process/Functional Board level because these entities are comprised of empowered representatives from each of the services, OSD, and the Joint Staff. A Service Chair heads each of the Process/Functional Boards. The chair responsibility rotates every six months to a different Service, thus enabling fairness and encouraging new perspectives on the initiatives under consideration.

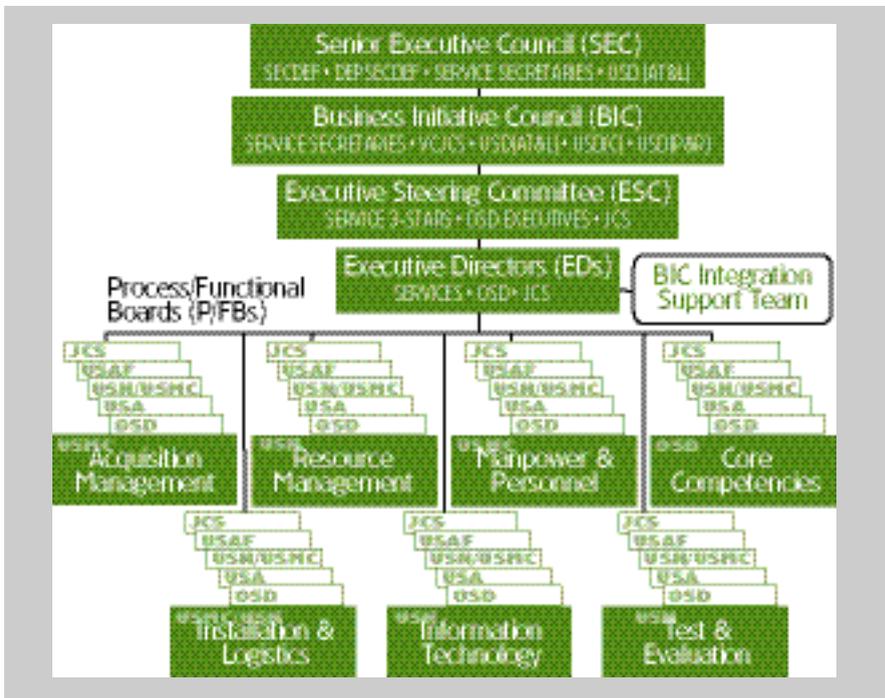
The flow of initiatives is more than simply a good idea going forward. An idea must meet basic criteria before it is forwarded up the respective tiers for final approval. Initiatives come into the Acquisition Management Process/Functional Board (AM PFB) in the form of a proposal. The proposal format is a four-page brief with the following elements:

- Proposal
- Process/Champion (Service/agency)
- History/Current Situation
- Estimate of Investments, Savings, or Benefits
- Metrics
- Pros (+) /Cons (-) /Risks (*)
- Required Policy/Congressional Actions
- Proposed Deployment/Action Approach
- Required BIC Actions

If the Acquisition Management Process/Functional Board accepts a proposal, it is then presented to the Executive Director (ED) for approval. The ED receives the proposal via briefing by the initiative champion and AM PFB chair. Once approved, the ED requests an initial implementation plan. This plan then moves forward to the Executive Steering Committee, and finally to the BIC. After BIC approval, the initiative is promulgated throughout the Department with direction that the champions develop the necessary implementation plans.

Since its inception, the BIC has been moving forward at a high rate of speed. As of Sept. 13, 2002, it has approved 48 initiatives (Figure 2).

FIGURE 1. BIC Senior Executive Council



Call for Initiatives

The BIC is now in its fourth phase. The Department of the Navy Team officially takes over the helm as the lead Service effective Oct. 1, 2002. The U.S. Marine Corps will chair the Acquisition Management Process/Functional Board. The focus for the next six months will be to continue to promulgate new initiatives and continue implementation of acquisition and logistics excellence. At this time, the AM PFB is soliciting new initiatives. As indicated earlier, it is simple to submit initiatives, and each of the Service representatives is responsible for forwarding proposals. Points of contact follow.

U.S. Army—Brian Murray

brian.murray@hqda.army.mil

U.S. Air Force—Air Force Col. Robert Ramsey

Robert.Ramsey@pentagon.af.mil

FIGURE 2. Approved BIC Initiatives

Enterprise Software Initiative	Raising Below Threshold Reprogramming (BTR) Thresholds
Establish Funding Flexibility Within Funds	Increase Flexibility of Expired Year of a Program
Increase Expense/Investment Threshold	Cell Phone Pooling Minutes
Modified Waiver Procedure for Hiring Military Personnel	Manpower Mix Management Flexibility
Recovery Auditing	Common Flight Clearance Process
Common Range Scheduling Process	Eliminate Excise Tax on DoD Tactical Vehicles
Streamline Clinger-Cohen Implementation	Streamline Contract Closeout Process
Revise Davis-Bacon Act Thresholds	Improve Inter-Service Performance Quality Data Report (PQDR) Business Process
Allow for Contracting of Security Guards	Establish Process for Property Conveyance for Conservation Purposes
Streamline Administrative Coordination Process	Optimize Professional Continuing Education
Modify Joint Professional Military Education (JPME) II Requirements	Establish Operations & Maintenance (O&M) Closeout Flexibility
Streamline the GO/Flag Officer Nomination Process	Cell Phone Subsidy
Streamline IT Equipment Disposal Process	Streamline Independent Technology Readiness Assessments (ITRA)
Elimination of Value Engineering Reporting	Pioneer Projects
Buy to Budget	Simplify Physical Access Control at DoD Installations & Facilities by Using the Common Access Card (CAC)
Eliminate Unnecessary Reports	Embedded Instrumentation
Improve Visibility of Contract Services	Consolidate Defense Agency Overhead Functions
Reengineer Personnel Security Investigation	International Electronic Information Release Policy
Managing for Results	Guaranteed Fixed-Price Remediation
Reengineer Legislative Coordination Process	Cost-Effective Multi-Year Contracting Arrangement &/or Purchase of Military Sealift Command Ships
Working Capital Fund-Business Practices	e-Contract Enterprise Licensing
Provide Adequate Fitness Facilities	One-Time Clearance of Priority Placement Positions for Science and Technology
Web-Based Invoice/Receipt Processing	Commercialize Military-Developed Systems
Commercializing Acquisition: Raise Thresholds for the Truth in Negotiations Act (TINA)	Implement Virtual IT Marketplace

U.S. Navy—Charles Mills
Mills.Charles@hq.navy.mil

U.S. Marine Corps—Richard Bates
Batesrw@mcsc.usmc.mil

Joint Staff—Air Force Col. Harry McClellan

harry.mcclellan@js.pentagon.mil

Chair—Steven Manchester

Manchestersj@mcsc.usmc.mil

People often complain that their great ideas are never heard. For the first time, the BIC offers the acquisition workforce an opportunity to make a difference without confronting the layers of red tape that plagued the past. And the beauty of the BIC is its streamlined nature and straightforward procedures that require little explanation (the Official Charter is only five pages long).

What are you waiting on? Submit your ideas—*today*.

Editor's Note: Manchester welcomes questions or comments about the BIC. Contact him at Manchestersj@mcsc.usmc.mil.

DoD 5000 Series Update
Read the Latest at
www.acq.osd.mil/ar/

DoD 5000.2-R Final Regulation

Mandatory Procedures for Major Defense Acquisition Programs (MDAPs) and Major Automated Information System (MAIS) Acquisition Programs, signed April 5, 2002.

DoDI 5000.2, Change One

Operation of the Defense Acquisition System, April 5, 2002.