

# Department of Defense Acquisition Reform Week, March 17-21, 1997

## Sustaining the Momentum While Moving Full Speed Ahead

DR. JOSEPH FERRARA

The Secretary of Defense declared March 17-21, 1997, as Acquisition Reform Week. The theme of AR Week was “Sustaining the Momentum While Moving Full Speed Ahead.” The Department needs to sustain the momentum on all the reform efforts initiated since 1993, while moving forward to tackle new challenges to reinventing government. The Secretary and other Department leaders want to show their continued commitment to acquisition reform.

### Teamwork

One major focus of AR Week was on using *teamwork* as a catalyst to make AR initiatives the norm. As Vice Presi-

dent Gore said in his videotaped AR Week Message to the Department, “Teamwork is at the heart of successful reinvention.”

During AR Week, the entire defense acquisition community—DoD acquisition workers, military users, auditors, financial analysts, legal counsel, and the defense industry—joined together in teams, discussed the state of acquisition reform, and focused on how to apply acquisition reform initiatives in their everyday work. Hundreds of thousands of people were involved, everybody from the Secretary of Defense to the GS-9 at Grand Forks Air Force Base who just won an award for streamlining the contracting

process. To ensure maximum communication potential, DoD leaders also set up electronic “chat rooms” on the Internet to conduct online discussions with the acquisition community (see p. 40 of this issue, “Kaminski Conducts Acquisition Reform Week Online Chat Sessions”).

### Where Are We?

As the Department observed Acquisition Reform Week, several themes emerged:

- The acquisition process is changing from a rules-driven bureaucratic system to an environment that encourages the application of *commonsense* business practices.

**“We have set aside this whole week to pull together government and industry teams throughout our defense acquisition system to look at the way we are doing business now, and to explore how we might improve the way we do business in the future, looking at fundamental approaches to doing this, but doing it with teamwork. Our success in pulling together and operating as a team with open communications and no surprises will in large part be the overall key to our success.”**

— Dr. Paul G. Kaminski  
Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition & Technology)



*Ferrara is the Executive Secretary to the Board and Executive Committee, Civilian Career Development Program. He is a member of the OUSD(A&T) API staff.*



**“We have to commit more time and more resources for training in order to build a very solid cadre of people who know and understand the new systems we’re building.”**

— William S. Cohen  
Secretary of Defense

- We have the *technology to streamline*, and we must exploit this technology to move reinvention efforts into the 21st Century.
- While streamlining is a key objective, government leaders will still continue to play the important and legitimate role of program oversight.
- The Department is *rightsizing* the acquisition workforce and expanding training and education to ensure a *smarter* workforce.
- Maintaining high levels of readiness in the acquisition system translates into high levels of *readiness* for the warfighter.
- Reform is a *continuous process* of improvement.

#### We’re At a Critical Juncture

Acquisition Reform is at a critical juncture; two key efforts must be pursued.

The first is to sustain the momentum and ensure that ongoing reform initiatives are fully implemented. Since 1993, DoD has made substantial progress in several key areas, including the enactment of landmark acquisition reform legislation and a dramatic reduction in the regulatory burden associated with government acquisition. The second key effort is to move forward to tackle new challenges. These new challenges include:

- Enhancing the stability of defense acquisition programs to reduce schedule slippage and cost growth.
- Applying reform innovations to service contracting; contracting for services consumes almost 50 cents of every defense contract dollar.
- Expanding electronic commerce to prepare the acquisition community

for the rapid pace of a global economy in an information age.

- Expanding education and training to ensure that DoD’s acquisition professionals stay on the cutting edge of the latest in best business practices.

Our Defense Acquisition Executive summarized the spirit and intent of Acquisition Reform Week with a simple statement:

“In this world, you’re either moving ahead or you’re falling behind. We can’t stop where we are and rest on our laurels.”

— Dr. Paul G. Kaminski  
Under Secretary of Defense  
(Acquisition & Technology)  
March 17, 1997

**“As the Department’s representative of the military user, I want to tell you why I believe acquisition reform is so absolutely critical to us—that reason is, quite simply, supporting the men and women in uniform who are doing the tough jobs around the world the Secretary of Defense has tasked them to do.”**

— Gen. Joseph Ralston  
Vice Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff



# DAVID PACKARD EXCELLENCE AWARD WINNERS

March 17, 1997

Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen announced the presentation of four 1997 David Packard Excellence in Acquisition Awards at the Acquisition Reform Week Kick-Off Ceremony in the Pentagon. The 1997 awards recognize Department of Defense Integrated Product Teams from the Navy, Special Operations Command, Ballistic Missile Defense Organization, and Air Force that have achieved excellence in acquisition through acquisition reform practices.

The award winners were competitively selected from nominations made by the military services and defense agencies. Principal nomination criterion was the demonstrated use of innovative team techniques first advocated by Packard to achieve excellence in defense acquisition.

The award is named in honor of the late David Packard, founder and chairman of the Hewlett-Packard Company, former deputy secretary of defense under President Nixon, and chairman of a blue ribbon defense commission (the "Packard Commission") under President Reagan.

Editor's Note: The Defense Systems Management College Alumni Association (DSMCAA) shares and underwrites the Packard Award in collaboration with the Office of the Secretary of Defense (Acquisition and Technology)



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE JOINT STRIKE FIGHTER PROGRAM (JSF) (PROGRAM MANAGEMENT INTEGRATED PRODUCT TEAM).



U.S. SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES INTELLIGENCE VEHICLE PROGRAM (SOF IV) (PROGRAM MANAGEMENT INTEGRATED PRODUCT TEAM).

# EXCELLENCE IN ACQUISITION AWARDERS NAMED



U.S. NAVY MULTIFUNCTIONAL INFORMATION DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM (MIDS) PROGRAM OFFICE (COMMUNICATIONS-COMPUTER SYSTEMS INTEGRATED PRODUCT TEAM).



U.S. AIR FORCE CONSTRUCTION FLIGHT WORKING GROUP FORMED FROM ELEMENTS OF THE 319TH CONTRACTING AND 319TH ENGINEER SQUADRONS, GRAND FORKS AIR FORCE BASE, N.D.

# ACQUISITION REFORM

## One-day Standdown Focuses on Acquisition

On Wednesday, March 19, DSMC employees discontinued their normal operations, locked the doors, and attended a full day of briefings, discussions, and teamwork exercises in observance of Acquisition Reform Day II. Beginning with a video presentation by Vice President Gore, followed by a message from Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Technology, Dr. Paul G. Kaminski, the College used the day as an opportunity to learn more about some of the issues that DSMC has a primary mission to teach. Pictured are staff, faculty, and several guest speakers from government and industry, which included project managers of some of the most successful systems acquisition programs in the Department of Defense.



DSMC COMMANDANT, ARMY BRIG. GEN. RICHARD A. BLACK KICKS OFF THE DAY'S ACTIVITIES WITH AN EARLY MORNING PRESENTATION.



NAVY CMDR. JAMES DULLEA, PMS 450, TECHNICAL DIRECTOR, NSSN PROGRAM.



WENDER COX, DEPUTY PROGRAM DIRECTOR, C-130J PROGRAM, LOCKHEED MARTIN CORPORATION.



ROBERT BRUCE, DIRECTOR, ATLANTIC ARMAMENTS COOPERATION, OUSD(A&T).



# REFORM WEEK 97

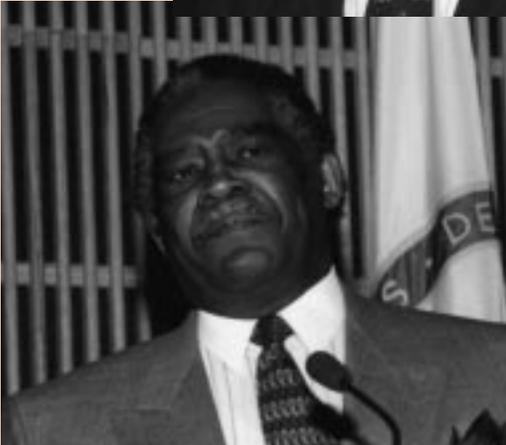
## Acquisition Reform Discussions, Team Exercises



WILL LENNON,  
DEPUTY PROGRAM  
MANAGER, NEW  
ATTACK SUBMARINE  
PROGRAM, ELECTRIC  
BOAT DIVISION,  
GENERAL DYNAMICS  
CORPORATION.



NAVY CAPT. DAVID FITCH, PROGRAM MANAGER, MULTIFUNCTIONAL INFORMATION DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM (MIDS).



KEN TAYLOR, CHIEF, CONTRACTING  
DIVISION, AEROSPACE CONTROL  
STRIKE MISSION GROUP.



AIR FORCE LT. COL.  
BLAINE VAN DAM, C-130  
SYSTEMS MANAGER.



FROM LEFT: NAVY CAPT. DAVID FITCH;  
DSMC PROFESSOR DR. MARY-JO HALL;  
DSMC COMMANDANT, ARMY BRIG. GEN.  
RICHARD A. BLACK; ROBERT BRUCE,  
OUSD(A&T); DSMC INDUSTRY CHAIR,  
GEORGE KRICKORIAN.