

Around the Acquisition Community

A brief compilation of major acquisition news items, career development announcements, Defense Acquisition University initiatives, and leadership changes.

For more acquisition news, please go to the Defense AT&L magazine Web site at <www.dau.mil/pubs/damtoc.asp> and click the links under the "Acquisition News Topics" heading.

Obama Nominates Defense Acquisition Under Secretary

Donna Miles

AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE (FEB. 24, 2009)

WASHINGTON—President Barack Obama announced yesterday that he will nominate Ashton Carter to be the next under secretary of defense for acquisition, technology and logistics. Carter is the chairman of the International and Global Affairs faculty at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government. He served as assistant secretary of defense for International Security Policy from 1993 to 1996.

If confirmed to the post held by John Young since 2007, Carter would oversee a sweeping defense acquisition reform effort.

Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates has called overhauling the way the department buys goods and services and manages taxpayer dollars one of the biggest challenges it faces.

"A risk-averse culture, a litigious process, parochial interests, excessive and changing requirements, budget churn and instability, and sometimes adversarial relationships" within the department and other parts of government have made acquisition reform a priority, Gates said last month during a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing.

If confirmed as under secretary, Carter would be the point man in the difficult procurement decisions Gates told the senators would begin with Obama's fiscal 2010 defense budget request.

"One thing we have known for many months is that the spigot of defense spending that opened on 9/11 is closing," Gates said at the hearing. "Two major campaigns ongoing, the economic crisis, and resulting budget pressures will force hard choices on this department."

Carter, who has a doctorate in physics, directed military planning during the 1994 crisis over North Korea's nuclear weapons program, according to a statement released by the White House. He was instrumental in removing all nuclear weapons from Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Belarus; and he directed the establishment of defense and intelligence relationships with former Soviet nations at the end of the Cold War.

He also participated in negotiations that led to the deployment of Russian troops as part of the Bosnia Peace Plan Implementation Force.

Carter managed the Cooperative Threat Reduction program aimed at eliminating nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons of the former Soviet Union; and he directed the Nuclear Posture Review and oversaw the Defense Department's Counterproliferation Initiative. He also directed the reform of the department's national security export controls.

In 1997, Carter co-chaired the Catastrophic Terrorism Study Group with former CIA Director John M. Deutch, urging greater attention to the terrorist threat. From 1998 to 2000, he was deputy to former Defense Secretary William J. Perry in the North Korea Policy Review, and traveled with Perry to Pyongyang. From 2001 to 2002, he served on the National Academy of Sciences Committee on Science and Technology for Countering Terrorism and advised on the creation of the Homeland Security Department.

Carter is a two-time recipient of the Department of Defense Distinguished Service Medal, the department's highest award. In addition to his current position at the Kennedy School, Carter is co-director of the Preventive Defense Project, serving along with Perry. The project is a research collaboration between Harvard and Stanford universities.

Opportunities for DoD Civilians to Serve Worldwide (Feb. 3, 2009)

The Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Civilian Personnel Policy) has been designated by Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness as the lead in expanding the opportunities for Department of Defense civilians to fill global expeditionary augmentation requirements. These details are on Joint Task Force Headquarters staffs supporting operations in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other locations worldwide. More information is available online at <www.cpms.osd.mil/expeditionary>.

From the Office of the Director, Defense Procurement, Acquisition Policy & Strategic Sourcing (Jan. 2, 2009)

The Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics has co-signed a memorandum identifying Defense Acquisition shortage category positions, and delegating the authority to the military departments and defense agencies to appoint highly qualified individuals to these positions. Read the entire memorandum at <www.acq.osd.mil/dpap/ops/docs/expeditedhiringauthority-20081223.pdf>.

Steven R. Meier Presents Study Results at Defense AT&L Speaking Event

Judith M. Greig

Steven R. Meier, group deputy director in the Advanced Systems and Technology Directorate, National Reconnaissance Office, was the second speaker in the Defense AT&L

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"Meet the Author" lunchtime series. Meier's presentation, delivered on Jan. 27 at the DAU main campus, Fort Belvoir, Va., was on "Best Project Management and Systems Engineering Practices for Large-Scale Federal Acquisition Programs."

Meier presented the results and subsequent analysis of a study of several government defense and intelligence agency large-scale weapons acquisition programs. The study was undertaken to determine why large federal acquisition programs continue to suffer cost and schedule overruns to the average tune of \$295 billion in cost growth and 21 months' schedule delay.

Information for the study was gathered from industry, the federal government, national laboratories, think tanks, and existing documents and studies. Some input was received in written form, and some was the result of face-to-face interviews with industry and federal government executives. Meier said that the data both confirmed other studies' findings and provided new information on the common causes of cost and schedule growth on large programs in the defense and intelligence communities.

The study revealed a number of factors contributing to agencies' current acquisition environment: overzealous advocacy; immature technology; lack of strategic corporate roadmaps; requirements instability; ineffective acquisition strategy and contractual practices; unrealistic program baselines; inadequate systems engineering; and workforce issues—specifically, a lack of experience and high turnover resulting from assignment rotations.

Meier explained each of the eight factors, outlining the reasons behind each and the impact. He shared comments from the study participants, illustrated points from his own experience, and recommended practices to minimize or eradicate impact on the program.

Most unsuccessful programs, Meier stressed, fail at the beginning, which underscores the need to establish a proper baseline in the preacquisition phase to increase the likelihood of a successful program outcome. To that end, he presented a 13-item preacquisition checklist to help program managers set a strong program basis early in the acquisition life cycle.



Steven R. Meier discusses the cost and schedule problems plaguing large-scale defense acquisition programs as revealed by a recent study—problems that can, he explains, be mitigated by good practices in the preacquisition phase.
Photo by Judith Greig

Meier encouraged questions throughout his presentation, and the audience of DAU professors, staff, and students engaged in lively discussion with him, several offering their own program experience.

Meier is a widely published author, and his *Defense AT&L* article "Building and Managing an Effective Project Team" appeared in the September-October 2008 issue. A detailed account of the study is available in his article "Best Project Management and Systems Engineering Practices in the Preacquisition Phase for Federal Intelligence and Defense Agencies," *Project Management Journal*, March 2008.

Greig, the former managing editor and executive editor of Defense AT&L, is a contributing editor to the magazine.

DAU Hosts Program Attorney's Course at Fort Belvoir
William Henabray • Michael P. Lacroix • Michael C. McGhee • Rexford T. Bragaw III

The program attorney can be one of the least visible members of the program team, especially if things are going well. There are often other occasions, however, when the program attorney can become one of the most important and highly visible members of the program team, especially when programs are forced to navigate the many complex statutory

and regulatory requirements that apply to today's major weapon system acquisitions.

Just when and where do these statutes/regulations impact programs? The short answer is throughout the life cycle of almost any major program and, frequently, at very critical decision points, such as source selections, contract awards, debriefings, high-profile bid protests, major milestone decisions, and other time-critical programmatic events.

To help provide Navy program attorneys with the fast-changing, highly specialized DoD 5000-series training that they need to support their clients, Naval Air Systems Command's Office of General Counsel worked in close coordination with senior Navy General Counsel leadership to help initiate and facilitate the development of a new DAU course designed specifically for DoD program attorneys.

Faculty from the Defense Acquisition University Mid-Atlantic Region (near Patuxent River Naval Air Station, Md.) and DAU's Midwest Region (near Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio) co-developed the course in 2005. The initial two-week pilot course was offered in July 2005 to 17 attorneys from across the Services at DAU Mid-Atlantic. Based upon attendee comments and follow-on feedback from the first pilot class, the course content was subsequently modified and compressed into a more compact one-week format.

In July 2006, 24 program attorneys from across the Services convened at DAU Mid-Atlantic to attend and pilot the new one-week course. Attendee critiques overwhelmingly validated that the content and length of the revised one-week syllabus met the ambitious learning objectives that both the senior Navy General Counsel leadership and DAU had established.

After a thorough DAU and Navy General Counsel leadership review of the second pilot attendee and instructor critiques, the course became a listed class under the Targeted Training section of the 2007 DAU Catalog as the "Program Attorney's Acquisition Overview Course." The five-day course provides program attorneys with a comprehensive analysis of the three major acquisition systems that their program manager clients must navigate to execute a successful program (i.e., the requirements process, acquisition management, and the budgeting system).

In August of 2008, the DAU main campus at Fort Belvoir, Va., hosted the third offering of the Program Attorney's Course to a capacity class of 36 program attorneys from

across the Navy and Marine Corps. The course had a substantial wait list, and every seat was filled.

In addition to the course's comprehensive analysis of the three major acquisition systems, Navy Assistant General Counsel for Research, Development, and Acquisition Susan Raps hosted a special "General Counsel Day" during the August 2008 course that covered timely topical legal issues. DoD Deputy General Counsel for Acquisition and Logistics Douglas Larsen spoke on topical program legal issues and the many challenges that he and his staff attorneys were facing within the Office of the Secretary of Defense. He also emphasized the critical importance of ensuring the statutory compliance and integrity of DoD programs, and what DoD program attorneys could do to help facilitate that process.

Special presentations from a program executive officer, program managers, and financial management experts were also featured as part of the five-day course.

The course is set up based on DAU's proven student-centric approach, and it allows the participants to go through the process of actually formulating an acquisition strategy and gaining an appreciation for the diverse complexities involved in executing a major program. As such, the workshop interactive format also serves as a melting pot of multi-Service ideas and perspectives—the feedback and interest in the course has been phenomenal.

For further information on the workshop, contact the DAU Mid-Atlantic Region at 240-895-7344.

Henabray works for the Naval Air Systems Command Office of Counsel; Lacroix and McGhee are DAU professors of acquisition management; and Bragaw is a DAU professor of contract management.

AT&L Rapid-Deployment Training Now Available for DoDI 5000.02

The official AT&L Rapid-Deployment Training is now available at the Defense Acquisition University Web site < http://www.dau.mil/performance_support/RDT.asp.> This site has the latest updated training based on the published DoDI 5000.02.

DAU and NDIA to Sponsor Defense Systems Acquisition Management Course Offering for Industry Managers

Defense Acquisition University and the National Defense Industrial Association will sponsor an offering of the De-

Defense Systems Acquisition Management course for interested industry managers June 8-12, 2009, at the Antlers Hilton Colorado Springs in Colorado Springs, Colo. DSAM presents the same acquisition policy information provided to DoD students who attend the DAU courses for acquisition certification training. It is designed to meet the needs of defense industry acquisition managers in today's dynamic environment, providing the latest information related to:

- Defense acquisition policy for weapons and information technology systems, including discussion of the DoD 5000 series (directive and instruction), and the Defense Acquisition Guidebook
- Defense acquisition reform and initiatives
- Defense acquisition procedures and processes
- The Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Execution process, and the congressional budget process
- The relationship between capability needs determination, resource allocation, science and technology activities, and acquisition programs.

All course materials will be provided to students on CD-ROM. It is highly recommended that students bring a laptop computer to the class. If you do not have access to a laptop, please contact the respective meeting planner as soon as possible. There will be a limited number of laptops available for use through NDIA, so please call early.

For further information see "Courses Offered" under "Meetings and Events" at <www.ndia.org>. Industry students contact Michelle Hariston at mhariston@ndia.org or 703-247-9478. A limited number of experienced government students may be selected to attend each offering. Prospective government students must first contact Karen Byrd at 703-805-3728 or e-mail karen.byrd@dau.mil prior to registering with NDIA.

TelePresence—DAU's Latest Training Mechanism

The Defense Acquisition University continues to be a leader in leveraging technology to better train and prepare the warfighter. TelePresence, DAU's latest training mechanism, moves beyond existing video teleconferencing technology to create the experience of being "across the table" for remote participants. This innovative technology allows individual professors to present in-person training simultaneously to students at multiple locations in a highly personal and effective manner. One key benefit of TelePresence is the significant cost saving achieved while maintaining a high-quality learning experience for each student.

PMT 401 Program Manager's Course Comes to DAU Midwest Region

Carl Hayden

The DAU Midwest Region in Kettering, Ohio, will begin teaching the PMT 401 Program Manager's Course within the Midwest Region in August 2009. This is the first time a region has been granted permission to teach the PMT 401 Program Manager's Course geographically separate from the Defense Systems Management College-School of Program Managers at Fort Belvoir, Va. After several months of discussions and meetings on the subject, a Memorandum of Understanding was developed and agreed upon by the DSMC-SPM and Midwest Region deans, and the president of DAU.

The plan is to conduct two classes a year and support the Senior Service College Fellowship program in the Midwest Region. The PMT 401 Program Manager's Course is designed to improve DoD acquisition outcomes by strengthening the critical thinking and decision-making skills of potential leaders of major defense acquisition programs and program support. The target audience is Level III program management career field members who have demonstrated the potential to become major program or program management and high-potential Level III acquisition professionals in other career fields, such as contracting, logistics, and financial management.

The Midwest Region has reorganized to accommodate this venture. Effective Jan. 7, 2009, the region's program management department became the acquisition management department led by Professor Sylvester Hubbard. A new program management department will be established, led by the Department Chair Professor Robert "Bob" Steele. He will also act as the regional representative for the PMT 401 Program Manager's Course. The program management department will deliver the Midwest PMT 401 and support other executive-level training.

Any and all inquiries pertaining to the program management department and/or PMT 401 for the Midwest Region should be directed to Department Chair Professor Robert Steele, robert.steele@dau.mil, 937-781-1055.

Hayden is associate dean for academic affairs, DAU Midwest Region.