



ACQUISITION,  
TECHNOLOGY,  
AND LOGISTICS

## THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

3010 DEFENSE PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-3010

JUN 10 2016

MEMORANDUM FOR: SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Sustaining Momentum - Continuing Efforts to Strengthen the Acquisition Workforce

The Department of Defense (DoD) acquisition activities and workforce comprise the largest research and development, production, sustainment and contracted services enterprise in the world. Between now and 2021 our acquisition workforce will be responsible for efficiently and effectively spending over \$1 trillion in taxpayer dollars to equip and support our Warfighters. We have made excellent progress in strengthening our workforce and improving the way we do business. The Services have each accomplished a great deal toward the goal of rebuilding an acquisition workforce that was gutted during the 1990s. Despite the tight budget climate, we don't want to lose any more of these gains in capacity and capability than we absolutely must. Our investments in these people are paying off.

Over the last several years our highly professional acquisition workforce has substantially improved the efficiency and productivity of acquisition programs. A number of metrics show steady improvement in both cost and schedule performance. This was accomplished despite the existence of major obstacles, including the enactment of sequestration and significant budget reductions. We are achieving the best results at controlling costs on major programs in 35 years, and we are trending solidly in the right direction across all the products and services that we acquire. We need to sustain this momentum.

To build on our progress, I ask all DoD senior leaders to:

- Responsibly sustain the acquisition workforce size, modulated by workload demand and requirements. Effective acquisition management provides high rates of return to the DoD.
- Ensure your personnel continue to increase their professionalism by helping them to obtain the training, education, and experience they need to be effective. Government acquisition professionals, both in and out of uniform, are generally grown from within the Department. True acquisition professionals, such as engineering, contracting, and program management specialists, are created and developed over a period of decades.
- Continue to expand your talent management programs, which include recruitment, hiring, training, development, recognition, and retention initiatives, by using the Defense Acquisition Workforce Development Fund and other tools such as those provided by the Force of the Future initiatives.

Our acquisition workforce is an invaluable and essential part of the DoD. I encourage the DoD leadership to take every opportunity to let our acquisition professionals know how much their work is respected and appreciated.

Frank Kendall

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