



SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
1000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1000

JAN 26 2016

MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS
CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF
UNDER SECRETARIES OF DEFENSE
DEPUTY CHIEF MANAGEMENT OFFICER
CHIEF OF THE NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU
GENERAL COUNSEL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
DIRECTOR, COST ASSESSMENT AND PROGRAM EVALUATION
INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
DIRECTOR, OPERATIONAL TEST AND EVALUATION
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR LEGISLATIVE
AFFAIRS
ASSISTANT TO THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR PUBLIC
AFFAIRS
DIRECTOR OF NET ASSESSMENT
DIRECTORS OF THE DEFENSE AGENCIES
DIRECTORS OF THE DOD FIELD ACTIVITIES

SUBJECT: Defense Digital Service

In a memorandum dated November 18, 2015, "Force of the Future: Maintaining our Competitive Edge in Human Capital," I approved the establishment of the Defense Digital Service (DDS). This memorandum further documents the missions, responsibilities, and authorities of the DDS.

The DDS was established in the Office of the Secretary of Defense. The Director, DDS, shall report directly to the Chief of Staff to the Secretary of Defense. Mr. Chris Lynch has been selected as the first Director of the DDS.

The mission of the DDS is to drive game-changing evolution in the way DoD builds and deploys technology and digital services. The DDS exists to apply best-in-class private sector practices, talent, and technology to transform the way software products are built and delivered within DoD.

The DDS will work closely with stakeholders in DoD and other government entities. It will have a close relationship with the United States Digital Service (USDS) in the Executive Office of President, and communicate regularly with the USDS to assist in the recruitment of candidates for DoD to hire into the DDS so that it can leverage the USDS's knowledge of and access to the nation's top talent in a variety of critical skillsets (e.g., designers, engineers, product managers, problem solvers) to untangle, rewire, and redesign our digital services. As part of this relationship with the USDS, the Department will consult with the USDS Administrator when selecting future DDS Directors.



To maximize the usefulness of our scarce resources and manage the team in a sustainable way, the DDS will fully support a smaller number of projects, rather than partially supporting a larger number. The DDS will focus on projects that advance DoD's most important initiatives – those that are critical to the well-being of the Service members, civilian employees, and core operations of the Department. In addition to these focus areas, we expect that tangential issues will arise (e.g., supporting back-end infrastructure, policy considerations) that will require DDS attention and resources from time to time. The DDS will engage with each project during a limited timeframe and will establish clear exit criteria for each project with concurrence from the relevant DoD leadership. These focus areas will be designed to highlight potential vulnerabilities and deficiencies in software used by the Department and the results of the projects will inform future departmental actions. Due to the limited duration of project activities, senior leadership, including the DoD Chief Information Officer, shall ensure, to the extent permitted by law, such projects proceed without delay. To accomplish these efforts, any request for waiver to regulation or policy shall be adjudicated within four days and the basis for denial of any waiver be fully documented and subject to review by the Secretary.

The DDS may, subject to the availability of appropriations, use all appropriate appointing authorities available to DoD to hire individuals to serve as part of the DDS as government employees. In general, personnel will be hired for limited terms using the Department's authority to appoint highly qualified experts pursuant to 5 U.S.C. § 9903; or on a temporary basis using the authority to appoint employees in the excepted service under Schedule A in accordance with the May 1, 2015, memorandum from the Director, Office of Personnel and Management (authorizing agencies to make excepted-service appointments under 5 C.F.R. § 213.3102(i)(3) to address the need for hiring digital services staff to support the President's Management Agenda's Smarter Information Technology Delivery Initiative); or the authority to appoint experts and consultants under 5 U.S.C. § 3109. Employees of the DDS shall be made aware of relevant standards of conduct for DoD employees, including post-government employment restrictions. If an individual is expected to serve as a government employee for 130 days or less during any period of 365 consecutive days, the individual may serve as a special government employee. The DDS will leverage future hiring authorities as appropriate.

The Deputy Chief Management Officer shall ensure that DDS has access to appropriate procurement and contracting personnel to accomplish its mission.

For the DDS to be effective, all DoD and Office of the Secretary of Defense components must fully cooperate with its team members, including providing access to components' information and Information Technology systems as determined necessary by the DDS Director, consistent with applicable security requirements and any statutory restrictions. The DDS team members will have regular meetings with, and direct access to, the Department's most senior decision makers, including the Secretary, for status updates and clearing road blocks.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ash Carter". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.