DoD Instruction 5000.80

Operation of the Middle Tier of Acquisition (MTA)

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Approved by:	Ellen M. Lord, Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment

Purpose: In accordance with the authority in DoD Directive 5134.01 and the July 13, 2018 Deputy Secretary of Defense Memorandum, this issuance establishes policy, assigns responsibilities, and prescribes procedures for the management of the MTA for rapid prototyping and rapid fielding in Section 804 of Public Law 114-92.

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SECTION 1: GENERAL ISSUANCE INFORMATION

1.1. APPLICABILITY. This issuance applies to OSD, the Military Departments, the Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Joint Staff, the Combatant Commands, the Office of the Inspector General of the Department of Defense, the Defense Agencies, the DoD Field Activities, and all other organizational entities within the DoD (referred to collectively in this issuance as the "DoD Components").

1.2. POLICY.

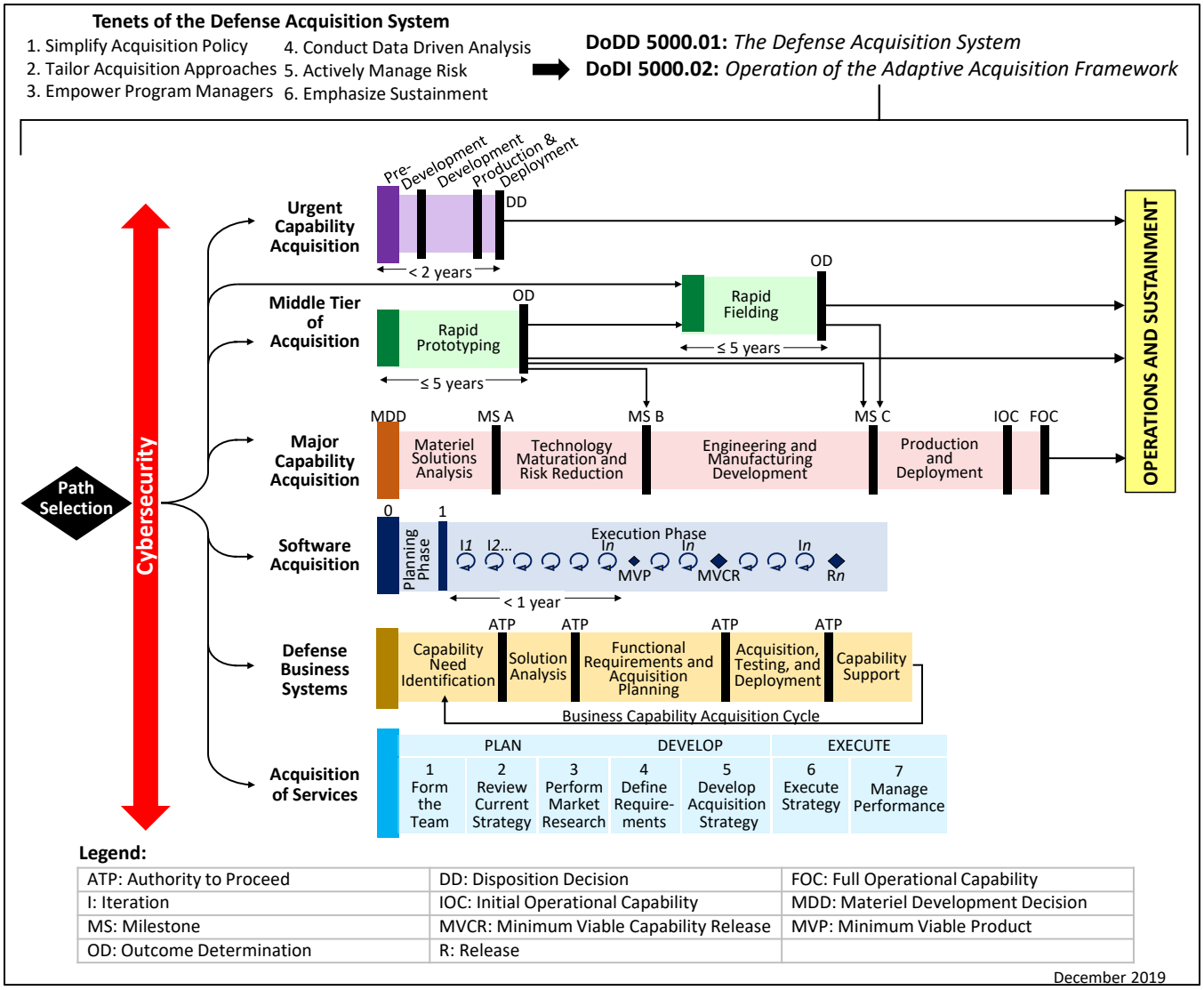
a. The overarching management principles that govern the defense acquisition system (DAS) are described in DoD Directive 5000.01 and DoD Instruction 5000.02. The objective of the DAS is to support the National Defense Strategy, through the development of a more lethal force based on U.S. technological innovation and a culture of performance that yields a decisive and sustained U.S. military advantage. To achieve that objective, the Department will employ an adaptive acquisition framework comprised of acquisition pathways, shown in Figure 1, each tailored for the unique characteristics and risk profile of the capability being acquired. The adaptive acquisition framework supports the DAS with the objective of delivering effective, secure, supportable, and affordable solutions to the end user while enabling execution at the speed of relevance. This issuance describes the responsibilities of principal acquisition officials and the purpose and key characteristics of the MTA acquisition pathway.

b. The MTA pathway is intended to fill a gap in the DAS for those capabilities that have a level of maturity to allow them to be rapidly prototyped within an acquisition program or fielded, within 5 years of MTA program start. The MTA pathway may be used to accelerate capability maturation before transitioning to another acquisition pathway or may be used to minimally develop a capability before rapidly fielding.

c. The rapid prototyping path provides for the use of innovative technologies to rapidly develop fieldable prototypes to demonstrate new capabilities and meet emerging military needs. The objective of an acquisition program under this path will be to field a prototype meeting defined requirements that can be demonstrated in an operational environment and provide for a residual operational capability within 5 years of the MTA program start date. Virtual prototyping models are acceptable if they result in a fieldable residual operational capability. MTA programs may not be planned to exceed 5 years to completion and, in execution, will not exceed 5 years after MTA program start without Defense Acquisition Executive (DAE) waiver.

d. The rapid fielding path provides for the use of proven technologies to field production quantities of new or upgraded systems with minimal development required. The objective of an acquisition program under this path will be to begin production within 6 months and complete fielding within 5 years of the MTA program start date. MTA program production start date will not exceed 6 months after MTA program start date without DAE waiver. MTA programs may not be planned to exceed 5 years to completion and, in execution, will not exceed 5 years after MTA program start without DAE waiver.

Figure 1. Adaptive Acquisition Framework



e. Not all programs are appropriate for the MTA pathway. Major systems intended to satisfy requirements that are critical to a major interagency requirement or are primarily focused on technology development, or have significant international partner involvement are discouraged from using the MTA pathway.

f. MTA programs will not be subject to the guidance in Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction 5123.01H and DoD Directive 5000.01. Each DoD Component will develop a streamlined process that results in a succinct requirement document no later than 6 months from the time the operational needs process is initiated. Approval authorities for each capability requirement will be delegated to a level that promotes rapid action.

g. DoD Component-required procedures will be compliant with applicable statute and consistent with the requirements for acquisition programs stated in this issuance. When necessary, requests for waivers to the provisions of this issuance will be submitted to the DAE.

SECTION 2: RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1. UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR ACQUISITION AND SUSTAINMENT (USD(A&S)). In addition to the responsibilities in Paragraph 2.6., the USD(A&S):

a. Establishes policy and provides guidance for the MTA pathway in consultation with the Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering (USD(R&E)), the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller)/Chief Financial Officer, Department of Defense (USD(C)/CFO); and the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (VCJCS).

b. Determines when a program is not appropriate for the MTA pathway. The USD(A&S) may disapprove use of the MTA pathway and direct use of an alternate acquisition pathway. Programs exceeding the dollar thresholds for a major defense acquisition program pursuant to Section 2430 of Title 10, United States Code (U.S.C.), require written approval prior to using the MTA pathway.

c. Advises the decision authorities (DAs) on their MTA programs, and works with them to ensure streamlined processes.

d. Advises DoD Components and makes recommendations to the Secretary of Defense on the use of rapid acquisition authority.

e. Maintains responsibility for prototyping activities within the MTA pathway.

2.2. USD(R&E). In addition to the responsibilities in Paragraph 2.6., the USD(R&E):

a. Consults with the USD(A&S) on policies and guidance for the MTA pathway.

b. Advises the USD(A&S) on MTA program technologies, program protection, developmental testing, program risks, and other areas as appropriate.

c. Advises the USD(A&S) on MTA program performance and execution metrics.

d. Manages the DoD rapid prototyping fund established in Section 804 of Public Law 114-92.

e. Advises DoD Components on program planning that anticipates the evolution of capabilities to meet the changing threats, technology insertion, and interoperability.

2.3. USD(C)/CFO. The USD(C)/CFO:

a. Consults with the USD(A&S) on policies and guidance for the MTA pathway.

b. Reviews and advises on funding for programs using the MTA pathway through the normal Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Execution processes of the DoD.

2.4. DIRECTOR, OPERATIONAL TEST AND EVALUATION (DOT&E). The DOT&E:

a. Advises the USD(A&S) and DoD Components and monitors the planning and execution of MTA program operational demonstrations.

b. Selects MTA programs for DOT&E operational and/or live fire test and evaluation oversight using the authority in Sections 139, 2366, 2399, and 2400 of Title 10, U.S.C., as applicable.

c. Reviews and coordinates tailored test strategies for operational demonstration plans and assessments for MTA programs designated for DOT&E oversight.

d. Establishes operational demonstration planning and assessment guidelines for MTA programs, as appropriate.

2.5. DIRECTOR OF COST ASSESSMENT AND PROGRAM EVALUATION. The Director of Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation:

a. Advises the USD(A&S) on schedule, resource allocation, affordability, systems analysis, cost estimation and the performance implications of proposed MTA programs.

b. Establishes policies and prescribes procedures for the collection of cost data and cost estimates for MTA programs, as appropriate.

2.6. DOD AND OSD COMPONENT HEADS WITH MTA PROGRAMS. The DoD and OSD Component heads with MTA programs oversee their MTA programs through their component acquisition executives (CAEs) and program managers (PMs):

a. CAEs will designate a PM and product support manager for each program using the MTA pathway. CAEs will serve as the DA for programs approved for the MTA pathway, unless delegated by the CAEs, and will implement the procedures in this issuance.

b. PMs will develop acquisition strategies, execute approved program plans, field capabilities, and report program status. They will employ an innovative and disciplined approach and will seek appropriate alternatives to any regulatory requirements that increase burden without adding value to their programs. PMs will "tailor- in" reviews, assessments, and relevant documentation that results in an acquisition strategy customized to the unique characteristics and risks of their program. PMs will ensure operational, technical, and security risks are identified and reduced so that fielded systems are capable, effective, and resilient. PMs will comply with statutory requirements unless waived in accordance with relevant provisions.

c. PMs, with the support of the product support managers, will develop and implement sustainment programs addressing each of the integrated product support elements to deliver affordable readiness.

2.7. VCJCS. In addition to the responsibilities in Paragraph 2.6., the VCJCS:

a. Consults with the USD(A&S) as appropriate on policies and guidance for the MTA pathway.

b. Maintains a library of MTA requirement documents available to DoD Components.

c. Advises DoD Components on interoperability across the joint force, cybersecurity of military networks, and alignment with future warfighting concepts.

SECTION 3: PROCEDURES

3.1. RAPID PROTOTYPING.

a. Operational Needs. DoD Components will develop a merit-based process for the consideration of innovative technologies and new capabilities to meet needs communicated by the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Combatant Commanders. This process will result in an approved requirement and a DA signed acquisition decision memorandum (ADM) that validates the rationale for using the MTA pathway and identifies the full funding required.

b. Acquisition and Funding Strategies. DoD Components will develop a process to implement acquisition and full funding strategies for the program. This process will result in an acquisition strategy, which includes security, schedule and production risks, and a cost estimate.

c. Demonstrating and Evaluating Performance. DoD Components will develop a process for demonstrating performance and evaluating for current operational purposes the proposed products and technologies. This process will result in a test strategy or an assessment of test results, included in the acquisition strategy, documenting the evaluation of the demonstrated operational performance, to include validation of required cybersecurity and interoperability as applicable. Programs on the DOT&E oversight list will follow applicable procedures.

d. Transitioning Rapid Prototyping Programs. For each MTA program, DoD Components will develop a process for transitioning successful prototypes to new or existing acquisition programs for production, fielding, and operations and sustainment under the rapid fielding pathway or other acquisition pathway. This process will result in a transition plan, included in the acquisition strategy, which provides a timeline for completion within 2 years of all necessary documentation required for transition, as determined by the DA, after MTA program start.

3.2. RAPID FIELDING.

a. Operational Needs. DoD Components will develop a merit-based process for the consideration of existing products and proven technologies to meet needs communicated by the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Combatant Commanders. This process will result in an approved requirement and a DA signed ADM, with minimum fielding plan criteria, identifying the full funding required.

b. Demonstrating and Evaluating Performance. DoD Components will develop a process for demonstrating performance and evaluating for current operational purposes the proposed products and technologies. This process will result in a test strategy or an assessment of test results, included in the acquisition strategy, documenting the evaluation of the demonstrated operational performance, to include validation of required cybersecurity and interoperability as applicable. The operational demonstration assessment will support the initial production decision by the DA. Programs on the DOT&E oversight list will follow applicable procedures.

c. Acquisition and Funding Strategies. DoD Components will develop and implement acquisition and full funding strategies for the program. This process will result in an acquisition strategy, which includes security, schedule and production risks, and a cost estimate.

d. Lifecycle Cost, Logistics Support, and Interoperability. DoD Components will develop a process for considering lifecycle costs and address issues of logistics support and training; system, joint, and coalition interoperability; and planning for cooperative opportunities, to include foreign sales. This process will result in a tailored lifecycle sustainment plan.

e. Reducing Total Ownership Cost. DoD Components will develop a process for identifying and exploiting opportunities to use the rapid fielding pathway to reduce total ownership costs. Success in this process will result in a tailored lifecycle sustainment plan that considers the integrated product support elements.

f. Transitioning Rapid Fielding Programs. For each MTA program, DoD Components will develop a process for transitioning successful programs to operations and sustainment. This process will result in a transition plan, included in the acquisition strategy, which provides a timeline for completion within 2 years of all necessary documentation required for transition, as determined by the DA, after MTA program start.

SECTION 4: IMPLEMENTATION

4.1. ENTRANCE.

a. The DA will approve MTA program documentation within their purview. Table 1 describes the documentation CAEs will ensure is available via Defense Acquisition Visibility Environment (DAVE) interfaces.

Table 1. MTA Entrance Documentation Deliverables

	Major System[1]	Non-Major System[2]
Rapid Prototyping	• ADM signed by the DA • Approved Requirement[3] • Acquisition Strategy[4] • Cost Estimate	• ADM signed by the DA
Rapid Fielding	• ADM signed by the DA • Approved Requirement[3] • Acquisition Strategy[5] • Cost Estimate • Lifecycle sustainment plan	• ADM signed by the DA

1. Above threshold as defined pursuant to Section 2302d of Title 10, U.S.C.
2. Equal to or below threshold as defined pursuant to Section 2302d of Title 10, U.S.C.
3. CAEs will ensure the approved requirement document is available in the Knowledge Management and Decision Support system.
4. Rapid prototyping acquisition strategies will include security, schedule and technical risks; a test strategy or an assessment of test results; and a transition plan that includes a timeline for completion within 2 years of all necessary documentation required for transition, as determined by the DA, after MTA program start.
5. Rapid fielding acquisition strategies will include security, schedule, and production risks; either a test strategy or an assessment of test results; and a transition plan that includes a timeline for completion within 2 years of all necessary documentation required for transition, as determined by the DA, after MTA program start.

b. For any MTA program expected to require an eventual total expenditure that exceeds the threshold defined pursuant to Section 2302d of Title 10, U.S.C., CAEs will ensure documentation in Table 1 is available via DAVE at the time of the President's budget submission. Full funding plans for the MTA program (to include year of execution), will be reflected in the documentation, consistent with the cost estimate.

c. Any MTA program expected to exceed the major defense acquisition program threshold defined pursuant to Section 2430 of Title 10, U.S.C., requires a written decision from the USD(A&S), after consultation with the advisory board defined in Paragraph 4.2., approving use of the MTA pathway, or direction to use an alternative strategy, before obligation of funds to a performing activity. Considerations will include the strategic risks involved, the scope and criticality of the desired capability, and whether programs are well positioned to meet statutory requirements based on review and input from relevant advisors.

d. Documentation shown in Table 1 for non-major systems will be made available via DAVE interfaces at least 10 workdays before the desired obligation of funds to a performing activity.

e. In addition to the documentation listed in Table 1, CAEs will ensure availability of the program identification data (PID) via DAVE interfaces. (For a description of PID requirements and connection to the submission portal, see the MTA pathway at the Adaptive Acquisition Framework page on the Defense Acquisition University Website at: https://www.dau.edu/aaf/) PID requirements are tiered between major and non-major systems. CAEs will submit updated PID via DAVE interfaces with the President's Budget and Program Objective Memorandum submissions to OSD. CAEs must comply with the online PID requirements, consistent with the policy specified in this issuance. Substantive changes to online content not required by law must be formally coordinated following the guidelines in DoD Instruction 5025.01. Substantive changes include any additional requirements that add to the financial and personnel burden of any DoD Components.

f. CAEs will ensure that MTA program names and budget reporting clearly and discretely indicate the scope of the effort being conducted under the MTA pathway, especially when the MTA program is a subprogram of a larger program or is a program spiral, increment, or block upgrade. USD(A&S) will maintain the authoritative list of MTA programs for the Department.

4.2. GOVERNANCE. The USD(A&S) will chair an advisory board comprised of the CAEs, the VCJCS, the USD(R&E), the Director of Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation, the DOT&E, the USD(C)/CFO, and others as requested by the USD(A&S), to assess the use of the MTA authority when a request is made by a CAE for a program that exceeds the major defense acquisition program threshold to use the MTA pathway, as provided in Paragraph 4.1.c. In the event of a USD(A&S) decision that any program is not appropriate for the MTA pathway, the USD(A&S) will direct the program to use an alternate acquisition pathway.

4.3. EXIT. No later than 60 calendar days after the MTA program completion date, CAEs will submit the following documentation via DAVE interfaces:

a. Outcome determination ADM signed by the DA.

b. An assessment of test results.

c. Final PID capturing updated entries, to include the outcome, sustainment, and final budget of the MTA program.

4.4. PRE-EXISTING MTA PROGRAMS. MTA programs designated prior to the effective date of this issuance will maintain their MTA program start date of funds first obligated. No later than 60 calendar days after the effective date of this issuance, pre-existing MTA programs will comply with this issuance, to include Table 1 deliverables.

4.5. MTA COMPANION GUIDE. Additional information will be available to expand upon the MTA policy established in this issuance at the Adaptive Acquisition Framework page on the Defense Acquisition University Website at: https://www.dau.edu/aaf/.

GLOSSARY

G.1. ACRONYMS.

ADM	acquisition decision memorandum
CAE	component acquisition executive
DA	decision authority
DAE	Defense Acquisition Executive
DAS	defense acquisition system
DAVE	Defense Acquisition Visibility Environment
DOT&E	Director, Operational Test and Evaluation
MTA	middle tier of acquisition
PID	program identification data
PM	program manager
U.S.C.	United States Code
USD(A&S)	Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment
USD(C)/CFO	Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller)/Chief Financial Officer, Department of Defense
USD(R&E)	Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering
VCJCS	Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

G.2. DEFINITIONS. Unless otherwise noted, these terms and their definitions are for the purpose of this issuance.

MTA program completion date. The date of an outcome determination ADM signed by the DA stating that the rapid prototyping program has transitioned to an existing acquisition program, transitioned to a new acquisition program, transitioned to a different acquisition pathway, has residual operational capability sustained in the field, transitioned to rapid fielding, or terminated. For rapid fielding programs, the date of an outcome determination ADM stating that the minimum fielding plan criteria approved by the DA, have been met.

MTA program production start. The date of funds first obligated to perform production activities.

MTA program start date. The date an ADM is signed by the DA initiating the effort as an MTA rapid prototyping or MTA rapid fielding program, consistent with this issuance.

operational environment. A set of operational conditions, selected by the users in coordination with the appropriate independent operational testing agency that are representative of the desired spectrum of operational employments.

prototype. A model built to evaluate and inform its feasibility or usefulness. Non-physical models are acceptable if the non-physical model is the residual operational capability to be fielded.

residual operational capability. For rapid prototyping programs, residual operational capability will be considered any military utility for an operational user that can be fielded.

REFERENCES

Chairman of the Joint Chief of Staff Instruction 5123.01H, "Charter of the Joint Requirements Oversight Council (JROC) and Implementation of the Joint Capabilities Integration and Development System (JCIDS)," August 31, 2018

Deputy Secretary of Defense Memorandum, "Establishment of the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Research Engineering and the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment," July 13, 2018

DoD Directive 5000.01, "The Defense Acquisition System," May 12, 2003, as amended

DoD Directive 5134.01, "Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics," December 9, 2005, as amended

DoD Instruction 5000.02, "Operation of the Defense Acquisition System," January 7, 2015, as amended

DoD Instruction 5025.01, "DoD Issuances Program," August 1, 2016, as amended

Public Law 114-92, Section 804, "National Defense Authorization Act of Fiscal Year 2016," November 25, 2015, as amended

United States Code, Title 10