

Answer. The planned competitive program for future F-15 and F-16 engines is for new production aircraft only. There is no intent to retrofit any existing aircraft should the General Electric F110 win a part of the competition for either F-15 and/or F-16 aircraft. We will have no excess F100 inventories which could be used to offset F-15 aircraft needs.

WEAPON SYSTEM SELECTION PROCESS

Critics of DOD weapon selection believe the process favors high technology approaches to meeting mission needs, although there has been talk by the present administration of a policy of "evolutionary," rather than "revolutionary" development of weapons systems. Yet, there continue to be examples of weapon systems in development that push the state of the art or that represent technology looking for an application. V/STOL aircraft have been mentioned as example of the former while the surface effect ship program has been cited as exemplifying the latter.

Question 1. How do you feel about the criticism that the process is biased toward high technology solutions to mission needs?

Answer. The acquisition process is correctly biased toward high technology solutions. We need highly effective weapon systems because the Soviet systems are increasingly more advanced technologically and they enjoy a numerical superiority which we cannot hope to overcome because of fiscal budgetary reasons. This bias does not mean that we should choose to pursue systems which are unnecessarily complex or sophisticated. Our requirements generation, and approval process questions the need for each system characteristic. Our acquisition policy top level Directive 5000.1 requires consideration of a product improvement to an existing system as an alternative to a new development. Our acquisition improvement program initiative #3 on Pre-Planned Product Improvement (P³I) provides for evolutionary development and phased production incorporation of high cost and high technical risk system features.

Question 2. Please provide a list of examples of recent "evolutionary" development programs.

Answer. Recent or ongoing evolutionary P³I efforts are contained, for example, in the following programs: M-1, Bradley FV, AH-64, 155mm Howitzer, Blackhawk, Advanced Field Artillery Tactical Data System, Patriot, Lamps, Tactas, Harm, F/A-18, ASPJ, ALWT, DDGX, Captor, Trident II, SUBACs, JTIDs, AMRAAM, B-1, F-15, F-16.

Question 3. At what state in the DSARC process is the technical risk associated with the proposed acquisition program evaluated? Whose judgment is decisive in that evolution?

Answer. The technical risk of an acquisition program is addressed in the concept validation and demonstration phases of the acquisition cycle. It is during this phase that the technical risks, which include functional performance and ability to manufacture, are both addressed leading to selection of a concept to be pursued in full scale development. The assessment of these risks is developed by the system Program Manager (PM) with support of his technical cognizant activities and submitted through Service channels and ultimately to the DSARC at the Milestone II decision point. The judgment of the DSARC chairman, the USDRE, with the assistance of the DSARC principals is decisive in proceeding with the concept recommended and selected. The decision is consummated by the Secretary of Defense Decision Memorandum (SDDM).

ROLE OF THE DCAA

When the "should cost" approach is used to evaluate contractors pricing proposals, the DCAA and plant representatives roles are greatly diminished.

Question. Have these parties objected to their diminished role? If so, please elaborate.

Answer. We do not consider that "should cost" has diminished the roles of DCAA and plant representatives. We view "should cost" as a technique to supplement the efforts of DCAA and plant representatives. "Should cost" is a concept of contract pricing that employs an integrated team of Government procurement, contract administration, audit and engineering representatives to conduct a coordinated, in-depth cost analysis at the contractor's plant. In any event, we are not aware of DCAA or plant representatives objecting to their roles as part of this team concept.