

TECHNICAL ASSESSMENTS

I. Purpose

This Directive establishes the requirement for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Science & Technology Directorate (S&T) to conduct Technical Assessments of major acquisition programs; for Technical Assessments of Information Technology (IT) major acquisition programs, the DHS Chief Information Officer (CIO) co-leads the Technical Assessment with S&T. It supports the Unity of Effort initiative, informs the Joint Requirements Integration and Management System (JRIMS) process, institutionalizes the memorandum “*Establishment of Integrated Product Teams*” issued by the Secretary of Homeland Security on August 25, 2015, and fulfills the congressional requirement for S&T to conduct Technical Assessments of acquisition programs. This Directive does not prevent Components and/or other DHS Headquarters offices from conducting assessments of, or providing assistance to programs.

II. Scope

This Directive applies to all major acquisition programs on the Master Acquisition Oversight List (MAOL), as approved by the Chief Acquisition Officer (CAO).

III. Authorities

- A. Responsibilities and Authorities of the Under Secretary for Science and Technology, 6 United States Code §§182 (4) and (12).
- B. Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2016, Section 4, Explanatory Statement, P.L. 114-113.
- C. Congressional Record. *Explanatory Statement Submitted by Mr. Rogers of Kentucky, Chairman of the House Committee on Appropriations regarding House Amendment No. 1 to the Senate Amendment on H.R. 2029 — Continued. Division F – Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2016.* Page H10161. December 17, 2015.
- D. Delegation 10001, Revision 01, Delegation to the Under Secretary for Science and Technology, April 28, 2014.

- E. Instruction 102-01-001, Acquisition Management Instruction, March 9, 2016.
- F. Instruction Manual 107-01-001-01, Department of Homeland Security Manual for the Operation of the Joint Requirements Integration and Management System, April 26, 2016
- G. DHS Memorandum, "Establishment of Integrated Product Teams," issued by the Secretary for Homeland Security on August 25, 2015.

IV. Responsibilities

- A. The **Under Secretary for Science and Technology**, through the S&T Chief Systems Engineer:
 - 1. Develops and maintains policies, procedures, and supplemental guidance for conducting Technical Assessments;
 - 2. Conducts Technical Assessments on major acquisition programs on the MAOL;
 - 3. In conjunction with the Joint Requirements Council (JRC), Executive Director of the Office of Program Accountability and Risk Management (PARM), and the DHS CIO, identifies and prioritizes the programs to be assessed; and
 - 4. Ensures the development of, approves, and distributes Letters of Technical Assessment.
- B. The **DHS CIO, through the Chief Technology Officer**:
 - 1. Jointly conducts Technical Assessments on IT major acquisition programs on the MAOL;
 - 2. Jointly approves Letters of Technical Assessment for IT major acquisition programs on the MAOL;
 - 3. In conjunction with the JRC, Executive Director of PARM, and the S&T Chief Systems Engineer, identifies and prioritizes the programs to be assessed;
 - 4. Ensures that relevant findings and results that were gathered during IT reviews and assessments conducted by the Office of the

Chief Information Officer (OCIO)¹ are integrated into Technical Assessments; and

5. Ensures that relevant findings and results from Technical Assessments of IT programs are integrated into IT reviews and assessments conducted by the OCIO to support decision-making.

C. The **Executive Director of PARM**:

1. In conjunction with the JRC, DHS Chief Technology Officer, and the S&T Chief Systems Engineer, identifies and prioritizes the programs to be assessed;
2. Ensures that relevant findings and results that were gathered during acquisition reviews, assessments, and meetings conducted by PARM² are integrated into Technical Assessments; and
3. Ensures that relevant findings and results from Technical Assessments are integrated into acquisition reviews, assessments, and meetings conducted by PARM to support decision-making.

D. The **Component Acquisition Executive**:

1. Ensures the S&T Chief Systems Engineer and DHS Chief Technology Officer have access to program records and/or data that are necessary to carry out a Technical Assessment;
2. Ensures that relevant Component assessments are integrated into Technical Assessments; and
3. Ensures program compliance with this Directive and related implementing Instruction.

¹ Such as, but not limited to program health assessments conducted pursuant to Directive 102-03, Tech Stat Accountability Sessions conducted pursuant to Directive 103-02, Enterprise Architecture decisions pursuant to Directive 103-04, and portfolio reviews conducted pursuant to Directive 102-04.

² Such as, but not limited to Acquisition Review Board meetings, Acquisition Review Team meetings, Executive Steering Committee meetings, and program assessments conducted pursuant to Instruction 102-01-001.

- E. The **JRC**:
1. In conjunction with the S&T Chief Systems Engineer, Executive Director of PARM, and the DHS Chief Technology Officer, identifies and prioritizes the programs to be assessed; and
 2. Uses relevant findings and results from Technical Assessments to support the JRIMS feasibility analysis process.
- F. **Departmental Integrated Product Teams**:
1. Ensure that relevant findings and results from Technical Assessments are integrated into the Research & Development (R&D) coordination and prioritization process.

V. Policy and Requirements

- A. DHS S&T conducts Technical Assessments of major acquisition programs on the MAOL; for Technical Assessments of IT major acquisition programs, the DHS CIO, through the Chief Technology Officer, co-leads the Technical Assessment with S&T.
- B. The purpose of conducting a Technical Assessment is to evaluate the program's technical maturity assessment (or support the program in conducting a technical maturity assessment, if one has not been conducted), evaluate manufacturing capability, and provide an overview of technical risk.
- C. The goals of conducting Technical Assessments are:
1. Assisting acquisition programs in addressing identified technical risks/issues, as requested;
 2. Enabling informed acquisition decision-making; and
 3. Informing the Departmental Integrated Product Team process to support the goals of identifying and prioritizing R&D across the Department.
- D. Technical Assessments are conducted in coordination with and in support of Departmental Integrated Product Teams and the JRC as a source to identify existing research and development activities being conducted by programs for the annual "*Report of Coordinated DHS R&D.*"

- E. A Technical Assessment is conducted prior to entering the Obtain Phase of the Acquisition Life Cycle Framework (ALF) (i.e., Acquisition Decision Event (ADE)-2A). Technical Assessments may be conducted during the Need Phase of the ALF (i.e., prior to ADE-1) where directed by the CAO, or requested by the JRC, Component Acquisition Executive, or Program Manager and/or during the Obtain Phase of the ALF (between ADE-2A and ADE-3) when directed by the CAO.
- F. Letters of Technical Assessment document Technical Assessment findings and recommendations.
- G. All major acquisition programs on the MAOL are to comply with the implementing Instruction to this Directive.

VI. Questions

Address any questions or concerns regarding this Directive to the S&T Chief Systems Engineer.



Chip Fulghum
Deputy Under Secretary for Management and
Chief Financial Officer



Date