

Requirements Revolution

DoD, Not Services, To Decide What U.S. Military Needs

By JASON SHERMAN

The U.S. Joint Staff is wresting from the individual military services the central role in deciding what new weapons and technology its troops require — a policy shift that is getting a preliminary thumbs-up from industry and analysts.

Under the new system, five soon-to-be created Joint Staff panels will issue requirements for new equipment or changes in doctrine, which the services will execute or turn into acquisition programs.

Established in a June 24 directive from Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the new system — called the Joint Capabilities Integration and Development System — aims to increase scrutiny of proposed new capabilities and ensure they will serve joint operating goals, and not just those of the individual services.

The new system elevates the role of the Joint Requirements Oversight Council (JROC), which was formed in 1986 to review service proposals for new tanks, trucks, aircraft and ships. Critics complained that despite the JROC's oversight, the services persisted in offering parochial requirements that operated poorly with forces from other service branches.

Each service "was looking within and no matter how well they tried to develop in a joint context, it was going to be service-specific," said a Pentagon official.

Under the new system, the council will provide guidance on materiel needs — weapons, equipment and more — instead of simply reviewing requirements submitted by the services.

The process promises "a more rigorous analytical process right up front that ensures proposals being made are being made in the context of the needs of the joint warfighter of the future," said the official.

New Process

The process will begin when the services send ideas for new capabilities to a "gatekeeper," a Joint Staff admiral or general who will review the incoming proposals. Some ideas will be rejected or sent back to the services for more work, but promising ones will be sent to one of five new panels, called Functional Capability

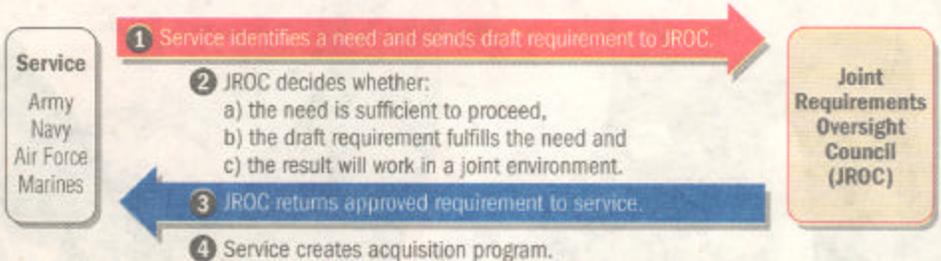
JOINT STAFF TAKES CONTROL

The Pentagon is revamping the way the U.S. military generates the requirements that guide acquisition programs, creating a new process called the Joint Capabilities Integration and Development System (JCIDS).

Proposals Draft requirement Approved requirements Joint Staff

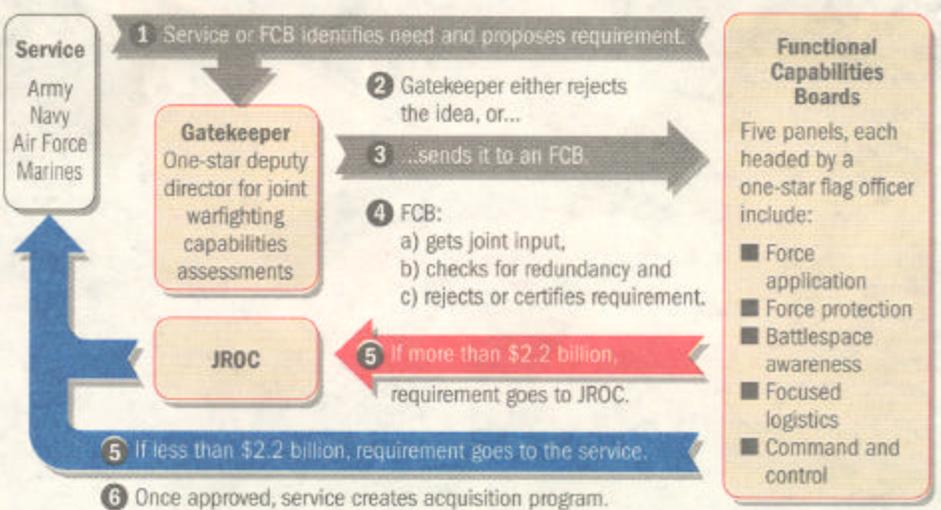
OLD SYSTEM

Only services can create requirements.



NEW SYSTEM

Either services or new Functional Capabilities Boards can propose requirements.



SOURCE: U.S. Defense Department

DEFENSE NEWS GRAPHIC BY JOHN BRETSCHNEIDER

Boards.

Staffed by representatives from up to 19 military and nonmilitary bodies — potentially, even industry — these boards will spearhead the analysis, prioritize needs, and advise the JROC. Each will focus on a different aspect of warfighting:

- Force application.
- Force protection.

- Battlespace awareness.
- Focused logistics.
- Command and control.

Overseen by a one-star admiral or general, these boards will work to ensure that proposals offered by services would not duplicate another service's capability.

Eventually these boards are expected to

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identify gaps in the military's abilities, and send their own ideas to the gatekeeper.

"They are going to have the resources to roll up their sleeves and... identify the shortfalls in capabilities," said the Pentagon official.

Finally, the boards will send the new materiel or process requirements to the services for action.

The boards are expected to be in place by summer's end. The Joint Staff directorate for force structure, resources and assessment, the J-8, will likely oversee the force application and force protection boards. The Joint Staff directorate for intelligence, the J-2, will lead the battlespace awareness board, and the focused logistics board will be led by the Joint Staff's logistics directorate,

the J-4.

The command-and-control board is likely to be farmed out to Joint Forces Command in Norfolk, Va., the Pentagon official said.

New Roles All Around

The new arrangement means a new role for the services.

"There were concerns on the part of the services because they've been big players in the past in the requirements-generation system," said the Pentagon official.

But he said the new boards would allow input from the services, as well as from the intelligence agencies, the State and Homeland Security departments, and NASA.

The Defense Department is also considering including industry representatives on the panels.

"Industry in a lot of cases is out in front of developing technolo-

gies," the official said. "They will have visibility on solutions that the folks in uniform, or even in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, don't have."

For now, however, industry will remain on the sidelines in an unofficial role, providing JROC members information as they see fit.

This new requirements approach is the culmination of an effort set in motion in March 2002 by Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld who saw serious shortfalls in the old approach and directed Gen. Peter Pace, the JROC chairman, to craft a new way of developing weapon requirements.

"We've done a really good job at grading the services' homework," Pace, a Marine, said in a December interview. "That's good, but it's not great. What's missing is the front-end piece where we [the JROC] should be providing a top-

down umbrella guidance."

Former Pentagon officials believe the new policy will provide that top-down guidance.

"I see this as a positive effort to put some rationality back into the JROC and requirements-generation process and to give it some direction," said Tom Davis, director of strategic planning, General Dynamics Corp., Falls Church, Va.

Davis, a retired Army colonel who worked on the JROC in the mid 1990s, penned a critique of the requirements panel in 2000 that argued the JROC had become too big, too complex and was becoming bogged down in small, disconnected issues.

The JROC this week is scheduled to consider the requirements justification for one of the first programs to be considered using this new policy. That program is the follow-on to the tank-killing Hellfire missile, the Joint Com-

mon Missile.

Working through the new requirements system has caused up to six months of delays to the Army-Navy effort. Such schedule slips make program proponents uneasy because funding can become vulnerable, unraveling the enterprise.

One industry representative following the program believes the new requirements process could help inoculate the Joint Common Missile from future funding difficulty.

"Once you go through that process, you're as budget proof as a program gets around here because you have a program that's going through the proper requirements generation process."

"While it may delay it initially, it solidifies support for the program," according to the industry official. ■

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