



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
WASHINGTON DC 20330-1060

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY

Policy Memo: 03A-002

MEMORANDUM FOR AFMC/CC, DACs, CDs, FADs, AND PEOs

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FROM: 1060 Air Force Pentagon  
Washington DC 20330-1060

SUBJECT: Agile Acquisition Implementation

Last March, the Secretary and the Chief gave us our mandate: we must change the way we do business to deliver capability to the warfighter in a timely, affordable manner. To meet that challenge, we launched Agile Acquisition, with two overriding goals: decrease acquisition cycle time and increase credibility in execution. All transformational initiatives must point back toward these two imperatives.

The overarching principle of Agile Acquisition is collaboration – active, cooperative dialogue between all parties in the acquisition process, including funding, requirements, test, science & technology, program management, contracting, sustainment, etc.

For the past several months we have accomplished much to lay the foundation for true transformation.

- In June, I issued the “Reality-Based Acquisition” policy letter. It effectively repealed the old, highly prescriptive AFPD 63-1/AFI 63-101 and replaced it with guidance that emphasizes innovation, seizing the initiative, risk management over risk aversion, and streamlined processes.
- Just a few weeks later, we issued a new Air Force supplement to the Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation (AFFARS) that eliminated literally hundreds of pages of rules and delegated decision authority down to more appropriate levels. Again, the emphasis was on empowering our people to make decisions and then holding them accountable for the results.
- Throughout the summer, we precipitated and spearheaded with OSD the effort to rewrite the DoD 5000 regulations to embrace the same Agile Acquisition tenets that the Air Force has adopted.

As part of Agile Acquisition, we established the stretch goal of reducing acquisition cycle time by a factor of 4:1. To achieve this goal, evolutionary acquisition/spiral development has become the standard for Air Force acquisition program strategy. Building credible programs that meet the expectations of our customers will rely on three key processes:

- Collaborative Requirements Process – the warfighter, acquirer, and tester working as one team at the outset and throughout the requirements and development process
- Seamless Verification Process – driving both developmental test and operational test into one seamless verification process
- Focused Technology Process – focusing limited S&T resources on programs that directly support warfighter capability needs and bringing technology into programs with a higher level of maturity

Three elements are key to implementing Agile Acquisition: Programs, People and Process. The SAE executes all program responsibilities for Air Force acquisition programs (note: space programs are no longer included in the AQ/AFMC portfolio). The Air Force Materiel Command (AFMC) provides support to acquisition programs by administering acquisition processes, by providing people to support the program execution management chain, and by retraining our workforce to create a more innovative risk-taking culture. Successful change requires a strong partnership between SAF/AQ and AFMC. Every player in this transformation process is key to and accountable for its success.

Credibility is a key tenet of Agile Acquisition. Simply put, credibility means delivering what we promise, on time and on budget. Historically, we have designed our programs with a 60-70% confidence level of meeting cost, schedule, and performance goals. If we are to build credibility with both the user and Congress we must change this paradigm by establishing a goal of having at least a 90% confidence level in meeting our commitments. Accurately assessing our confidence level requires a disciplined risk assessment program. Finally, to implement agile acquisition, I expect both the warfighting and acquisition communities to tradeoff non-critical elements within programs to buy down risk.

As we move forward, it is important that each organization's roles and responsibilities are clearly understood. Those roles are documented in the attachment.

Additional detail on the concepts required by this policy memorandum is available on the SAF/AQ web site <http://www.safaq.hq.af.mil>.



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(Acquisition)

Attachment:  
Roles and Responsibilities

cc: AFSPC/CC  
SAF/USA

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR AGILE ACQUISITION**

### **Assistant Secretary of Air Force for Acquisition (ASAF(A)) & SAF/AQ Organization**

- Execute SAE responsibilities in the execution of AF (non-space) programs
- Provide direction for acquisition transformation across the AF (except space)
- Hold PEOs/DACs accountable for program execution and implementation of transformation initiatives within their programs
  - Chair an annual program execution review with PEOs, DACs, and MAJCOM Commanders
  - Manage with proactive and real-time involvement facilitated with an automated toolset (e.g. SMART program health assessment tool, etc.)
  - Conduct annual program reviews in the field on select programs

### **Deputy Assistant Secretary for Management Policy & Program Integration (SAF/AQX)**

- Identify and implement cultural change through the Work Culture Transformation Board (WCTB) in partnership with the AFMC senior leadership. Provide senior-level training on implementing culture change and develop criteria for the training to be accomplished by AFMC
- Lead and integrate AF efforts to continually improve the DoD acquisition process through joint identification and implementation of new and innovative acquisition and sustainment initiatives
- Implement necessary policy changes to enable acquisition transformation
- Ensure communication of Air Force acquisition policies and initiatives to the field and disseminate information/direction to the field that comes directly from SECAF, CSAF, or ASAF(A)
- Maintain a close liaison with the other services and agencies to facilitate the cross flow of information
- Champion change initiatives and promote acquisition innovation by identifying, implementing, and institutionalizing those initiatives

### **Designated Acquisition Commanders/Program Executive Officers (DAC/PEO)**

- Lead their portfolios executing known requirements, based on a solid business strategy designed to fulfill known requirements, and secure necessary funding and time to meet those requirements
- Work with appropriate MAJCOM representatives to develop capabilities-based requirements, seamless verification plans, technology transition plans, and spiral development strategies

- Use the SAF/ACE as an extended staff to 1) review program strategy, 2) ensure a solid program foundation has been set, and 3) insert innovative agile acquisition concepts as opportunities arise

### **HQ USAF Acquisition Center of Excellence (SAF/ACE)**

- Establish a methodology to assess program risk and assist PMs in its implementation
  - Conduct an annual review of Risk Management Plans
- Provide direct support to PEOs/DACs to quantify risk and ensure executable program strategies
- Provide focused support to single managers to ensure program baselines are built on a solid foundation and assess adequacy of key processes (e.g. systems engineering, software development, requirements definition, etc.)
- Act as review agent for ASAF(A) to ensure the agile acquisition initiatives discussed above are applied successfully to programs
- Monitor acquisition processes and programs across the Air Force with the intent of identifying requirements and processes that slow down the delivery of capability, support and/or services to the warfighter
- Participate in acquisition review and decision forums (e.g., Acquisition Strategy Panels) to provide objective inputs to acquisition decisions and processes
- Work with industry to facilitate communication and development of new initiatives and foster industry partnerships
- Knock down barriers across functional areas in support of field activities and assist in the processing of waivers at Air Force level and work with AFMC to remove barriers within the command
- Provide periodic feedback to ASAF(A) and AFMC/CC concerning the implementation of initiatives, barriers to the acquisition process, and the need for training
- Establish feedback mechanism with the warfighter to promote and explain agile acquisition initiatives and build warfighter confidence in the acquisition corps
- Conduct trend analysis to address program problems before negative trends become unmanageable

### **Air Force Materiel Command**

- Evaluate command-level policy and processes and eliminate those that slow down the program manager's ability to deliver capability rapidly to the warfighter
- Develop and provide command and center level acquisition training and management tools designed to assist programs in the execution of their mission

- Collaborate with SAF/AQ to identify transformation initiative opportunities and facilitate their implementation
- Train and refocus our workforce to obtain a more innovative risk-taking culture
- Identify a small cadre of personnel (4-5 “graybeards”), at each of the Product and Logistics Centers, to interface directly with the SAF/ACE to work program specific issues, identify process/policy changes, and spread innovation throughout the workforce.
- In conjunction with Enterprise Commanders, promulgate lessons learned across AFMC and re-engineer processes to institutionalize best practices
- Knock down barriers across functional areas in support of field activities, assist in the processing of waivers at AFMC, and work with SAF/AQ to remove barriers across the acquisition community