
Secretary Cohen Sets Course for International Acquisition Bridge to the 21st Century

By

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Secretary Cohen's emphasis on International Armaments Cooperation in defense acquisition programs was clearly established in a policy memorandum he signed in late March. The Secretary determined that "International Armaments Cooperation is a key component of the Department of Defense Bridge to the 21st Century." Citing the evolving environment of coalition warfare, limited resources, and a global industrial base, DoD policy is to utilize International Armaments Cooperation with our allies "to the maximum extent feasible."

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Several previous Defense Secretaries have asserted the need for more cooperation with our allies in research, development, production, and follow-on support. Former Defense Secretary Weinberger began emphasizing Armaments Cooperation over a decade ago. He articulated seven steps for convincing our allies of the seriousness of our purposes. Of historical significance to those interested in the training and education of our acquisition workforce was the last step: "Each service should establish an education program for their personnel in order to develop and maintain appreciation for the significance of, and individual role in, the furthering of Alliance collective security through armaments cooperation." The services relegated this to the Defense Systems Management College, which began during the late 1980s the development of a family of three international acquisition courses. In 1993 then Secretary Perry called for a "renaissance in armaments cooperation." He cited armaments cooperation as a primary means for achieving effective and efficient collective defense with our allies, and expressed our objectives in armaments cooperation:

- Deployment and support of common, or at least interoperable, equipment with our allies.
- Leverage of our own resources through cost sharing and economies of scale afforded by coordinated research, development, production, and logistics support programs.
- Exploitation of the best technologies, military or civilian, available for the equipping of alliance forces.

FIVE NEW POLICIES

The recent policy statement by Secretary Cohen reaffirmed much of the rationale of the previous Secretary for armaments cooperation, and went on to direct five new policies for attaining the objectives of cooperation. These are paraphrased below.

1. The DoD will engage Allies early to identify common mission problems and acceptable performance requirements.
2. The USD (A&T) will designate appropriate defense acquisition programs as international cooperative programs. The Component Acquisition Executive shall notify the

USD (A&T) at the earliest opportunity of intent to terminate or substantially reduce funding for these designated programs.

3. In support of designated international cooperative programs, DoD will favorably consider transfers of defense articles, services, and technology subject to national security, legal, regulatory and policy constraints. DoD reviewing organizations objecting to a transfer will be required to provide a specific national security rationale.
4. Training for program managers and other Acquisition Workforce personnel will include sufficient instruction in international armaments cooperation programs.
5. International Cooperative R&D Program accounts are encouraged for use as seed money for beginning cooperative projects early.

An organization called the Armaments Cooperation Steering Committee has been tasked to ensure that this new policy is aggressively pursued. Sponsors have 180 days to amend their appropriate DoD Directives and Instructions to reflect the new policy.

DSMC'S ROLE

Once again, as in 1985, the Secretary of Defense recognizes the necessity of training and educating the acquisition workforce in international programs. The Defense Systems Management College has much to offer in this regard with its family of three international acquisition short courses: Multinational Program Management Course, International Security & Technology Transfer/Control Course, and Advanced International Management Workshop. All three are designated as assignment-specific mandatory courses by the Defense Acquisition University. Furthermore, mainstream program management courses, such as the Advanced Program Management Course and the Intermediate Systems Acquisition Course, are targeted for the inclusion of some international aspects in future offerings.

The College is positioned at the crossroads of international acquisition. A European presence has been maintained for nearly a decade with the Annual International Acquisition/Procurement Seminar. This Seminar is sponsored by the International Defense Educational Arrangement (IDEA), comprised of the equivalent defense educational institutions in the United States, United Kingdom, Germany, and France. Last year the first-ever Defense Cooperation in Armaments Course was offered jointly with the Defense Institute of Security Assistance Management in Singapore for U.S. DoD personnel in the Pacific Theater. Plans are underway to conduct an annual international acquisition/procurement seminar with Pacific nations, as well as biennial offerings of the Defense Cooperation in Acquisition Course in both the Pacific and Europe. DSMC is well positioned to be part of the Department of Defense Bridge to the 21st Century, and to be the international acquisition academy of distinction.

[Editor's note. The full text of Secretary Cohen's 23 March 1997 memorandum was published in the Spring 1997 issue of *The DISAM Journal*, pp. 70-71.]