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Defense acquisitions: How DoD acquires weapon systems and recent efforts to reform the process.

Accession Number : ADA520832

Title : Defense Acquisitions: How DOD Acquires Weapon Systems and Recent Efforts to Reform the Process

Descriptive Note : Congressional rept.

Corporate Author : LIBRARY OF CONGRESS WASHINGTON DC CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERVICE

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Full Text : <http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a520832.pdf>

Report Date : 23 Apr 2010

Pagination or Media Count : 30

Abstract : Department of Defense (DOD) efforts to acquire goods and services are often

complex and controversial. These efforts are referred to as defense acquisitions. The structure DOD utilizes to plan, execute, and oversee those activities is an intricate and multivariate 'system of systems' composed of the requirements, resource allocation, and acquisition systems. This system of systems has evolved over time, its foundation being the report published by the Packard Commission in 1986, many of whose recommendations became part of the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986. This evolution continued, as the requirements system changed from a threat-based to a capabilities-based system; the resource allocation system added execution reviews and concurrent program/budget reviews; and the acquisition system became a flexible, tailored process. The complexity of this system of systems combined with the magnitude of personnel, activities and funding involved in its operation can result in problems, including inefficient operations, fraud/waste/abuse, and inadequate implementation or enforcement of the laws and regulations that govern it. Both DOD and Congress have worked to address these types of problems and accompanying issues over the years. On April 21, 2010, the House Armed Services Committee unanimously voted in support of the Implementing Management for Performance and Related Reforms to Obtain Value in Every Acquisition Act of 2009 (H.R. 5013). While the act focuses primarily on the acquisition workforce, DOD's internal financial management, and the industrial base, some sections of the proposed bill relate directly to weapon system acquisition. In Fiscal Year (FY) 2009, a number of major efforts were undertaken to reform the acquisition progress.

Descriptors : *WEAPON SYSTEMS , *ACQUISITION , *DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE , GOVERNMENT PROCUREMENT , FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT , LAW ENFORCEMENT , MULTIVARIATE ANALYSIS , ALLOCATIONS , BUDGETS , RESOURCE MANAGEMENT , CONGRESS

Subject Categories : Administration and Management

Economics and Cost Analysis

Fire Control and Bombing Systems

Distribution Statement : APPROVED FOR PUBLIC RELEASE

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