Software Acquisition Pathway Interim Policy and Procedures Signed by USD(A&S)

Section 800 of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2020 directs Secretary of Defense to issue interim policy for a new Software Acquisition Pathway. This direction is fulfilled by the Software Pathway interim policy that was signed out by Under Secretary Lord on 03 January 2020. The applicability of this interim policy is software-intensive programs across the Department of Defense.

This interim policy will simplify the acquisition model to enable continuous integration and delivery of software capability on timelines relevant to the Warfighter/end user’s need. Additionally, the policy establishes the Software Acquisition Pathway as the preferred path for acquisition and development of software-intensive systems. To manage risk, the policy that programs create business decision artifacts to facilitate successful software acquisition and development. DoD employs an adaptive acquisition framework composed of multiple acquisition pathways, each tailored for the unique characteristics and risk profile of the capability being acquired.

The types of systems this interim policy is applicable to includes: software-only systems, such as Command & Control (C2) software or applications; weapon system software, such as smart munitions, fire control systems, embedded mission planning software; and any other custom-developed software running on commercial or modified commercial hardware.

This interim policy will be replaced by issuance of a DoD Instruction within a year of signature of this memo.

In the FY20 NDAA Conference Report, the conferees commended the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment's commitment to adopting the recommendations of the Defense Innovation Board.

For more information on the interim policy and guidance, please visit:

www.dau.edu/aaf/software

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**Ask an Expert**

Q: My program is using a traditional acquisition framework for software development activities. How can I use the Software Acquisition Interim Policy today?

To see the answer, please visit the Agile Pilots Community of Practice site using the link below (Select Discussion Board: CoP News, Issue 5, January 2020).

[https://www.dau.edu/team/AgilePilots/SitePages/Category.aspx?CategoryID=16&SiteMapTitle=Ask%20an%20Agile%20Expert](https://www.dau.edu/team/AgilePilots/SitePages/Category.aspx?CategoryID=16&SiteMapTitle=Ask%20an%20Agile%20Expert)

**Meet the PM**

Ms. Hi-Young (Heidi) Cotter is the Defense Information Systems Agency (DISA), Program Manager (PM) for the National Background Investigative Services (NBIS). NBIS is a 2018 NDAA Section 874 agile pilot acquisition program to develop and field the federal-wide information technology service used to conduct suitability, security, and credentialing investigations for all federal civilians, military members, and government contractors. Under her leadership, NBIS has been at the forefront of adopting an agile methodology and developing best practices within a DOD software development program. Ms. Cotter restructured the development contracts and program leadership roles to align to industry standards for DevSecOps. By linking development capabilities through a Scaled Agile Framework (SAFe), NBIS has been able to more closely align with mission needs and deploy capabilities faster than ever. Over the past seven Program Increments (PIs), the 20+ NBIS sprint development teams have completed 10,000+ user stories and incorporated GovCloud, Cybersecurity, Other Transaction Authority (OTA) Contracting, DevSecOps pipeline, and other state-of-art vetting technologies that have directly contributed to the reduction of security investigation backlog. Ms. Cotter continues to find and implement innovative processes to tackle challenges. She led a partnership with Director, Operational Test and Evaluation (DOT&E), Joint Interoperability Test Command (JITC), and the program to develop a tailored requirements workflow and testing processes to move testing inside the development sprints. She also drove the use of industry-leading commercial products for data management that are critical to incorporating Machine Learning algorithms in the business process. Prior her selection as NBIS PM, Ms. Cotter served a number of acquisition project leadership roles within DISA, including heading the Multi-National Information Sharing (MNIS) portfolio and Global Video Services (GVS) program.

**Announcements & Events**

JAN – Agile Pilots Guidebook for FY19

30 JAN – A&S Town Hall, Pentagon Auditorium BH 650 at 1430

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