ACQUISITION,
TECHNOLOGY
AND LOGISTICS

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
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WASHINGTON, DC 20301-3010

OCT 12

MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS
(ATTN: ACQUISITION EXECUTIVES)
CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEF OF STAFF
(ATTN: ACQUISITION EXECUTIVE OF USSOCOM
AND USTRANSCOM)
DIRECTORS OF THE DEFENSE AGENCIES
DIRECTORS OF THE DOD FIELD ACTIVITIES

SUBJECT: Question Unusual Practices and Organizational Structures

The Defense Science Board (DSB) Task Force on Management Oversight in Acquisition Organizations was asked to assess our structure and methods of oversight to ensure the integrity of acquisition decisions in the Department. One of their recommendations recognized the importance of questioning unusual practices and organizational structures within our system. Specifically, they referenced the March 1998 Secretary of the Air Force memo which consolidated essentially all acquisition authorities, oversight, and management with one individual. Clearly this was a major change to the Air Force's acquisition process, but the senior acquisition executive in the Department, the Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition and Technology), was not consulted. Had that happened, it would have been apparent that the Air Force acquisition structure and process were diverging from those of the other two military departments, and the consolidation of authority in a single individual demanded checks and balances not evident in the arrangement. Although, the decision may have seemed justified at the time in light of the desire to streamline acquisition practices, its implementation should also have been questioned.

All members of the Department's acquisition, technology, and logistics workforce shall be vigilant and question unusual practices and organizational structures within their areas of responsibility. I'm asking Component Acquisition Executives to report by November 30, 2005, actions they are taking in this regard. I have also requested Defense Acquisition University to identify and incorporate, into acquisition courses as appropriate, best practices, case studies, and lessons learned on prevention of procurement fraud, waste and abuse. We must maintain focus "not only on doing things right, but also on doing the right thing."

Kenneth J. Krieg