



Owning the Technical Baseline for Acquisition Programs in the U.S. Air Force:: A Workshop Report

Committee on Owning the Technical Baseline in the U.S. Air Force: A Workshop, Air Force Studies Board, Division on Engineering and Physical Sciences, National Research Council

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The U.S. Air Force has experienced many acquisition program failures - cost overruns, schedule delays, system performance problems, and sustainability concerns - over program lifetimes. A key contributing factor is the lack of sufficient technical knowledge within the Air Force concerning the systems being acquired to ensure success.

To examine this issue, the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Acquisition requested that the Air Force Studies Board of the National Research Council undertake a workshop to identify the essential elements of the technical baseline - data and information to establish, trade-off, verify, change, accept, and sustain functional capabilities, design characteristics, affordability, schedule, and quantified performance parameters at the chosen level of the system hierarchy - that would benefit from realignment under Air Force or government ownership, and the value to the Air Force of regaining ownership under its design capture process of the future. Over the course of three workshops from November 2014 through January 2015, presenters and participants identified the barriers that must be addressed for the Air Force to regain technical baseline control to include workforce, policy and process, funding, culture, contracts, and other factors and provided a terms of reference for a possible follow-on study to explore the issues and make recommendations required to implement and institutionalize the technical baseline concept. *Owning the Technical Baseline for Acquisition Programs in the U.S. Air Force* summarizes the presentations and discussion of the three workshops.

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