

OSD Policy Operational Challenges Call for Papers

Colleagues,

On behalf of ASD Steve Welby, BG Randy George, and myself, I would like to invite you to participate in a crowdsourcing initiative designed to spur innovation within the Defense Department. The initiative is soliciting short papers addressing one or more of the following questions through changes in force structure, changes in operational concepts, new materiel capabilities, or adjustments to investment priorities, posture or doctrine:

- How can the U.S. military more effectively and efficiently project power in the face of massed or mobile precision attacks -- for example, cruise and ballistic missile salvos and swarming?
- Given current U.S. global military posture and potential changes in the character of war, how must future U.S. operational battle networks change to accomplish counter-power projection operations in contested theaters against large state adversaries?
- How must Joint Force operational and organizational constructs change to allow combat operations involving multi-domain battle against adversaries with battle network/guided munitions parity?
- How must Joint Force operational and organizational constructs change as adversaries exploit crowd sourced information and commercially available intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance technologies such as drones and commercial space systems?
- How can the U.S. military ensure that the speed of its decision-making continues to keep pace with the accelerating speed of action on the battlefield due to automation, artificial intelligence, hypersonics, cyber weapons and other factors?

Additional information about the initiative, including submission guidelines and paper requirements can be found at:

<http://www.defense.gov/News/Article/Article/994585/defense-department-seeks-ideas-for-preserving-us-competitive-advantage>.

Papers must be submitted by November 28 at 5:00pm EST.

We hope you will consider participating in this important project.

Best,

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Defense Department Seeks Ideas for Preserving U.S. Competitive Advantage

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After 15 years of continuous combat operations focused on counterterrorism, irregular warfare, and nation building, the joint force is now preparing for a future that demands skill across the full range of military operations, including high-end, multidomain warfare against large state competitors.



Soldiers conduct preflight system checks before launching the RQ-7B Shadow unmanned aerial vehicle at Fort A.P. Hill, Va., Oct. 26, 2016. The Shadow provides reconnaissance, surveillance, target acquisition and force protection in near-real-time during day and night operations and limited adverse weather conditions. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Nicholaus Williams

The U.S. military remains the best trained and equipped military in the world. But with the rise of sophisticated rivals, the proliferation of military and dual-use commercial technologies, and the accelerating speed of action on the battlefield, there is a growing need to identify innovative means of preserving the United States' competitive military advantage.

Preserving and extending U.S. competitive military advantage is the key to maintaining a strong conventional deterrent. One competitive advantage we

especially want to preserve is our ability to project power across transoceanic distances into any theater.

In this regard, the joint force faces three emerging operational challenges:

-- Unlike during the Cold War, the U.S. does not maintain large combat formations in the theaters in which they are expected to fight; most U.S. combat power now resides in the continental U.S. and external states and territories. As a result, a state competitor bent on power projection in its near abroad or along its periphery will likely enjoy a time-space and force correlation advantage early in any crisis.

-- As the joint force closes on a theater, it may face opponents with rough parity in operational battle networks and guided munitions warfare.⁽¹⁾ It will be harder for the Joint Force to fight its way into theater, and to operate once there.

-- Large state competitors well understand the power of U.S. joint operational battle networks directing 24-hour, all-weather guided munitions warfare across multiple operating domains. They have therefore invested heavily in counter-battle network capabilities such as operational and tactical cyber, electromagnetic warfare and counter-space capabilities.

U.S. planners often use the short-hand "anti-access/area-denial" to describe these three operational challenges.

Pentagon officials are inviting individuals and groups to submit papers putting forth ideas for addressing five questions:

-- How can the U.S. military more effectively and efficiently project power in the face of massed or mobile precision attacks -- for example, cruise and ballistic missile salvos and swarming?

-- Given current U.S. global military posture and potential changes in the character of war, how must future U.S. operational battle networks change to accomplish counter-power projection operations in contested theaters against large state adversaries?

-- How must joint force operational and organizational constructs change to allow combat operations involving multi-domain battle against adversaries with battle network/guided munitions parity?

-- How must joint force operational and organizational constructs change as adversaries exploit crowdsourced information and commercially available intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance technologies such as drones and commercial space systems?

-- How can the U.S. military ensure that the speed of its decision-making continues to keep pace with the accelerating speed of action on the battlefield due to automation, artificial intelligence, hypersonics, cyber weapons and other factors?

Actionable Means

Papers should propose an actionable means of either circumventing or addressing one or more of the challenges through changes in force structure, changes in operational concepts, new materiel capabilities, or adjustments to investment priorities, posture or doctrine, officials said.

Authors of the top papers will be invited to brief their proposals to senior DoD leaders in mid- to late-December. Selected papers also will be provided to the deputy defense secretary and the vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Submission Guidance

Papers must be no longer than four pages; pictures or diagrams may be included as an appendix. They may be written by either teams or individuals, and teams or individuals may submit multiple papers, and they will be evaluated on their creativity, practicality and efficacy.

A cover sheet must accompany each paper, listing the full name, affiliation, job title, email address and phone number of each author. The paper's header must identify the operational challenges it addresses, and the footer must include the lead author's full name, email address, and phone number.

All content must be unclassified, officials stressed. Electronic files must be titled using the format "Operational Challenge_Last Name_First Name," where "Last Name_First Name" is replaced with the lead author's name. Papers must be submitted to osd.pentagon.ousd-policy.mbx.operational-challenges@mail.mil.

Paper Requirements

Proposals should address the following questions, officials said:

- What is your proposal and how does it address the operational challenges?
- What changes in force structure, operational concepts, investment priorities, posture or doctrine will be required to implement your proposal?
- How would you overcome bureaucratic, budgetary or other impediments to implementation?

The deadline for submission is 5 p.m. EST Nov. 28, 2016.

NOTE:

⁽¹⁾ A battle network consists of four interconnected grids: a sensor grid; a command, control, communications, computer and intelligence grid; an effects grid; and a logistics and support grid. Operational level battle networks operate at the theater and campaign level.

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