

**Paul Solomon
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December 23, 2024

The Honorable Joni Ernst, SASC
111 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Subject: Questions to DOD Nominees; Déjà vu all over again

Dear Sen. Ernst:

On January 9, 2022, I submitted proposed Advanced Policy Questions (APQ) to you for use at the Pentagon hearings for nomination of the USD(A&S) and the Dep. USD(A&S). Thanks for using those questions.

Unfortunately, the incumbents failed to complete those commitments. I hope that their work in progress is turned over during the transition. Please seek stronger, more explicit commitments from the new nominees and, if confirmed, oversee their execution of those commitments.

The previous APQs, with responses, are included in my attached letters to:

William LaPlante USD(A&S), Subj: Realpolitik on Digital Engineering, Outcome-Based Metrics, and Project 2025, Part 2, dated November 25, 2024.

Radha Plumb, (then) Dep. USD(A&S) Subject: Meeting Commitments Made at Your SASC Nomination Hearing, dated April 24, 2023.

Excerpts from the questions follow:

1. Valid measures of cost, schedule, and technical performance for all acquisition pathways.
2. Require contractors that employ the DOD Digital Engineering (DE) Strategy to maintain valid information in the digital authoritative data source (ASoT, Authoritative Source of Truth) that is sufficient for program managers to make informed and timely decisions to manage cost, schedule, performance, and risk?
3. What specific steps would you take, if confirmed, to ensure the acquisition enterprise is collecting authoritative data, including data from industry partners and other DOD organizations, to effectively model risk, and use appropriate indicators of program and portfolio health?
4. What is your opinion on ways DOD could incorporate iterative development approaches centered on fielding minimum viable capabilities?

In my previous letter to you, dated November 26, I cited your letter to DOGE. You presented “a trillion dollars’ worth of ideas for trimming the fat and reducing red ink.” One idea is:

Require Commonsense Project Management Principles

For every \$1 billion Washington spends, [\\$102 million is wasted](#) as projects go [over budget, are delayed, or fail to meet projected goals](#). Implementing the most basic management systems—like establishing scopes and goals—could have saved taxpayers \$688.5 billion from [the \\$6.75 trillion the federal government spent this past year](#).

My email to Roland Foster, dated December 19, cited your idea along with my recommendations to implement those principles. The recommendations are in the referenced white paper. An excerpt from the email follows:

Revised White Paper: Common Sense Project Management: "When you come to a fork in the road..." 12/18/24



The white paper, **Common Sense Project Management: "When you come to a fork in the road..."**, dated 12/18/24, lays a path to common sense project management. The first step is to get rid of the regulation that requires contractors to use earned value management (EVM) in compliance with the discredited EVM System standard, EIA-748.

An excerpt from the white paper: "It is time to fully de-regulate how DOD manages the acquisition of major weapon systems."

Please question the nominees about Common Sense Project Management at their hearings in addition to reusing the old questions.

This letter and the other references may be downloaded from www.pb-ev.com.

Respectfully,

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Cc:

USD (Comptroller)/CFO Michael McCord
Hon. Bill LaPlante (USD)
Hon. Andrew Hunter, AF Asst. Sec. for AT&L
Honorable Ken Calvert
Hon. Carlos Del Toro, Secretary of the Navy
Nickolas Guertin (ASN RD&A)
Honorable David L. Norquist, NDIA
Hon. Sen. Patty Murray
Hon. Robert J. Wittman
Hon. Adam Smith , HASC
Hon. Heidi Shyu, (USD(R&E))
Hon. Donald Norcross
DOGE
Anthony Capaccio, Bloomberg News
Shelby Oakley, GAO
Jon Ludwigson, GAO