

Paul Solomon
3307 Meadow Oak Drive
Westlake Village, CA 91361
Paul.solomon@pb-ev.com

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Hon. John Wicker
Chairman, SASC
Russell Senate Building, Room 228
Washington, D.C., 20510

Subj: Advance Policy Questions for F-35 Program Executive Officer Nominee Masiello

Dear Hon. Chairman Wicker:

The F-35 TR-3 software upgrade has not yet been validated and there are reported risks to the delivery of the Block 4 AN/APG-85 radar and other upgrades. Lt. Gen. Gregory Masiello has been nominated to be the F-35 Program Executive Officer (PEO). Considering the program's history and the magnitude of the future costs, please hold an open confirmation hearing and ask Advance Policy Questions (APQ) to obtain his commitments to employ:

1. Outcome-based metrics.
2. The digital engineering (DE) ecosystem including digital twins, digital threads, and real-time, automated schedule status reports that are based on Authoritative Sources of Truth (ASoT).

Mr. Feinberg's and Mr. Michael's Responses to APQs

Please recycle APQs that were asked at confirmation hearings for Mr. Feinberg and Mr. Michael. Just refocus the questions to be informed of Lt. Gen. Masiello's plans to manage the F-35 program. Then, if confirmed, hold him accountable for program outcomes and meeting his commitments.

A previous letter to Mr. Feinberg included proposed strategic objectives and tactics. The APQs for the current nominee are relevant to those objectives and tactics, including:

Strategic objectives to transform the acquisition of weapon systems.

1. Hold contractors and DoD program managers **accountable** for **outcomes**.
2. Tear down NDIA's **barrier** to entry facing non-traditional defense contractors.
3. Institutionalize digital engineering (**DE**) and digital twins.

Implementation Tactics

1. Compliance requirements and reviews divert a program manager's focus from the product to the process. Reward real engineering, not financial engineering.
2. Real-time, automated status reports that are based on ASoT. Replace botched metrics with outcome-based metrics.

APQs to Mr. Feinberg and Mr. Michael, with their responses, follow.

Proposed Masiello Advance Policy Questions Recycled from Feinberg and Michael Confirmation Hearings		
Objective	Questions to Mr. Feinberg	Feinberg's Responses
Outcomes	Are you confident in the affordability and executability of the Department's plan for F-35 Block 4 Continuous Capability Development and Delivery (C2D2)?	review the details and status of F-35 modernization, including the acquisition strategy for Block 4, to achieve a balance of cost and timely delivery of required capabilities to the warfighter.

Barrier, Regulations	how would you ensure a broader use of modern management tools and systems that you would seek to implement at the Department of Defense, if confirmed?	accelerate data-driven decision making and outcome-based performance management...mandate the enhancement, interoperability, and broader use of tools...to inform...decision making. Use best of breed commercial technologies, implement best practices for software development, and mandate data sharing.
DE Outcomes	Based on your experience, how do you see artificial intelligence (AI), digital twin technology and model-based systems engineering (MBSE) approaches improving both test and evaluations approaches, and supporting improved acquisition outcomes?	AI, digital twin technology, and MBSE significantly enhance the Department's T&E approaches and decision-making. Advancements in these technologies lead to faster product development and reduced costs, ultimately supporting improved acquisition decisions and outcomes, even into sustainment.
Objective	<u>Questions to Mr. Michael</u>	Michael's Responses
DE	What are your views on the maturity and availability of digital twin or model-based SE tools in the commercial space, and their potential applicability for DOD needs.	digital twin and model-based SE tools... improve policy, guidance, and digital standards consistent with commercial best practices
DE	What are your views on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Department of Defense's developmental test and evaluation activities?	ensure that T&E processes are properly structured to assess software-intensive systems leverage new SE approaches such as DE

My letter to Rep. Norcross, Subj: Oversight of F-35 C2D2 Major Subprogram's Outcome-based Metrics, dated February 4, 2024, cites GAO report GAO-23-105867 DEFENSE SOFTWARE ACQUISITIONS Changes to Requirements, Oversight, and Tools Needed for Weapon Programs. Per GAO, DOD should ensure that all programs using Agile have policy and guidance that encourages the use of oversight approaches tailored to their program, include using **outcome-based metrics**, and continually assess the value of capability delivered to support iterative software development. Please ask the following questions to understand Lt. Gen. Masiello's planned metrics, capability objectives, and processes.

APQs:

1. Identify metrics that are used to track and report F-35 TR-3 and the Block 4 AN/APG-85 radar software technical performance and schedule progress.
2. Does the F-35 program use real-time, automated schedule status reports for TR-3 and Block 4 AN/APG-85 radar that are based on Authoritative Sources of Truth?
3. What are the Minimum Viable Capability Release capabilities, including features or requirements, of TR-3?
4. What are the Minimum Viable Product capabilities of the Block 4 AN/APG-85 radar?

The following articles in *Defense Acquisition Magazine* include policy, guidance, and industry best practices that are necessary for success and are a source for the questions.

- "Program Management THROUGH DIGITAL ENGINEERING," May-June 2022 Issue.

- “Program Management THROUGH DIGITAL ENGINEERING Updated,” July-August 2025 Issue.

The July-August Issue will be published soon but a proof is attached for your information.

Yours truly,



Paul Solomon

CC:

Hon. Pete Hegseth, Sec. Def.	Hon. Dep. Sec. Def. Stephen Feinberg
Hon. Glen Grothman, HOAC	Hon. Adam Smith, HASC
Hon. Mike Rogers, HASC	Hon. Tom Cole, HAC
Hon. Robert J. Wittman, HASC	Hon. Donald Norcross, HASC
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