



## DEFENSE BUSINESS BOARD MEETING MINUTES

### FEBRUARY 6-7, 2024

The Defense Business Board (DBB) is a Federal Advisory Committee within the Department of Defense (DoD), operating pursuant to the Federal Advisory Committee Act of 1972, the Government in the Sunshine Act of 1976, and other appropriate federal regulations. The DBB meets quarterly and at times out of cycle when required. The DBB held its second session for fiscal year 2024 on February 6 and February 7, 2024, at the Pentagon, Washington, D.C. The meeting was partially closed with scheduled open sessions held on both days. Registered public participants joined via Zoom.gov.

#### **DBB Members Present (16)**

Hon. Deborah Lee James (Chair)  
Mr. Craig Albright  
Dr. Alex Alonso  
Mr. Joseph B. Anderson, Jr.  
Ms. Cheryl Eliano  
Ms. Linnie Haynesworth (Vice Chair)  
Ms. Erin Hill  
Mr. David Beitel (Attended Via Zoom)

Ms. Suzanne Leopoldi-Nichols  
Ms. Jennifer McClure  
Dr. David Van Slyke  
Hon. David Walker  
GEN Johnnie Wilson, USA (Ret.)  
Mr. Robert Wolf  
Mr. Safroadu (Saf) Yeboah-Amankwah  
GEN Joseph Votel, USA (Ret.) (Attended Via Zoom)

#### **DBB Members Not Present (4)**

Ms. Sally Donnelly  
Dr. Christopher Gopal  
Mr. Oscar Munoz  
Gen Larry Spencer, USAF (Ret.)

#### **DBB Staff (non-voting) – attended 1 or more session(s)**

Ms. Cara Allison Marshall, Designated Federal Officer (DFO)  
CAPT Chad Graham, U.S. Navy Military Representative to the DBB  
Lt Col Kyle Harrington, U.S. Air Force Military Representative to the DBB  
MAJ Michael McDonald, U.S. Army Military Representative to the DBB  
Mr. Matthew Ratcliff, U.S. Air Force Subject Matter Expert Detailed to the DBB  
Ms. Leah Glaccum, Operations Manager  
Ms. Janice Mclaury, Research/Writer/Editor (Contractor)  
Ms. Patricia Edwards, Operations Analyst (Contractor)

#### **Consultants to the Board Present (8)**

Mr. Anand Bahl, Consultant to the Board  
COL Greg Bowman, USA (Ret.), J.D., Consultant to the Board  
Mr. Matthew Daniel, Consultant to the Board  
Ms. Marachel Knight, Consultant to the Board  
Hon. Eric Rosenbach, Consultant to the Board  
Brig Gen Bernard (Bernie) Skoch, USAF (Ret.), Consultant to the Board  
Mr. Stan Soloway, Consultant to the Board  
Ms. Pat Zarodkiewicz, Consultant to the Board



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#### **Public Attendees**

The DBB received 6 requests from the public to participate in the open session. A list of all public attendees is attached as an addendum to these minutes.

#### **BEGIN OPEN SESSION**

At 9:10 AM on February 6, Ms. Cara Allison Marshall began the closed session and turned the floor over to the Board Chair, Hon. Deborah Lee James, to welcome members and provide opening remarks.

From 9:10-10:10 AM, Hon. Radha Iyengar Plumb, Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment (DUSD(A&S)) headed an open discussion on the new National Defense Industrial Strategy (NDIS) and the National Defense Industrial Base. She provided an overview of their efforts to reform the acquisition system to meet future challenges. Hon. Plumb highlighted the Competitive Advantage Pathfinder (CAP) program, which aims to leverage private industry innovation, and the National Defense Industrial Association (NDIA) Supply Chain Mapping Tool to identify vulnerabilities. The DUSD(A&S) also discussed the need to reduce barriers to integration, align service-specific requirements, and create a more attractive environment for small businesses.

#### **ADJOURN OPEN SESSION**

At 10:10 AM, Ms. Cara Allison Marshall adjourned the open session.

#### **BEGIN CLOSED SESSION**

At 10:15 AM, Ms. Cara Allison Marshall began the closed session.

From 10:20–11:15 AM, Hon. Michael McCord, Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller)/Chief Financial Officer (USD(C)/CFO) provided a classified discussion on the latest DoD Audit, progress to date, and the path forward. Hon. McCord provided insights into the Department's budgeting process, highlighting the need for flexibility and agility in an era of fiscal uncertainty. The USD(C)/CFO emphasized the importance of investing in readiness, balancing current needs with long-term modernization efforts, and ensuring efficient use of taxpayer dollars. The discussion also covered the challenges of budgeting in a constrained fiscal environment and the need for Congress to pass appropriations bills in a timely manner.

From 11:15 AM–1:30 PM, the members had lunch and a break.

From 1:30–2:50 PM, Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force JoAnne Bass, Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Secretary of the Air Force and Chief of Staff of the Air Force led a discussion on the State of the Workforce. Chief Bass believes people operations in the DoD must evolve and adapt to emerging challenges. To attract and retain talent, the Air Force must consider alternative onboarding methods and career paths. To improve communication, Chief Bass emphasizes the use of social media and Microsoft Teams, stressing the importance of over-communicating and utilizing platforms that resonate with younger audiences. However, Airmen often feel disconnected and perceive some messages as lacking authenticity, leading them to tune out. Front-line supervisors play a crucial role in shaping an Airman's experience, while peers on social media provide validation rather than diverse perspectives. To effectively recruit Gen Z, the service should consider utilizing influencers who can connect with potential recruits on their level. Bass also highlights the need to address disinformation, as the DoD currently lacks a robust strategy to combat it.



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From 2:50–3:00 PM Break

From 3:00–3:45 PM, Mr. Jedidiah Royal, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Indo-Pacific Security Affairs, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy led a discussion on the NDIS and the Indo-Pacific. He discussed challenges and opportunities in the region. Mr. Royal identified different chokepoints compared to Ukraine, with maintenance and distance posing bigger hurdles. He expressed concern about Chinese activity and dependence on third-party communication infrastructure in case of conflict. He mentioned successful efforts against Chinese influence in Taiwan’s election but warned about potential future escalations. Mr. Royal highlighted difficulties in moving U.S. industry closer to the region due to policy limitations and suggested paying more to overcome these. He emphasized promising partnerships with Korea and Japan, with India's role still undefined. The discussion concluded with the need to balance exportability with protecting sensitive technology, suggesting potential reforms to the Foreign Military Sales process.

3:45 – 4:00 PM Break

From 4:00–5:00 PM, LTG Douglass A. Sims II, U.S. Army, Director for Operations, Joint Staff provided a classified discussion on Current Operations, Crisis Action Planning, and Adaptive Decision Making in Dynamic Environments. He explored the intersection of military operations and corporate crisis management, highlighting the parallels between the principles of current operations, crisis action planning, and adaptive decision-making in both contexts. Through this exploration, participants can gain valuable insights into proactive crisis management, strategic preparedness for “black swan” events, and the cultivation of an agile organizational culture that is capable of navigating complex and rapidly changing landscapes.

5:00–5:15 PM Break

From 5:15–5:20 PM, Hon. Deborah Lee James, Board Chair, welcomed Deputy Secretary Hicks and the next session’s speaker, Dr. Stefanie Tompkins.

From 5:20–5:25 PM, Hon. Kathleen Hicks, Deputy Secretary of Defense provided remarks to the Board.

From 5:25–7:00 PM, members received a classified presentation from Dr. Stefanie Tompkins, Director of Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (*DARPA*). In her remarks, she shared significant updates from *DARPA* in support of the National Security Strategy, how they have a different remit from the DoD, and what best business practices could be imported to the rest of the Department.

#### **ADJOURN CLOSED SESSION**

At 7:00 PM, Ms. Cara Allison Marshall adjourned the final session of the day.

#### **BEGIN CLOSED SESSION**

At 9:20 AM on February 7, Ms. Cara Allison Marshall opened the day’s session and handed the floor over to Hon. Deborah James for the Chair’s morning welcome.

From 9:30–10:15 AM, Hon. Kathleen Hicks, Deputy Secretary of Defense, alongside Ms. Aditi Kumar, Deputy Director for Strategy, Policy, and National Security Partnerships at Defense Innovation Unit; and Ms. Joy Shanaberger, Senior Advisor to the Deputy Secretary of Defense led an overview and discussion on the Replicator initiative. Hon. Hicks, Ms. Kumar, and Ms. Shanaberger briefed board members on accelerating the development



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and procurement of advanced capabilities. The Deputy Secretary noted that DoD is learning lessons from the Replicator initiative that could be applied throughout the Department. Replicator shows where improved business processes can deliver cost-effective capability.

### **ADJOURN CLOSED SESSION**

At 10:15 AM, Ms. Cara Allison Marshall adjourned the closed session.

### **BEGIN OPEN SESSION**

At 10:20 AM, Ms. Cara Allison Marshall began the open session.

From 10:20 – 11:30 AM, Brigadier General Stephanie Howard (U.S. Army Reserve), Executive Director of Operational Contract Support under the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition & Sustainment led a discussion on operational contract support. BG Howard highlighted the critical role of contract support, which constitutes 70-80% of Army logistics. The DoD faces challenges in managing supply chain risks, including a lack of information sharing on vulnerabilities between Services. Efforts to address these issues involve the creation of a central data platform and the development of AI and machine learning solutions. BG Howard recognized that there is a shortage of talent in supply chain management and logisticians, and quantifying risks, especially the potential impact of altering the supply chain, remains a complex task.

### **ADJOURN OPEN SESSION**

11:30 AM, Ms. Cara Allison Marshall adjourned the Board's open and final session for the February 6 and 7 quarterly meeting.

By my signature, certified to be accurate and complete.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Deborah Lee James".

Deborah Lee James  
Chair  
Defense Business Board



**DEFENSE BUSINESS BOARD PUBLIC ATTENDEES  
OPEN SESSION – FEBRUARY 6-7, 2024**

**ALL INFORMATION ON THIS SHEET IS  
PART OF THE PUBLIC RECORD**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization</b>
Juan Suarez	N/A
Breon Wells	CEO & Founder, The Daniel Initiative, LLC
Malcolm Anderson	Youth Counselor, Naval Academy Athletics Association
Thomas Hall	Lead Systems Security Engineer, The MITRE Corporation
Joseph H. Imwalle	Contractor supporting OSD/R&E
Nigel Sutton	VP Business Operations, TCOM LP
Doug Cameron	Aerospace & Defense Reporter



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