



DEFENSE BUSINESS BOARD MEETING MINUTES JANUARY 13, 2025

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 a virtual ad hoc meeting to present, deliberate, and vote on the *Supply Chain Illumination* Study on January 13, 2025, via Zoom. The meeting was open to the public. In the Federal Register Notice published on Jan. 8, members of the public were invited to submit comments; no comments were received prior or during the meeting.

DBB Members Present (16 attendees)

Hon. Deborah Lee James (Chair)
Ms. Linnie Haynesworth (Vice Chair)
GEN Joseph Votel, USA (Ret.)
Mr. Craig Albright
Mr. Joseph B. Anderson, Jr.
Mr. David Beitel
Ms. Cheryl Eliano
Dr. Christopher Gopal, Ph.D.
Ms. Erin Hill, Esq.

Ms. Marachel Knight
Ms. Suzanne Leopoldi-Nichols
Ms. Jennifer McClure
Gen Larry Spencer, USAF (Ret.)
Dr. David Van Slyke
Hon. David Walker
Mr. Robert Wolf

DBB Members Not Present (3)

Dr. Alex Alonso, Ph.D.
Mr. Oscar Munoz
Mr. Safroadu (Saf) Yeboah-Amankwah
Ms. Sally Donnelly

DBB Staff (non-voting)

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
Ms. Lisa DesLauriers, Operations Manager
Ms. Janice Williams-McLaury, Researcher/Writer/Editor (Contractor)
Ms. Patricia Edwards, Operations Analyst (Contractor)
Mr. Will McLaury, Intern

Consultants to the Board Present (6)

Mr. Anand Bahl, Consultant to the Board
Mr. Greg Bowman, Consultant to the Board
Mr. Joshua Malcolm, 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



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BEGIN OPEN SESSION

At 3:00 PM on January 13, Ms. Cara Allison Marshall began the open meeting and turned the floor over to the Board Chair, Hon. Deborah Lee James, to welcome members and provide opening remarks. Hon. James congratulated the Business Operations Advisory Subcommittee on its recent successful presentation of the *Industry Partnerships for Crises Study* to the Deputy Secretary of Defense.

From 3:10-4:30 PM, the Business Transformation Advisory Subcommittee presented *Supply Chain Illumination in the Department of Defense Study* for consideration, deliberation, and vote by the DBB. The Subcommittee was charged with finding actionable recommendations to improve DoD supply chain illumination and risk management through an evaluation of the current state of DoD enterprise-wide efforts and applicability of private-sector best practices.

The presentation included key terms and definitions, global supply chain disruptions and vulnerabilities overviews, the Study approach and methodology, the current state of DoD supply chain illumination initiatives, and applicable private industry best practices.

The Subcommittee noted that DoD has made good early progress, but requires leadership, data standardization, and systems and tools to scale its efforts. Executing supply chain illumination demands urgent, focused action and enhanced technological capabilities to strengthen collaboration with partners. Any approach to illuminate the supply chain also requires a bold vision that ensures adaptability.

Sec. James opened with a question about the ongoing efforts within the Military Departments. Mr. Albright highlighted that there are good examples of focused illumination priority, such as the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter Program and use of ADVANA. Enterprise initiatives are very good but broad in scope. There are also specific military departments or agencies working their parochial priorities but not with an enterprise-wide focus on overarching objectives. Leadership alignment on priorities, formal review and assessments, and enterprise-wide implementation remains a gap.

Mr. Soloway noted that there are high level priorities across the Department that have been clearly developed by the Secretary and Deputy, such as for critical or rare earth minerals. Beyond strategic priorities, Mr. Soloway recognized the need for other major programs to track and report their vulnerabilities in critical areas as well for cross-enterprise collaboration. This will bring awareness to senior leaders and enhance sharing across the Department to address those issues jointly.

Mr. Bowman added that one of the most shocking findings is the impact that obsolescence is having on the whole Department. He described the issues legacy programs have had sourcing critical parts that are no longer being manufactured. It is extraordinarily hard and very expensive for the Department to obtain these obsolete parts.

Hon. David Walker asked about metrics. In addition to defining critical needs across the enterprise, he asked if the Department has methods to measure the current state of its inventory, the sources of its materials, the country of origin of the ownership of those enterprises, the capabilities of domestic industry and of its partners', and the transit risks associated with the supply chain.

Mr. Albright responded that many of these areas warrant metrics that can be supported by technology and addressed with risk mitigation strategies. When talking about performance metrics, the Subcommittee weighed



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the importance of processes versus end results. The overwhelming feedback from the private sector was that end results are the priority and keep employees focused. End results also drove alignment on risk management and associated metrics.

Hon. Walker asked if the study assessed the ability of the Department to understand the state of their supply chains with respect to critical minerals, materials, etc. Mr. Albright answered that the study noted that critical needs assessment must be an on-going, regular topic of quarterly discussions by the military departments, to include the materials they determine to be critical.

Mr. Bowman stated that a study recently came out about semiconductors, rare earth minerals, and casting and forging. Oftentimes, critical needs visibility differs at the individual program level such as the B-21 bomber produced by Northrop Grumman, who knows to the nth degree where the supplies come from. The whole system is born digitally, and they paid attention to it from the start. He compared that with legacy systems like the Army's M1 Abrams and M2 Bradley, which is older, and they may not know where the materials come from.

Ms. Knight stated that the DoD needs to continue to map material origin to identify what is priority and what is not to proactively attack the problem.

Dr. Gopal mentioned that the study was terrific and asked about Recommendation 5.1 – related to talent and the Defense Acquisition University's (DAU) course offerings on Supply Chain Risk Management. He remarked that only great companies can staff SCRM instructors with sufficient expertise and if the Subcommittee assessed whether the DAU courses were taught by individuals who truly understand the problem and the importance of illumination.

Mr. Soloway responded that when it comes to national security, the DoD should be the best of the best. He also noted that he cannot answer the question, but DAU has done a good job attempting to create courseware reflective of the needs going forward. However, there is no requirement to take that training; it is elective. Moreover, it is not an integrated curriculum.

Mr. Albright lauded Dr. Gopal's work and leadership on supply chain issues. He added that a lot of supply chain training is on the job. He agreed with Mr. Soloway that most training is on supply chain risk management and not illumination.

At the conclusion of Board member questions, the Chair invited the public to submit their comments for consideration. She then asked for a motion to approve the study. Dr. Van Slyke motioned to approve with Dr. Gopal seconding. The Study was approved unanimously at 4:15 PM.



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ADJOURN OPEN SESSION

At 4:15 PM, Ms. Cara Allison Marshall adjourned the 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