

Analysis of Section 204: Establishment of Joint Requirements and Programming Board

Key Points

Section 204 of the Forged Act proposes the establishment of a Joint Requirements and Programming Board within the Department of Defense (DoD). This board would be co-chaired by the Director of Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation (CAPE) and the Chairman of the Joint Requirements Oversight Council (JROC). The primary responsibilities of the Board include serving as the central forum for all duties and responsibilities of the JROC regarding joint military capabilities requirements and the Director of CAPE concerning program evaluation. It will also act as the review and recommendation forum for all requirements documents referred to the JROC and all program issue papers referred to the Director of CAPE. Furthermore, the Board will be the single point of interface between the Chairman of the JROC and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff on joint military capabilities requirements, and between the Director of CAPE and the Deputy Secretary and Secretary of Defense on program evaluation functions. The Board will consist of an executive committee and functional committees, with recommendations requiring a majority vote in the functional committees and potential rejection only through unanimous vote of the executive committee.

History of the recommendation

The establishment of the Joint Requirements and Programming Board reflects a long history of efforts to reform the Department of Defense's acquisition process and improve the alignment between requirements and resources. Concerns about inefficiencies, redundancies, and a lack of integration across the military services have driven numerous reform initiatives over the decades ¹. The Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 was a landmark piece of legislation aimed at improving the joint structure of the military, including the creation of the Joint Requirements Oversight Council (JROC) ¹. The JROC was intended to foster consensus across the services on acquisition priorities, eliminate overlap, and ensure that the needs of combatant commanders received proper precedence in the Pentagon's acquisition process ¹.

Over time, the JROC's role has evolved, becoming more proactive in defining military requirements rather than simply reacting to service-specific programs ⁹. The Joint Capabilities Integration and Development System (JCIDS), established in 2003, further formalized the process for identifying capability gaps and generating requirements from a joint perspective ¹⁰. This system aimed to replace service-specific processes that often led to redundancies and failed to meet the combined needs of all military branches ¹¹. The creation of the Director of Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation (CAPE) was another significant reform, intended to provide independent analysis of defense programs and costs ⁵. The proposed Joint Requirements and Programming Board can be seen as a continuation of these reform efforts, seeking to further integrate the requirements generation process, led by the JROC, with program evaluation and resource considerations, overseen by CAPE. This

integration aims to ensure that validated requirements are not only strategically sound but also fiscally responsible and achievable within budget constraints ².

Desired Effect of the recommendation

The primary desired effect of establishing the Joint Requirements and Programming Board is to create a more integrated and efficient process for translating identified joint military capabilities requirements into funded acquisition programs. By combining the responsibilities of the JROC and the Director of CAPE within a single forum, the provision intends to foster a closer alignment between the identification of military needs and the evaluation of program costs and feasibility ².

- **Desired Effect 1: Enhanced Integration of Requirements and Resources:** The Board serves as the primary forum for both requirements validation (JROC) and program evaluation (CAPE), ensuring that these two critical functions are considered in tandem from the outset. This integrated approach is expected to lead to the development of more realistic and affordable requirements, as cost considerations will be factored in earlier in the process ².
- **Desired Effect 2: Streamlined Decision-Making:** By establishing a single point of interface between the JROC and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and between CAPE and the Secretary of Defense, the Board aims to simplify communication and decision pathways. This consolidation could reduce bureaucratic hurdles and accelerate the process of moving from validated requirements to program funding ¹.
- **Desired Effect 3: Improved Prioritization of Joint Capabilities:** The Board's responsibility to review and recommend on all requirements documents referred to the JROC will likely lead to a more comprehensive and prioritized assessment of joint military capabilities. This should help ensure that resources are focused on the most critical needs of the joint force, as defined by the National Military Strategy ⁹.
- **Desired Effect 4: Increased Transparency and Collaboration:** The structure of the Board, with its executive and functional committees comprising representatives from various stakeholders (portfolio acquisition executives, combatant commanders, CAPE, and JROC), promotes greater transparency and collaboration in the requirements and programming process. This inclusive approach could lead to more informed decisions that better reflect the diverse needs and perspectives within the DoD ¹¹.
- **Desired Effect 5: Enhanced Accountability:** The requirement for a majority vote within the functional committees for recommendations, and the potential for dissenting opinions from the co-chairpersons, introduces a level of accountability into the process. This structure ensures that decisions are not solely driven by one entity and that differing viewpoints are considered and potentially elevated

for higher-level review ¹³.

Potential Negative impacts of the recommendations

Despite the intended benefits, the establishment of the Joint Requirements and Programming Board could also lead to several unintended negative outcomes if not carefully managed.

- **Potential Negative impact 1: Increased Bureaucracy and Process Delays:** Creating a new layer of bureaucracy, even with the aim of streamlining, can sometimes lead to the opposite effect. The need for coordination between the JROC and CAPE staffs, the establishment of new committees, and the requirement for majority votes could potentially slow down the decision-making process, especially in the initial stages of implementation ¹.
- **Potential Negative impact 2: Power Imbalances and Conflicts:** The co-chairmanship model, while intended to balance requirements and resources, could also create power struggles between the Director of CAPE and the Chairman of the JROC. Differing priorities and perspectives on program needs versus fiscal constraints might lead to disagreements and impede the Board's effectiveness ⁴.
- **Potential Negative impact 3: Reduced Responsiveness to Urgent Needs:** The consensus-based decision-making process, while promoting thoroughness, might make it challenging to respond quickly to rapidly evolving threats or urgent operational requirements. Achieving a majority vote within functional committees and navigating potential executive committee rejection could introduce delays in addressing critical capability gaps ¹.
- **Potential Negative impact 4: Overemphasis on Cost at the Expense of Capability:** The strong involvement of CAPE, with its focus on cost assessment, might inadvertently lead to an overemphasis on affordability at the expense of critical performance parameters or necessary technological advancements. This could result in the acquisition of less capable systems that do not fully meet the warfighter's needs ⁴.
- **Potential Negative impact 5: Resistance from Existing Organizations:** The establishment of the Board and the shifting of responsibilities could face resistance from existing organizations and personnel within the JROC, CAPE, and the military services who may perceive a loss of authority or influence. This resistance could hinder the Board's effective integration into the DoD's existing structures and processes ².

Mitigations the organization will take to diminish the negative impacts

- **Mitigation of Negative Impact 1:** To mitigate the risk of increased bureaucracy, the DoD should clearly define the roles and responsibilities of the Board, its

committees, and its staff from the outset. Implementing efficient processes and timelines for issue review and recommendation, leveraging technology for collaboration, and regularly assessing the Board's operational efficiency can help prevent unnecessary delays.

- **Mitigation of Negative Impact 2:** To address potential power imbalances, the co-chairpersons should establish clear protocols for decision-making and conflict resolution. Fostering a culture of mutual respect and recognizing the equal importance of requirements and resources in the acquisition process will be crucial. Regular joint strategic planning sessions can help align the perspectives of CAPE and the JROC.
- **Mitigation of Negative Impact 3:** To ensure responsiveness to urgent needs, the Board should establish expedited review processes for time-sensitive requirements. Clear criteria for identifying urgent needs and flexible procedures that allow for swift decision-making while still maintaining due diligence will be necessary.
- **Mitigation of Negative Impact 4:** To prevent an overemphasis on cost, the Board's processes should ensure a balanced consideration of cost, schedule, and performance objectives. The inclusion of combatant command representatives in the functional committees will help ensure that warfighter needs remain a central consideration alongside affordability.
- **Mitigation of Negative Impact 5:** To overcome resistance from existing organizations, the DoD leadership should clearly communicate the rationale and benefits of the Joint Requirements and Programming Board. Engaging stakeholders early in the implementation process, providing adequate training and support for personnel adapting to new roles, and demonstrating the Board's value through tangible results can help foster buy-in.

DoD Personnel Most Affected

Several categories of federal personnel within the DoD will be most affected by the establishment of the Joint Requirements and Programming Board.

- **Director of Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation (CAPE) and Staff:** As a co-chair of the Board, the Director of CAPE's role will be significantly expanded to include direct involvement in the joint military capabilities requirements process. CAPE staff will also be heavily involved in supporting the Board's activities, providing program evaluation expertise and analysis throughout the requirements and programming lifecycle⁹.
- **Chairman and Staff of the Joint Requirements Oversight Council (JROC):** The Chairman of the JROC will serve as the other co-chair of the Board, integrating the JROC's responsibilities for joint military capabilities requirements

directly with program evaluation. JROC staff will be integral to the Board's functional committees, contributing their expertise in defining and validating joint requirements⁹.

- **Portfolio Acquisition Executives and Program Managers:** These individuals, or their designated representatives, will serve on the functional committees and will be directly involved in the review and recommendation of requirements that their programs will ultimately fulfill. The Board's decisions will directly influence the scope, cost, and schedule of their acquisition programs¹³.
- **Combatant Commanders and Their Designated Members:** Combatant commanders will have a direct voice in the Board's deliberations through their designated members on the functional committees. This will allow them to advocate for the capabilities needed within their areas of responsibility and ensure that their operational needs are considered early in the acquisition process⁹.
- **Joint Staff (Specifically J8):** The Joint Staff, particularly the J8 directorate responsible for force structure, resources, and assessment, will be significantly impacted as the Board becomes the central forum for joint requirements. They will likely play a crucial role in supporting the co-chairpersons and the executive committee⁹.

Stakeholders opposed and rationale for Opposition

Several stakeholders, both within and potentially outside the DoD, might oppose the establishment of the Joint Requirements and Programming Board for various reasons.

- **Military Services:** Individual military services might perceive the Board as an encroachment on their traditional authorities in defining and prioritizing their own service-specific requirements. They may worry that the joint focus of the Board could lead to a dilution of their unique needs and priorities, potentially impacting their ability to modernize and maintain service-specific capabilities¹.
- **Existing Bureaucracies within JROC and CAPE:** Personnel within the existing JROC and CAPE structures might resist the creation of the new Board due to concerns about organizational changes, potential shifts in power and influence, and the need to adapt to new processes and procedures. They may fear that the new structure will add complexity rather than streamlining the existing processes².
- **Defense Industry:** While the defense industry generally seeks clarity in requirements, some companies might oppose the Board if they perceive it as adding more layers of review and potentially slowing down the acquisition process. Companies that have established strong relationships with specific services might also be concerned that a more centralized joint approach could

reduce their influence ¹.

- **Congressional Members and Committees:** While Congress generally supports efforts to improve efficiency in defense spending, some members or committees might express concerns about the specific structure and authorities of the new Board. They might worry about the balance of power between the JROC and CAPE, the potential for the Board to become another bureaucratic hurdle, or the impact on their oversight responsibilities for individual service programs ².

Additional Resources

The DoD will likely require several additional resources to successfully implement the Joint Requirements and Programming Board.

- **Dedicated Staff:** The executive committee will require a dedicated staff directly responsible to the co-chairpersons to assist in identifying, reviewing, coordinating, and analyzing all matters brought before the Board, as explicitly stated in the provision. This staff will need expertise in both requirements generation and program evaluation.
- **Funding:** Resources will be needed to support the staffing, operations, and potential technology infrastructure required for the Board to function effectively. This could include funding for personnel salaries, administrative costs, meeting facilities, and secure communication systems.
- **Training Programs:** Personnel from the JROC, CAPE, the military services, and the acquisition community will require training on the new processes, procedures, and responsibilities associated with the Joint Requirements and Programming Board. This training will be crucial for ensuring effective collaboration and a common understanding of the Board's mission and operations.
- **Information Technology Infrastructure:** A robust and secure IT infrastructure will be necessary to facilitate the sharing of information, documents, and analysis among the Board members and supporting staff. This infrastructure should enable efficient communication and collaboration across different organizations within the DoD ¹⁴.
- **Analytical Tools and Data:** The Board will need access to comprehensive data and analytical tools to effectively evaluate program costs, schedules, and performance, as well as to assess joint military capabilities and identify gaps. This may require investment in new analytical capabilities or the integration of existing data systems.

Measures of Success

The DoD should measure the success and effectiveness of the Joint Requirements and Programming Board based on several criteria once implemented.

- **Improved Alignment of Requirements and Resources:** A key measure will be

the extent to which the Board facilitates the development of strategically sound and fiscally responsible requirements that are effectively translated into funded programs². This can be assessed by tracking the number of programs that proceed through the acquisition process with stable requirements and realistic cost estimates.

- **Reduced Duplication and Overlap:** The Board's effectiveness can be gauged by its ability to identify and prevent the development of redundant or overlapping capabilities across the military services¹¹. Metrics could include a reduction in the number of similar programs being pursued by different services.
- **Faster Decision Cycle Times:** The Board aims to streamline the requirements and programming process. Success can be measured by tracking the time taken to validate joint requirements and recommend program funding compared to previous processes¹.
- **Enhanced Warfighter Input:** The degree to which combatant commanders' needs are effectively incorporated into acquisition programs will be a critical indicator of success¹¹. This can be assessed through feedback mechanisms and evaluations of how well delivered capabilities meet operational requirements.
- **Increased Interoperability:** The Board's focus on joint military capabilities should lead to improved interoperability among the services¹¹. Measures could include assessments of the compatibility and integration of newly acquired systems across different branches of the military.
- **Stakeholder Satisfaction:** Regular feedback from personnel involved in the Board's processes, including representatives from the JROC, CAPE, the services, and the acquisition community, can provide valuable insights into the Board's effectiveness and identify areas for improvement.

Alternative approaches

While the establishment of the Joint Requirements and Programming Board represents a significant step towards integrating requirements and programming, alternative approaches could potentially achieve similar outcomes, possibly more effectively or efficiently.

- **Enhanced Collaboration between Existing JROC and CAPE Structures:** Instead of creating a new board, the DoD could focus on strengthening the existing collaboration mechanisms between the JROC and CAPE. This could involve establishing formal joint working groups, co-locating staff, and implementing joint review processes for key documents and decisions³. This approach might be less disruptive and could build upon existing expertise and relationships.
- **Strengthening the Role of Functional Capabilities Boards (FCBs):** The JROC already utilizes FCBs to consider specific capability areas. Their role could be

expanded to include greater CAPE participation and a more explicit focus on the programming and resource implications of identified requirements¹². This could provide a more targeted and domain-specific approach to integrating requirements and resources.

- **Implementing a More Integrated Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Execution (PPBE) Process:** The PPBE process is the primary resource allocation mechanism within the DoD. Reforms to this overarching process could better integrate requirements generation, program evaluation, and budget formulation from the outset, potentially reducing the need for a separate board focused solely on the intersection of requirements and programming¹⁴. This could involve earlier and more substantive engagement of the JROC and CAPE in the planning and programming phases.
- **Utilizing Advanced Data Analytics and Artificial Intelligence:** Leveraging advanced data analytics and AI tools could provide a more objective and efficient way to assess the alignment between requirements, costs, and strategic priorities. These technologies could help identify potential redundancies, cost inefficiencies, and areas where requirements might not be effectively addressing strategic goals, potentially augmenting or even partially replacing the need for a new board

¹⁵.

Section Specific Question 1: What is the specific mandate and composition of the new Joint Requirements and Programming Board, and how is it expected to influence the translation of validated requirements into funded program elements within the PPBE process for acquisition programs?

The specific mandate of the Joint Requirements and Programming Board is to serve as the central forum within the Department of Defense for exercising the duties and responsibilities of both the Joint Requirements Oversight Council (JROC) concerning joint military capabilities requirements and the Director of Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation (CAPE) regarding program evaluation. Its responsibilities include reviewing and providing recommendations on all requirements documents referred to the JROC and all program issue papers referred to the Director of CAPE. Furthermore, it acts as the single point of interface between the JROC Chairman and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff for requirements matters, and between the Director of CAPE and the Deputy and Secretary of Defense for program evaluation functions.

The Board's composition includes an executive committee, co-chaired by the Director of CAPE and the Chairman of the JROC, along with all other members of the JROC. It also consists of functional committees established by the co-chairpersons to consider portfolios of joint military capabilities, mission areas, or functions. Membership on

these functional committees includes representatives designated by portfolio acquisition executives, combatant commanders (if relevant to the matters under consideration), the Director of CAPE, and the Chairman of the JROC.

The Board is expected to significantly influence the translation of validated requirements into funded program elements within the PPBE process by directly linking the validation of joint military needs with program evaluation and resource considerations. By having both the JROC and CAPE co-lead the Board and participate in the review of requirements and program issues, the provision aims to ensure that resource implications are considered early in the requirements generation process. The Board's recommendations, based on a majority vote in the functional committees, will serve as official policy unless unanimously rejected by the executive committee. This integrated approach is intended to result in more realistic and affordable requirements that are more likely to be supported through the programming and budgeting phases of the PPBE process, ultimately leading to their inclusion in funded acquisition programs.

Section Specific Question 2: How does the function of this Board intersect with or alter the current interactions Program Managers have with the JROC and resource sponsors during budget formulation?

The establishment of the Joint Requirements and Programming Board will likely alter the current interactions Program Managers have with the JROC and resource sponsors during budget formulation by introducing a more integrated and potentially centralized review process.

Currently, Program Managers interact with the JROC primarily during the requirements validation phase, where they present information on their programs and how they address validated capability gaps¹². They also engage with resource sponsors (typically within their respective military services) during the budget formulation process to advocate for funding for their programs within the broader service priorities.

The new Board will intersect with these interactions by becoming the primary forum where both requirements (previously the sole purview of the JROC) and program evaluation (a key aspect of resource sponsor and CAPE considerations) are jointly reviewed. Program Managers, through their portfolio acquisition executive's designated member on the functional committees, will likely have their programs considered within this integrated context. This means that the Board's recommendations will carry the weight of both validated joint requirements and

cost/programmatic feasibility assessments from CAPE.

This could lead to several changes in Program Manager interactions. They might need to provide more comprehensive information earlier in the process, addressing not only the operational need but also the cost, schedule, and performance trade-offs of their programs. The Board's structure, with representatives from various stakeholders including combatant commands, could also mean that Program Managers need to address a broader range of perspectives and priorities during the review process. Furthermore, the Board's role as a single point of interface between the JROC and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, and between CAPE and the Secretary of Defense, could streamline some communication pathways but might also require Program Managers to navigate the Board's processes to gain support for their programs during budget formulation. The influence of the Board's recommendations on the Deputy Secretary and Secretary of Defense could also mean that Program Managers need to ensure their programs align with the integrated priorities established by the Board to secure funding.

Summary

The establishment of the Joint Requirements and Programming Board represents a significant effort to further integrate the Department of Defense's processes for identifying joint military capabilities requirements and evaluating program feasibility and cost. By bringing together the functions of the JROC and CAPE under a single co-chaired entity, the provision aims to create a more efficient and effective system for translating needs into funded acquisition programs. While the intended benefits include enhanced integration, streamlined decision-making, and improved prioritization, potential negative impacts such as increased bureaucracy and power imbalances must be carefully mitigated. The successful implementation of the Board will require dedicated resources, comprehensive training, and a commitment to fostering collaboration among the diverse stakeholders involved. Measuring the Board's effectiveness will necessitate tracking key indicators related to the alignment of requirements and resources, decision cycle times, and the satisfaction of warfighter needs. While this new board offers a promising approach, alternative strategies focused on enhancing collaboration within existing structures or reforming the broader PPBE process could also contribute to achieving similar goals. Ultimately, the success of the Joint Requirements and Programming Board will depend on its ability to effectively balance the critical considerations of military capability and fiscal responsibility in the pursuit of a stronger and more efficient defense enterprise.

Works cited

1. The School of JROC | Air & Space Forces Magazine, accessed March 27, 2025, <https://www.airandspaceforces.com/article/the-school-of-jroc/>
2. Defense Budget: Role of the Joint Requirements Oversight Council - Every CRS

- Report, accessed March 27, 2025,
https://www.everycrsreport.com/files/19970312_97-346_f978c505f1bb278d6f274b7b836079e538a0e69a.pdf
3. Been There, Done That: Acquisition Reform | Article | The United States Army, accessed March 27, 2025,
https://www.army.mil/article/173083/been_there_done_that_acquisition_reform
 4. The Case for Joint Force Acquisition Reform - National Defense University Press, accessed March 27, 2025,
<https://ndupress.ndu.edu/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/1566584/the-case-for-joint-force-acquisition-reform/>
 5. Defense Acquisition Reform: Background, Analysis, and Issues for Congress - EveryCRSReport.com, accessed March 27, 2025,
<https://www.everycrsreport.com/reports/R43566.html>
 6. The More Things Change, Acquisition Reform Remains the Same - DAU, accessed March 27, 2025,
<https://www.dau.edu/sites/default/files/Migrate/ARJFiles/arj61/Eide61.pdf?Web=1>
 7. Army Acquisition: A brief history | Article | The United States Army, accessed March 27, 2025,
https://www.army.mil/article/135395/army_acquisition_a_brief_history
 8. The Ghosts of Acquisition Reform: Past, Present and Future. - DTIC, accessed March 27, 2025, <https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/tr/pdf/ADA314891.pdf>
 9. Leadership of the Joint Requirements Oversight Council - Army War College, accessed March 27, 2025,
<https://ssl.armywarcollege.edu/dclm/pubs/Meinhart%20JFQ%20article%20VCJCS.pdf>
 10. Joint Capabilities Integration and Development System (JCIDS) | www.dau.edu, accessed March 27, 2025,
<https://www.dau.edu/acquikipedia-article/joint-capabilities-integration-and-development-system-jcids>
 11. Joint Capabilities Integration and Development System - Wikipedia, accessed March 27, 2025,
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joint_Capabilities_Integration_and_Development_System
 12. Joint Requirements Oversight Council (JROC) | www.dau.edu, accessed March 27, 2025,
<https://www.dau.edu/acquikipedia-article/joint-requirements-oversight-council-jroc>
 13. Joint Requirements Oversight Council - Wikipedia, accessed March 27, 2025,
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joint_Requirements_Oversight_Council
 14. DoD PPBE Reform Implementation Plan - Department of Defense, accessed March 27, 2025,
<https://media.defense.gov/2025/Jan/17/2003629812/-1/-1/1/DOD-PPBE-REFORM-IMPLEMENTATION-PLAN.pdf>
 15. JUST IN: Joint Staff Automating Resource Allocation Process - National Defense Magazine, accessed March 27, 2025,

- <https://www.nationaldefensemagazine.org/articles/2025/2/13/joint-staff-automating-resource-allocation-process>
16. Planning, Programming, Budgeting & Execution Process (PPBE) | www.dau.edu, accessed March 27, 2025, <https://www.dau.edu/acquikipedia-article/planning-programming-budgeting-execution-process-ppbe>
 17. Guide to Program Management Business Processes - Adaptive Acquisition Framework, accessed March 27, 2025, <https://aaf.dau.edu/storage/2024/09/Guide-to-Program-Management-Business-Processes.pdf>
 18. Next-Generation Defense Budgeting Project - Federation of American Scientists, accessed March 27, 2025, <https://fas.org/initiative/defense-budget/>
 19. Major Events That Shaped Defense Acquisition, 1981-2019 - DAU, accessed March 27, 2025, <https://www.dau.edu/sites/default/files/Migrated/CopDocuments/Reference%20-%20Major%20Events%20that%20Shaped%20DAS%2C%201981%20to%202019%2C%20Interactive.pptx>