OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

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We are in an era of unprecedented change – in the make-up and nature of the national and defense industrial bases; in the ways in which information and related technologies have become essential underpinnings of both our business processes and our future military capabilities; and in the pace of change, throughout the industrial sector. The fact is that our traditional processes and strategies for acquiring, developing, fielding and supporting weapons and business systems must be adapted to the world we live in.

Our new acquisition policies have been geared to achieving that objective. We must expand the use of commercial items in Department of Defense systems so we can leverage the massive technology investments of the private sector; reap the benefits of reduced cycle times, faster insertion of new technologies, lower life cycle costs, greater reliability and availability, and support from a robust industrial base. To accomplish this, we must capitalize on the technical advances in the commercial marketplace by carefully reviewing our requirements to determine where they can be satisfied by commercially available products or where they can be altered to enable the Department to leverage the commercial sector. And we must pursue new and different acquisition and support strategies.

This document is designed to assist as you acquire and support commercial items. It provides an overview of the considerations inherent in such acquisitions and summarizes lessons learned from a wide variety of programs. We believe it will help you to become a more informed consumer and assist you as we move down this increasingly important path.

We encourage you to learn from it and use it as you design your acquisition strategies.

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FEDERAL RECYCLING PROGRAM PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER