OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
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OPERATIONAL TEST
AND EVALUATION

11 SEP 2000

MEMORANDUM FOR DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY OF THE ARMY
(OPERATIONS RESEARCH)
DIRECTOR, NAVY TEST AND EVALUATION AND
TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS
DIRECTOR, AIR FORCE TEST AND EVALUATION

SUBJECT: Policy on the Use of Test Data in Operational Evaluations

Operational evaluations are usually based upon effectiveness and suitability data collected during field test events in an operational environment, and may be augmented by other relevant data, such as developmental test results. Operational testers should participate early in a program's development and testing process to enhance the operational realism of contractor and developmental testing so that the collected data can be used in operational evaluations.

For some acquisitions, significant test or utilization data may already have been accrued during development and/or commercial use. To increase our understanding and knowledge of a system's performance, it is to our advantage to exploit all relevant and credible test data to supplement the data to be collected during operational testing.

Attached is my policy for the acquisition and application of test data to support operational evaluations. Since the acquisition of test data through conventional operational testing is already well understood, the primary focus of this policy is on test data from other sources.

Philip E. Coyle
Director

Attachment:
As stated

cc:
ATEC
OPTEVFOR
AFOTEC
MCOTEA
JITC

DOT&E POLICY
USE OF TEST DATA IN OPERATIONAL EVALUATIONS

BACKGROUND

Operational Test Agencies (OTAs) evaluate the operational effectiveness and suitability of systems and products acquired by DoD. These evaluations are usually based upon effectiveness and suitability data collected during field test events designed to collect data in an operational environment, and may be augmented by other relevant data.

Operational testers can and should provide advice throughout a program's development and testing, especially during early activities. One goal of early involvement is to enhance the operational realism of the initial technical and developmental test environments. Early involvement can greatly enhance the utility of test results for all testing phases of a program—from early technical testing through operational testing of the final design.

In many cases, especially for new DoD-developed systems where no other alternative is available, all test data must be obtained from Government-sponsored tests. However, DoD acquires some systems that may have accrued substantial test data during development and commercial use. For these acquisitions, it may be possible to use the already existent data to supplement the data to be collected during additional testing.

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy addresses the acquisition and application of data to support operational evaluations and decisions. Since the acquisition of data through conventional operational test (OT) is well understood, the principal focus of this policy is the qualification and usage of data from *other* sources, or non-OT data. Non-OT data are test, utilization, or simulation data collected from sources other than Government-conducted OT events.

This policy applies to all operational tests and evaluations in the DoD that are subject to DOT&E oversight, although all operational test and evaluation (OT&E) programs are encouraged to employ the principles stated herein.

POLICY

All credible and applicable test data, including those from non-OT sources, accrued prior or during the completion of independent OT&E should be considered for use in operational evaluations with the intent to increase understanding and knowledge of a system's performance. Non-OT data may include the following: contractor test data, government developmental test data, commercial utilization data, user data, and foreign comparative test data.

If the proposed system meets the criteria of Title 10, Section 2399 (i.e., an ACAT I or II system designed for use in combat), then independent OT&E, without contractor involvement, must be conducted to support the Milestone III decision. Further, if the proposed system is an upgrade or modification to an ACAT I or II program that has the potential to significantly affect

operational effectiveness or suitability, then independent OT&E must be performed. For these situations, it is still possible to use other data to supplement the data required from the independent OT&E. The structure of the OT to be conducted should account for the knowledge already obtained through the use of previously obtained data.

GENERAL APPROACH

The OTA should initially determine the capabilities to be demonstrated and the performance levels required (as guided by user-approved operational requirements). The effectiveness and suitability data needed to evaluate these required capabilities must then be determined.

Based upon these data requirements, the OTA should next investigate whether useful data is already available or will become available through non-OT events (e.g., data obtained by the developer or contractor during developmental tests or through user experience). Of course, the applicability and credibility of non-OT data must be evaluated for their adequacy in addressing the current data requirement.

When all data requirements and availability studies are complete, operational test events must be designed to obtain the data needed to complete the evaluation of the system's operational effectiveness and operational suitability issues.

EFFECTIVE DATE

This policy is effective immediately.

Philip E. Coyle
Director, Operational Test and Evaluation