DEPUTY SECRETARY OF WAR
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WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1010

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MEMORANDUM FOR SENIOR PENTAGON LEADERSHIP
COMMANDERS OF THE COMBATANT COMMANDS
DEFENSE AGENCY AND DOW FIELD ACTIVITY DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: Paths Forward for Maven Smart System and Combined Joint All-Domain Command and Control in the Artificial Intelligence Era

Accelerating AI-Enabled Decision Making for the Joint Force

The tempo of decision-making in contemporary conflicts demands that the Department provide our warfighters with a common, real-time understanding of a global and interconnected security environment, along with the latest tools necessary to detect, deter, and dominate our adversaries in all domains. In order to maintain our data-driven decision advantage, it is imperative that we invest now and with focus to deepen the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) across the Joint Force and establish AI-enabled decision-making as the cornerstone of our strategy for Combined Joint All-Domain Command and Control (CJADC2). This technological opportunity requires that we re-focus the management of our CJADC2 capability buildout efforts across the Joint Force.

Similarly, we have reached the point in the evolution of one of the Department's key command and control (C2) programs, Maven Smart System (MSS), where we must establish it as a formal Program of Record (POR) in order to ensure its long-term viability and effectiveness as a cornerstone of the Department's joint warfighting capabilities used across the Joint Force. Transitioning MSS to a POR will provide the stable funding and resourcing necessary for deliberate, sustained development and enterprise-wide integration to give our commanders the C2 necessary to fight and win wars. This designation will streamline acquisition, ensure use of rigorous testing and evaluation standards, and create clear lines of accountability for performance, oversight, and management. Ultimately, making MSS a POR will help mature this critical, AI-enabled system from a promising initiative into an enduring, joint, and fully supported capability that reliably delivers decision advantage across all domains.

To these ends, and to support development of the framework identified in section 1509 of the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year (FY) 2026, I direct the following:

- Within 120 days, given the technical nature and AI focus of CJADC2, the Under Secretary of War for Research and Engineering (USW(R&E)), in his role as the Department's Chief Technology Officer (CTO), will prepare a plan to rationalize governance and accelerate the Department's ongoing buildout of CJADC2 capability for my immediate review. This "CJADC2 Acceleration Plan" shall assess the scope, feasibility, and necessity of establishing a CJADC2 Direct

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Reporting Program Manager for the Department to oversee, rationalize, and accelerate CJADC2 efforts Department-wide with clear accountability for results. The USW(R&E) and the Chief Digital and Artificial Intelligence Office (CDAO), within the Office of the USW(R&E), will coordinate with the Under Secretary of War for Intelligence and Security (USW(I&S)), the Under Secretary of War for Acquisition and Sustainment (USW(A&S)), the Director, Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation, and my office in the preparation of this plan. This guidance supersedes my prior direction on this topic as provided in the December 2026 FY 2027 Program Decision Memorandum II, and the CJADC2 Acceleration Plan will replace the associated study.

- Within 30 days, the Department will consolidate administration and oversight responsibilities of MSS into the CDAO MSS Program Office to support rapid and efficient deployment of the MSS licenses that the Department procured in FY 2026 across Combatant Commands and networks. The CDAO MSS Program Office shall administer and oversee MSS for the Department on an interim basis until the CJADC2 Acceleration Plan is approved.

- The Department will immediately begin the process of establishing MSS as a formal POR using the Software Acquisition Pathway in accordance with Department of Defense Instruction 5000.87, to be completed before the end of FY 2026. The CJADC2 Acceleration Plan will assess the option of aligning the MSS POR under a potential CJADC2 Program Office as its permanent home.

- In order to streamline contractual management and leverage optimized enterprise commercial terms established for MSS by the Department of the Army, all MSS contracts shall be transitioned to the existing Army Enterprise Agreement (EA) contract vehicle. Future contracting for the MSS POR will continue to be managed by the Army using the EA.

Additional Implementation Guidance

In order to efficiently implement these decisions, I direct the following additional actions:

USW(R&E) will:

- While preparing the CJADC2 Acceleration Plan, immediately serve as the Department's focal point for investment decisions regarding CJADC2 enterprise capabilities for the FY 2027 budget finalization process.

- Within 30 days, provide departmental guidance consistent with my directions in this memorandum to consolidate all MSS purchases under the Army EA. This action, managed by the USW(R&E) in coordination with the USW(A&S) and the Secretary of the Army, will optimize pricing and eliminate redundancy.

- In coordination with the USW(I&S), assume Authorizing Official (AO) responsibilities from the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA) for MSS and its associated Commercial Cloud Enterprise (C2E) infrastructure. The USW(R&E) will ensure CDAO consolidates these responsibilities under a single, designated AO within 30 days. NGA's security management interests will be ensured through measures outlined in a mutually agreed upon Service-Level Agreement between the USW(R&E) and the USW(I&S), to be finalized within 30 days.

- In the event the USW(R&E) identifies a transition task that will negatively impact delivery of MSS capability to the warfighter, make any necessary adjustments to the timelines outlined in this memorandum on my behalf.

USW(I&S) will:

- Within 30 days, in coordination with USW(R&E), oversee the expedient transition of MSS system administration, oversight, support activities, and related responsibilities from NGA to the CDAO MSS Program Office, and reflect these transitions in a mutually agreed upon memorandum of agreement with the USW(R&E).

- Within 30 days, oversee NGA's transition of AO responsibilities for MSS and its associated C2E infrastructure to the CDAO-designated AO.

- Within 60 days, and in coordination with the USW(R&E), the USW(A&S), and the Secretary of the Army, oversee NGA's transition of the management of MSS's C2E infrastructure to a contractor-operated model.

- Within 30 days, in coordination with USW(R&E) and NGA, finalize terms of a Service-Level Agreement that ensures NGA's data and infrastructure security and oversight requirements, as well as NGA's Program Maven needs, are met throughout this transition and into the future.

- In coordination with the Department of War Senior Intelligence Oversight Official, ensure appropriate intelligence oversight continues to be exercised over the use of MSS.

- During this transition period, oversee NGA execution to ensure complete operational continuity for the MSS and NGA Maven programs.

USW(A&S) will:

- Within 30 days, in coordination with USW(R&E), provide an acquisition decision memorandum to begin the process of establishing MSS as a POR on the Software Acquisition Pathway.

- By the end of FY 2026, in coordination with USW(R&E), complete the establishment of MSS as a formal POR on the Software Acquisition Pathway.

- Coordinate with USW(R&E) (including the CDAO MSS Program Office) and the Secretary of the Army to consolidate all MSS purchases Department-wide under the Army EA.

The Secretary of the Army will:

- Ensure that Army Contracting Command is appropriately staffed and resourced to support the procurement needs of the MSS program.