

**NASA Advisory Implementing Instructions:**

**Decision Framing Meeting (DFM) and Pre-Acquisition Strategy Meeting (Pre-ASM) Guide**

Chg #	Approver	Date Approved	Description/Comments
4	AA's Senior Advisor / Technical	4/4/2023	Updated to: (1) Introduce Decision Framing Meetings as an alternative to most Pre-ASMs and provide guidance, (2) Limit formal Pre-ASMs to certain multi-element or multi-phase complex acquisitions, and derive guidance from NAI 1000.2, (3) Provide guidance on acquisition meeting attendance, management, sensitivity controls and documentation for compliance with NPR 2810.7 and for appropriate protection of acquisition-sensitive materials, (4) Clarify meeting timing and the discretionary authority of Convening Authorities.
3	AA's Senior Advisor / Technical	11/6/2020	Updated to: (1) Reconcile pre-ASM and ASM procedures with these meetings now being held in the Acquisition Strategy Council. (2) Include alignment to Center Roles as part of supporting justification. (3) Provide additional guidance on supporting justification for partnerships and supplier capability to perform work.
2	AA's Senior Advisor / Technical	4/23/2018	NAII 1000.1 issued, replaces initial Pre-ASM Guide NID
1	AA's Senior Advisor / Technical	5/19/2015	Initial Pre-ASM Guide issued as a NID to further implement the EC decision of 15 May 2012 to align Acquisition Strategy Planning and Acquisition Strategy Meetings to the NASA Organizational structure.

## **Introduction and Definitions**

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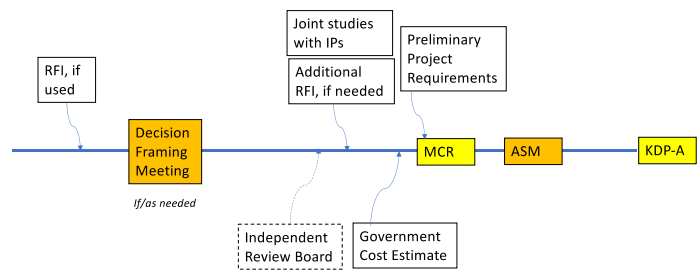
## **Appendix: Format for Decision Framing or Pre-ASM Outcomes**

## **Appendix: Decision Framing Briefing Template / Example**

# 1 Introduction and Definitions.

- 1.1 **Changes from Previous Guidance.** NASA has significantly updated and standardized its guidance for the conduct of Acquisition Strategy Meetings (ASMs)<sup>1</sup>, per NAI 1000.2. Activities previously conducted at Pre-ASMs, such as providing a robust and rigorous Analysis of Alternatives, are now included as requirements for ASMs. This NAI still addresses guidance for meetings antecedent to an ASM, when they are needed. These are now split into guidance for Decision Framing Meetings (most cases), and Pre-ASMs (now limited to complex, multi-part or multi-phase acquisitions).
- 1.2 **Decision Framing Meetings.** Decision Framing Meetings are conducted in NASA Governance Councils when there is a need to align leadership and Chair expectations on how, when, and under what decision criteria future decisions will be made. Guidance on the application of Decision Framing Meetings to the acquisition decision process is included in Section 2.0 below. These meetings may be used by any ASM Convening Authority. The rigor of briefing standards in Decision Framing Meetings is relaxed over Pre-ASMs, and many outcomes previously assigned to Pre-ASMs can be accomplished more effectively through Decision Framing Meetings. In addition to refining the authorities, timeline and any unique decision criteria for an ASM, these meetings are intended to engender discussion around key questions for stakeholders to consider and to prepare for a fully-informed ASM.
- 1.3 **Pre-ASMs.** Formal Pre-ASMs are now reserved for complex or multi-part acquisitions, such as those involving an integrated observatory, campaign, or other coupled program with multiple mission elements; details are provided in Section 3.0 below. Pre-ASMs are also appropriate for multi-phase acquisitions, such as an extended contracted study/demonstration phase prior to acquisition of final elements or operational services.
- 1.4 **Timing.** Timing of antecedent Decision Framing or Pre-ASM meetings is determined by the specific circumstances of an acquisition. For ASC level meetings, timing is typically negotiated as an outcome of the annual Acquisition Forecast conducted by the ASC Executive. ASM requirements are substantial and treated as distinct Council topics; Mission Directorates should plan a minimum of 2-3 months between an antecedent meeting and ASM, although more may be required based on actions issued at the antecedent meeting; some Decision Framing Meetings may need to occur up to 1 year prior to an ASM. The diagram below shows a notional flow for single project/program acquisitions.<sup>23</sup>

**Decision Framing Meeting and ASM placement in early life cycle milestones**  
— for single project / program acquisition



- 1.5 **Convening Authority.** The Convening Authority of Decision Framing Meetings and Pre-ASMs is determined by the same thresholds for consideration documented in NAI 1000.2.

<sup>1</sup> Definitions for acronyms used in this document may be found in the OES-managed [NASA Acronym List](#).

<sup>2</sup> An Independent Review Board prior to MCR or the ASM is a best practice and has become normative for SMD; other Directorates are encouraged to consider its use.

<sup>3</sup> NPR 7120.5F Figure 2-5 is currently being revised to clarify the preferred timing of ASMs as after MCR and before KDP-A.

Per NPD 1000.5 and NAII 1000.2, acquisitions which potentially meet one or more of these thresholds must be brought to the attention of the NASA AA, who may choose to convene an Acquisition Strategy Council meeting, decline to convene a meeting, or delegate further to a Mission Directorate without additional documentation.

- 1.6 **Discretionary Conduct of Meetings.** Under NPD 1000.5, and as with ASMs, neither Decision Framing Meetings nor Pre-ASMs are required; they are at the discretion of the Convening Authority. If documentation of a decision not to conduct a meeting is desired, either to inform the lifecycle record of an acquisition or to record a dissenting opinion by advisors, it may be negotiated with and provided by an agent of the Convening Authority, such as the ASC Executive.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Since Decision Framing Meetings, Pre-ASMs and ASMs are not requirements, they likewise are not formally waived, and hence a requirement does not exist for the Convening Authority to document or sign a decision not to conduct a meeting. In this document, "waived" is used to denote the plain language interpretation of a convening authority's decision not to conduct a meeting.

## 2 Decision Framing Meeting Guidance.

### 2.1 Requesting a Decision Framing Meeting. For ASC level meetings:

- Contact your Mission Directorate's senior acquisition planning Point of Contact; this is typically a Deputy AA for Programs or Deputy AA for Management.
- Contact the ASC Executive no less than 10 weeks prior to the anticipated need date; earlier if the anticipated need was not submitted as part of your Directorate's Annual Acquisition Forecast data call. The ASC Executive will schedule a kickoff meeting to assess ASC thresholds, schedule requirements, and propose a draft storyboard per section 2.4 below.
- Once the Directorate and OES are in agreement on approach, OES will propose to the ASC Chair following standard Council process. Per this process, all topics proposal must be approved by the Chair before committing to a calendar date or issuing invites. This confirmation step must be completed NLT 7 weeks before the planned date.

### 2.2 Triggers for Use. Decision Framing Meetings typically have a specific trigger or issue which should be clearly understood by all participants, often an issue where lack of agreement on basic assumptions or expectations, or insufficient data, is creating impediments to proceeding. Examples within the domain of acquisition strategy include, but are not limited to:

- Perceived schedule pressure from stakeholders which requires leadership agreement on critical issues, timetables, and on what additional information is needed to ultimately approve an acquisition strategy.
- Policy issues for international partnerships, such as changes in commitment or urgency.
- Outcomes of previous phases of acquisitions, or changes in requirements, approach or scope, which require consideration of the end-to-end acquisition plan.
- Uncertainty around how to proceed in a given budget environment.

### 2.3 Outcomes. Decision Framing Meetings are non-decisional. Outcomes (initial consensus or agreement, redirection, actions, delegation or "waiver" of subsequent steps, etc.) should be documented per Section 4.0 below under signature of the Convening Authority. Examples of outcomes may include, but are not limited to:

- Agreement on driving requirements, including their prioritization. Participants should leave a Decision Framing meeting with a clear and direct understanding of the major factors driving an acquisition; and understanding of how they will influence the Analysis of Alternatives presented at the subsequent ASM. Participants should leave with a clear and common understanding of, and agreement on, basic assumptions.
- Agreement that an activity in formulation is ready to move into an acquisition phase, including, but not limited to: (1) agreement that requirements are sufficiently mature and that plans are in place to sufficiently definitize them by the ASM and PSM, (2) cost assumptions or estimates are realistic enough to begin planning and plans are in place to mature them and provide independent estimates by the ASM.

- Agreement on the information needed to decide an ASM (e.g., industry data, architecture or requirements studies and trades, independent cost or schedule estimates, Center roles and capacity, partnership maturity), and on any additional decision criteria beyond those prescribed in NAII 1000.2.
- Agreement on the timeline for acquisition decisions, in light of budget realism, and balanced with stakeholder commitments.
- Documentation of direction by the Convening Authority to refine the trade space to be considered at an ASM.
- (Optional) Documentation of agreement to delegate ASM convening authority or “waive” an ASM.
- Actions as needed to implement any of the above.

2.4 **Briefing Format and Approach.** Decision Framing Meetings are best conducted following a disciplined and structured approach. A small number of key questions (3-4) addressing open issues, ambiguity or critical obstacles should be identified through discussion with the ASM Convening Authority or their senior representative, and the briefing clearly segmented and designed to resolve these questions in the meeting. For Decision Framing Meetings held in the ASC, the ASC Executive negotiates these questions and the related briefing storyboard and documents in briefing guidance instructions for the recommending organization. A standard template for the briefing format is available on [OneNASA](#); it must be used for the ASC and is strongly encouraged for Mission Directorate Convening Authorities to require.

2.5 **Attendance.** Meetings should include key stakeholders in subsequent ASMs. Unlike Pre-ASMs (see below), inclusion of Center Director(s) with key stakes in the acquisition is encouraged to ensure alignment of all parties on the forward path. Given the sensitivities around the most common triggers which require Decision Framing Meetings, the overall attendance footprint should be much smaller than for ASMs, and support staff limited to a very small number needed to actively participate in the discussion.

### 3 Pre-ASM Guidance.

- 3.1 **Requesting a Pre-ASM.** Follow procedures per section 2.1, above.
- 3.2 **Basis for Use.** Formal Pre-ASMs are now reserved for special cases involving complex, multi-part or multi-phase acquisition strategies. The intent of a Pre-ASM is to ensure NASA proceeds with a holistic view of NASA's lifecycle acquisition approach, whether on the integrated impact of NASA and supplier roles, on long term cost effectiveness and budget sufficiency, on Center roles and workforce, or other issues.
- 3.3 **Triggers for Use: Multi-Element Acquisitions.** Pre-ASMs should not be needed for acquisition strategies for single missions which may involve multiple systems (e.g., a bus, instruments, launch vehicles). Some NASA programmatic efforts, however, involve the acquisition and integration of multiple mission elements, either tightly or loosely coupled, to achieve a NASA goal; Convening Authorities may request Pre-ASMs in these cases. Concrete examples of current NASA efforts and programs which would fall into this category include:
- The Artemis campaign
  - The Mars Sample Return campaign
  - The Earth Systems Observatory suite of missions
- 3.4 **Triggers for Use: Multi-Phase Acquisitions.** Convening Authorities may request Pre-ASMs for acquisitions whose life cycle objectives may involve multiple acquisitions or procurement strategies over time to meet the final objective *and* when the recommending Mission Directorate proposes to waive an ASM for subsequent phases (i.e., a single ASM authorizes both initial and subsequent phases). The intent is again to ensure a holistic view of the overarching acquisition objective. For example:
- An acquisition strategy whose final result is to acquire services, but whose development/production/service phases may involve different acquisition or procurement approaches.
  - An acquisition strategy involving an initial study/demonstration phase and subsequent full acquisition phase for operational products or services.
- 3.5 **Outcomes.** Pre-ASMs may be informational or decisional. Decisions should be recorded when one or more of the items below (or others) require dispositive documentation in order to proceed:
- Authorization by the Chair to move into formal acquisition planning.
  - Definition of the trade space of acquisition options to be considered in subsequent ASMs, including any options requested by the Convening Authority or agreement to remove options from the trade space.
  - Authorization to continue international partner negotiations, whose formal approval will occur at the ASMs.
  - (Optional) Documentation of agreement to delegate convening authority for, or "waive", one or more subsequent ASMs.

3.6 **Briefing Format and Approach.** Requirements for Pre-ASMs are more structured than for Decision Framing Meetings and follow the same basic template as for ASMs (NAII 1000.2), with modification to address more holistic or integrated aspects of the overall effort (i.e., address NAII 1000.2 at the integrated campaign/observatory/program level, addressing element level details only when they involve critical constraints or issues). Specific modification of NAII 1000.2 requirements should address:

- **Assumptions/Requirements/Maturity:** The trades, outcomes, key constraints, and drivers resulting from prior architecture or other studies should be clearly communicated. Plans for further analysis, and the timing of their results relative to further acquisition steps, should be shared. Outcomes of RFIs or other supplier assessments should be shared.
- **Acquisition Strategy Drivers and Analysis:** The prioritization of overall drivers and constraints for the effort should be clearly communicated (i.e., is the effort fundamentally constrained or bounded by cost, schedule, performance, policy or other factors). Acquisition strategy options should span a diverse trade space; point solutions should not be presented at a Pre-ASM. The role of NASA vs suppliers in each option, and in life cycle phases of requirements development, design, development, test & evaluation and operations should be made clear.
- **Acquisition Strategy Risk and Executability:** Emphasis should be placed on the integrated and phased budget requirements, which should be presented within the context of the budget account's overall and/or competing commitments over the lifecycle. An assessment should be made of execution following in-guide / recently appropriated funding profiles, vs assumptions of over-guides / additional appropriations, and strategies to address funding below desired levels, or desired phasing, should be discussed. The anticipated management structure should be presented with emphasis on how the portfolio of acquisitions supporting the effort will be managed and integrated. Options for Center roles in supporting the effort should be presented in an integrated format, and any initial capacity concerns discussed. Plans for independent assessment of cost, schedule and/or overall executability prior to ASMs should be presented.

3.7 **Attendance.** Meetings should include key stakeholders in subsequent ASMs. To enable open discussion of options between the program/Mission Directorate and convening authority, Center Directors are not invited to Pre-ASMs. The overall attendance footprint should be smaller than for ASMs, and support staff limited to a small number needed to actively participate in the discussion.



#### 4 Handling of Materials and Meetings; Documentation and Dissemination of Outcomes.

- 4.1 **Sensitive Materials Controls.** The Decision Framing Meeting and ASM Templates include the required format for CUI controls. Materials must be marked CUI Specified, with a minimum of SP-PROCURE and SP-SSEL category markings applied. CUI markings must be in a single line on the header of each slide, and markings on each slide should reflect all CUI content in the entire presentation.<sup>5</sup> “Pre-Decisional” must be applied on a second header line to reinforce an Agency position that acquisition strategy materials are exempt from FOIA. Additional CUI Limited Materials Dissemination Control (LMDC) markings may not be applied to ASC materials; for Decision Framing Meetings or Pre-ASMs in which a Mission Directorate AA is the Convening Authority, and the Mission Directorate is both the author and recipient/relayer of the information, LMDCs may be allowed but materials controlled in an appropriate manner. Other markings inconsistent with the CUI standards (e.g., “For NASA internal use only”, “Not for redistribution”, etc) must not be included in slide headers. Briefers may include such markings in slide footers only, but they have no binding effect and are discouraged. The following format is compliant for slide headers, adding additional category markings (e.g., SP-BUDGET, SP-EXPT, SP-PROPIN) when needed:

**CUI // SP-PROCURE / SP-SSEL  
Pre-Decisional**

- 4.2 **Meeting Management.** Lists of potentially interested parties, to the extent known, should be presented prior to engaging in any discussion and invitees given the opportunity to recuse themselves in the event of potential conflicts of interest. Given that Decision Framing Meeting and Pre-ASM materials will be marked CUI Specified, participation in online meetings must be actively monitored per NPD 2810.7, 2.13.4.a. Additional NASA requirements for online meetings containing CUI [as documented by OCIO](#) must be followed.
- 4.3 **Documentation and Dissemination of Outcomes.** Outcomes should be documented using a format similar to the Agency Council standard in Appendix A below, under signature of the convening authority. Documented outcomes of ASC Decision Framing Meetings or Pre-ASMs are marked at minimum CUI // SP-PROCURE / SP-SSEL // DL ONLY, with the DL ONLY dissemination control corresponding to meeting participants and any eventual Contracting Officers for the activity.<sup>6</sup> Other Convening Authorities may establish their own dissemination control approaches. NPD 1000.5 documents NASA’s policy relative release of pre-decisional acquisition related materials outside the Agency.
- 4.4 **Records Management.** For ASC decision memoranda and minutes, OES follows records retention schedule 01/014.0.B.01, “Temporary Commissions, Boards, Councils and Committees; Internal Agency Committees”. Records are transferred to the National Archives when 20 years old. OES will assess decontrol of ASC materials against the relevant current contract status when dispositioning these records. Only OES-authored final documents are transferred, i.e., minutes and decisions. Recommending organizations are responsible for records management of all other related documents such as briefing materials, etc.

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<sup>5</sup> While Federal requirements allow for internal portion markings in a document, if used they must be applied consistently to every non-CUI and CUI element in the briefing. This is untenable for Council briefings.

<sup>6</sup> Additional access can be cleared by the Office of the Administrator on a need-to-know basis. Contact the ASC Executive to request approval and arrange for access.

**APPENDIX A: Format for Decision Framing or Pre-ASM Outcomes**

(Editable version is available on the [OneNASA Agency Governance ASC site](#))

# CUI

## ATTENTION

Use this space to indicate categories, limited dissemination controls, special instructions, points of contact, etc., if needed.

Controlled by the Office of the Executive Secretariat (OES)

CUI // SP-PROCURE / SP-SSEL // DL ONLY

Redistribution limited to participants in the associated Acquisition Strategy Council (ASC) and any subsequent Contracting Officer(s) for the mission.

The DL ONLY dissemination control expires after associated procurements and/or partnership agreements have been finalized.

POC: ASC Executive Secretary, Dennis Boccippio

## ATTENTION

All individuals handling this information are required to protect it from unauthorized disclosure.

Handling, storage, reproduction, and disposition of the attached document(s) must be in accordance with 32 CFR Part 2002 and applicable agency policy.

Access to and dissemination of Controlled Unclassified Information shall be allowed as necessary and permissible to any individual(s), organization(s), or grouping(s) of users, provided such access or dissemination is consistent with or in furtherance of a Lawful Government Purpose and in a manner consistent with applicable law, regulations, and Government-wide policies.

Standard Form 901 (11-18)  
Prescribed by GSA/ISOO | 32 CFR 2002

# CUI

# NASA ACQUISITION STRATEGY COUNCIL (ASC)

## Meeting Minutes and Actions

### VITAL MEETING DATA

**Date:** November 10, 2022, 9:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

**Location:** Virtual Microsoft Teams Meeting

**Attendance:** Core ASC members<sup>7</sup>; AA/OIIR; Center Directors, JSC, KSC; Chief, Safety & Mission Assurance; Chief Health and Medical Officer; approved support staff.

### MEETING ACTIVITIES

The ASC convened to hold a decision framing discussion on the forward path for acquisition of an ISS de-orbit capability.

The Chair opened the meeting at x:xx p.m.

### BACKGROUND

One to three short paragraphs establishing the mission need the acquisition fills, any key context, formulation efforts conducted by the MD/program prior to the meeting, definition of convening authority (including date of delegation by the NASA AA if NAI 1000.2 thresholds were exceeded and Convening Authority offered to the AA). If a Decision Framing meeting, synopsize the key questions to be addressed in the meeting.

### FIRST ITEM OF BUSINESS: (topic)

Depth of documentation of minutes and discussion is at the discretion of the Convening Authority. OES recommends clearly separating synopses of the briefing from synopses of discussion. Documentation of discussion should be non-attributional (“participants discussed”) unless a participant’s inputs are highly coupled to their specific Agency role and establish an organizational position, rather than individual advisory inputs to the Convening Authority.

### OUTCOMES

Use for Decision Framing Meetings and non-decisional Pre-ASMs. Outcomes are non-binding.

### DECISIONS

Use for decisional Pre-ASMs and ASMs. Decisions are binding. Pre-ASM and ASM decisions may not encroach onto authorities reserved for subsequent PSMs. Early understanding of anticipated PSM approaches may be documented if appropriately worded, e.g., “It is expected that...”

### ACTIONS

[Organization] to [action], due: xx/xx/xxxx.

[Organization] to [action], due: xx/xx/xxxx.

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<sup>7</sup> AA, CAO, AA/Procurement, CFO, OGC, OCE, MDAs, MSC Chair, CIO, AA/OLIA, Chief Program Management Officer.

Actions should always be owned by a single organization/individual; “joint” actions should be worded as “[organization], in coordination with [organization], [organization], to...”.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY**

**Accountable:** The senior-most executive below the Convening Authority accountable for the effort.

**Responsible:**

- [name], [role], [responsibility]. The individual responsible for implementing the integrated acquisition strategy.
- [name], [role], [responsibility]. Key individuals from other organizations, and their specific responsibilities, if documentation is needed to help ensure success of the strategy.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

Anticipated timeline for the acquisition. This is a non-binding component of the documentation included only to help communicate after issuance, and to help provide context for original intent for the long term record.

Month, year – Acquisition Strategy Meeting

Month, year – KDP-A

Month, year – Procurement Strategy Meeting

Month, year – Draft RFP

Month, year – Final RFP

Month, year – Source selection

## **REPORT-BACK**

Document any expectations or agreements on formal (in-board) report-back to the Convening Authority.

## **LIST OF ACRONYMS**

As used in this document; encouraged, as acquisition life cycles may span many years and acronyms may fall out of common use.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Recording of attendance is required for virtual meetings involving CUI Specified content.