

Chg#	Approver	Date Approved	Description/Comments
1	Senior Advisor	11/6/2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated to: (1) reconcile Pre-ASM and ASM procedures with these meetings now being conducted within 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.

NASA Advisory Implementing Instructions: Acquisition Strategy Meeting (ASM) Guide

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The ASM is a decision-making forum where senior Agency management reviews proposed program and project acquisition strategies, and authorizes the program or project to proceed with the approved acquisition strategy. The ASM results (decisions) are documented in an ASM Decision Memorandum (DM). Consistent with the Mission Concept Review and KDP-A, the ASM should be conducted as soon after KDP-A as practical and before Agency commitments are made, e.g., entering into international agreements, procurements, partnerships, or other relationships.

1.2 The Associate Administrator is the convening authority for Pre-ASMs and ASMs for: acquisitions >\$1B (including multi-part acquisition strategies whose first phase may be <\$1B but whose final cost will exceed \$1B); Category 1 projects; projects requiring a coordinated acquisition strategy across multiple Centers; and funded Space Act Agreements; and for pre-ASMs and ASMs convened at the discretion of the Associate Administrator. These ASMs are held in the Acquisition Strategy Council (NPD 1000.3, Chapter 3). Mission Directorate Associate Administrators, or appropriate functional sponsor, are the convening authority for all other projects.

1.3 Pre-ASMs and ASMs are conducted at the discretion of the convening authority and are not always required.

2.0 Acquisition Strategy

2.1 NASA's strategic acquisition process supports obtaining, or advancing the development of, the systems, research, services, construction, and supplies to fulfill the Agency's mission and other activities which advance the Agency's statutory objectives. Within the framework of this strategic acquisition process, NASA utilizes multiple authorities to meet these objectives. In addition to NASA's acquisition authority to contract for goods and services through procurements, NASA also has authorities including, but not limited to: grants; cooperative agreements; international agreements; and Space Act Agreements (SAA). The Agency also has the authority to enter into other types of arrangements depending on the circumstances, such as

Inter-Agency Agreements, leases, concession agreements, property loan agreements and Cooperative Research and Development Agreements (CRADAs).

2.2 Acquisition is accomplished through programs and projects, including institutional projects, and their supporting activities. Programs and projects fulfill an identified need that contributes to accomplishing the Agency's mission. An acquisition strategy is the plan or approach for using NASA's authorities to obtain the systems, research, services, construction, and supplies that are needed to fulfill program and project requirements or NASA's statutory objectives. Programs and projects should consider the full spectrum of available acquisition authorities when developing an acquisition strategy.

2.3 Programs and projects are managed as appropriate by major area of investment through NASA's program and project management processes and requirements as directed by NPD 7120.4, NASA Engineering and Program/Project Management Policy, and its associated NPRs that contain the requirements for the major investment areas of space flight, research and technology, information technology, and institutional infrastructure.

2.4 Program and project considerations in developing acquisition strategies should include resource availability; impact on the Agency workforce; maintaining core capabilities; make-or-buy planning; supporting Center assignments; use of partnerships; and the availability of the industrial base capability and supply chain needed to design, develop, produce, and support the program or project, identifying risks associated with single source or critical suppliers, and attendant mitigation plans.

2.5 Acquisition Strategies must also be aligned with Agency strategic guidance. This guidance comes from multiple sources including Agency Strategic Goals, Executive Council (EC) decisions, Strategy Implementation Planning (SIP) results, NASA responses to external studies, Center Roles and Pre-ASMs. Strategic Goals are documented in NPD 1001.0, NASA Strategic Plan; Center Roles are documented in NPD 1000.3, The NASA Organization. The EC is the Agency's senior decision-making body for Agency-wide decisions such as PPBE budget decisions or setting Agency priorities. SIP meetings are focused on topics that are potential future areas of investment. All sources of strategic guidance should be considered.

3.0 Acquisition Strategy Meeting (ASM) Guidance

3.1 The ASM is a decision-making forum where senior Agency management reviews proposed program and project Acquisition Strategies, as submitted by the Mission Directorate, or appropriate functional sponsor, responsible for the program or project. The ASM focuses on considerations such as impacting the Agency workforce, maintaining core capabilities, make-or-buy decisions, supporting Center assignments, use of partnerships, and risk. The Associate Administrator or Mission Directorate Associate Administrator chairs the ASM and approves acquisition strategies with the concurrence and commitment of senior Agency management, per criteria defined in NPD 1000.5. In addition, the Associate Administrator balances individual ASM decisions such that the Agency portfolio remains consistent with Agency strategic guidance.

3.2 ASM attendance should be limited to direct stakeholders (e.g., Mission Directorates).

- For ASMs conducted in the ASC (Associate Administrator as convening authority), the core ASC membership (ASC Charter, NPD 1000.3) is invited. The responsible Mission Directorate Associate Administrator or functional sponsor, rather than a delegate, is expected to attend. Center Directors of Centers who are candidates for assignments based on their Center Roles are invited. The Chair may invite other senior officials, such as the Chief, Safety & Mission Assurance, Chief Health and Medical Officer, or Center Director, JSC (as crew Technical Authority) if the recommended acquisition approach raises specific issues under their authorities. Supporting staff should be limited; no more than 3 people for the sponsoring organization and 2 for other organizations. Attendance approval is coordinated with the Chair through the Office of Agency Council Staff (OACS).
- For ASMs not conducted in the ASC, attendance should be similarly limited. The following officials are required, in addition to the convening authority:
 - a. Chief Financial Officer, in both roles as the CFO and as the Agency's Chief Acquisition Officer
 - b. NASA Assistant Administrator for Procurement, in his/her role as Deputy Chief Acquisition Officer and Agency Senior Procurement Executive; and
 - c. NASA Chief Information Officer

Other core ASC members (e.g. Chief Engineer, General Counsel) or senior officials (e.g., Chief, Safety & Mission Assurance, Chief Health & Medical Officer) may be invited at the convening authority's discretion. For these ASMs, the sponsoring organization is responsible for ensuring the relevant stakeholders are invited.

3.3 The ASM should be conducted as soon as practical following the KDP-A and before entering into agreements with partners, releasing a competitive announcement or solicitation, or making Center assignments. At the ASM, the sponsoring organization presents a program or project overview, the proposed acquisition strategy, and the development of that acquisition strategy, including results and guidance from the pre-ASM. Note: a presentation checklist is provided in Appendix A, and is intended as an aid to prepare for the ASM. The presentation should be in sufficient detail to show that the full spectrum of acquisition authorities was considered and how the proposed acquisition strategy is consistent with Agency strategic guidance.

3.4 The results of the ASM are documented in a Decision Memo (DM). A draft ASM DM should be available at the ASM, with the expectation that it will be signed by all required organizations before the meeting adjourns.

3.5 For ASMs held in the ASC, planning and coordination for the meeting are through the OACS ASC Executive and staff to the ASC Chair. The Mission Directorate Associate Administrator or senior representative should contact the ASC Executive at least eight weeks prior to the meeting date. Recommending officials are responsible for:

- Providing a brief synopsis of anticipated specific decisions requested (in order to identify appropriate stakeholders for inclusion in the meeting)
- Negotiating a firm deadline for draft charts and final readahead charts. Draft charts are typically due no later than the Friday before an ASC; final charts should allow for 2-3 days read-ahead time by ASC members.
- Ensuring pre-meeting coordination with affected stakeholders has occurred (3.2, above)
- Ensuring presentation materials are direct, succinct, and address all required content below. Chart count limits will be provided by OACS based on the allocated ASC agenda time.
- Integrating additional attendee requests from their organization and providing to the ASC Executive, with a short rationale, for approval by the Chair.

3.6 Presentation materials and the meeting agenda are considered NASA pre-decisional. Given that ASM materials involve competition-sensitive information, all transmission of data files and email discussions should follow encryption standards and involve only those cleared to support the meeting. Meetings should be limited to NASA civil servants. Participants should be reminded to be aware of potential conflicts of interest, and to recuse themselves if needed.

4.0 Acquisition Strategy Meeting (ASM) Decision Memorandum (DM)

4.1 For ASMs conducted in the ASC, to form the official record, OACS archives the ASM presentation; prepares and archives minutes (marked SBU) including decisions and actions resulting from the meeting, with decisions clearly documenting the approved program or project acquisition strategy; and archives the agenda and attendance list. The minutes comprise the decision memorandum, and are signed by the Chair. Per the ASC Charter, the Associate Administrator is the sole decider, with commitment from invited ASC members. The Council charter and procedures ensure that appropriate stakeholders are included, and that any dissent is noted in the minutes. The Chair determines distribution restrictions on meeting minutes; typically they are limited to meeting participants only.

4.2 For ASMs led by the Mission Directorate Associate Administrator, or other sponsoring organization leadership, that organization will prepare a succinct meeting summary signed by the Mission Directorate AA or designee. A copy of the signed summary memo is emailed to the AA for awareness. The sponsoring organization is responsible for archiving the meeting summary, sign-in sheet, and presentation material for future reference. Instructions and a template for the ASM DM are included in Appendix B. The signature of required or key stakeholders is required on the decision memorandum.

4.3 As part of the ASM process, the Mission Directorate Associate Administrator, or appropriate functional sponsor, should communicate preliminary acquisition decisions and resulting work assignments to the Centers involved in considered options.

Appendix A. Acquisition Strategy Meeting (ASM) Checklist

Note: the ordering of the checklist items is not mandatory. Tailoring of the list is allowed, as appropriate to the program or project situation.

1. Introductory and concluding slides; identifying program or project and stating what type of approval is being sought.
2. Program/project structure
 - a) Leadership team, as known
 - b) Governing policy (NPR 7120.x, anticipated tailoring, application to external partner involvement)
3. Program/project description and technical discussion (as informative to the consideration of the proposed acquisition strategy)
 - a) Genesis of program/project
 - b) Identify driving forces (internal or external)
 - c) How it fits into Agency and Mission Directorate portfolio and current direction
 - d) Predecessor missions (if any)
 - e) Purpose of program/project
 - f) Key technical components and challenges
 - g) Technology goals (e.g., commercial adoption, use in other programs, cost share considerations)
- 4) Program/project lifecycle chart with dates, as known
- 5) Dates of completed and pending (near-term) program/project milestones, reviews, and documents
- 6) Budget figures by year, as known
- 7) Preliminary cost estimate range
- 8) Proposed acquisition strategy
 - a) Recognition of prior acquisition decisions or guidance from pre-ASM or other forum
- 9) Make versus buy considerations and conclusions

- a) Potential participants considered versus those proposed in the acquisition strategy, and rationale
 - b) Alignment of specific Center assignments to specific Center Roles (NPD 1000.3)
 - c) Workforce
 - i) Locations (NASA Centers, contractor, partners, etc.)
 - ii) Projected FTE and WYE by year by location, as known
 - d) Key Facilities/Capabilities
 - i) Locations (NASA Centers, contractor, partners, etc.)
 - ii) Assumptions regarding NASA infrastructure (readiness, funding)
- 10) Acquisition Risks
- a) Matrix (where applicable)
 - b) Plans to mitigate risks
 - c) Candidate partners'/suppliers' capability to deliver (for strategies that propose to rely on an emergent or nontraditional supplier base)
- 11) Partnerships – international, other US Government, commercial, etc. (if any)
- a) Partner contributions
 - b) Status of agreements
 - c) Management strategy
 - d) Office of General Council (OGC) determination (if funded SAAs proposed)
- 12) Launch vehicle selection and planning, as applicable
- 13) Next steps

Appendix B. Instructions and Template for Acquisition Strategy Meeting (ASM) Decision Memorandum (DM) for ASMs led by Mission Directorates or functional organizations

B.1 Instructions

The sponsoring organization is responsible for preparing the ASM Decision Memorandum, as well as acquiring the designated signatures at the ASM. In the case of a Mission Directorate, usually the Program Executive is the responsible party.

The text in *italics* provides guidance for each DM section and should be replaced with the appropriate content. The DM is intended to be approximately one page with a focus on the approved acquisition strategy. The accompanying presentation provides the supporting information for the decision.

The template should be filled out prior to the meeting, as if the proposed Acquisition Strategy were to be approved. The document can be updated at the ASM if necessary. The Office of Agency Council Staff can provide examples of ASM DMs based on previous decisions.

B.2 Template (ASMs outside the ASC)

Program/Project Name **Acquisition Strategy Meeting (ASM)** **Decision Memorandum**

Summary

Include the date the meeting was held and the governing NPR document.

Decision

Include the decision and a citation to the accompanying presentation. It can reference an option or proposal in the presentation, as is or with exceptions; or it can be included fully here in the DM. A table summarizing make/buy decisions or Center assignments may be appropriate, including these designations for each element: description; lead Center; source of the element (existing contract, partner, Center, government agency, etc.); and type of acquisition.

Actions

Include the action items assigned from the ASM. Number the actions and include assignees and due dates. Fill out template with “None” as the initiating position. This section can be updated at the ASM if there are actions assigned.

Concurrence and Commitment

The Center Director of the lead Center is required. If there are other Centers providing significant effort, those Directors are also required. Other program/project unique signature blocks should be added as appropriate. Conveners should review the following list for organizations who may have a direct stake in the implications of the acquisition strategy:

Chief Engineer

Chief, Safety & Mission Assurance

Chief Health and Medical Officer

JSC Center Director (as crew technical authority)

Office of International and Interagency Relations

Office of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs

Other Mission Directorate Associate Administrators

Approval

Mission Directorate Associate Administrator, Chair and Approver

Date

Assistant Administrator, Office of Procurement

Date

Chief Financial Officer

Date

General Counsel

Date