

Published on January 15, 2019

Section 809 Panel calls for more dynamic marketplace

*Section 809 Panel Commissioners **David Drabkin** and **Charlie Williams** discuss takeaways from their third report, and what they recommend for the future of defense acquisition.*

The Section 809 Panel's third volume of recommendations says that the paradigm of military acquisition needs to be changed. One of the most prominent proposals from the report is to transform the Department of Defense's new Section 809 Panel Commissioner **Charlie Williams** says that the current system is very imposing for new companies who want to sell to the Pentagon, and the bureaucracy is scaring them away. "We started early on in this process talking about this thing called the dynamic marketplace, recognizing that not all markets are the same and the processes and procedures you need to use to interact with those markets are different. But unfortunately, the current acquisition system looks at them all as one size and treats them in that way. We have built a framework around this dynamic marketplace that we believe allows the department to take actions in a very efficient and responsive way," Williams said. "What we find as we go out and talk to industry, we find that the procedures and processes that go into dealing with them in the [non-dynamic] marketplace are what causes many of these non-traditional companies to not want to do business with the department." **David Drabkin**, another commissioner of the Section 809 Panel, says that opening up the marketplace will not only help companies that want to deal with the Department of Defense, but also assist those in the Pentagon with buying readily available technology. "Those things which exist in the private sector, which are not developed uniquely for the Department of Defense... right now our rules impede our ability to reach out and buy those things, whether they are goods or services. And it requires us on many occasions to go through an incredible amount of time and effort to determine whether something is commercial or not," Drabkin said. "So, when you ask what does the marketplace we envision look like? It's what's outside your door that you can buy with cash, check or a credit card."