

Government Matters

By: Francis Rose, Andrew Wagner | February 20, 2019

Section 809 Report: Transitioning from a program to portfolio focus

*Section 809 Panel Commissioner **David Ahern** discusses the panel's recommendation for the Department of Defense to invest in portfolio management, and why it would be an improvement over the current program-based system*

As part of the Section 809 panel's recommendations to overhaul acquisition at the Pentagon, they recommend changing the way the department thinks about procurement management. In their third report to Congress, the panel suggests moving from a focus on managing individual programs to portfolios. Section 809 Panel Commissioner **David Ahern** told Government Matters that portfolios are much more adaptable than the current program-based system. "The program centric system that the Defense Department has right now is effective, we have one of the best fighting forces in the world. There have been significant changes to that capability development in the Department of Defense, but what we saw was the opportunity to transition from program-centric, where there's a measured process for developing requirements, for developing the budget, for developing the acquisition strategies, it takes a long lead time to get there in response to warfighter needs," Ahern said. "The value that we see in recommending and adopting portfolio is that as portfolios are developed, all will have a group of products, of programs, of services that are all in support of specific warfighter needs."