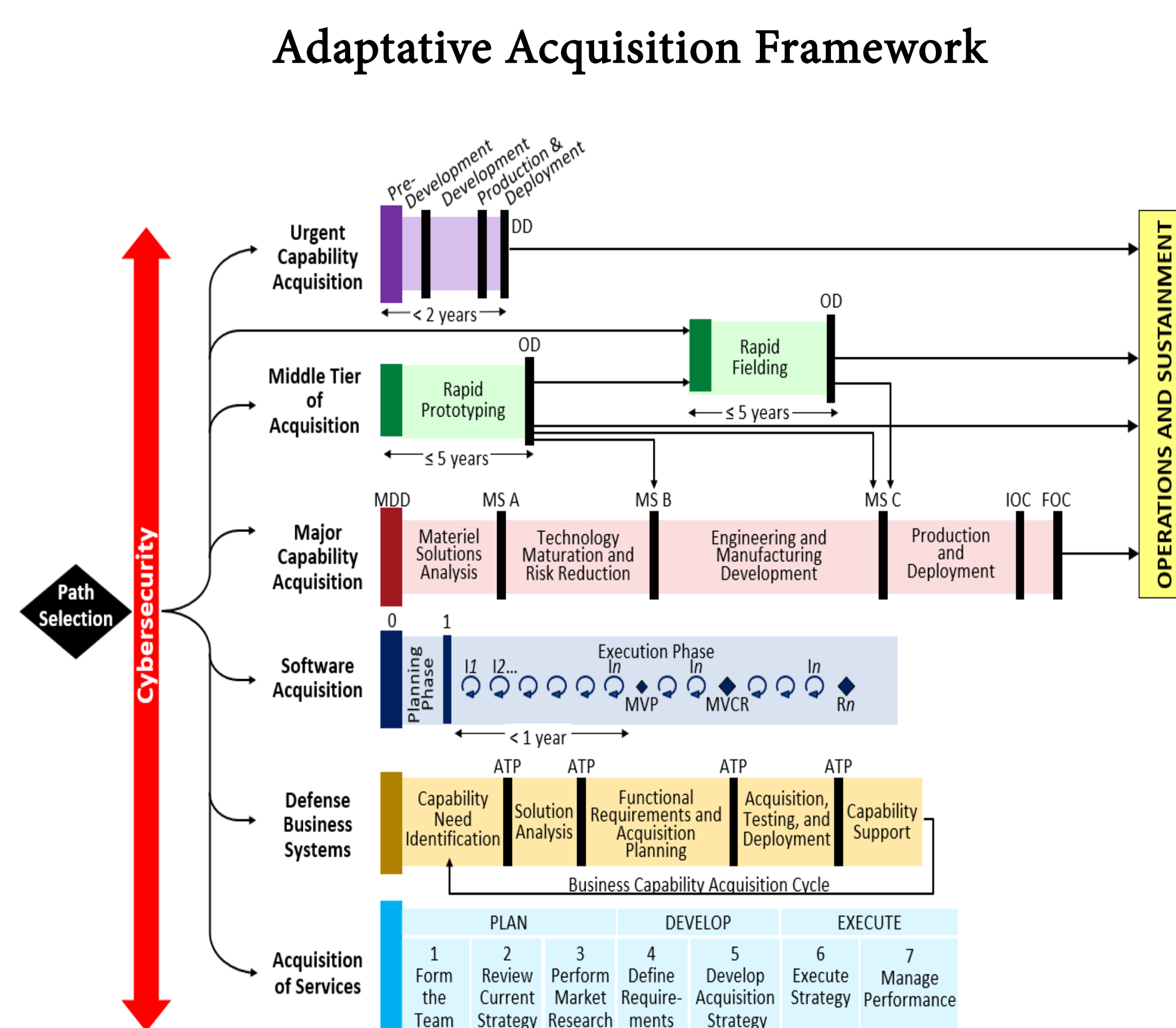


Abstract

Drones, more formally recognized as unmanned aircraft systems (UAS), offer a wide variety of utility and great potential for harm. The U.S. Air Force and the rest of the Department of Defense (DoD) represent significant targets for UAS. Addressing the UAS threat that the Air Force is facing can be undertaken by looking at how the Air Force can employ an acquisition strategy by which it acquires counter-unmanned aircraft systems (C-UAS) and delivers the capabilities of those systems to its Airmen. By exploring the DoD's acquisition system and counter-small unmanned aircraft systems (C-sUAS) and capabilities, this research argues for establishing an acquisition strategy of those systems. The research concludes by providing recommendations on how the Air Force can align itself with official and authoritative C-sUAS elements within the DoD to ultimately frame a C-sUAS acquisition strategy for the Air Force to utilize.

Methods

The development of a C-sUAS acquisition strategy will allow for a program of record to be established for the Air Force in its acquisition of a C-sUAS capability. This can be accomplished by utilizing a larger DoD strategy, market research, and a qualitative literature review and analysis to examine existing products that have been successfully acquired and employed against sUAS. The literature review that was conducted for the completion of this research examined three distinct elements individually to allow for follow-on synthesis of each of these elements. The three elements that were selected for individual studies and analysis were: C-sUAS functions, C-sUAS systems and operations and, DoD acquisition of C-sUAS.



Results

- **U.S. Department of Defense Counter-Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems Strategy**
- The C-sUAS Strategy identifies three Lines of Effort for how the DoD will combat the UAS threat.
- **Joint Counter-Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems Office**
- The JCO (led by the US Army) serves as the executive agent for C-sUAS activities within the DoD, to include acquisitions and strategy.

Recommendations

- The Air Force must codify a formal acquisition strategy for C-sUAS.
- This strategy can be built using the work and guidance provided from both the C-sUAS Strategy and JCO.
- The Air Force cannot afford to continue to piecemeal its C-sUAS systems and operations against the UAS threat. It must employ an acquisition strategy for C-sUAS to standardize operations across the Air Force.