

# **In business of defence procurement, procurement strategy a critical component**

Re: "DND should focus on improving current procurement process," (*The Hill Times*, April 5, p. 8). While I would much prefer to simply relax and enjoy my vacation in Florida, I cannot let Pierre Lagueux's letter to the editor go unchallenged.

First, he states "the current construct if properly managed does have single accountability and as per Treasury Board directive, that is DND." This statement is absurd. For example, Public Works and Government Services Canada (PWGSC) "is responsible for developing procurement strategies for consideration by the Procurement Strategy Committee and the review committees, and for implementing procurement strategies, within the framework of its clients' needs, its legislative mandate and government policy," (Treasury Board, Procurement Review Policy). In the business of defence procurement, the procurement strategy is a critical component. It involves decisions such as whether to sole source or to compete and determining the evaluation criteria. Clearly, the minister of PWGSC is accountable for key elements of the process.

Second, with regard to adopting a radical reorganization, Mr. Lagueux states that "there is no evidence to support any improvement in results." As I presented in my book, *Reinventing Defence Procurement: A View From The Inside*, there is ample hard evidence to indicate that merging PWGSC's contracting resources with DND's procurement resources will save considerable time and lower costs. In addition, contrary to Mr. Lagueux's contention, this kind of reorganization is anything but radical. It can be done and must be done if the government is serious about improving the process and ensuring it is open fair and transparent.

Early in his comments Mr. Lagueux states "I am not advocating that any organizational 'side' is better or worse," yet, he concludes his comments by suggesting that the focus be maintained on "making the current process

work." Obviously, he is advocating the status quo and those who maintain this view are entitled to their opinion. They can, for example, share pride in the ongoing delays in the Fixed Wing Search and Rescue (FWSAR) program.

We, however, should not be so naïve as to think they advocate the status quo because they want to make the process the best it can be. Rather it is because, as lobbyists, their priority is to ensure their client wins a bid. Maximizing the number of ministers involved in the process helps them achieve their objective.

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