



Defence Acquisition and Capability Programme Course: Requirements, Through-Life Cost and Contracting



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Introduction:

Defence acquisition and capability programme work, covering requirements, through-life cost and contracting, is a 10-day course for capability planners, acquisition staff and prime or supplier bid teams, ending with an Acquisition Strategy and Business Case Pack. Programmes overrun when the capability gap is vaguely stated, options are compared on purchase price alone and the contract type loads risk on the party least able to carry it. Nominees already prepare or review acquisition cases and work through case files from land, air and naval programmes. CoreConcept Training Center delivers this defence acquisition and capability programme course.

Course Objectives:

- Define a capability gap and translate it into user requirements, key performance measures and an affordability envelope for an acquisition case
- Compare acquisition options through an analysis of alternatives that weighs effectiveness, whole-life cost, schedule and industrial factors
- Build a whole-life cost estimate with acquisition, in-service support and disposal elements, discounted to net present value and tested for risk
- Select an acquisition strategy, competition approach and contract type that allocates cost, schedule and performance risk deliberately
- Prepare approval gate submissions and an assurance trail that let reviewers judge maturity, cost confidence and readiness to commit
- Track programme cost, schedule and capability delivery after contract award and report variance to the sponsor and approval bodies

Target Audience:

- Staff responsible for identifying capability gaps and drafting user requirements for new defence equipment and services
 - Staff responsible for preparing business cases, option appraisals and approval submissions for defence acquisition programmes
 - Staff responsible for cost estimating, budgeting and programme control on defence acquisition portfolios
 - Staff responsible for acquisition oversight, assurance reviews and industrial participation linkage within defence industry authorities
 - Staff responsible for bids, pricing and contract negotiation at prime contractors and their suppliers
 - Staff responsible for managing awarded defence contracts, change requests and contractor performance reporting
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Course Outline:

Day 1: Capability Acquisition Context and the Need-to-Disposal Path

- Capability Management Cycle From Defence Planning to Disposal
- Capability Gap Statement Built From Threat and Mission Analysis
- Acquisition Roles of Sponsor, Delivery Agency and Industry
- Planning, Programming and Budgeting Cycle Links to Acquisition
- Programme Versus Project Versus Portfolio Accountability Map

Day 2: Requirements Definition and Analysis of Alternatives

- User Requirement Document Structure and Key User Requirements
- Key Performance Parameters With Threshold and Objective Values
- Analysis of Alternatives Study Plan and Option Long List
- Do-Minimum Baseline and Option Short-Listing Criteria Matrix
- Effectiveness Scoring Combined With Cost and Schedule Factors

Day 3: Acquisition Strategy, Approval Gates and the Business Case

- Acquisition Strategy Document Sections and Decision Points
- Competitive, Single-Source and Collaborative Procurement Routes
- Initial and Main Gate Approval Evidence Requirements
- Five-Case Business Case Structure for Defence Investment
- Affordability Envelope and Funding Profile Across Budget Years

Day 4: Whole-Life Cost Estimating Methods and Data

- Whole-Life Cost Breakdown Structure for Defence Systems
- Parametric, Analogy and Engineering Build-Up Estimating Methods
- In-Service Support Costs From Integrated Logistics Support Data
- Net Present Value Discounting and Benefit-Cost Ratio Comparison
- Three-Point Estimates and Monte Carlo Cost Confidence Levels

Day 5: Week-One Guided Case on an Air Surveillance Capability

- Case Capability Gap and User Requirement Drafting Exercise
 - Case Analysis of Alternatives Across Four Procurement Options
 - Case Whole-Life Cost Model for the Preferred Option
 - Case Initial Gate Submission Peer Review
 - Week-One Gap Log for the Acquisition Case File
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Day 6: Defence Contract Types, Pricing and Risk Sharing

- Firm Fixed Price and Fixed Price Incentive Fee Mechanics
- Fixed Price With Economic Price Adjustment Index Clauses
- Cost-Plus Award Fee and Cost-Plus Incentive Fee Arrangements
- Price Redetermination and Target Cost Share Ratio Design
- Single-Source Pricing Review and Allowable Cost Principles

Day 7: Programme Risk, Assurance and Contract Governance

- Quantified Schedule Risk Analysis on the Integrated Master Schedule
- Independent Assurance Review Points and Gateway Readiness Criteria
- Technology and Manufacturing Readiness Levels in Gate Evidence
- Liquidated Damages, Warranty and Limitation of Liability Clauses
- Contract Change Control and Engineering Change Pricing

Day 8: Industry Engagement, Localisation Linkage and Stakeholders

- Market Sounding, Requests for Information and Supplier Days
- Localisation and Industrial Participation Requirements in Tender Packs
- Bid Evaluation Model Weighting Price, Technical and Local Content
- Prime and Supplier Teaming Agreements and Work Share Splits
- Stakeholder Map Across Users, Finance, Treasury and Industry

Day 9: Programme Performance Measurement and Lessons Capture

- Earned Value Management Baseline and Cost Performance Index
- Schedule Performance Index and Estimate at Completion Forecasts
- Capability Delivery Milestones From Initial to Full Operating Capability
- Contractor Performance Scorecard and Quarterly Review Cycle
- Actual Cost Feedback Into Future Whole-Life Cost Estimates

Day 10: Capstone Case Study and Acquisition Strategy and Business Case Pack

- Capstone Briefing on a Naval Patrol Vessel Replacement Need
 - Team Build of Requirements, Options and Whole-Life Cost Model
 - Team Build of Contract Strategy and Risk Allocation Matrix
 - Team Build of Assurance Plan and Performance Measures
 - Acquisition Strategy and Business Case Pack Panel Defence
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Skills You Will Gain:

- Capability Gap Analysis
- Option Appraisal
- Whole-Life Cost Estimating
- Cost Risk Analysis
- Contract Type Selection
- Approval Gate Preparation
- Earned Value Analysis
- Bid Evaluation Design

Why Attend This Course:

- Deliver an Acquisition Strategy and Business Case Pack to the capability sponsor, the investment approvals committee or the bid review board
- Decide which option, procurement route and contract type best balances capability, cost confidence and risk before funds are committed
- Avoid cost overruns, failed gate reviews and disputed contract prices that follow weak estimates and poorly allocated risk
- Equip requirements, finance and contracts colleagues with the option scoring, cost model and risk allocation templates

Conclusion:

Back at work, the participant presents the Acquisition Strategy and Business Case Pack to the capability sponsor, the investment approvals committee or, at a prime or supplier, the bid review board. The pack supports the decision to proceed through the next approval gate, the choice of procurement route and contract type, and the funding profile to request. After its first gate review, the unit should compare reviewer findings, cost confidence and schedule risk against the pack and revise the estimate, option scoring and risk allocation where reviewers challenged them.

Frequently Asked Questions FAQ:

What should participants know before a defence acquisition and capability programme course?

Participants should already prepare, review or price defence acquisition cases, contracts or bids and be comfortable reading cost tables and schedules. Bringing an anonymised requirement, business case or contract summary makes the case work closer to their own programme.

How does a defence acquisition and capability programme course differ from an offset or a systems engineering course?

It follows the buying decision: capability gap, option appraisal, whole-life cost, approval gates and contract risk sharing. Offset courses focus on industrial obligations attached to a contract, and systems engineering courses focus on technical design and verification, which this course treats only as inputs.

Why does whole-life cost matter in defence acquisition and capability programmes?

In-service support, upgrades and disposal often cost more than the purchase itself, so comparing options on purchase price alone can select the most expensive capability over its life. A whole-life cost estimate puts every option on the same discounted basis.

What do participants take back from the defence acquisition and capability programme course?

Participants take back an Acquisition Strategy and Business Case Pack for a case programme, with a capability gap statement, option appraisal, whole-life cost model, contract strategy, risk allocation matrix, assurance plan and performance measures ready to adapt to their own programmes.
