From:	Cook, Katie
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SECTION 809 PANEL

Daily Media Clips

July 25, 2018

The Section 809 Panel is a congressionally mandated panel designed to be a catalyst that restores agility and simplicity to defense acquisition through bold and effective recommendations.

Good morning! We found several articles that you may be interested in.

Acquisition Reforms Survive in Defense Authorization Bill

July 24, 2018 | Charles S. Clark

Contractors hoping to protect their right to file bid protests got much of what they wanted in the conference report for the fiscal 2019 National Defense Authorization Act, which also contained several provisions to streamline the Pentagon's acquisitions.

In reconciling the two chambers' bills, House members accepted a Senate provision to require the Defense secretary to study the frequency and effects of bid protests related to the same contract award filed at both the Government Accountability Office and the Court of Federal Claims.

Some contractors had previously objected to a Pentagon request for curbs on protests some consider "frivolous" by giving companies a deadline for filing a second one. Instead, Defense must conduct the study within 180 days and also establish a data collection system "to better track and analyze bid protest trends in the future," a joint explanatory statement said. For contracts of less than $100,000, the Pentagon must establish by Dec. 1 an expedited bid protest process.

Contractors are also likely to welcome the bill's authorized increase of $600 million for research and development, with an emphasis on "high-priority emerging technologies like hypersonics, artificial intelligence, space, cyber and directed energy." Drafters in a summary added that management reforms in the bill improve the department's "ability to leverage the contributions of small businesses to technology and manufacturing and strengthen their cybersecurity posture." The bill would also preserve the Trump administration's requested $400 million for the acquisition workforce development fund.

Because House Armed Services Committee Chairman Mac Thornberry, R-Texas, has viewed several sections of the existing acquisition statutes as "unwieldy and inadequate," the Senate conferees accepted his language to "establish the initial step in the first phase of a comprehensive reorganization and optimization of acquisition-related statutes in Title 10."

The compromise bill also aims to streamline the Defense secretary's approval process of major contract milestones. In the example of the program managers' analysis of the Navy's carrier replacement program, the report said, "It is the conferees' intent that the secretary of Defense review such analysis and, if the secretary deems it appropriate, make the certification without performing any separate cost assessments or analyses. The conferees view such a process as consistent with ongoing efforts to reduce the time associated with acquisition decisions, push acquisition authorities and accountability to the services, and ensure that the secretary of Defense retains visibility and ultimate authority over acquisition matters in the department."

To improve management of service contracts, the merged bill would direct the Defense secretary within 180 days to revise the Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement "to clarify the definitions of and relationships between terms related to services contracts, including the appropriate use of personal and nonpersonal services contracts, and the responsibilities of individuals in the acquisition workforce with respect to such contracts."

On a smaller scale, the bill would raise the micro-purchase threshold—for awards small enough to relieve the contracting officer from rules requiring competitive bids—for the entire department from $5,000 to $10,000.

Other Articles of Interest

Peering into the black box of OTA awards
July 24, 2018 | Scott Maucione

Provision calling for higher buyout values scrapped from NDAA [Audio]
July 25, 2018 | Eric White

NDAA Conference: Congress Spares DISA, Bans Chinese Firms and Orders JEDI Review
July 24, 2018 | Joseph Marks

Developing defense capabilities at the speed of software
July 24, 2018 | Todd Probert

OMB looks to get its workforce modernization effort into GEAR
July 25, 2018 | Jason Miller

DoD: Price tag for new electronic health record might grow by $1.2 billion
July 25, 2018 | Jared Serbu

What should federal agencies ask themselves about reorganization? [Audio]
July 24, 2018 | Federal Drive

How Congress wants DoD to tackle AI and machine learning in 2019
July 24, 2018 | Maddy Longwell

What the new defense bill means for cyber
July 24, 2018 | Justin Lynch

Did DISA make the cut in the FY19 defense bill?
July 24, 2018 | Mark Pomerleau

No space force for Trump in big Pentagon policy bill
July 24, 2018 | Joe Gould

Pentagon to Increase Health Records Contract Ceiling By Another Billion
July 24, 2018 | Jack Corrigan

White House Seeks Input on Reskilling Feds and Upgrading Agency Services
July 24, 2018 | Jack Corrigan

Section 809 News

We have a new Bold Bites Podcast: LISTEN!
Commissioner Joseph Dyer discusses Characteristics of Successful Programs, which is identifying the attributes and qualities common to successful programs, with an eye toward techniques, tools, and practices that can be widely employed.

Be sure to check out the Section 809 Panel Volume 2 Report.

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SECTION 809 PANEL | *Streamlining & Codifying Acquisition*