



DIRECTOR

DEFENSE INNOVATION UNIT
230 RT JONES RD
MOUNTAIN VIEW, CA 94043

2 MAR '26

MEMORANDUM FOR ALL DEFENSE INNOVATION UNIT EMPLOYEES

SUBJECT: Day 1 – Converting Commercial Technology into Combat Power

Like wildfires, wars are unpredictable, but conditions make them more likely. Our adversaries are scaling war production. The President, Congress, and the Secretary of War have ordered an urgent rearmament. Our world-leading tech entrepreneurs, funded by surging private capital, are critical to the solution. DIU exists to accelerate the conversion of commercially derived technology into combat power.

I'm honored to serve alongside you on this mission of profound consequence. Together we will deliver weaponry and upgrades to the troops who have volunteered to fight for us. Our goal is to reduce the risk they face, while setting a pace no other acquisition unit can match. Career risk pales in comparison. DIU will be the fastest contracting and fielding agent in the Department.

DIU's core mission is to deliver high-tech lethality our military wants, handing off projects that have been accelerated, improved and cheapened. We are not in the business of keeping quality science projects on life support without 4-star equivalent sponsorship.

Our investment priorities will narrow. We solve operational problems identified by the joint force and integrate into the Department's innovation strategy. We will invest where speed, scale, and lethality intersect. Our priorities are threefold: 1) high technologies that produce overmatch domination; 2) technologies that substitute machines, fires, or electrons for troops in harm's way; and 3) capabilities that can scale quickly and dramatically reduce our cost-per-kill. The latter two should be fielded within three years. We will only consider less kinetic or administrative projects that produce overwhelming efficiencies, freeing budget for weapons or training time.

We will measure everything. To cite Pearson's law, "If you want good performance, measure it. If you want overperformance, measure it and report it." Transparency reduces arrogance, ensuring we can pivot as the Joint Force demands. While failure is inherent in risk capitalization, we will quantitatively assess risk versus reward.

In one decade, DIU has earned a critical role in our nation's defense. To ensure that remains the case, we will adopt the "Fight Tonight" vigilance that our operational units demand. Their feedback ensures portfolio relevancy. Of our many customers, none is bigger than the warfighter.

Service is our business. Our collective determination to harness the full power of America's markets and entrepreneurs on behalf of our military will reduce the likelihood of war and increase the certainty of victory if our enemies choose unwisely.

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