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Defense Science Board

**Task Force on Technology
Investment for the Defense
Advanced Research Projects
Agency (DARPA)**

Letter Report

November 2003



OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

3140 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-3140

DEFENSE SCIENCE
BOARD

NOV 17 2003

MEMORANDUM FOR ACTING UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
(ACQUISITION, TECHNOLOGY & LOGISTICS)

SUBJECT: Final Report of the Defense Science Board (DSB) Task Force on
Technology Investment for the Defense Advanced Research Projects
Agency (DARPA)

I am pleased to forward the final summary review of the DSB Task Force on Technology Investment for the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA). The task force was asked to perform a one time evaluation of DARPA's current technology portfolio to confirm that their advanced research projects are based on sound, proven scientific and technological foundations, practices and methods, and are of high value to DoD's operational missions.

The following summary is forwarded for your review.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "William Schneider, Jr." with a stylized flourish at the end.

William Schneider, Jr.
DSB Chairman



DEFENSE SCIENCE
BOARD

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
3140 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-3140

NOV 14 2003

MEMORANDUM FOR CHAIRMAN, DEFENSE SCIENCE BOARD

SUBJECT: Final Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on the Technology Investment for the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA)

As requested by the Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics) and the Director DARPA, the task force performed a one-time independent evaluation of the technology investment for the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA). Task force members reviewed all of the projects in DARPA's current technology portfolio (both unclassified and classified) and assessed each research effort based upon the following criteria:

- It appears to have scientific merit, and
- It would be of high value to DoD's operational missions.

After a summary review of the current DARPA technology portfolio, the task force found no programs that appeared to have obvious ethical issues, that had insurmountable technical impediments, or that could not be of high value to DoD. Though no significant items were uncovered, task force members did identify a number of minor issues with specific programs that should be addressed by DARPA. The nature of these issues include technical objectives that seemed overly ambitious, program titles that did not accurately reflect the research performed, or program documentation that needed to be better cast for a general audience. These specific items were addressed with DARPA staff and appropriate actions are being taken.

Additionally, areas of particular sensitivity that require continued attention from DARPA management include:

- Human and animal testing protocols: DARPA uses protocols established by DoD for human and animal testing. DARPA is encouraged to establish a process that will ensure that these safeguards are indeed being followed by DARPA Agents.

- Sensitivity to environmental issues: DARPA must continue to be very sensitive to the potential impact of their research efforts on the environment.

We thank the task force members for their efforts and contributions. We also thank Dr. Tony Tether for the time he spent with us and our Executive Secretary, Mr. Ron Kurjanowicz, for his help and insight.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Phil Odeen". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Mr. Phil Odeen