



# The Product Support Manager

A Catalyst for Life Cycle Management  
and Product Support Success

*Sue Dryden*

*Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Materiel Readiness*

The 2010 signing of Directive-Type Memorandum (DTM) 10-015, "Requirements for Life Cycle Management and Product Support," was a great achievement for both the DoD life cycle logistics and program management communities. It implemented the requirements of Section 805 of Public Law 111-84 in the Fiscal Year 2010 National Defense Authorization Act and established DoD policy mandating a product support manager (PSM) position be identified and assigned for each acquisition category (ACAT) I and II program office, and be filled by a properly qualified military Service member or full-time employee of the Department. The PSM reports directly to the program





manager and fills a key leadership position (KLP) for ACAT I or a critical acquisition position (CAP) for ACAT II programs. Now, for the first time, the logistician has a designated seat at the table as the program office catalyst for life cycle management and product support. The PSM, possessing greater responsibilities, capabilities and a broader, more enterprise-focused interdisciplinary skill set, represents a powerful new resource to assist the program manager (PM) in fulfilling their DoD Directive 5000.01 life cycle management responsibilities. PSMs will help deliver successful “inception through demilitarization” system life cycle product support outcomes.

Mahatma Gandhi said, “You must be the change you wish to see in the world.” PSMs now have the authority to address logistics and product support early and throughout the program’s life cycle, and thus effect the changes you wish to see in your programs. The PSM is vital to the development, implementation, and execution of an effective and affordable product support strategy. Specific areas to effect that change are inculcated into the product support manager’s principal duties to:

- Provide weapon systems product support subject matter expertise to the PM for the execution of the PM’s duties as the Total Life Cycle System Manager.
- Develop, implement, and periodically review a comprehensive, outcome-based, product support strategy.

- Promote opportunities to maximize competition while meeting the objectives of best-value, long-term outcomes to the warfighter.
- Leverage enterprise opportunities across programs and DoD components.
- Use appropriate analytical tools and conduct appropriate cost analyses, including cost-benefit analyses, as specified in Office of Management and Budget Circular A-94 to determine the preferred product support strategy.
- Develop and implement appropriate product support arrangements.
- Periodically assess and adjust resource allocations and performance requirements for product support, not less than annually, to meet warfighter needs and optimize implementation of the product support strategy.
- Document the product support strategy in the Life Cycle Sustainment Plan (LCSP).
- Conduct periodic product support strategy reviews and revalidate the supporting business case analysis prior to each change in the product support strategy or every 5 years, whichever occurs first.

The development and implementation of a product support strategy is an iterative process. The PSM duties and responsibilities are enablers to this process and key for program success.

Although this will be a challenging job, the PSM does not stand alone. In addition to support from the respective Service and program office staff, the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Material Readiness) (ODASD(MR)), and the Defense Acquisition University (DAU) are available to assist as the PSM in the execution of these responsibilities. Both have been working diligently to develop and provide resources to assist prospective PSMs with their assigned duties and responsibilities. Immediately following distribution of DTM 10-015, DAU launched PSM Rapid Deployment Training to provide immediate training material on the new policy. Training is one of many essential elements to assist the PSM. As new policy is implemented, DAU develops and modifies training material to remain current with policy. The following training material is available now or under development:

- PSM Rapid Deployment Training (RDT) (<http://www.dau.mil/images/Pages/RDT.aspx>)
- New LOG 340 "Life Cycle Product Support" Course (<http://icatalog.dau.mil>)
- Enhanced LOG 350 "Enterprise Life Cycle Logistics Management" Course (<http://icatalog.dau.mil>)
- Continuous Learning Module, CLL 036 "The Product Support Manager" (<http://icatalog.dau.mil>)
- Post-Level III LOG 365 PSM Course (currently in early planning)

In addition, the ODASD(MR) in collaboration with components, agencies, industry, and academia wrote and disseminated several guidebooks to assist the PSM in execution of their duties. These guidebooks were written for the PSM as a reference tool for managing product support throughout the weapon system's life cycle. The following guidebooks are available now:

- *Product Support Manager's (PSM) Guidebook* (<https://acc.dau.mil/psm-guidebook>)
- *Business Case Analysis (BCA) Guidebook* (<https://acc.dau.mil/bca-guidebook>)
- *Logistics Assessment (LA) Guidebook* (<https://acc.dau.mil/la-guidebook>)

Other resources available to the PSM include:

- PSM Reference Repository on DAU Logistics Community of Practice (<https://acc.dau.mil/psm>)
- Product Support Policy, Guidance & Tools Repository (<https://acc.dau.mil/productsupport>)
- LCSP Outline/Template (<https://acc.dau.mil/lcsp-outline>)

Additionally, the following resources are in development and will be available soon at the DAU Logistics Community of Practice (LOG CoP) (<https://acc.dau.mil/log>) to assist the PSM:

- *Cost Assessment & Program Evaluation (CAPE) O&S Cost Estimating Guide*
- *Public-Private Partnering (PPP) Guidebook*
- *DoD O&S Cost Management Guidebook*

- *Integrated Product Support (IPS) Element Guidebook*
- Web-based PSM Toolkit

Upon issuance of DTM 10-015, the Services immediately began to comply with the requirement to identify and assign PSMs as well as publish additional Service-level implementation guidance. To date, each of the Services has assigned PSMs, aggressively participated in PSM training opportunities, and hosted a variety of PSM forums. On November 2-3, 2011, the OASD (L&MR) hosted the first PSM Conference at DAU to bring the Service PSMs together in an open forum to discuss the evolving challenges of the PSM in the current fiscal environment, including how to satisfy the goals outlined in the Better Buying Power Initiatives and fulfill the responsibilities outlined in DTM 10-015. The conference focused on policy, guidance, tools, and PSM expectations. In addition, the conference featured two critical workshops on the LCSP and the business case analysis (BCA), which also addressed operations and support (O&S) cost management. The next PSM Conference is scheduled June 5-7, 2012 at DAU and is open to government and industry personnel.

In addition, the Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (AT&L) Sept. 14, 2011 "Document Streamlining—Life Cycle Sustainment Plan (LCSP)" memorandum provided the guidance and outline for development of the LCSP. The LCSP is a "living" document that articulates the product support strategy and evolves through the acquisition milestones and into sustainment. The LCSP is a key for documenting how the PSM will accomplish their myriad responsibilities. The recent LCSP workshop allowed the ODASD(MR) policy team to review the policy and LCSP outline in-depth and to address PSM and Service concerns, issues, and questions. For more information on the LCSP outline, please visit <https://acc.dau.mil/lcsp-outline>. ODASD(MR) will continue to provide guidance and assistance to the PM and PSM at future conferences, as well as in preparation for major milestone reviews.

As professional logisticians and product support managers know, reflecting on previous achievements can help guide one's future strategies and objectives. Policy, guidance, tools, and open communication forums are in place to assist the PSM in achieving product support and program success. As we move forward with PSM implementation, it is vital to maintain open communication with each other to capitalize on lessons learned and to share knowledge. These communication channels must include the Services, industry, academia and OSD stakeholders.

PSMs, you are the change we seek in the acquisition world. The responsibilities you have are vital to ensuring the DoD not only can deliver but also affordably sustain effective weapon systems. As President John F. Kennedy said, "There are risks and costs to a program of action. But they are far less than the long-range risks and costs of comfortable inaction."