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WAR DEPARTMENT
The Adjutant General's Office
Washington 25 D C

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J. J. King

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21 March 1946

SUBJECT: War Department Priorities for Research and Development Projects

- TO:
- Commanding Generals
 - Army Air Forces
 - Army Ground Forces
 - Army Service Forces
 - Commander-in-Chief
 - Army Forces, Pacific
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 - Independent Commands under the War Department
 - Base Commands
 - Commanding Officers
 - Base Commands

713

1. Purpose. The purpose of the War Department Priorities for Research and Development Projects is to insure a more effective utilization of the funds, personnel, materials, facilities, and equipment of the Government in the discharge of its responsibilities with respect to research and development.

2. Application. Since the importance of any project must be measured in its relation to the over-all program, it follows that the final evaluation can be accomplished effectively only by those official duties required the possession of sufficient knowledge of the general situation to make such an appraisal possible. The determination of the priorities for research and development projects will be as indicated below:

a. Each request for initiation of a project will include a recommended priority and a justification therefor, based on the definitions contained herein.

b. The priority of each project will be considered by the technical committee and the recommended priority will be made a part of each technical committee recommendation for the initiation of a project.

c. In the event that a disagreement between the priority assigned by the initiating agency and the technical committee involves two major forces, the priority will be determined by a committee consisting of the Director,

21 March 1946

Developments Division, War Department Special Staff, and a representative from each of the interested Divisions of the War Department General Staff, and each of the major commands concerned.

d. All project priorities will be reviewed by the responsible development agency in coordinating with the prospective user at periodic intervals of not less than six months for purposes of reappraisal. Projects in category 1-A will be similarly reviewed at least every ninety days to determine whether the situation existent at that time warrants a continuation of the special effort required.

e. Organizations charged with the prosecution of Research and Development projects are authorized to request at any time a review of class 1 priorities assigned. Such requests will be given prompt attention.

f. Projects in basic research will be assigned priorities consistent with the expected application of the results of such projects.

3. Definitions. The definitions set forth in this paragraph must be adhered to meticulously by those responsible for their employment and will be followed by all concerned in requesting or directing the initiation of research and development projects whether of local or general application.

a. Priority 1. This classification will designate projects that will result in an end item necessary for the security of the nation or mandatory for the successful accomplishment of important assigned missions of the using forces.

(1) Priority 1 projects are subclassified as follows:

1-A - This priority will be assigned to those projects which will produce an end item designed to meet a potential threat against this nation, the lack of which would result in natural destruction and disaster in the event of war.

1-B - This priority will be assigned to those projects required for new tactical concepts of warfare or for new concepts of warfare resulting from radically new weapons developed by great scientific advancements.

1-C - This priority will be assigned to those projects which will result in an end item, the lack of which would prevent the timely accomplishment of important assigned missions of the using forces.

(2) Examples of projects of sufficient relative importance to warrant inclusion in priority 1 include:

21 March 1946

(a) Those necessary to develop countermeasure against weapons that are a potential threat against this nation, such as atomic explosives, guided missiles, and supersonic aircraft.

(b) Those necessary to develop atomic explosives, utilization of atomic energy, guided missiles, and supersonic aircraft.

(c) Those necessary to prepare materiel and equipment for important special missions or operations.

(d) Those necessary to eliminate excessive losses of materiel and personnel.

(e) Those essential to the successful accomplishment of important assigned missions such as large-scale maneuvers or vital training programs.

b. Priority 2. This classification will designate projects that will result in an end item which will materially increase the efficiency of the armed forces.

(1) Priority 2 projects are subclassified as follows:

2-A - This priority will be assigned to those projects which will result in an end item that possesses such marked superiority over existing items that complete replacement would be justified.

2-B - This priority will be assigned to those projects required to correct major deficiencies in primary equipment.

2-C - This priority will be assigned to those projects which will substantially improve combat effectiveness.

(2) Examples of projects of sufficient relative importance to warrant inclusion in Priority 2 include:

(a) Those necessary to develop, modify, and test new materiel designed to replace existing types in the near future.

(b) Those required to keep an important type of primary equipment operations.

(c) Those of vital importance to the proper training of specialized personnel.

(d) Those necessary to increase operational efficiency.

(e) Those necessary to increase maintenance efficiency.

AGOB-C-4D5FD-II 400,112 (11 Mar 46) (Contd')

21 March 1946

(f) Those necessary to increase safety of materiel and personnel.

c. Priority 3. This classification will include all other projects the expediency of which does not warrant a higher priority but whose inclusion in the overall development program is justified. Projects which lead to development of new materiel, new operation techniques, or to discovery of new military techniques and devices whose urgency and importance cannot be currently determined should initially be placed in this category.

(1) Priority 3 projects will be subclassified as 3-A, 3-B, or 3-C to indicate the relative importance thereof.

(2) Examples of projects properly assigned to priority 3 include:

(a) Those development projects necessary to improve existing materiel and equipment, but which are of lesser urgency than those included in higher priorities.

(b) Those required to make desirable, but not essential improvements.

(c) Those routine tests to determine practicability of materiel and equipment for future use.

(d) Those for which no degree of urgency has been indicated.

(e) Those designed to improve training techniques.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF WAR:

/s/ Edward F Witsell
EDWARD F WITSELL
Major General
The Adjutant General

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4

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