Progressive Design-Build + OTA

A practical guide to faster decisions, clearer risk ownership, and stronger owner-contractor alignment

PDB moves faster only when the team can make decisions at the same speed.
Progressive Design-Build brings the contractor into scope, design, cost, schedule, and risk decisions earlier. The flexibility is real, but so is the need for disciplined decision-making, transparent cost development, and sustained alignment.

HOW THE DELIVERY MODEL CHANGES

1 SELECT ON QUALIFICATIONS	2 DESIGN + PRICE TOGETHER	3 BUILD WHILE DESIGN FINISHES
Choose the design-builder on capability and qualifications before detailed pricing is set.	Advance design collaboratively with iterative reviews, open-book estimating, cost trends, and a negotiated construction price.	Move into final design and construction with agreed controls, early packages, long-lead procurement, and defined off-ramps.

WHERE SPEED IS WON OR LOST

COMMON FAILURE POINTS

- **Decision authority is vague.** People know the issue but not who decides, by when, or how it escalates.
- **FAR muscle memory returns.** Teams recreate familiar processes instead of using the flexibility built into the Agreement.
- **Open-book data does not become action.** Cost and design information is visible, but unresolved issues continue to age.
- **Risk ownership gets blurred.** Owner, designer, and contractor see the same risk differently or assume another party owns it.

FIVE OPERATING DISCIPLINES

1. Decision map. Define who decides, who inputs, turnaround, and escalation.

2. One baseline. Keep scope, design assumptions, cost, schedule, and risk aligned.

3. Issue rhythm. Review aging decisions, commitments, and unresolved constraints on a fixed cadence.

4. Commercial transparency. Use open-book cost data, IGE, thresholds, and off-ramps deliberately.

5. Continuous partnering. Measure trust, role clarity, issue resolution, and alignment between formal sessions.

PDB READINESS CHECK: CAN YOUR TEAM ANSWER THESE NOW?

✓ Who owns each major decision and how long can it wait?	✓ What is the shared baseline for scope, design assumptions, cost, schedule, and risk?	✓ What happens when the team cannot agree on price or a major technical issue?
✓ Which Agreement terms replace the FAR defaults the team is used to relying on?	✓ Which risks must be resolved before long-lead procurement or early work packages move?	✓ How will leaders know if partnering and decision flow are weakening during execution?

WHERE ATTAIN FITS

Attain supports USACE teams and prime contractors with neutral partnering and Project Delivery Intelligence℠ (PDI℠). We help establish the operating model, then measure whether it is still working as design, price, risk, and construction move forward through PDB readiness workshops, decision and escalation mapping, PDI℠ pulse checks, risk and issue facilitation, re-partnering, and executive decision support.

START WITH
ONE PROJECT.
Surface friction early. Project Delivery Intelligence℠ for seamless PDB.

Authority note: Progressive Design-Build is authorized for military construction under 10 U.S.C. § 3241(g). Other Transaction construction authority is provided by 10 U.S.C. § 2808a. This guide is general information, not legal or acquisition advice.