



Systems Engineering Part 3

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Agenda

- What's the point of this EAT?
- Assumptions
- Definitions
- Where are we?
- Unit-Level Specification
- Unit-Level Requirements vs. Specifications
- Capturing Unit-Level Specifications
- Performing Unit-Level Specifications
- Design Solution Definition
- UNP Avionics Development
- UNP Structural Development
- Want to learn more?

References

Significant credit to Sam Baxendale, author of the NS-10 Systems Engineering EAT series from which this heavily drew. Also references:

- “UNP NS11 User’s Guide”, AFRL/RV, 2022
- “Applied Space Systems Engineering”, Larson/Kirkpatrick/Sellers/Thomas/Verma, 2009
- “Space Mission Engineering”, Wertz/Everett/Puschell, 2011
- “The NASA Systems Engineering Handbook”, NASA, 2007
- “INCOSE Systems Engineering Handbook”, INCOSE, 2010
- “Michigan Tech MEPIV Lecture: An Introduction to Systems Engineering”, King, 2019
- “UNP NS9 EAT: Systems Engineering”, Straight, 2016
- “ISO/IEC 15288 IEEE Systems Engineering Standard”, IEEE, 2015
- “ECSS-E-10A European Systems Engineering Standard”, ESA, 2018

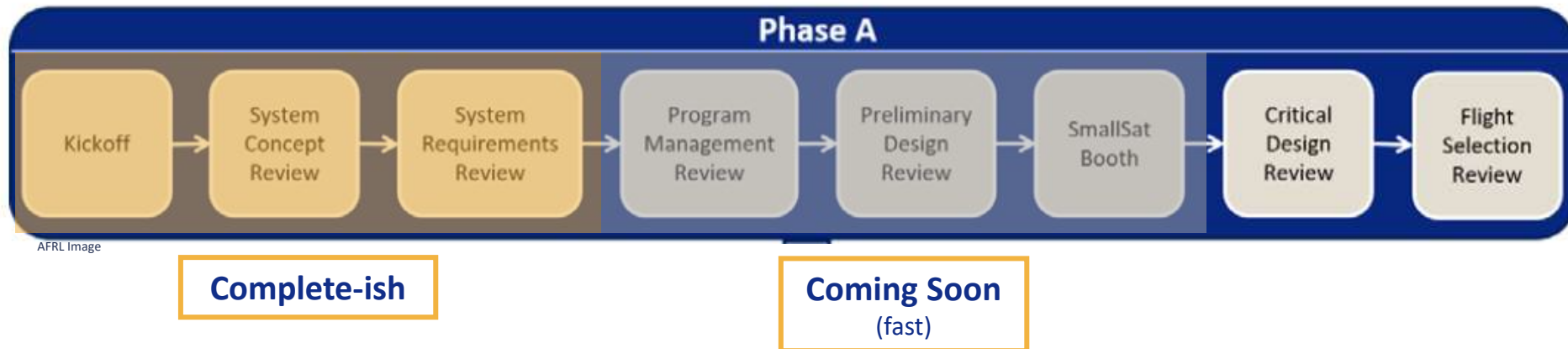
What's the point of this EAT?

Today's EAT will be slightly more 'philosophical' than previous SE EATs. But here are the main topics:

1. How to transition from requirements definition to more detailed unit-level design?
2. Unit-level hardware selections must stay consistent with SE tools (CONOPS, Experiment Plan, RVM, System Budgets)
3. What are the expectations of avionics/structure development moving forward?

Assumptions

- This EAT is relevant to activities *after* SRR
- Mission Design Document updated with feedback from SCR/SRR
- RVM defined from mission-level down to subsystem-level, feedback from SRR implemented
- Block diagrams at the mission- and system-level are currently in progress
- Design details of each subsystem, beyond subsystem requirements, remain unknown



Definitions



Avionics: All the electrical hardware and software that support the mission.

Mission-level: The space system(s) and ground system(s) cooperating as a “system of systems.”

System-level: Constituents of the mission – the space system (i.e. the spacecraft) or the ground system independently.

Subsystem-level: Constituents of a system – for example the space system has an Electrical Power Subsystem (EPS) or Attitude Determination & Control Subsystem (ADCS).

Unit-level: Constituents of a subsystem – a torque rod, battery module, processor PCB, interface PCB, reaction wheel, etc.

Commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS): Purchased from an industry vendor intended to be functional and ready to go “off-the-shelf.”

In-house: Designed and/or fabricated by the project team (e.g. a PCB designed by your team in Altium).

Interface Control Document (ICD): A mandatory UNP deliverable (Users Guide 8.3.4) that details hardware and software interfaces for each unit or subsystem.

Engineering-model (EM): EM avionics are ideally an accurate representation of the flight hardware’s form, fit, and function. The EM is generally an independent set of hardware upon which most development occurs. Due to the stress induced on this hardware through extended testing and revisions, EM avionics are often considered unsuitable for flight.

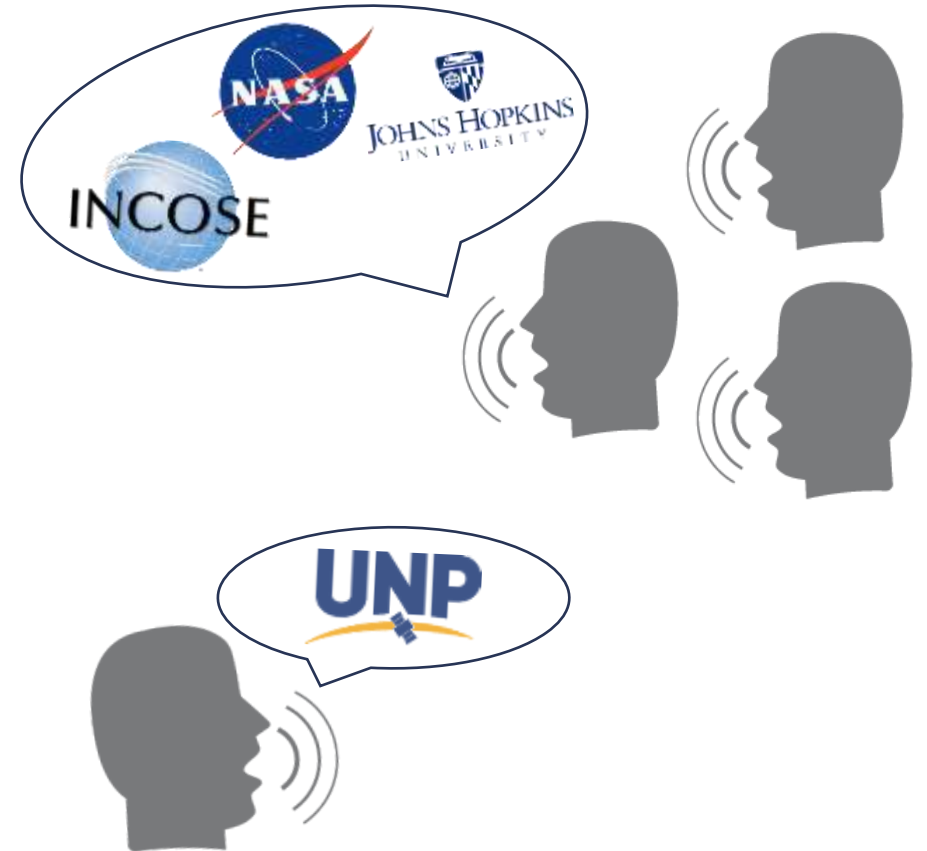
Flight-model (FM): FM avionics are often thought of as the final revision of the EM and are intended for integration into the final satellite assembly.

UNP Disclaimer

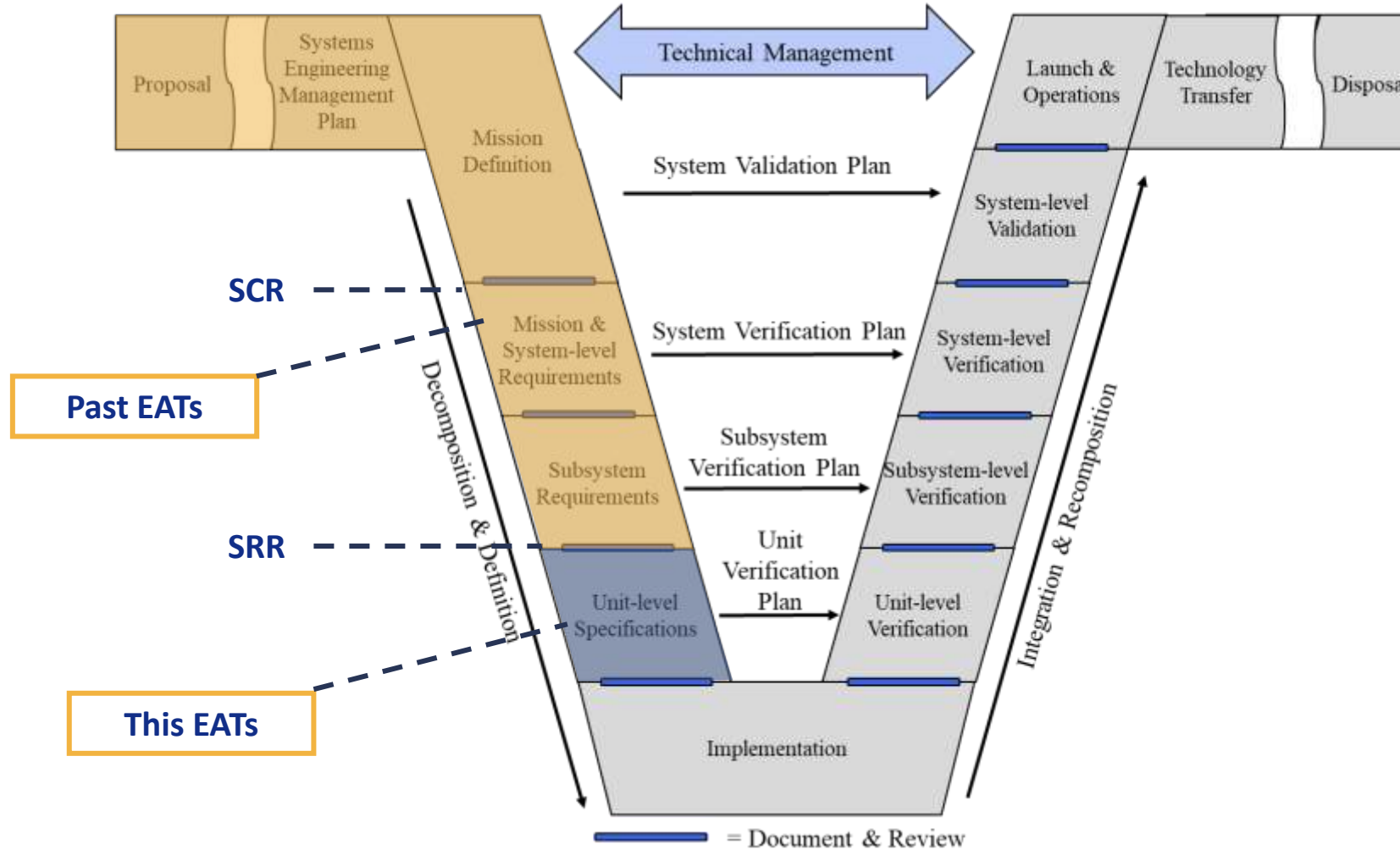


Systems Engineering comes in many flavors...

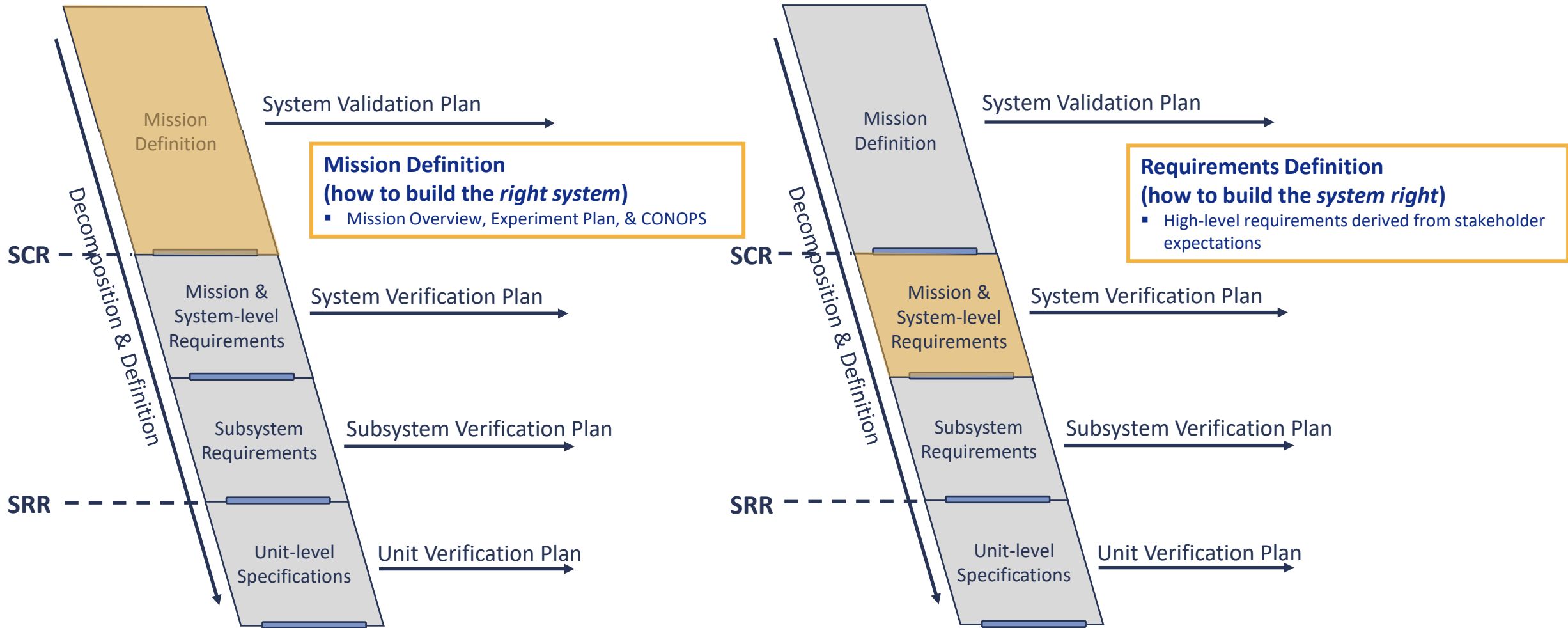
- One organization's best practices may differ from another's
- Small satellites are a unique niche of the systems engineering community
 - There is a spectrum from large-scale production (e.g. Planet) to one-off R&D (e.g. AFRL)
- The point of UNP is to provide a *scoped* project framework to *introduce* students to Systems Engineering
 - Don't get hung up on the details, often times just building and learning is the best approach
 - These EATs are intended to provide some context on why UNP is structured the way it is
- Is UNP the ideal Systems Engineering approach?
 - **No** (does an ideal SE even exist?). But it is a decent starting point.



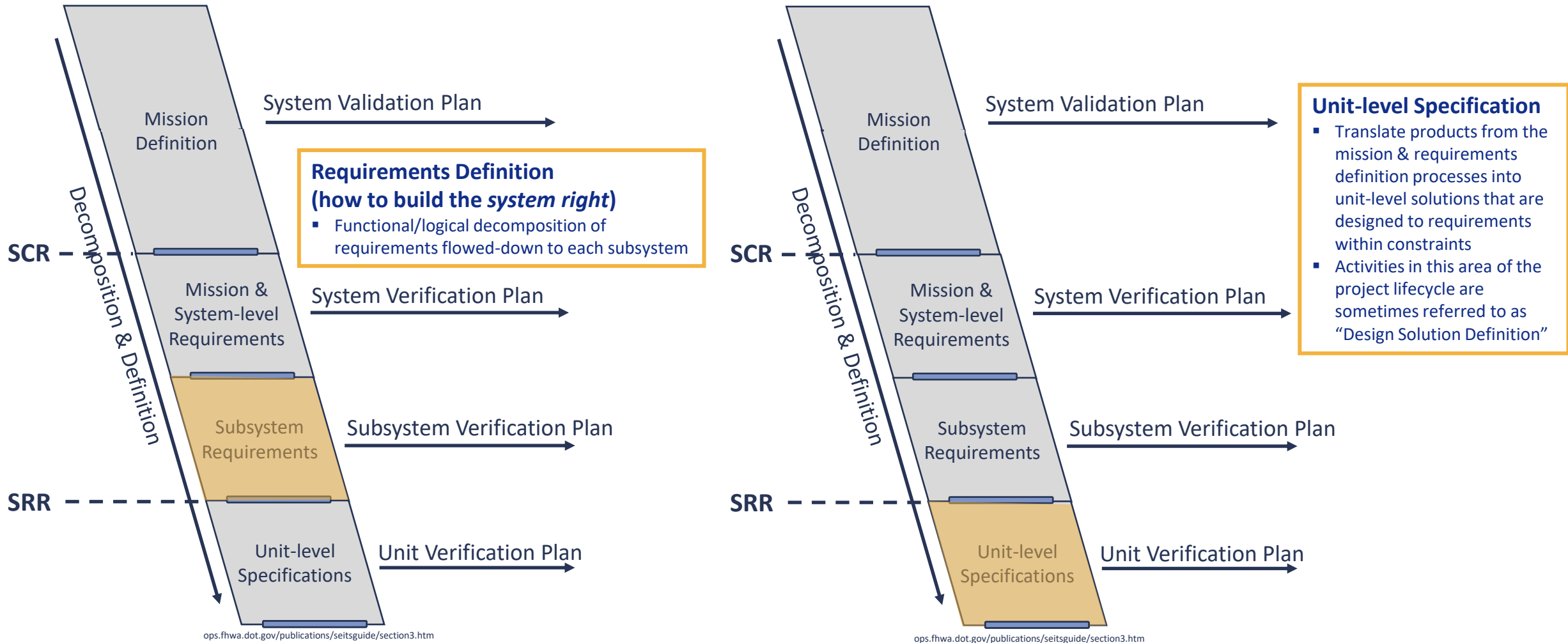
Where are we?



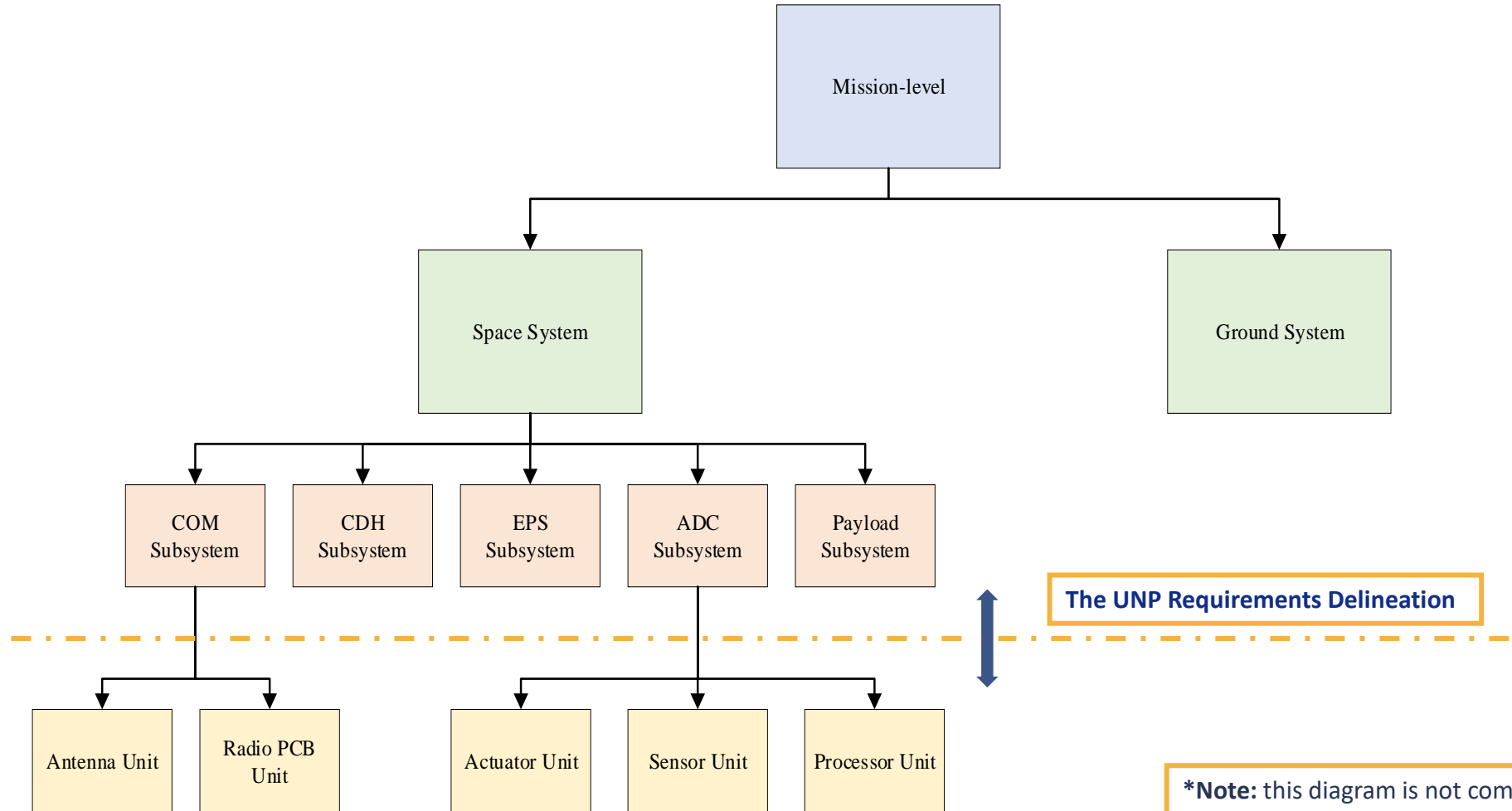
Where are we?



Where are we?



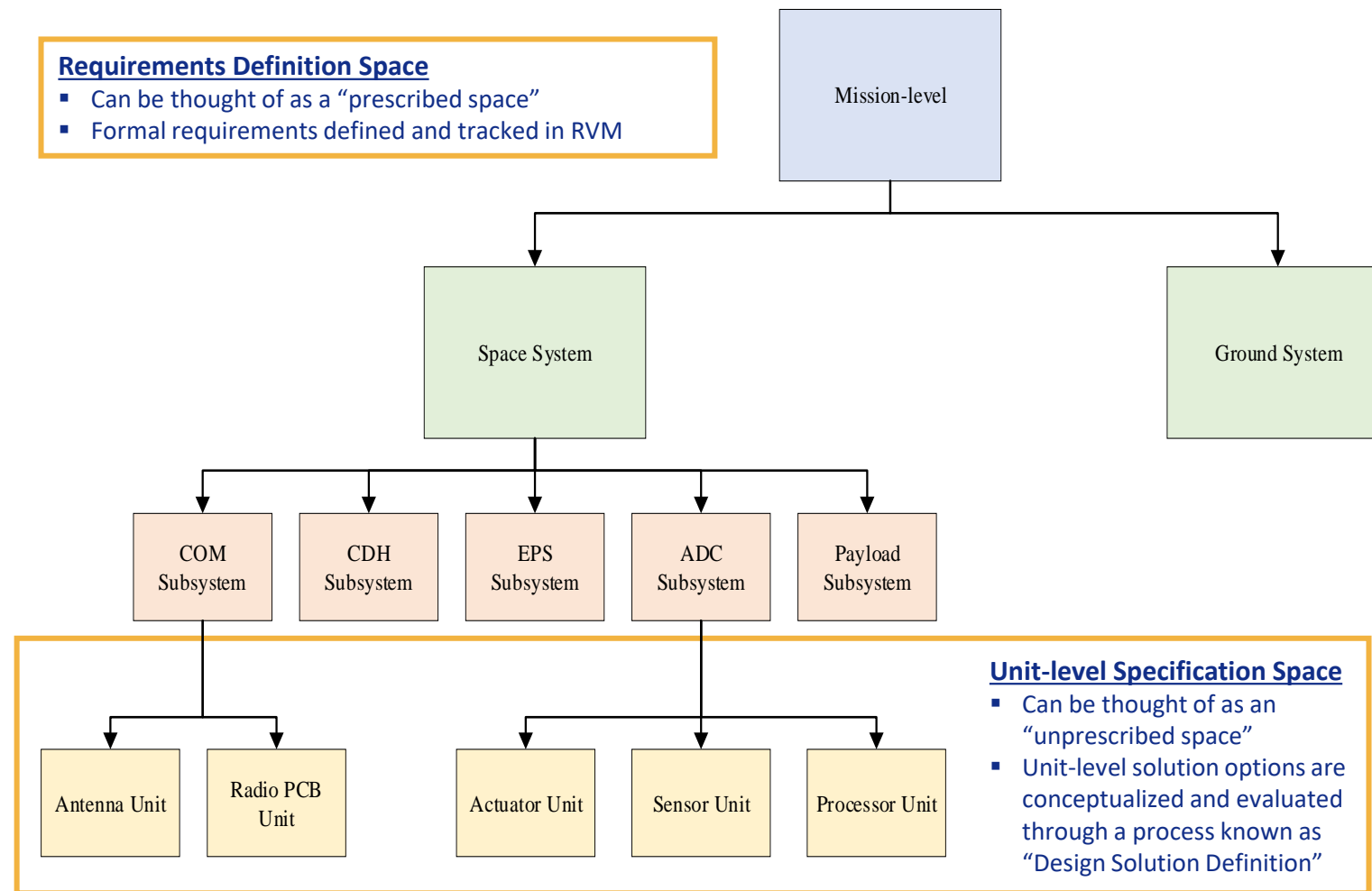
Unit-Level Specification



Unit-Level Specification

UNP teams typically only define requirements down to the subsystem-level in their RVM.....

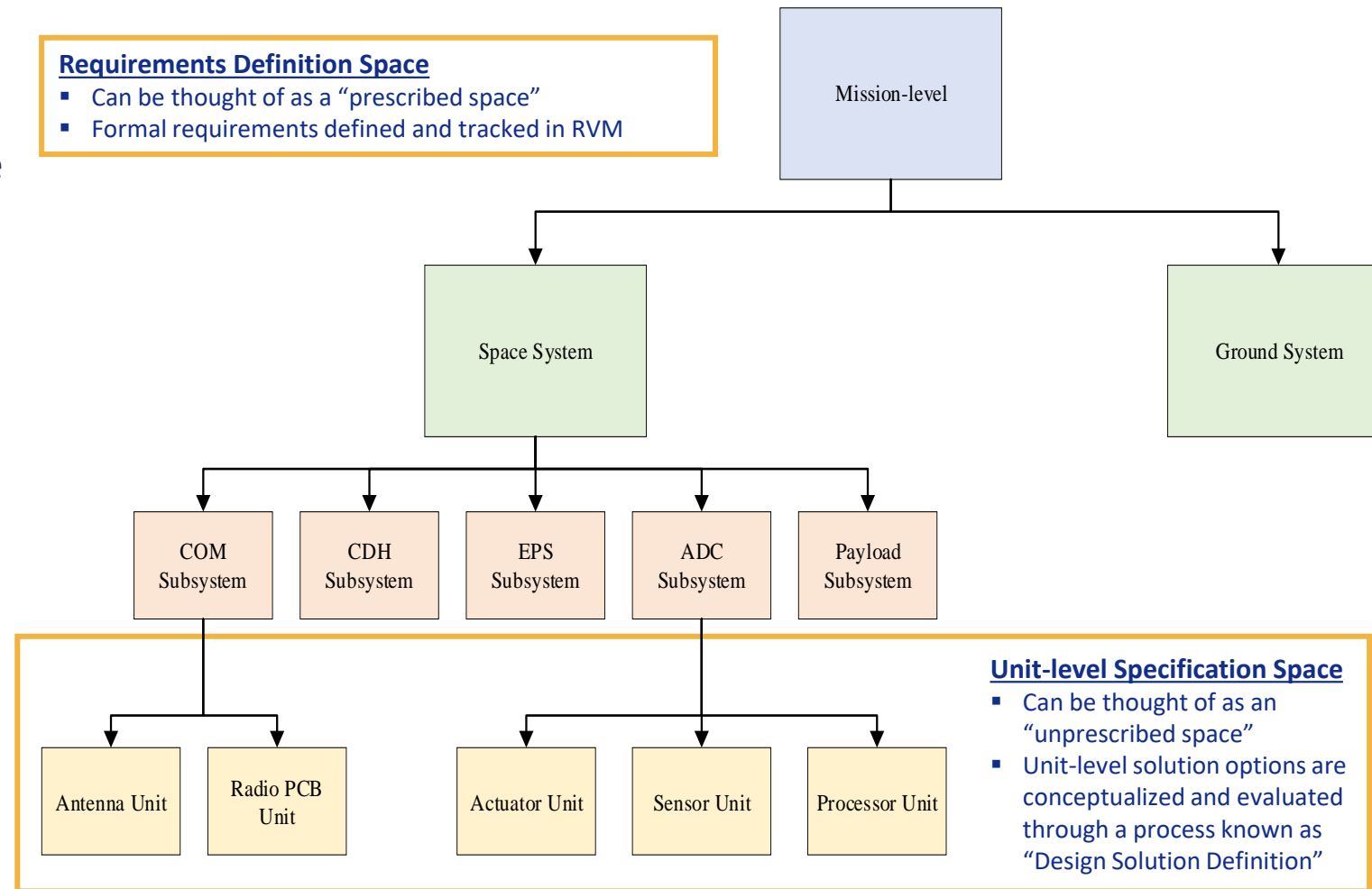
- Below the subsystem-level, teams operate in a “Unit-level Specification” space in which they conduct trades to identify unit-level avionics capable of meeting subsystem-level requirements
- This specification must be conducted “within constraints” (what is realistic given UNP’s small budget, tight schedule, and limited technical expertise)
- Unit-level specification is where “the rubber meets the road”! The products of SCR and SRR are truly put through the wringer...



Unit-Level Specification

A common pitfall in practical systems engineering is defining solutions “in a vacuum”

- Unit-level solution selections may impact the entire system, some may only impact the local subsystem, and **some may change your mission.**
- Simple example: the ADCS team evaluates and selects an actuator capable of meeting the mission’s strict attitude control requirement. However, the actuator is extremely power hungry.
 - Chief Engineer finds out months later when the Power Budget does not close (i.e. spacecraft is constantly power-negative).
- Effective engineers “push back” on bad requirements – if you are given an assignment to design/build/verify something that does not make sense. Speak up!



Unit-Level Specification



Design Solution Definition (i.e. UNP Unit-level Specification) can be an incredibly complex process.....

- Programs with thorough mission assurance strategies (e.g. legacy space system programs at NASA or Lockheed Martin) typically spend years evaluating thousands of design solutions - quantitatively weighing these options against formal concept screening methodologies such as Pugh Matrices or Utility Theory
 - We don't have that luxury in UNP (nor is it really necessary)
- UNP teams only have a few months to consider a few options – **the key is to understand your constraints (e.g. cost, schedule, etc.) and make swift, informed decisions on what is the minimum effort necessary for full mission success**
- What does “informed decisions” mean? Maintain consistency between unit-level specifications and the Mission Design Document/RVM/System Budgets (e.g. Power, Link, Pointing, etc.)

Unit-Level Requirements vs. Specification

So, what is the difference between a requirement and a specification?

- Good question. This will be disputed until the end of time.
- Contemporary SE literature seems to agree on the following:
 - A requirement is a statement of what a product must do or a quality it must have
 - A specification is a collection of information that is imposed on the design and verification of a product; this includes all relevant requirements **and other information necessary for design, fabrication, and verification**
 - e.g. hardware interfaces, software interfaces, schematics/blueprints, dimensions, materials, etc.
 - A common analogy states that requirements are *inputs* to the design process while specifications are the *output*
- In industry, you will see all sorts of terms like ICDs, RVM, Requirements Specification, Design Specification, Qualification Report, Verification Report, Validation Report, etc. – often used interchangeably or with overlap from company to company
 - In UNP, you are required to submit Software Design Documents, Block Diagrams, ICDs, and an RVM (among other deliverables) – these are all pieces of what is referred to here as a specification
- **The point here is that, after SRR, UNP teams need to transition from requirements definition rather quickly. Specifications are your tool to translate requirements into design, build, integration, & test of avionics – eventually leading to a functioning FlatSat.**

Capturing Unit-Level Specifications



From UNP NS-11 User's Guide Chapter 2

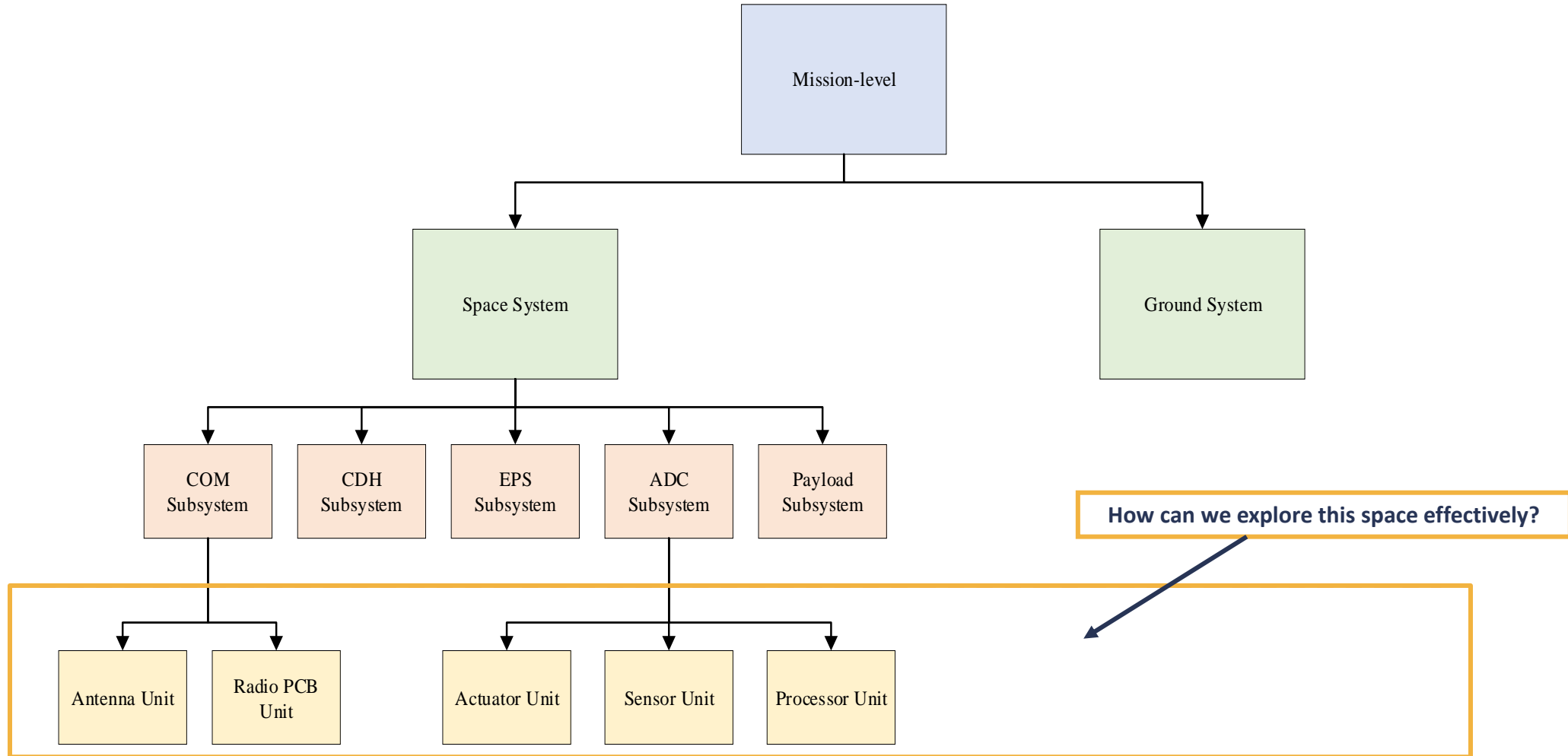
An effective Avionics Specification cannot be properly developed until the link between avionics development and requirements verification is first understood. The avionics development process is not just about designing hardware and writing code but verifying the design meet requirements. Recall that requirements are defined through a flow down from top (mission statement) to bottom (subsystem-level). The direction is reversed later in the satellite development process as requirements are verified from bottom to top. Avionics specifications bridge these major phases of the systems engineering process by imposing function and interface definitions at the unit-level to ensure requirements fulfillment at the subsystem and system-levels. This means the effectiveness of an avionics specification relies on the rigor of the requirements definition process. In other words: **teams may expend enormous resources (i.e. schedule, cost, personnel) developing the world's most advanced avionics bus, but it does not matter unless it meets mission-level requirements. It is only necessary to develop avionics sufficient enough to support the payload in meeting mission success.** Poor understanding of this relationship will ultimately result in excessive resource expenditure as teams struggle to integrate and verify their avionics.

Capturing Unit-Level Specifications

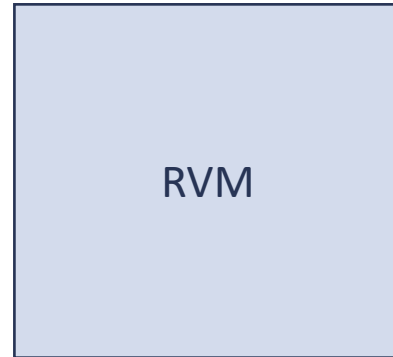
How should unit-level specifications be captured?

- Each UNP team will do it differently, for example some teams might:
 - Have a single “Subsystem Overview Document” that details the subsystem’s relevant requirements and block diagram. The document would also contain specifications for all the units that compose the subsystem
 - e.g. unit-level block diagrams, unit-to-unit hardware interfaces, dimensions, schematics, BOMs, software interfaces, etc.
 - Maintain a separate document for every avionics unit-level specification that composes their spacecraft
 - subsystem-level documents (e.g. subsystem-level block diagrams and requirements) are kept separate
 - Keep verification test procedures/results in separate documents than specifications
 - Millions of other ideas....
- Think about what works best for your team in terms of configuration management, revision tracking, and student turnover. All documentation should capture at least the following elements:
 - Design to requirements - How does the design of this unit tie to requirements verification at the subsystem, system, and mission-levels?
 - Functions - What functions must this unit perform to fulfill requirements?
 - Interfaces - How will this unit interface with other units/subsystems? Both hardware *and software* interfaces must be captured.
 - Note that this information is necessary regardless of the procurement strategy (COTS or in-house). If teams purchase a COTS unit that does not come with the appropriate data sheets and user manuals to answer these basic questions, there will be many headaches later on.

Performing Unit-Level Specification



Performing Unit-Level Specification



ADC Subsystem

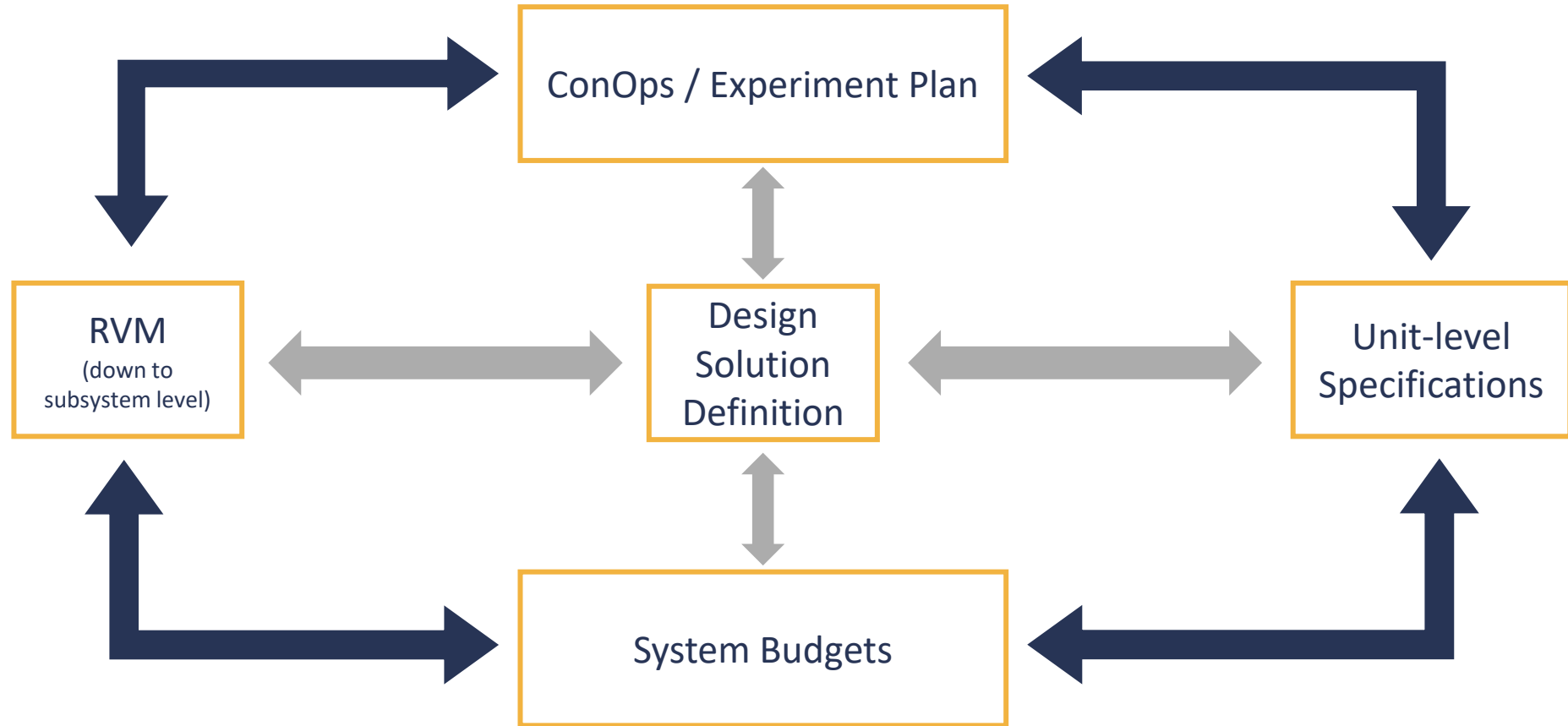
- Subsystem Block Diagram
- Torque Rod Unit Specification
- Reaction Wheel Unit Specification
- Gyroscope Unit Specification
- Magnetometer Unit Specification
- Star Tracker Unit Specification
- ADCS Processor PCB Unit Specification

In other words, how do we get from here.....

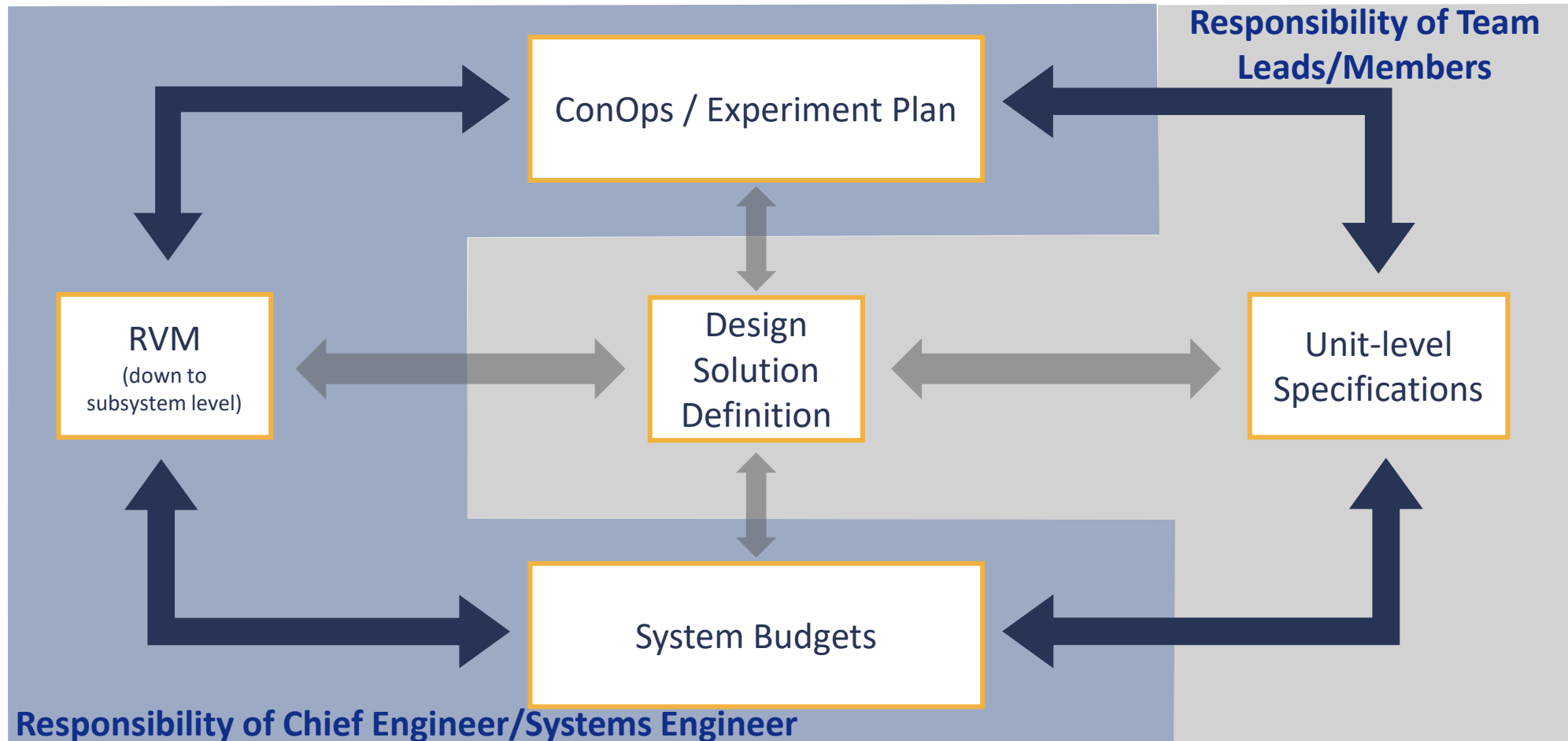
.....to here?

***Note:** used ADCS as an example here, but this could be applied to any system/subsystem/unit

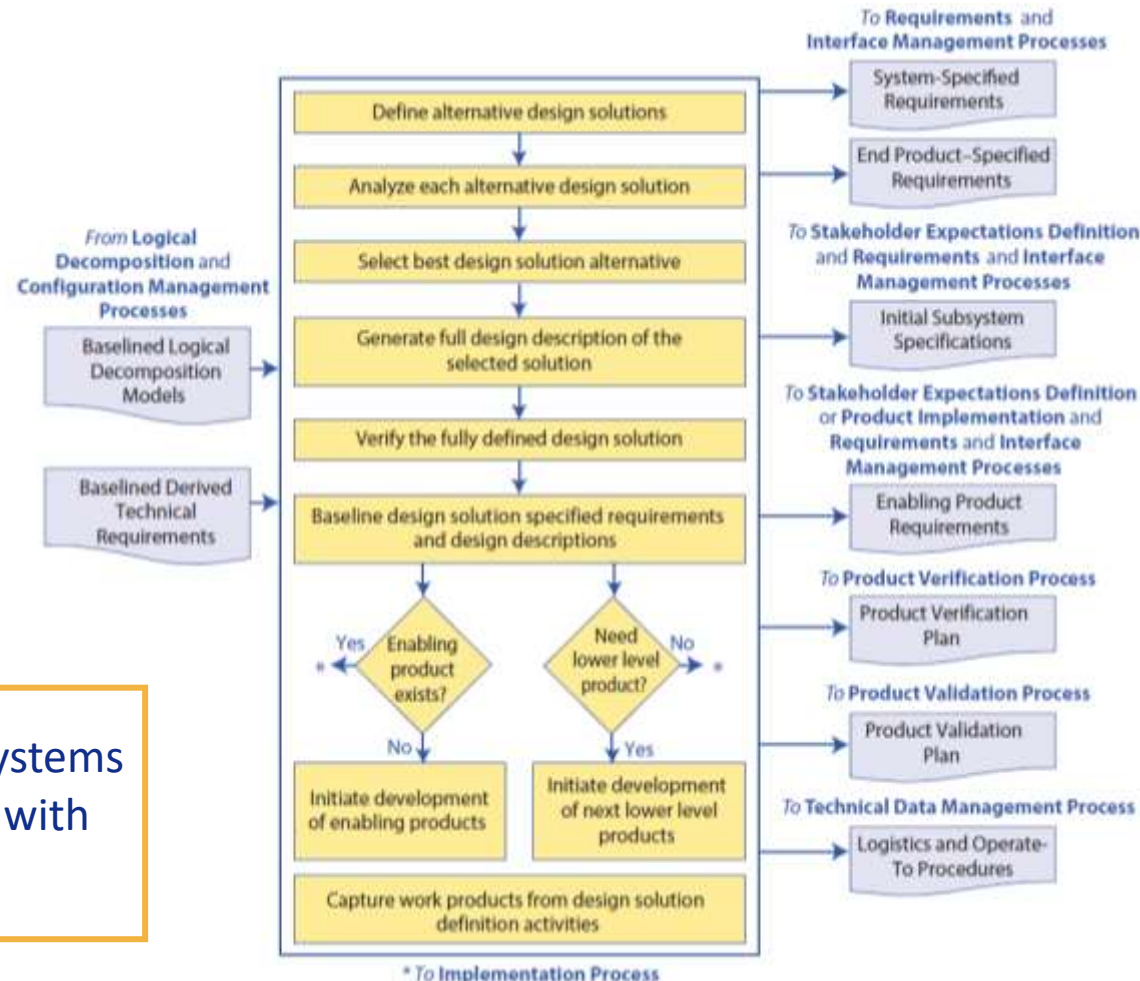
Performing Unit-Level Specification



Performing Unit-Level Specification



Design Solution Definition

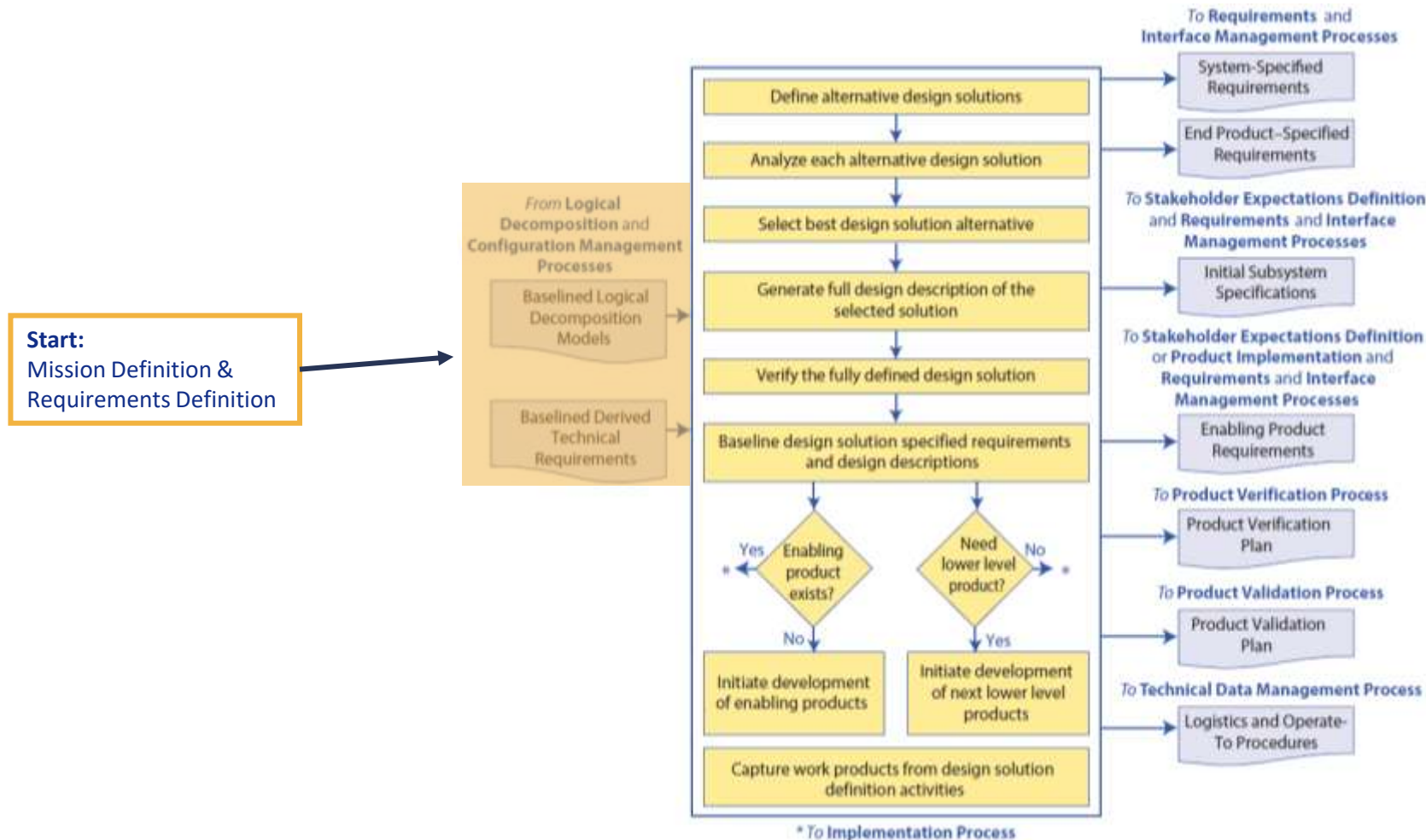


***Note:** This process could be applied at any level of system hierarchy (system/subsystem/unit), we will focus on the unit-level application in this EAT (since you have already wrote subsystem-level requirements)

According to the NASA Systems Engineering Handbook with some UNP context

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Design Solution Definition

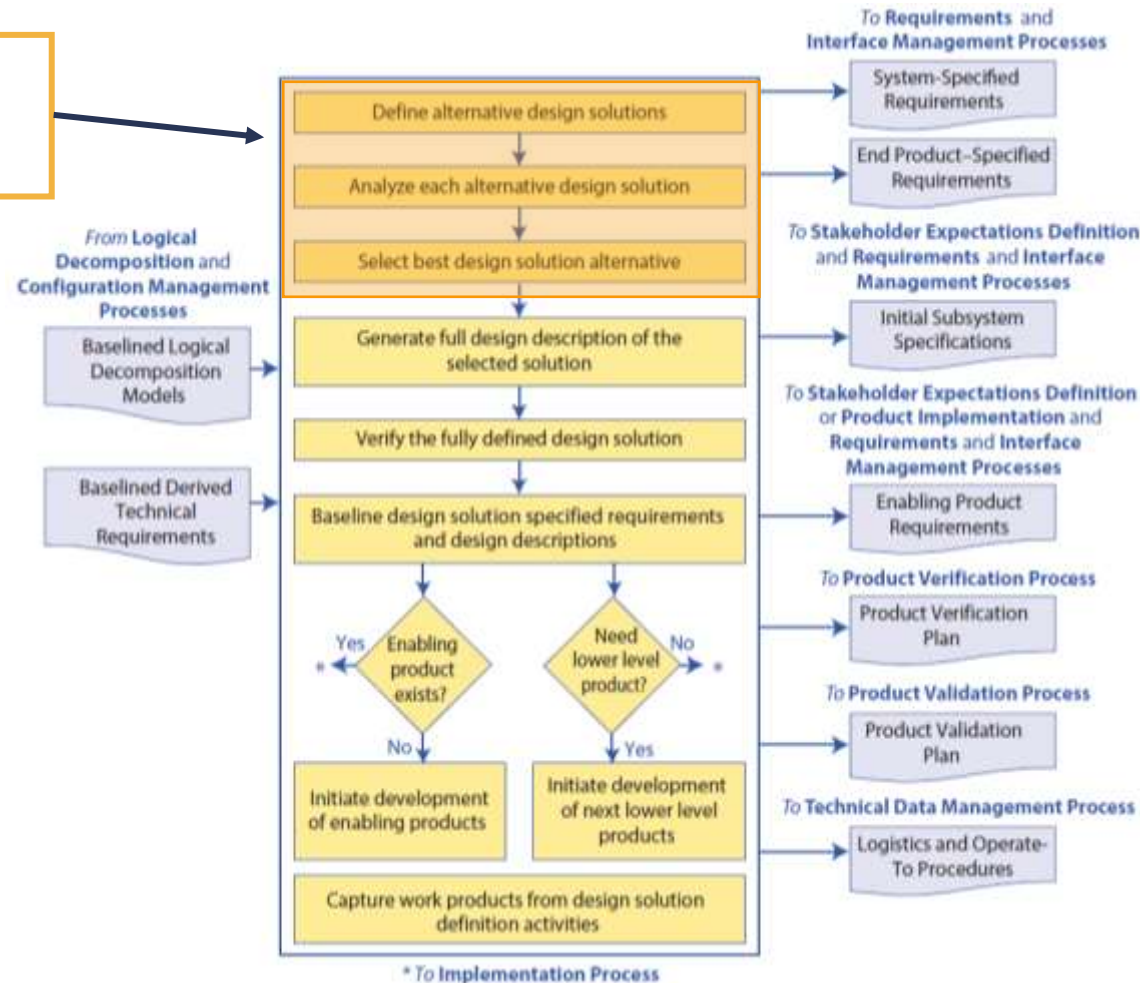


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Design Solution Definition

Trade Studies

- COTS vs. in-house
- Weighed against time, cost, & technical constraints



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Trade Studies

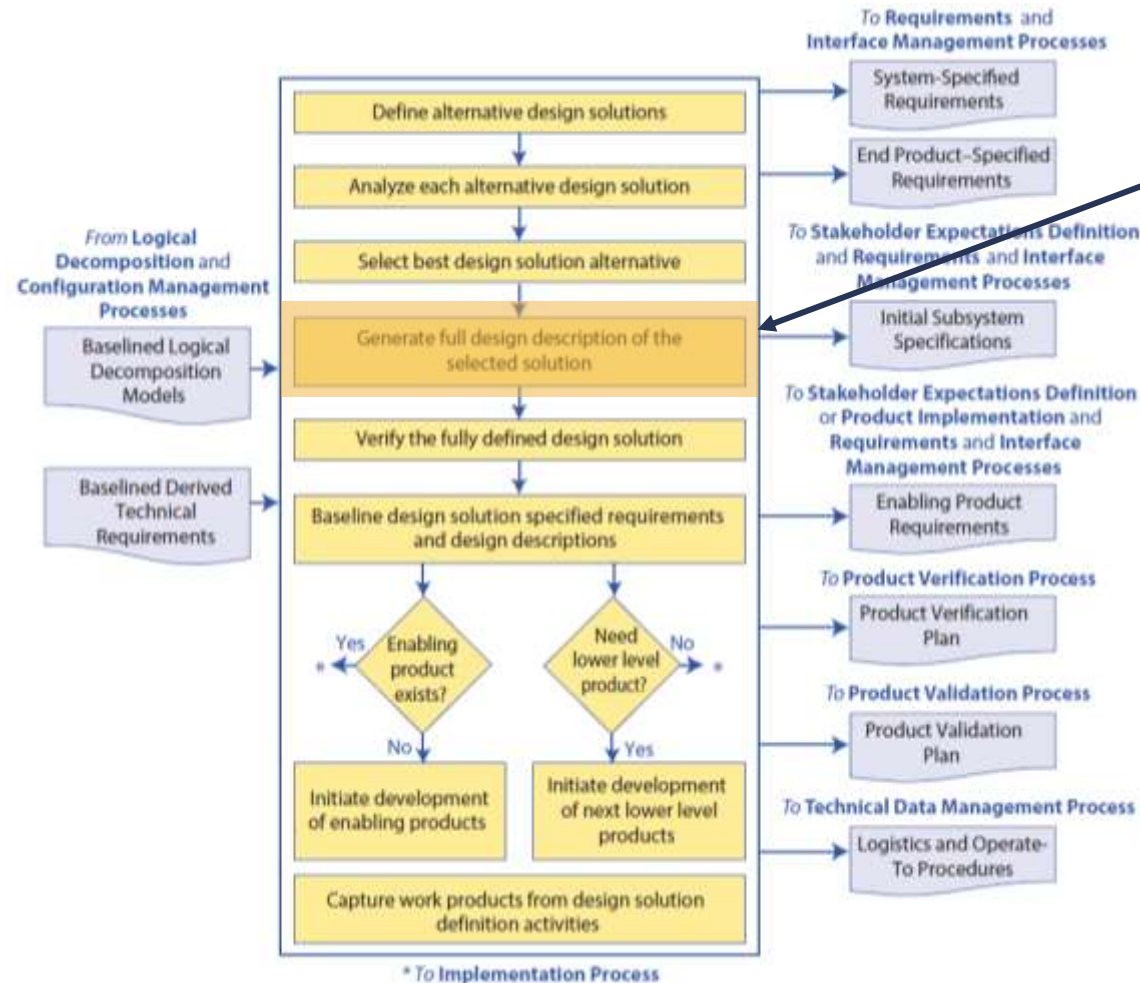
- Great to collect and document choices and evolution of mission
 - Can be at any level of design architectural (6U vs. 12U, Camera vs LIDAR), subsystem, vendor, part, etc.
- Generally, functionality/performance are traded against schedule, cost, or feasibility
 - Should outline MUST HAVE attributes vs. items that can be traded
 - Input should be as quantitative as possible; evaluation is often qualitative
- Often requires research, modeling, and programmatic evaluation to collect input to create trade

Characteristic	Architecture/Part/Configuration #1	Architecture/Part/Configuration #2	Comments
Interface with other mission elements	Fits all interfaces	Requires some rework	ICD referenced
Performance	Achieves 70% of objectives	Achieves 90% of objectives	Based upon system budget
Lead Time (Schedule)	Integration with FlatSat in month 2	Integration with FlatSat in month 2	Both options meet schedule
Cost	\$100	\$150 + \$TBD for rework of interfaces	Both above desired cost but are possible. Rework is concern on #2

Feasibility

- “Functional and Performance Analysis” + “Safe and Reliable, Affordable”
 - All of these are Feasibility studies
- Analyzing the Design Drivers is one of the keyways to determine feasibility
- System Budgets are great way to assess (i.e. power, data, link, mass):
 - Iteration 1 = sizing/architecting of system + identifying drivers + feasibility
 - Iteration 2 = analysis tool to track progress/verification of these budgets with test results
 - Iteration 3 = Use as operations tool to ensure system is capable of a given operations profile
- Ideally, physics-based models of the technology or science demonstration exist to inform mission developers of key needs
- Utilize trade studies to compare capability vs. need vs. constraints (time, money, people knowledge)

Design Solution Definition

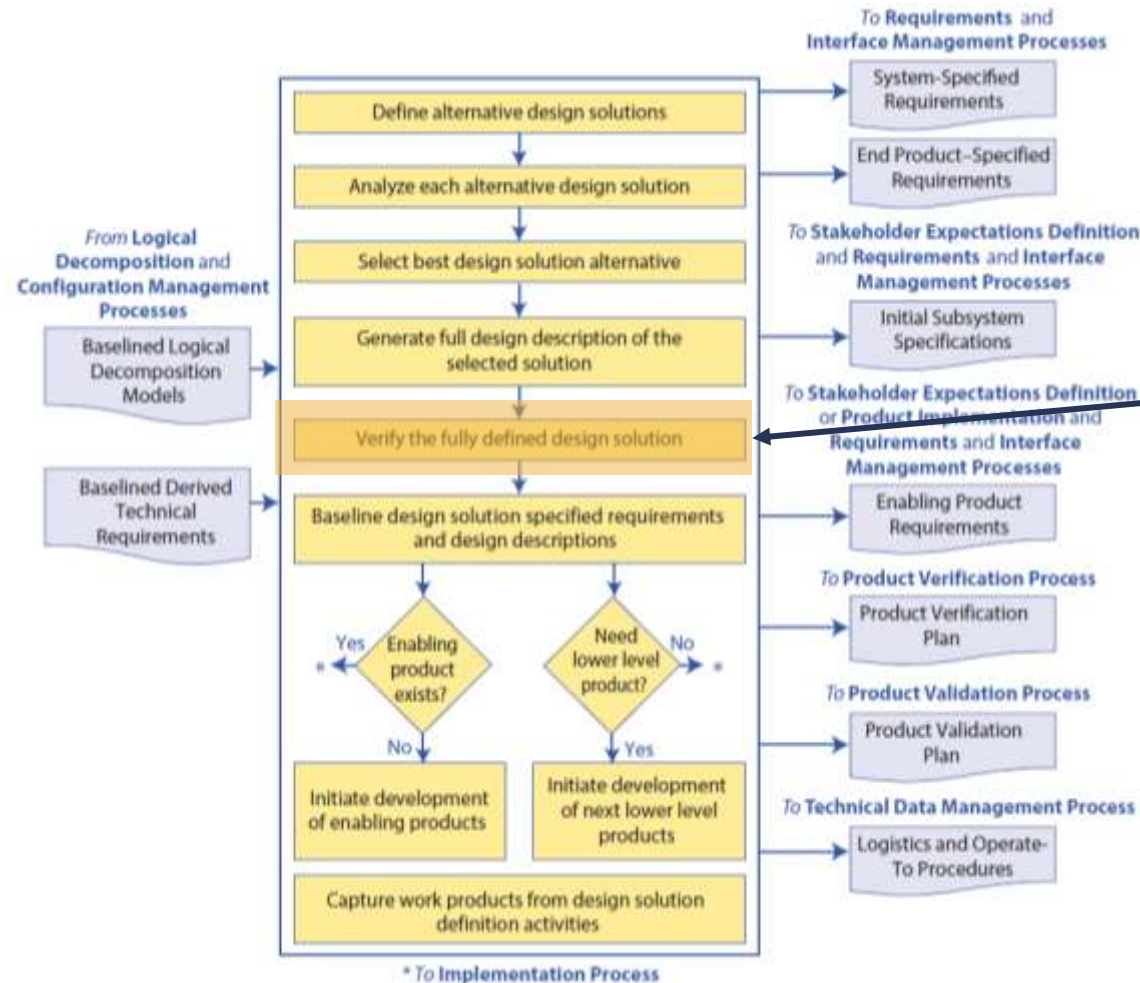


Develop Unit-level Specifications

- Block diagrams
- Functions
- ICDs
- Etc.

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Design Solution Definition

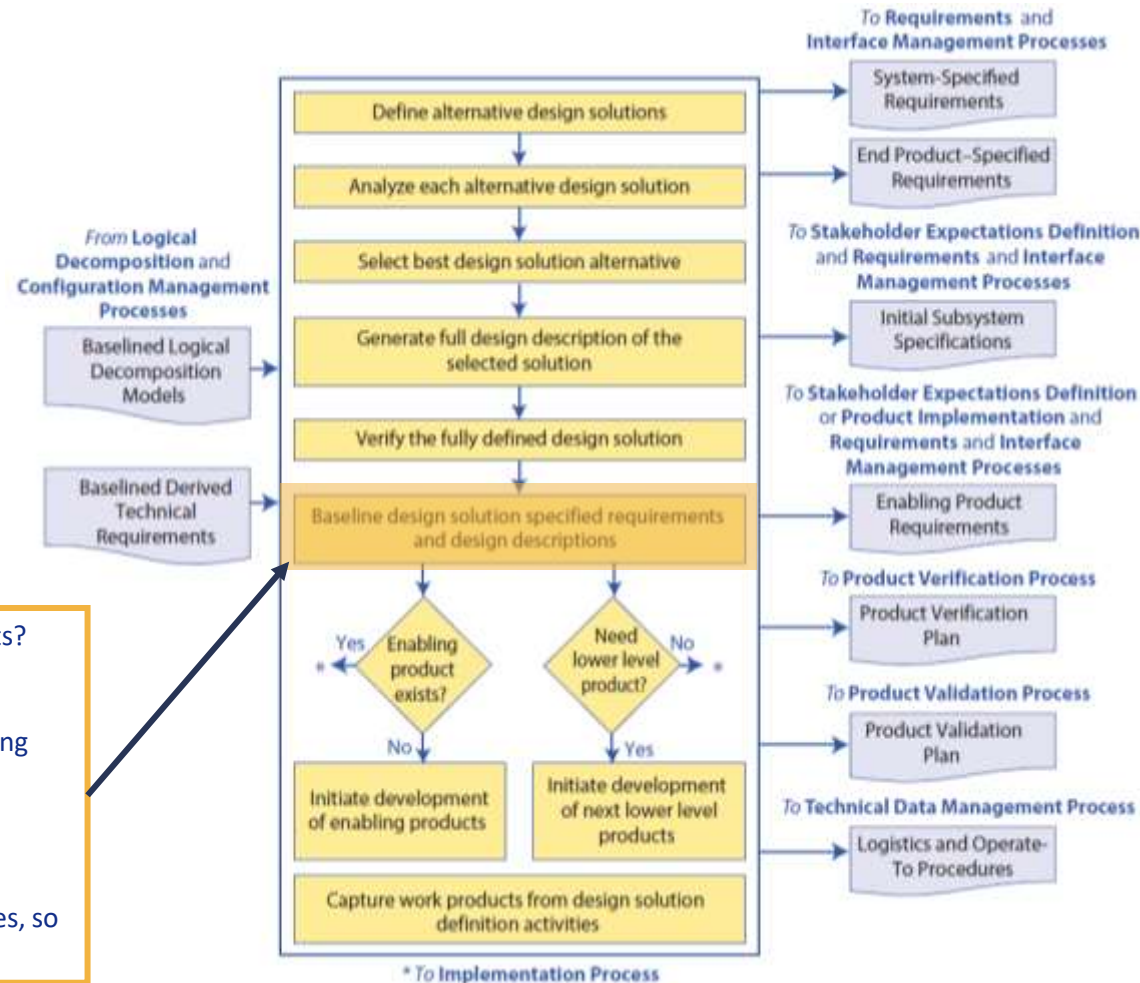


You will do formal verification later through integration & test, but do some initial sanity checks

- Interface checks
- System budgets (power, data, etc.)
- Mod&sim (if applicable)
- Evaluation boards/initial testing

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Design Solution Definition



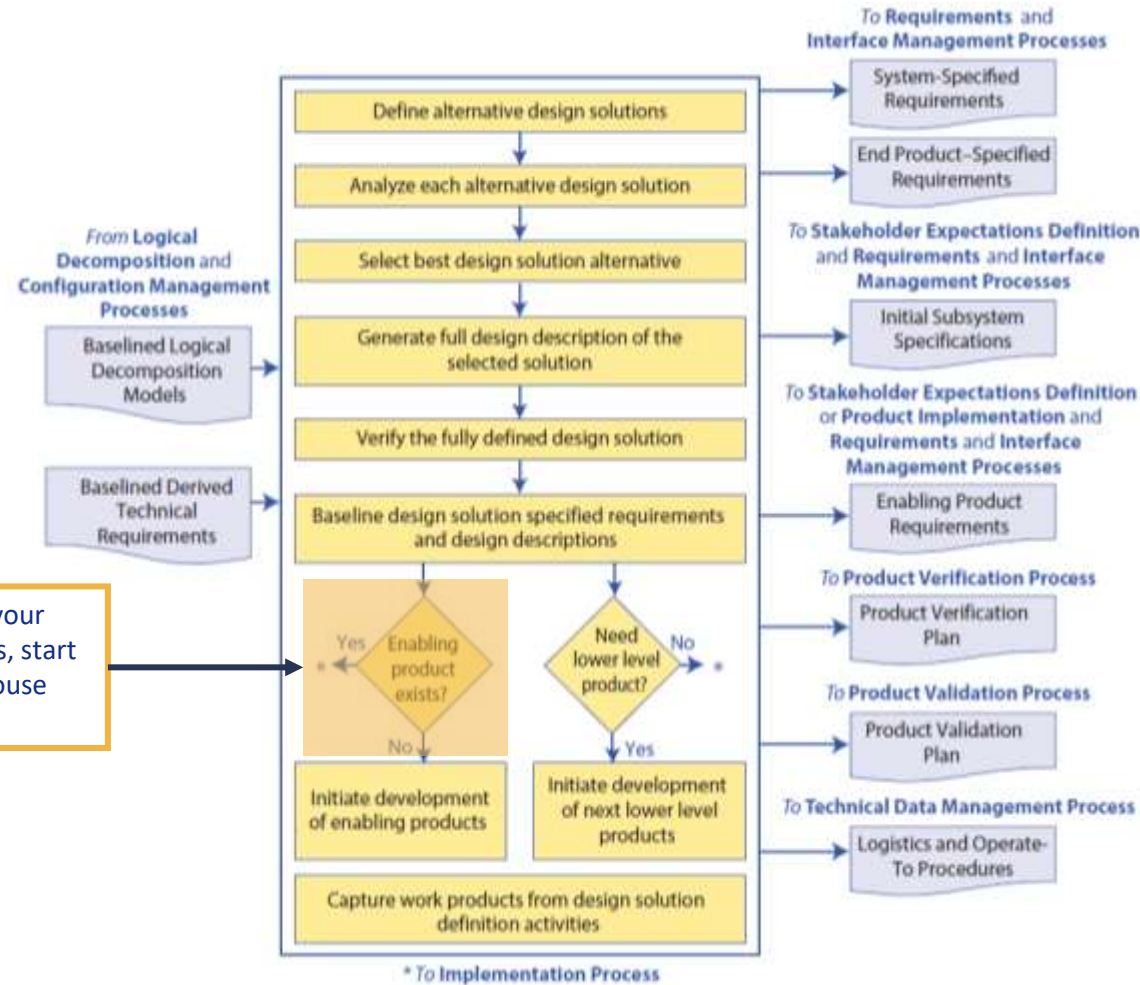
Will this design solution meet ALL requirements?

Again, you will formally verify this through integration & test later, but use your engineering judgement here based on the results from the previous step.

Remember UNP typically does not define requirements at the unit-level (NASA often does, so don't get confused by this step)

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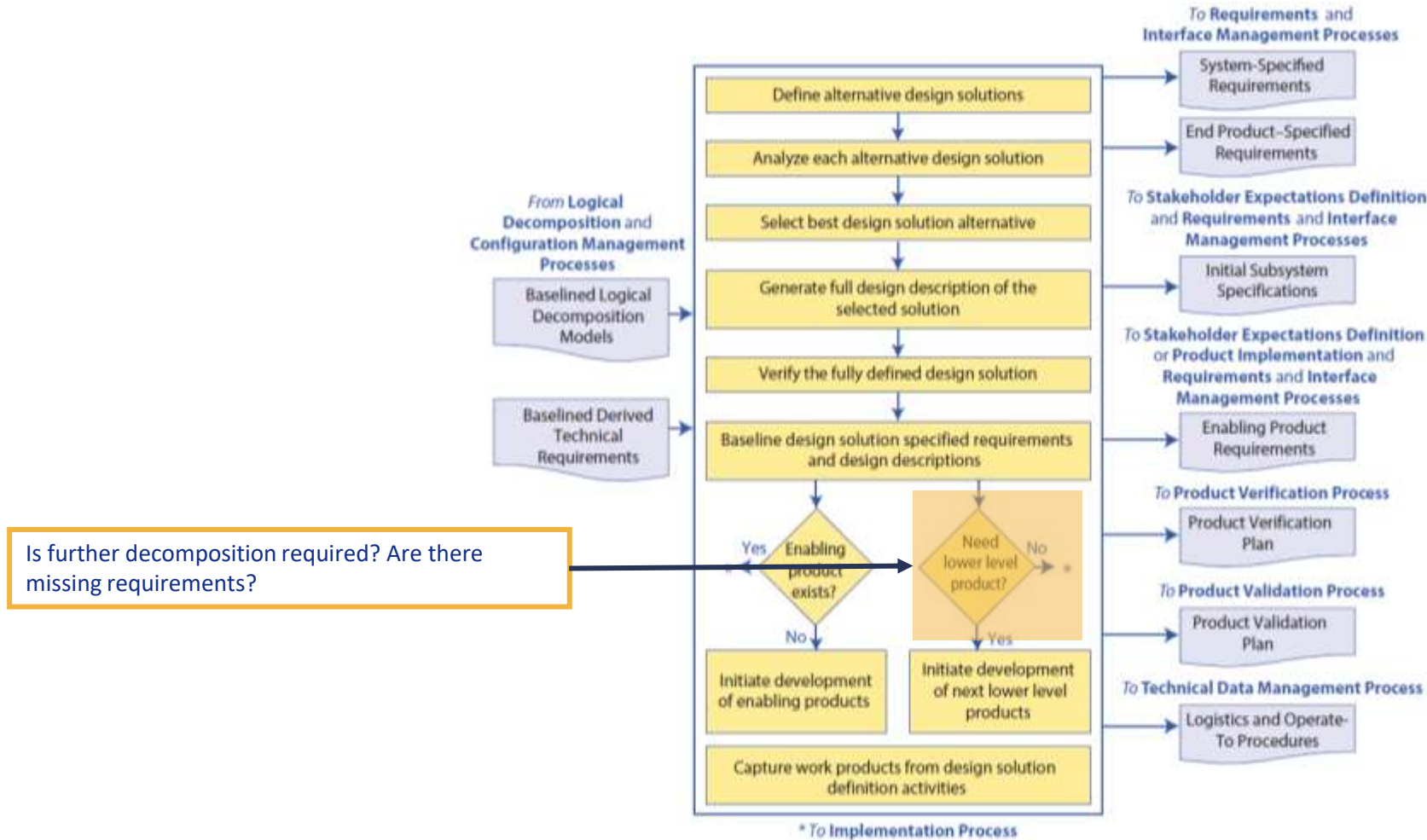
Design Solution Definition



Does a COTS solution exist that agrees with your cost, schedule, & technical constraints? If yes, start implementation. If no, start defining an in-house solution.

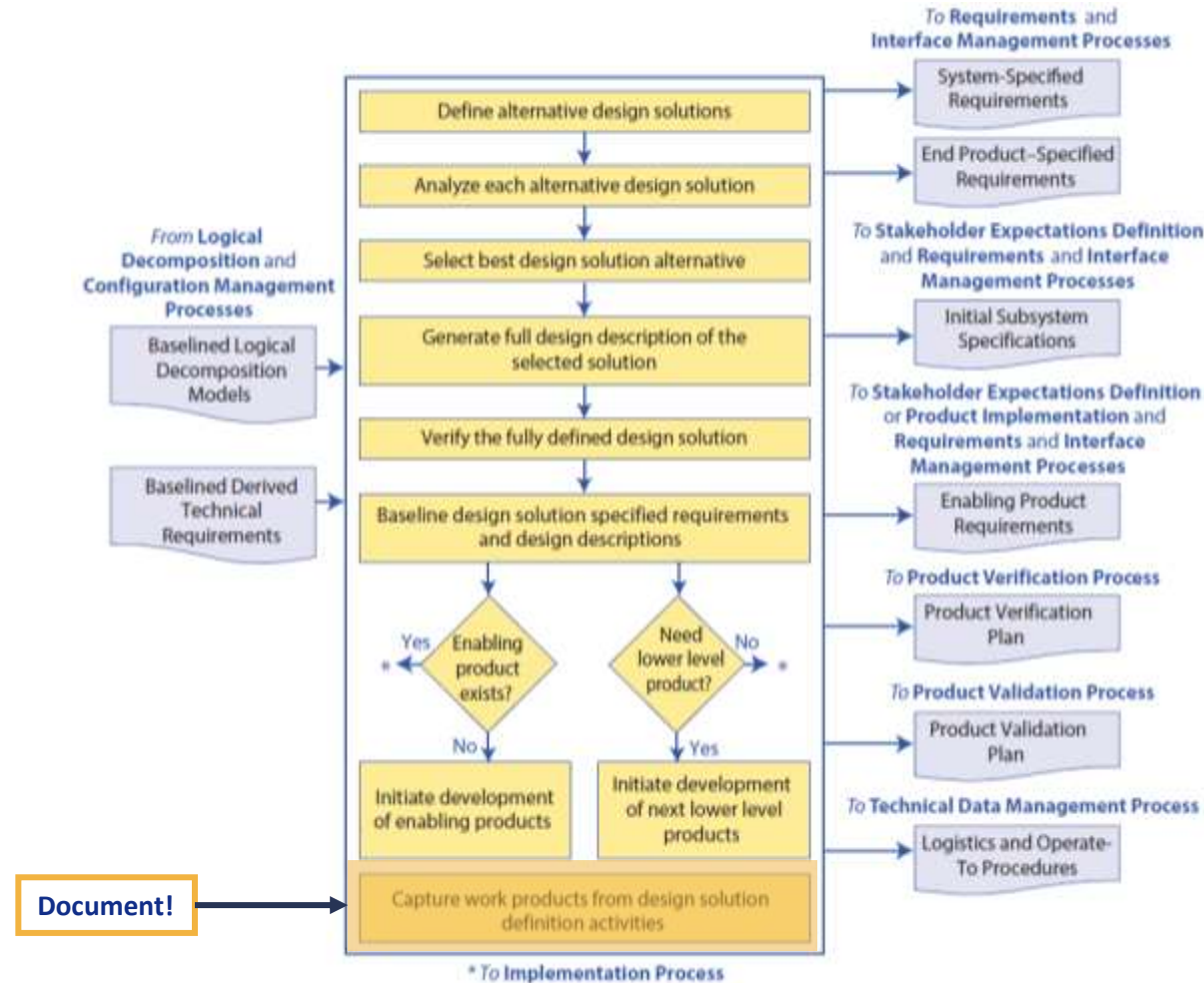
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Design Solution Definition



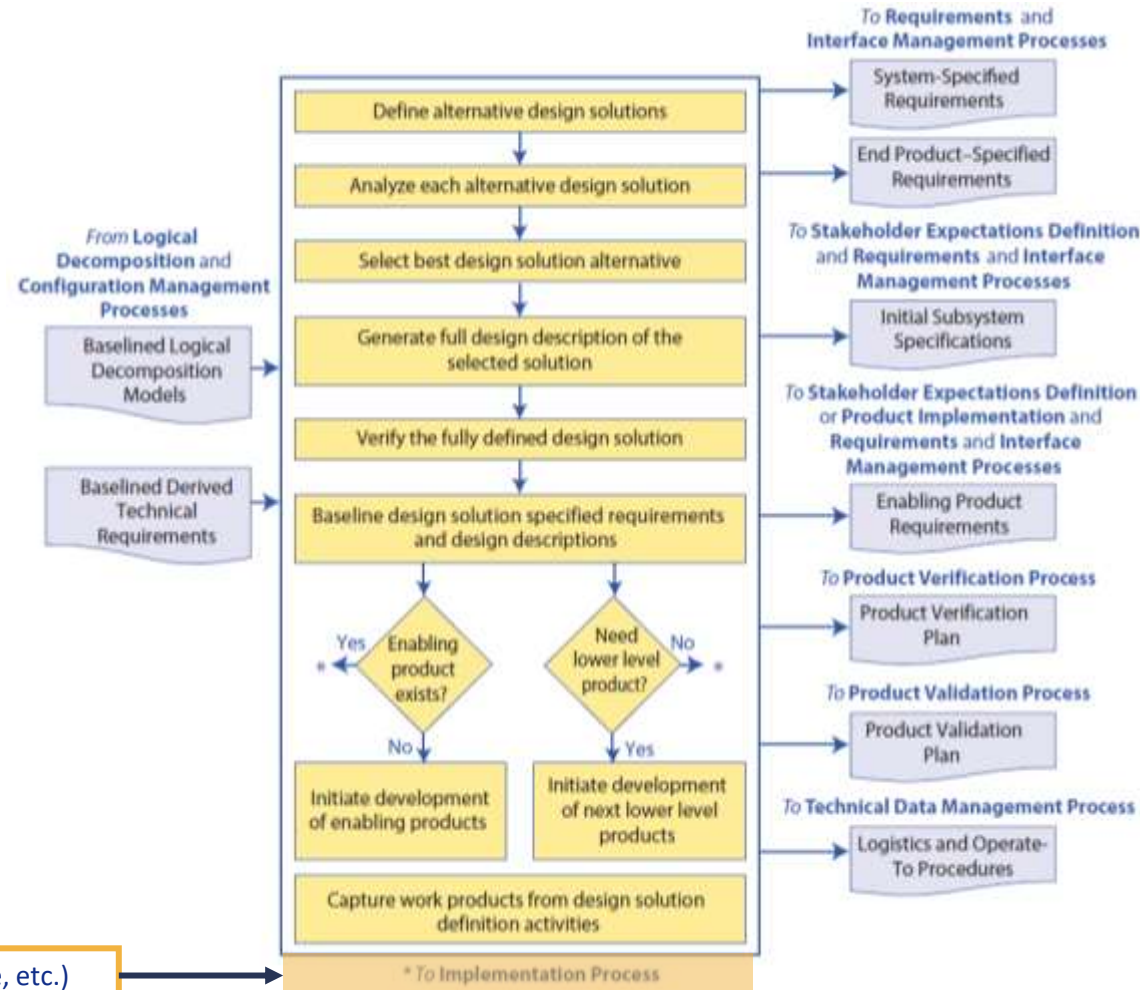
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Design Solution Definition



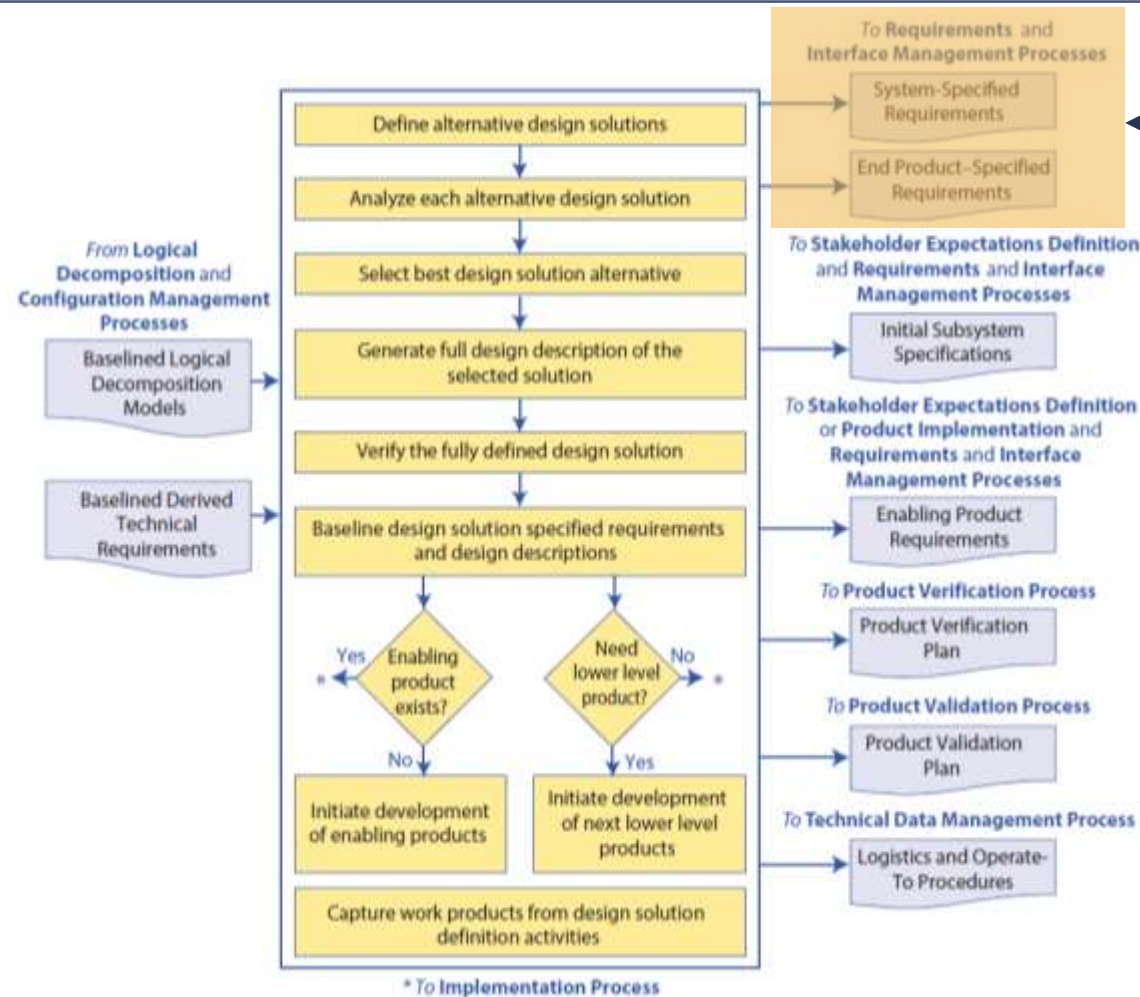
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Design Solution Definition



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Design Solution Definition

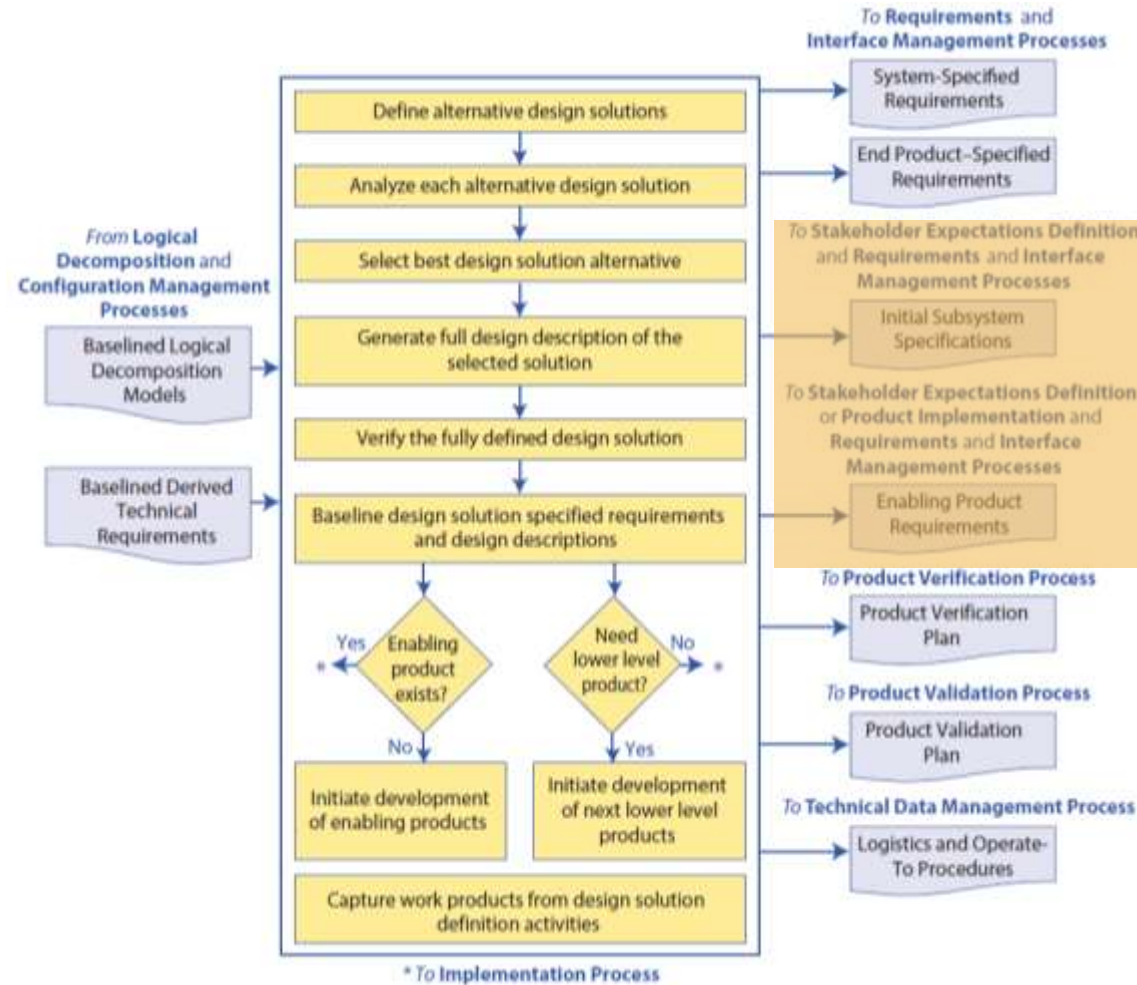


Create a feedback loop between design solution options and your RVM

- Are design solutions scoped within requirements?
- Did you miss any requirements?

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Design Solution Definition

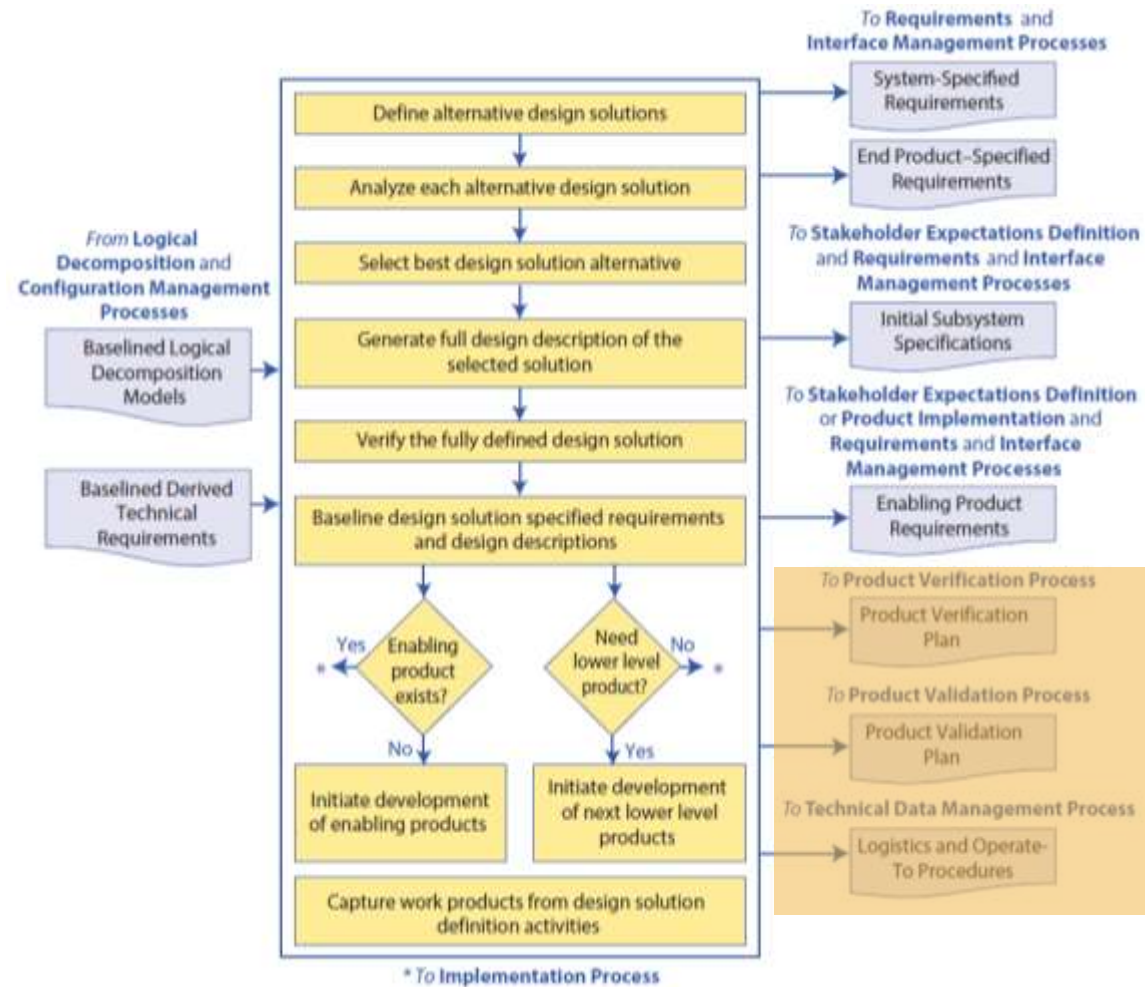


These are not particularly relevant to UNP, but they have some merit:

- Create a feedback loop between design solution options and your Mission Design Document
- Update your System Budgets (e.g. power, data, etc.) as you trade design solution options
- Document the selected design solution (functions, ICD, etc.)

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Design Solution Definition



As you start developing design solution definitions, start thinking about verification test procedures, handling procedures, etc.

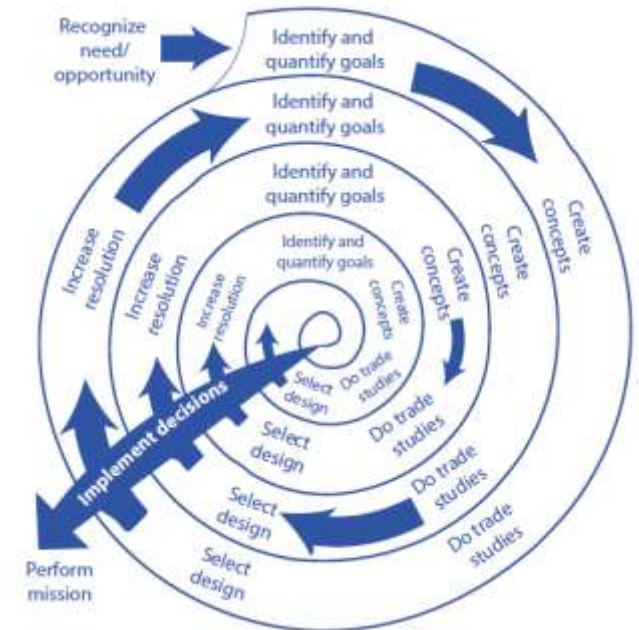
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Design Solution Definition



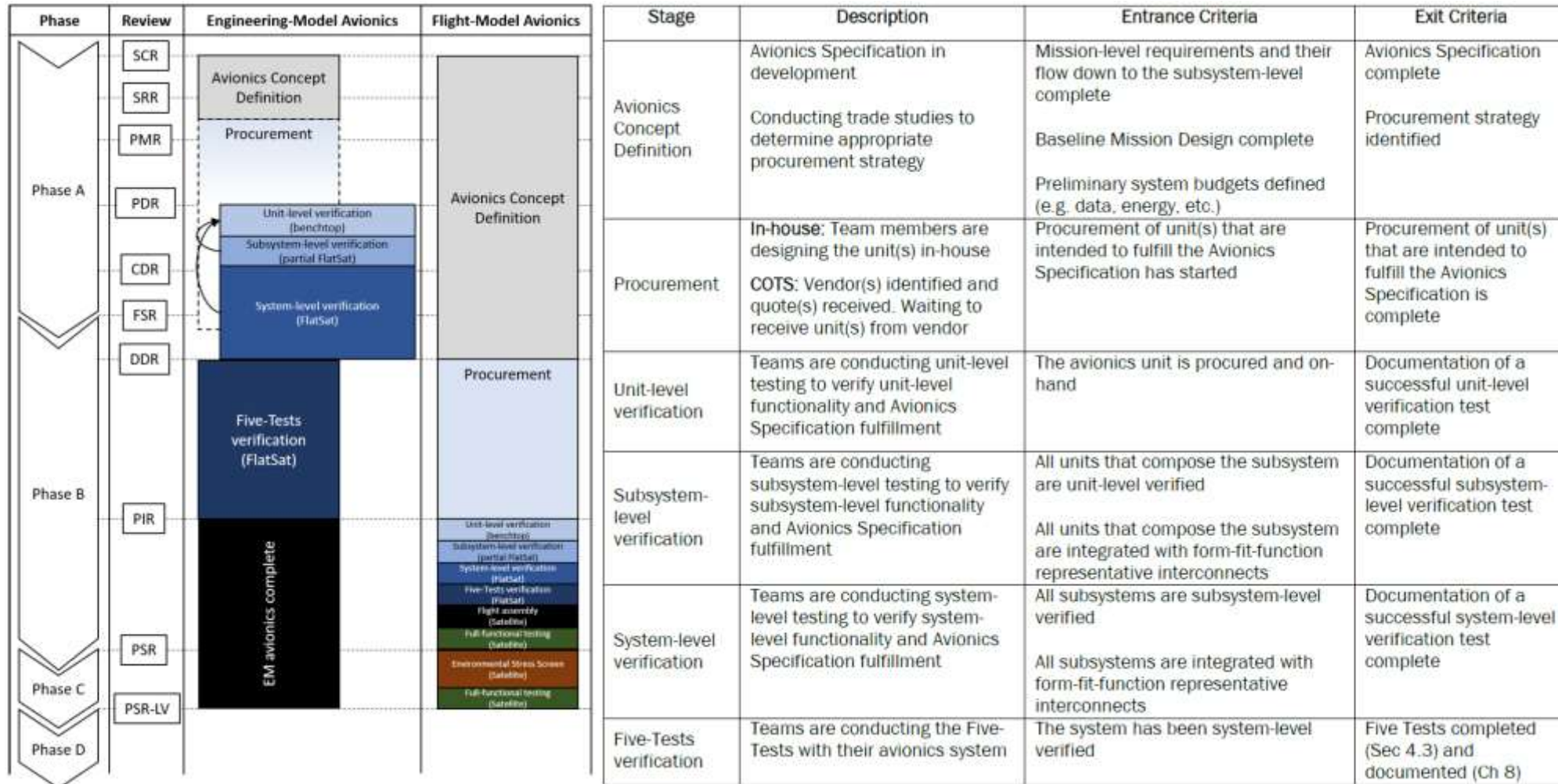
Design Solution Definitions must be consistent with the CONOPS, Experiment Plan, RVM, & System Budgets

- Requires a successive series of decisions regarding the appropriate design solution option
 - Know your design solution options early, document them, and save them for a future de-scope
 - Always ask: “Why was this solution picked? Is it truly the best option for our team?”
- It’s easy to lose sight of the Mission Design Document, RVM, & System Budgets once you start doing the “fun” stuff (e.g. CAD, PCBs, Code)
 - Always remember to ask the Systems Engineering questions from previous EATs (is this useable? is this the bare minimum required to meet mission success? etc.). The Mission Design Document, RVM, and System Budgets should never “go away” – update them as you go
 - You might find a conflict in your Mission Design Document, RVM, and System Budgets once you start Design Solution Definition/Implementation
 - e.g. there are no reasonably available products capable of providing the functionality you need, the ADCS you need is too expensive, your power budget does not close, etc.
- Make decisions swiftly and confidently, don’t dawdle
 - Do not wait until a formal UNP review to make important design decisions – sometimes there are months between reviews. Make the decision as a team, with your stakeholders, and discuss it at the next formal UNP review. E-mail the UNP PMO office if it is super pertinent. Remember YOU are the responsible design authority for your program



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UNP Avionics Development



AFRL Image

UNP Avionics Development



Software Development Expectations

Review	Expectation
SCR	Not required
SRR	This initial deliverable can be a very short explanation to outline the plans outlined in the software development section of the User's Guide.
PMR - PDR	Starting with PMR, the first full draft of this document should be submitted. Everything identified in the document description should be provided in draft form. System level architecture defined (block diagrams, ASM charts, state diagrams, etc.) Updates, as needed, should be provided at PDR. Drivers and firmware necessary for unit-level verification released.
CDR - FSR	The document should be fairly mature at this point. Software necessary for subsystem level verification released. Updates should be provided for each review. The submitted document should describe the flight software functionality. Initial release of software intended to fulfill Command Execution Test (CET) and Day-in-the-Life (DitL) test requirements, but may not be fully debugged.
Phase B	It is expected that software development may continue to occur in preparation for the Five Tests and as FM hardware is fully integrated and tested. Any changes to the design document supporting that development should be updated accordingly and submitted at each review.
Post Phase B	This document should be frozen once shipment to AFRL occurs.

COTS Avionics



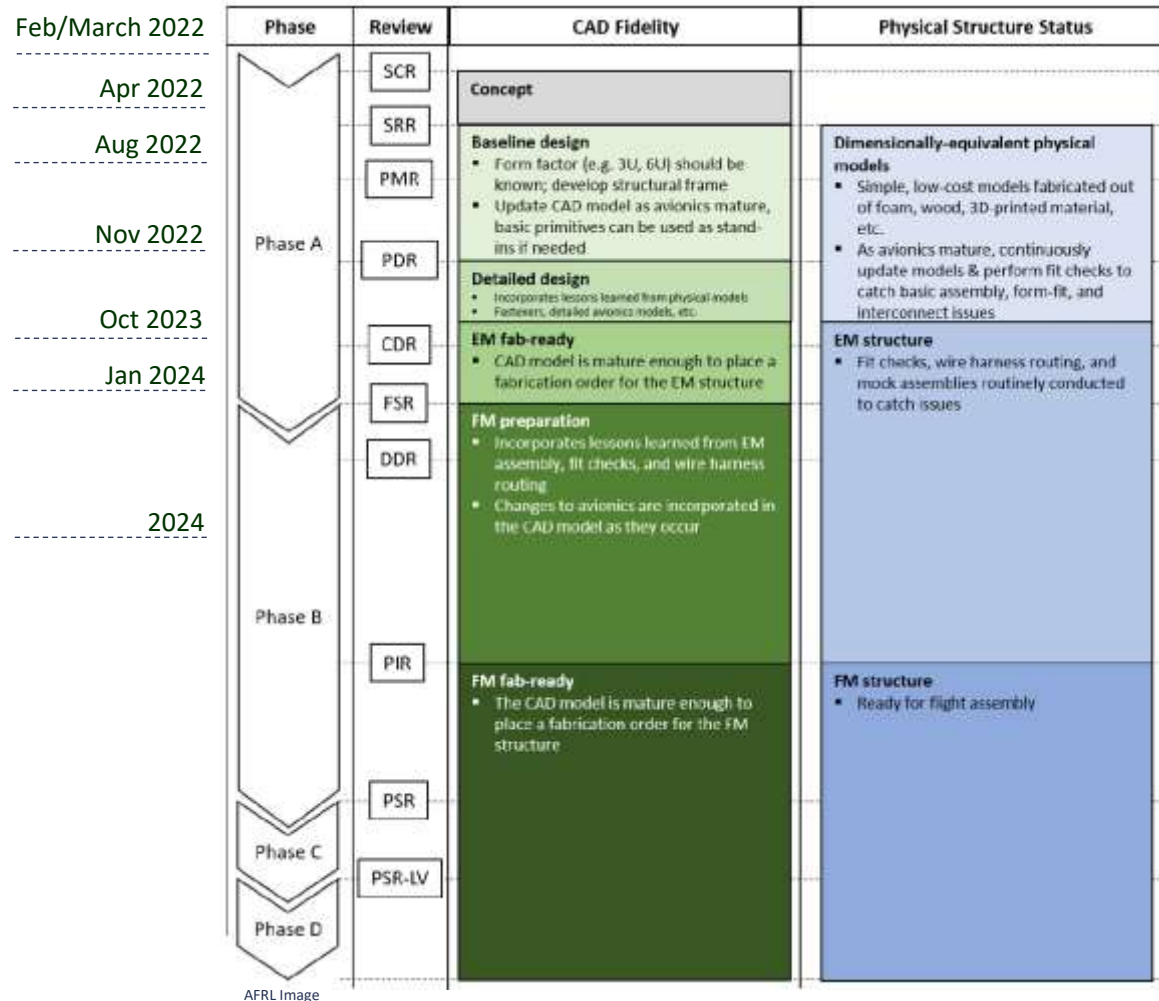
UNP teams may purchase some of their avionics from manufacturers (i.e. COTS) instead of developing it themselves (i.e. in-house).

A common example is the ADC subsystem: there is a growing market for COTS “black boxes” that contain all the sensors, actuators, support circuitry, and software for common small satellite ADC. COTS procurement approaches appear convenient; especially for teams that do not have expertise in ADC subsystem development.

However, COTS avionics may not always meet technical, cost, or schedule constraints. It is under such circumstances that many UNP teams end up developing PCBs in-house to complete portions of their avionics. A common example is the hardware/software interface between the satellite’s payload and remaining avionics bus. Satellite payloads often require unique power sources (e.g. odd supply voltage or high in-rush current), uncommon data interfaces (e.g. ethernet or custom architecture), and other interface traits that do not directly integrate with typical small satellite COTS solutions. Thus, a custom in-house PCB that provides the appropriate interfaces is often required.

Regardless of the procurement strategy, all avionics must be thoroughly tested to ensure proper functionality and interface compatibility with the remainder of the satellite’s avionics. **It is extremely important to realize that COTS avionics do not guarantee functionality, requirements fulfillment, or interface compatibility with the remainder of the satellite’s avionics.**

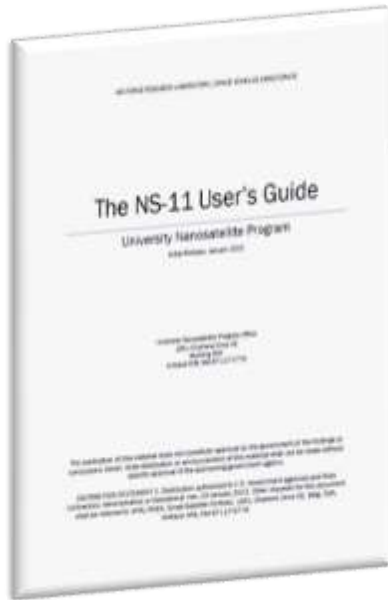
UNP Structural Development



AFRL Image

**All team members should read Chapter 2 of
the UNP User's Guide!**

Want to Learn More?



Read the UNP User's Guide!

Stick around for future EATs!

Ask questions!

Read the supporting material

Supporting material

- Most of this presentation copied from “UNP NS10 Systems Engineering Part1 EAT” by Sam Baxendale
- “UNP NS11 User’s Guide”, AFRL/RV, 2022
- “Applied Space Systems Engineering”, Larson/Kirkpatrick/Sellers/Thomas/Verma, 2009
- “Space Mission Engineering”, Wertz/Everett/Puschell, 2011
- “The NASA Systems Engineering Handbook”, NASA, 2007
- “INCOSE Systems Engineering Handbook”, INCOSE, 2010
- “Michigan Tech MEPIV Lecture: An Introduction to Systems Engineering”, King, 2019
- “UNP NS9 EAT: Systems Engineering”, Straight, 2016
- “ISO/IEC 15288 IEEE Systems Engineering Standard”, IEEE, 2015
- “ECSS-E-10A European Systems Engineering Standard”, ESA, 2018
- And more! *Not an exhaustive list*

