



Washington, D.C.
February 12, 2026

The Honorable Allison Hooker
Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

Re: Courtesy Transmittal – Letter to The Honorable Marco Rubio

Dear Under Secretary Hooker,

I write to respectfully provide, for your awareness, the enclosed copy of my letter addressed to The Honorable Marco Rubio regarding a request for a meeting on U.S.–Japan defense-industrial cooperation.

I would be grateful if your office could kindly take note of this correspondence. Should you or your team have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact my office directly.

For ease of reference and scheduling purposes, I may be reached at goran.pesic@samuelgroup.us or (202) 236-3488.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully yours,

Goran Samuel Pesic
President and Chief Executive Officer
Samuel Group Inc.

Enclosures:

Letter to The Honorable Marco Rubio (dated February 12, 2026)

THIS MATERIAL IS DISTRIBUTED BY SAMUEL GROUP INC. ON BEHALF OF IHI CORPORATION.
MORE INFORMATION IS ON FILE WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, WASHINGTON, D.C.



CERTIFIED TRUE COPY

Washington, D.C.
April 20, 2026

Mr. Joseph A. Brooks
Performing the Duties of Deputy Assistant Secretary of War for Product Support
Office of the Assistant Secretary of War (Sustainment)
The Pentagon
3010 Defense Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20301-3010

RE: U.S.–Japan Defense Industrial Cooperation and Forward Sustainment Alignment

Dear Mr. Brooks,

I write in my capacity as President and Chief Executive Officer of Samuel Group Inc., a Washington, D.C. based strategic advisory firm supporting defense, national security and allied industrial cooperation initiatives. I respectfully request a meeting with you and your team, in person or by secure video conference, to discuss a prospective U.S.–Japan defense industrial cooperation initiative involving our client, IHI Corporation of Japan, and its relevance to current Department of War sustainment priorities.

This request aligns with ongoing Department efforts to advance distributed sustainment, forward maintenance capacity, and allied industrial base integration across the Indo Pacific.

IHI is a leading Japanese aerospace firm supporting the Japan Air Self Defense Force and allied programs. It maintains proven expertise in the maintenance, repair, overhaul, and lifecycle sustainment of F100 and F110 propulsion systems supporting United States Air Force (USAF) and allied fleets, including the F-15 and F-16. This includes licensed production in Japan of the Pratt and Whitney F100 engine for the Japan Air Self Defense Force, designated F100 IHI 220E, alongside full spectrum sustainment capabilities.

These capabilities align directly with the **March 20, 2026**, Partnership for Indo Pacific Industrial Resilience (**PIPIR**) Joint Statement, which commits partners to exploring forward deployed F100 and F110 engine repair capacity in Japan.

We seek your guidance on how such capabilities may be assessed within existing Department frameworks, including Defense Industrial Cooperation, Acquisition, and Sustainment (DICAS) mechanisms, to translate strategic intent into executable sustainment outcomes.

In this context, the Japan Ministry of Defense press release following the **April 14, 2026 DICAS** meeting in Washington, D.C., confirms that both governments concurred on advancing the manufacture and repair of F100 and F110 components as a pilot effort toward USAF certification through the Source Approval Request (SAR) process. This establishes a timely and credible bilateral pathway to advance forward sustainment cooperation in alignment with the IHI capabilities outlined above.

We would also highlight a near-term application and an emerging USAF requirement. Contractor-supported training and aggressor air programs under Air Combat Command and Pacific Air Forces are increasingly constrained by the limited availability of legacy propulsion systems. The controlled reuse and refurbishment of Japan Air Self Defense Force F-15 propulsion assets, including F100 IHI 220E engines, presents a practical and policy-aligned opportunity to augment sustainment capacity while extending the lifecycle value of allied assets.

This approach supports both PIPIR and DICAS objectives to expand forward sustainment, strengthen allied industrial integration and accelerate operational outcomes.

We would value your perspective and any guidance regarding coordination with the relevant Department and USAF stakeholders.

I would welcome the opportunity to meet with you at your convenience. I may be reached directly in Washington, D.C. at goran.pesic@samuelgroup.us or (202) 236-3488.

Thank you for your leadership in advancing United States sustainment and readiness priorities.

Respectfully yours,

S I G N E D C O P Y

Goran Samuel Pesic
President and Chief Executive Officer,
Samuel Group Inc.

Cc: Mr. Dan CINTRON, Director, Office of Japanese Affairs, Department of State

THIS MATERIAL IS DISTRIBUTED BY SAMUEL GROUP INC. ON BEHALF OF IHI CORPORATION.
MORE INFORMATION IS ON FILE WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, WASHINGTON, D.C.



Washington, D.C.
February 12, 2026

The Honorable Marco Rubio
Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

RE: Request for Meeting on U.S.–Japan Defense-Industrial Cooperation

Dear Mr. Rubio,

I write in my capacity as President and Chief Executive Officer of Samuel Group Inc., a Washington, D.C., based strategic advisory firm focused on defense, national security and allied industrial cooperation.

I respectfully request a meeting with you, or with a member of your national security team, either in person or via secure video conference, to discuss a prospective defense-industrial cooperation initiative involving our client, IHI Corporation of Japan, and its potential relevance to current U.S.–Japan alliance priorities.

In the period following President Trump's October 2025 visit to Japan and his engagement with Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi, attention has increasingly turned to converting strategic alignment into practical, durable forms of cooperation, including in the defense-industrial sphere.

Prime Minister Takaichi's recent electoral mandate this month further reinforces Tokyo's political readiness to deepen defense-industrial collaboration with the United States. Against this backdrop, we believe this is an appropriate moment to share IHI's perspective and seek your office's guidance on how such engagement may be evaluated within established U.S. policy frameworks.

IHI is among Japan's leading industrial and aerospace enterprises, with a longstanding role in support of the Japan Self-Defense Forces (JSDF) and key allied programs. Of particular relevance, IHI brings deep technical and operational expertise in the sustainment, maintenance, repair and overhaul of F100 and F110 aircraft engines, platforms central to U.S. and allied airpower, including F-15 and F-16 fleets operating across the Indo-Pacific and, more broadly, both the NATO and Middle East theaters.

IHI is assessing how this experience may be applied, in a complementary and appropriately scoped manner, to support U.S. and allied readiness objectives.

A discussion with your team would help clarify how existing mechanisms, such as the Defense Industrial Cooperation, Acquisition, and Sustainment (DICAS) framework and the Partnership for Indo-Pacific Industrial Resilience (PIPIR), are currently viewed as vehicles for translating alliance intent into practical business-ready outcomes. We would value your perspective on whether and how initiatives of this nature are best considered under those channels.

We would also welcome guidance regarding certification and approval pathways, especially the Source Approval Request (SAR) process for allied industrial contributors. In practical terms, SAR is not a procedural formality; it is the principal gate through which a prospective source demonstrates technical equivalency, manufacturing quality, configuration control and long-term sustainment reliability for mission-critical components. For an allied firm such as IHI, a clear and predictable SAR pathway is essential to determine whether and how its capabilities can be responsibly integrated into U.S. sustainment ecosystems.

From an industry and readiness perspective, the predictability, sequencing, and resourcing of SAR reviews can materially affect feasibility, program timing, and supply assurance. Where SAR pathways are clear, the United States can widen qualified source options, reduce single-point vulnerabilities, and strengthen resilience across high-demand fleets. Where timelines are uncertain, even highly capable allied participation can become difficult to operationalize.

For these reasons, we believe it would be valuable for the U.S. Air Force's relevant engineering and sustainment authorities to continue treating SAR as a strategically important mechanism for allied industrial integration, particularly in propulsion sustainment, where readiness effects are immediate and measurable. Early policy clarity on documentation standards, technical benchmarks, and review sequencing would help ensure that potential contributors such as IHI are assessed efficiently, rigorously and in full alignment with U.S. safety, security and performance requirements.

IHI has retained Samuel Group to help ensure that any prospective U.S. engagement is approached with discipline, transparency, and full alignment with U.S. priorities, policies and processes. Our purpose in requesting this meeting is straightforward: to provide context, to listen carefully and to ensure that any future steps, if appropriate, are shaped by early and constructive dialogue with the U.S. government.

We are fully flexible as to timing and format and would be pleased to accommodate your schedule.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration of this meeting request. I would be honored by the opportunity to engage in a constructive dialogue and remain deeply appreciative of your office's leadership in advancing United States national security and alliance cooperation.

For scheduling purposes, I may be reached at goran.pesic@samuelgroup.us or (202) 236-3488.

Respectfully yours,

S I G N E D C O P Y

Goran Samuel Pesic
President and Chief Executive Officer
Samuel Group Inc.

cc:

The Honorable Allison Hooker, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, U.S. Department of State
The Honorable Michael P. Duffey, Under Secretary of War for Acquisition and Sustainment, U.S. Department of War

ANNEX

(FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES ONLY)

IHI-Specific Context:

Business-Ready Allied Engine Sustainment, DICAS/PIPIR and SAR Approval Considerations

Purpose of this Annex:

This Annex is provided solely for background and discussion purposes. It offers IHI-specific context relevant to prospective U.S.–Japan defense-industrial cooperation and illustrates how existing policy frameworks could be operationalized through an execution-ready industrial partner. It is not a proposal, request for approval or policy recommendation.

1. IHI and Allied Fighter-Engine Sustainment

IHI Corporation of Japan is one of Japan’s foremost industrial and aerospace companies, with a decades-long role supporting the Japanese Self-Defense Forces (JSDF) and key allied programs. Of particular relevance to U.S. and allied readiness, IHI possesses deep, operationally proven expertise in the sustainment, maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) of the F100 and F110 aircraft engine families.

These engines underpin critical combat aircraft fleets, including the **F-15 and F-16**, that remain central to U.S. and allied airpower across the **Indo-Pacific**. Demand for sustainment capacity for these platforms is expected to remain durable over the next decade, driven by fleet age, operational tempo and increasingly distributed basing and logistics concepts.

IHI’s experience is not theoretical. The company currently supports these engine families in operational environments and has established technical depth, quality systems, and workforce capabilities directly relevant to allied sustainment requirements.

2. IHI as a Business-Ready Vehicle to Operationalize Policy

From an industry perspective, IHI represents a business-ready sustainment partner capable of translating policy intent into measurable industrial output, should U.S. policymakers determine that doing so advances national security objectives.

Key characteristics of IHI’s readiness include:

- Existing technical qualifications and sustainment track record on F100/F110 engines;
- Experience operating within allied military airworthiness and quality frameworks;
- The ability to scale sustainment output incrementally as approvals and demand warrant;
- A demonstrated willingness to structure engagement in a manner complementary to U.S. industry and aligned with U.S. government processes.
- Excellent long-term working relationships with U.S. engine OEMs such as Pratt & Whitney and General Electric.

As such, IHI provides a concrete case through which policy frameworks can be assessed not only in strategic terms, but in their ability to generate real-world readiness, supply-chain resilience and sustainment outcomes.

3. Relevance of DICAS and PIPIR to IHI Engagement

Existing cooperation mechanisms, particularly the Defense Industrial Cooperation, Acquisition, and Sustainment (DICAS) framework and the Partnership for Indo-Pacific Industrial Resilience (PIPIR), are frequently cited as instruments for advancing allied industrial cooperation.

From IHI's perspective, these frameworks offer potential pathways for:

- Evaluating allied sustainment participation in a structured, policy-aligned manner;
- Sequencing engagement in a way that balances readiness benefits with industrial base considerations;
- Translating alliance commitments into executable sustainment activities tied to existing platforms.

Understanding how U.S. policymakers view the applicability of DICAS and PIPIR to a company such as IHI, already active in allied sustainment but new to the U.S. industrial base, is therefore central to informed business planning, investment and alignment.

4. Source Approval Request (SAR) Approval as a Critical Interface

For IHI, as with other allied industrial contributors, **Source Approval Request (SAR) approval pathways** represent the primary interface between policy alignment and industrial execution.

From an IHI-specific planning standpoint:

- SAR approval predictability directly influences investment decisions, workforce readiness and supplier alignment;
- Early clarity on approval sequencing helps ensure that business commitments are synchronized with U.S. Air Force and Department of War priorities;
- Engagement at an exploratory stage allows IHI to calibrate expectations, timelines and scope in a manner consistent with U.S. processes.

This Annex does not advocate for any particular approval outcome. Rather, it underscores that SAR approval pathways are the mechanism through which policy intent becomes an operational business-ready reality, and that early dialogue materially reduces friction, misalignment and inefficiency at later stages.

5. Value of Early Consultative Engagement with IHI

Early, non-binding engagement with IHI would allow U.S. government stakeholders to:

- Assess IHI's capabilities and intentions in a low-risk, exploratory setting;
- Provide guidance on appropriate channels, sequencing, and considerations;
- Ensure that any future engagement, if pursued, aligns fully with U.S. national security, industrial base and risk-management priorities.

For IHI, such engagement enables disciplined, policy-aligned business planning and avoids premature or misaligned commitments.



WASHINGTON, D.C.
SAMUEL GROUP D.C.
Ronald Reagan Building
1300 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Suite 700
Washington, D.C. 20004
Main: (202) 753-9034
admin@samuelgroup.us

www.samuelgroup.us

BRIEFING NOTE

To: Mr. Benjamin J. Parisi
Political Unit Chief
Office of Japanese Affairs
U.S. Department of State
ParisiB@state.gov

From: Goran Samuel Pesic
President and Chief Executive Officer
Samuel Group Inc.
Washington, D.C.

Subject: Background Briefing on Samuel Group Inc. Engagement Regarding IHI Corporation, DICAS, PIPIR and U.S.–Japan Defense-Industrial Cooperation

Date: June 15, 2026

PURPOSE

This briefing note is provided to Mr. Benjamin J. Parisi and the Office of Japanese Affairs for awareness and context regarding Samuel Group Inc.'s ongoing engagement on behalf of IHI Corporation of Japan.

Samuel Group Inc. wishes to ensure that the Department of State, through the Office of Japanese Affairs, is appropriately informed of our ongoing discussions with the Department of War concerning prospective U.S.–Japan defense-industrial cooperation, particularly as it relates to sustainment, readiness, DICAS, PIPIR, and IHI's aerospace engine capabilities.

Copies of the relevant correspondence are included in this package for reference.

BACKGROUND

Samuel Group Inc. is a Washington, D.C.-based strategic advisory firm supporting defense, national security, and allied industrial cooperation initiatives. We are currently engaged by IHI Corporation of Japan in relation to prospective U.S.–Japan defense-industrial cooperation opportunities.

IHI is one of Japan's leading aerospace and industrial companies, with longstanding experience supporting the Japan Self-Defense Forces and allied programs. Of particular relevance, IHI has significant experience in the maintenance, repair, overhaul, and lifecycle sustainment of F100 and F110 aircraft engines, including systems supporting F-15 and F-16 aircraft.

This engagement is focused on identifying practical and policy-aligned ways in which Japanese industrial capabilities may support U.S. and allied readiness, sustainment resilience, and broader defense-industrial cooperation.

Samuel Group Inc. is undertaking this work in a transparent and disciplined manner, with the objective of ensuring that any future engagement is aligned with U.S. government processes, U.S. national security priorities, and the broader U.S.–Japan alliance relationship.

PRIOR CORRESPONDENCE

On February 12, 2026, Samuel Group Inc. transmitted a letter to The Honorable Marco Rubio, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, requesting a meeting to discuss prospective U.S.–Japan defense-industrial cooperation involving IHI Corporation.

That correspondence focused on IHI's potential relevance to U.S. and allied sustainment priorities and asked how such capabilities might be considered within established policy frameworks, including the Defense Industrial Cooperation, Acquisition, and Sustainment framework, known as DICAS, and the Partnership for Indo-Pacific Industrial Resilience, known as PIPIR.

For awareness, Samuel Group Inc. also provided courtesy copies of the Rubio correspondence to senior U.S. government stakeholders, including the Department of State and the Department of War. A courtesy transmittal was sent to The Honorable Allison Hooker, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs. A similar courtesy transmittal was provided to The Honorable Michael P. Duffey, Under Secretary of War for Acquisition and Sustainment.

Samuel Group Inc. has also maintained related correspondence with U.S. officials in Japan, including the American Embassy in Tokyo, to ensure appropriate awareness of the broader diplomatic and alliance context.

Copies of these letters are included in this briefing package.

RECENT ENGAGEMENT WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF WAR

Following the initial correspondence, Samuel Group Inc. engaged with Mr. Joseph A. Brooks, Performing the Duties of Deputy Assistant Secretary of War for Product Support, Office of the Assistant Secretary of War for Sustainment.

On April 20, 2026, Samuel Group Inc. wrote to Mr. Brooks regarding U.S.–Japan defense-industrial cooperation and forward sustainment alignment. Mr. Dan Cintron, Director of the Office of Japanese Affairs at the Department of State, was copied on that correspondence.

That letter outlined IHI's relevance to current sustainment priorities, including distributed sustainment, forward maintenance capacity, allied industrial base integration, and potential cooperation involving F100 and F110 engine repair capacity in Japan.

On May 4, 2026, Samuel Group Inc. participated in an MS Teams meeting with Mr. Brooks and members of his office to discuss a practical use case involving IHI Corporation, Top Aces, and American Defense International.

The concept under discussion involves a potential allied adversary air sustainment initiative focused on the controlled release, inspection, refurbishment, and reuse of F100-IHI-220E engines associated with Japan Air Self-Defense Force F-15 inventory.

The intent would be to support U.S. Air Force training readiness, particularly contractor-supported adversary air requirements, while demonstrating a practical example of allied industrial cooperation under the DICAS and PIPIR frameworks.

Samuel Group Inc. will shortly be submitting a Proposal Letter to Mr. Brooks for the Department of War's review and consideration.

The proposal is intended to provide some concrete, narrowly defined, and policy-aligned use case through which IHI's sustainment capabilities, Japan's defense industrial capacity, and approved U.S. contractor requirements may be assessed in support of U.S. Air Force readiness.

PURPOSE OF ENGAGEMENT WITH THE OFFICE OF JAPANESE AFFAIRS

Samuel Group Inc. would like to begin including the Office of Japanese Affairs in relevant information updates regarding this initiative. This is intended to ensure transparency and to recognize the Department of State's important role in the broader U.S.–Japan alliance relationship. While the immediate technical and sustainment discussions are taking place with the Department of War, we believe it is appropriate and important that the Department of State remain informed.

Samuel Group Inc. would welcome guidance from Mr. Parisi and the Office of Japanese Affairs on the preferred method and frequency for providing such updates.

REQUEST FOR SITUATIONAL AWARENESS ON DICAS AND PIPIR

Samuel Group Inc. would also respectfully ask whether the Office of Japanese Affairs is able to provide, to the extent not classified or otherwise restricted, any information regarding U.S. participation, membership, or working-level points of contact associated with the DICAS and PIPIR processes.

This request is made solely for situational awareness. Samuel Group Inc. is not requesting classified, privileged, or internal deliberative information. Rather, we are seeking any appropriate guidance that may help us better understand the relevant channels, sequencing, and responsible offices connected to these frameworks.

Such awareness would help ensure that any future engagement is properly routed, respectful of U.S. government processes, and aligned with the appropriate policy architecture.

POSSIBLE FUTURE IHI ENGAGEMENT IN TOKYO

Samuel Group Inc. would also welcome the opportunity to explore whether, during a future visit to Tokyo by the Office of Japanese Affairs or other relevant U.S. government officials, there may be value in a courtesy visit or introductory briefing with IHI Corporation.

Such a visit could provide U.S. officials with direct exposure to IHI's aerospace sustainment capabilities, including its experience with F100 and F110 propulsion systems and its broader role within Japan's defense-industrial base.

Any such engagement would be subject to the Department of State's interest, schedule, and applicable protocols.

PROPOSED DISCUSSION POINTS

During the courtesy meeting with Mr. Parisi and the Office of Japanese Affairs, Samuel Group Inc. would welcome the opportunity to discuss:

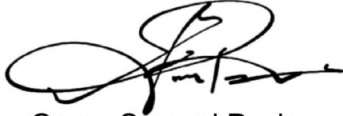
1. Samuel Group Inc.'s engagement with IHI Corporation of Japan;
2. Prior correspondence with the National Security Advisor, Department of State, Department of War, and U.S. officials in Japan;
3. Recent interaction with Mr. Joseph A. Brooks and the Office of the Assistant Secretary of War for Sustainment;
4. The forthcoming Proposal Letter to Mr. Brooks concerning the adversary air sustainment use case;
5. How best to keep the Office of Japanese Affairs informed as the initiative progresses;
6. Whether any non-classified information can be provided regarding U.S. participation in DICAS and PIPIR; and
7. Whether a future visit to IHI in Tokyo may be useful or appropriate.

CONCLUSION

Samuel Group Inc. views this initiative as a practical opportunity to support U.S.–Japan defense-industrial cooperation, strengthen allied sustainment capacity, and contribute to U.S. Air Force training readiness.

At this stage, Samuel Group Inc. is not seeking any commitment or endorsement from the Department of State. Rather, the purpose of this engagement is to ensure that the Office of Japanese Affairs is informed, that the Department of State has visibility into the initiative, and that any future steps are taken in a transparent and appropriately coordinated manner.

Respectfully submitted,



Goran Samuel Pesic
President and Chief Executive Officer
Samuel Group Inc.
Ronald Reagan Building
1300 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Suite 700
Washington, D.C. 20004
goran.pesic@samuelgroup.us
(202) 236-3488

CONFIDENTIAL

THIS MATERIAL IS DISTRIBUTED BY SAMUEL GROUP INC., ON BEHALF OF IHI CORPORATION; MORE INFORMATION IS ON FILE WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, WASHINGTON, D.C.



Washington, D.C.
February 12, 2026

The Honorable Michael P. Duffey
Under Secretary of War for Acquisition and Sustainment
Office of the Under Secretary of War (A&S)
3010 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-3010

Re: Courtesy Transmittal – Letter to The Honorable Marco Rubio

Dear Under Secretary Duffey,

I write to respectfully provide, for your awareness, the enclosed copy of my letter addressed to The Honorable Marco Rubio regarding a request for a meeting on U.S.–Japan defense-industrial cooperation.

I would be grateful if your office could kindly take note of this correspondence. Should you or your team have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact my office directly.

For ease of reference and scheduling purposes, I may be reached at goran.pesic@samuelgroup.us or (202) 236-3488.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully yours,

Goran Samuel Pesic
President and Chief Executive Officer
Samuel Group Inc.

Enclosures:

Letter to The Honorable Marco Rubio (dated February 12, 2026)

THIS MATERIAL IS DISTRIBUTED BY SAMUEL GROUP INC. ON BEHALF OF IHI CORPORATION.
MORE INFORMATION IS ON FILE WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, WASHINGTON, D.C.