

Systems Engineering Complexity in Context

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Abstract. Systems engineering literature identifies many different kinds of complexity. One paper cataloging complexity for the purpose of modifying systems engineering cost estimates identified more than 30 types. The research described in this paper investigates the idea of sorting and organizing the many concepts of complexity and showing the relationships between them on a single two-dimensional chart. The Systems Engineering Complexity Contexts (SECC) chart was developed to show how a large number of complexity concepts relate to systems engineering and to each other. All but two of the 30 types from the paper mentioned above fit on this chart. Those two appear as aspects that may apply to all other boxes on the chart instead of as orthogonal elements, which was the desired representation.