

Advance Policy Questions for Thomas R. Lamont
Nominee for Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs

Defense Reforms

The Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 and the Special Operations reforms have strengthened the warfighting readiness of our Armed Forces. They have enhanced civilian control and clearly delineated the operational chain of command and the responsibilities and authorities of the combatant commanders, and the role of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. They have also clarified the responsibility of the Military Departments to recruit, organize, train, equip, and maintain forces for assignment to the combatant commanders.

Do you see the need for modifications of any Goldwater-Nichols Act provisions? The Goldwater-Nichols Act changed Department of Defense operations profoundly and positively. Although I believe that the framework established by Goldwater-Nichols has significantly improved inter-service and joint relationships and promoted the effective execution of responsibilities, the Department, working with the Congress, should continually assess the law in light of improving capabilities, evolving threats, and changing organizational dynamics. I am currently unaware of any reason to amend Goldwater-Nichols, but if confirmed, I will have an opportunity to assess whether the challenges posed by today's security environment require amendments to the legislation with a view to continuing the objectives of defense reform.

If so, what areas do you believe might be appropriate to address in these modifications? If confirmed, I look forward to reviewing this milestone legislation and assessing whether any changes should be considered to address the challenges posed by today's security environment.

Duties

Section 3016 of title 10, United States Code, provides that the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs shall have "as his principal duty the overall supervision of manpower and reserve component affairs of the Department of the Army."

If confirmed, what duties do you expect that the Secretary of the Army will prescribe for you? Although the Secretary of the Army has not discussed with me the duties and functions he will expect that I perform if I am confirmed, I anticipate that he will rely on me to provide accurate and timely advice in the area of Army manpower and reserve affairs, as the statute establishing the position of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs provides. I presume also that the specific duties assigned to this position would be

consistent with the responsibilities assigned to the Assistant Secretary for Manpower and Reserve Affairs in Headquarters, Department of the Army General Orders Number 3, which sets forth the duties of each principal office of the Headquarters, Department of the Army. In addition, I believe the Secretary of the Army would expect me to continue pursuing an effective, professional relationship with the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness) and other key officials within the Office of the Secretary of Defense, other Military Department Assistant Secretaries for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, and the other Army Assistant Secretaries. I anticipate that the Secretary will expect me to continue and to build upon the effective and professional working relationships between the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) and the Deputy Chief of Staff, G-1 (Personnel); The Surgeon General; the Chief, Army Reserve; the Chief, National Guard Bureau; and the Director of the Army National Guard.

What actions will you take to enhance your ability to perform the duties of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs?

Although I look forward, to assuming the duties of the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Manpower and Reserve Affairs), should the Senate confirm me, I recognize that every new Assistant Secretary has much to learn. If I am confirmed, I will work to further my understanding and knowledge of the Army, its people and organizations, the challenges it faces and the resources necessary to sustain and transform it. I will work with and through the talented and dedicated military and civilian personnel serving the Department to broaden my expertise and increase my knowledge and will seek advice and counsel from the many and diverse stakeholders dedicated to the success of the Army, including the Members and staff of the Congress.

In carrying out these duties, what would be your relationship with the following officials:

The Secretary of the Army. If I am confirmed, my relationship with the Secretary of the Army would be close, direct, and supportive. I would work to communicate as effectively as possible with the Secretary regarding the advice, views, and plans of the Secretariat and Army Staff and to oversee the implementation of the Secretary's decisions through the Army. If I am confirmed, I understand that my actions would be subject to the authority, direction, and control of the Secretary of the Army.

The Under Secretary of the Army. If confirmed, I would establish a close, direct, and supportive relationship with the Under Secretary of the Army. Within the Department of the Army, my responsibilities would also involve communicating the Secretariat and Army Staff advice, views, and plans to the Under Secretary of the Army and to oversee the implementation of his decisions falling within my area of responsibility. I further understand that the Under Secretary is the Chief Management Officer (CMO) of the Department of the

Army and, in that role, exercises primary management responsibility for the business operations of the Army. If confirmed, I would work closely with the Under Secretary in his role as CMO, particularly to the extent those duties affected human capital management and other “business operations” within the functional purview of the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Manpower and Reserve Affairs).

The other Assistant Secretaries of the Army. The other Assistant Secretaries of the Army set strategic direction by formulating and overseeing policies and programs within their respective functional areas of responsibility, consistent with applicable laws and regulations and in accordance with the objectives and guidance of the Secretary of the Army. If confirmed, I will establish and maintain close and professional relationships with each of the Assistant Secretaries and seek to foster an environment of cooperative teamwork, working together on the day-to-day management and long-range planning needs of the Army.

The General Counsel of the Army. The General Counsel is the chief legal officer of the Department of Army. His duties include providing legal and policy advice to officials of the Department of the Army, as well as determining the position of the Army on any legal question or procedure. If confirmed, I will establish and maintain a close and professional relationship with the General Counsel of the Army.

The Inspector General of the Army. The Inspector General of the Army is charged with inquiring into, and reporting on the discipline, efficiency, economy, morale, and training, and readiness of the Army. If confirmed, I will establish and maintain a close and professional relationship with The Inspector General of the Army.

The Chief of Legislative Liaison of the Department of the Army. The Chief of Legislative Liaison is responsible for all Department of the Army Congressional affairs, to include formulating, coordinating, and supervising policies and programs on the Army’s relations with Congress and the Department’s legislative strategy. If confirmed, I will establish and maintain a close and professional relationship with the Chief of Legislative Liaison.

The Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness. Acting on behalf of the Secretary of Defense, the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness performs responsibilities that require the issuance of guidance to the Military Departments. If confirmed, I will communicate openly and directly with the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness in articulating the views of the Department of the Army. I will have a close and professional relationship with the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, characterized by continuous consultation, communication and cooperation on matters of mutual interest, in furtherance of the best interests of the Army and the

Department of Defense.

The Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness. Acting on behalf of the Secretary of Defense and Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, the Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness performs responsibilities that require, from time to time, the issuance of guidance to the Military Departments. If confirmed, I will communicate openly and directly with the Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness in articulating the views of the Department of the Army. I will work closely with the Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness to ensure that the Department of the Army is administered in accordance with the guidance and direction issued by the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

The Chief of Staff of the Army, The Chief of Staff of the Army is the Secretary's senior military advisor in all matters and has responsibility for the effective and efficient functioning of Army organizations and commands in performing their statutory missions. If confirmed, I will work closely and in concert with the Chief of Staff to supervise the implementation of the Secretary's decisions.

The Deputy Chief of Staff of the Army for Personnel. The Deputy Chief of Staff, G-1, serves as the principal military advisor to the Assistant Secretary for Manpower and Reserve Affairs and formulates, manages, evaluates and executes military and civilian personnel plans and programs for the Army for peacetime, contingency and wartime operations. If confirmed, I will establish a close, professional relationship with the Deputy Chief of Staff, G-1 (Personnel). I will consult with him frequently and communicate with him directly and openly as he performs his prescribed duties. I expect that, if I am confirmed, he and I will work together as a team on a daily basis.

The Surgeon General of the Army. The Surgeon General is a special advisor to the Secretary of the Army and to the Chief of Staff on all matters pertaining to the military health service system. In that role, The Surgeon General assists the Secretary and the Chief in carrying out their responsibilities by ensuring a medically ready force as well as a trained and ready medical force. If confirmed, I intend to work closely with The Surgeon General to ensure that the Army's healthcare systems and medical policies support the Army's objectives, responsibilities, and commitments effectively and uniformly across the total force, with a particular focus on Wounded Warriors.

The Chief, National Guard Bureau. The Chief, National Guard Bureau is a principal advisor to the Secretary of Defense, through the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, on matters involving non-federalized National Guard forces and on other matters as determined by the Secretary of Defense and is the principal adviser to the Secretary of the Army and the Chief of Staff of the Army, and to

the Secretary of the Air Force and the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, on matters relating to the National Guard, the Army National Guard of the United States, and the Air National Guard of the United States. Because the National Guard is a key element of the Reserve Component, the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs must work closely with the Chief, National Guard Bureau to provide overall supervision of National Guard matters across all aspects of Army business. If confirmed, I will establish a close, professional relationship with the Chief, National Guard Bureau. I will communicate with him directly and openly as he performs his prescribed duties.

The Chief, Army Reserve. The Chief, Army Reserve is the principal advisor to both the Secretary of the Army and Chief of Staff of the Army on all Army Reserve matters. Because the Army Reserve is a key element of the Reserve Component, the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs must work closely with the Chief, Army Reserve, to provide overall supervision of reserve matters across all aspects of Army business. If confirmed, I will establish a close, professional relationship with the Chief, Army Reserve. I will communicate with him directly and openly as he performs his prescribed duties.

Soldiers and their families. The men and women who serve in the armed forces are our nation's most valuable national security assets. The Army owes its success to these versatile young Americans who answer its call to duty and service. Caring for Soldiers and their Army families through effective quality of life programs both demonstrates the Army's commitment to the total Army family and endeavors to reflect the value of their service to our Nation. If confirmed, I will work diligently to ensure the needs of Soldiers and their families are addressed across the total Army.

Qualifications

What background and experience do you have that you believe qualifies you for this position? The diversity and complexity of issues confronting the Department of the Army are such that very few can have in-depth experience in them all. However, an Assistant Secretary of the Army must possess the personal attributes of integrity, mature judgment, and strong interpersonal and leadership abilities. I believe that my diverse legal and managerial experiences in both the public and private sectors have prepared me to meet the many challenges of this office.

I have 37 years of organizational experience in the public and private sectors during which I have developed valuable executive leadership and problem-solving skill-sets. In addition, I served as a judge advocate in the National Guard for more than 25 years, experiencing first-hand the life of a Soldier. As an attorney in the private sector, I concentrated my efforts in government, administrative and regulatory matters, serving a broad spectrum of clients ranging

from individual entrepreneurs to FORTUNE 500 companies. In the public arena, I had the privilege of serving in leadership roles with the Illinois Attorney General's Office, the State's Attorney Appellate Prosecutor Commission and, most recently, as executive director of the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE). As executive director of the IBHE, I was responsible for budgeting and appropriations, curriculum approval, degree granting authority, and the implementation of gubernatorial and legislative policy in all Illinois public colleges and universities. As chairman of the Board of Trustees for the University of Illinois, the nation's fourth largest public university, with some 70,000 students and 22,000 employees, I experienced, first-hand, the challenges of leading and managing a large organization, working with widely diverse cultural and geographic population groups, and the myriad issues associated with an academic environment.

In your view, what are the major challenges confronting the next Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs?

In my view, the fundamental challenge facing the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs is manning the force. I view the recruitment and retention of high caliber citizens to man the active, reserve and civilian ranks as an important aspect of maintaining Army readiness. The Army's ability to staff the Army fully with the active, guard and reserve component military members and civilians necessary to execute its complex and challenging missions, both today, and in the future, presents unprecedented challenges. The Army will continue to have a compelling need to garner support for Soldiers, to obtain sufficient funding to achieve critical recruiting and retention goals, and to maintain the financial investment in the quality of life programs that help to sustain the all-volunteer force. I believe that the Army must continue to engage actively in proactive marketing campaigns, pursue robust and attractive initiatives and incentives, and continue to seek ways to improve health and well-being programs. If confirmed, I would candidly assess the Army recruiting and retention posture and work to initiate or enhance programs of the type and quality most likely to support the Army's recruiting and retention needs—both military and civilian.

Secondly, I believe that the Army's ability to prevail in current operations and to sustain global commitments is critical. The Army must continue to maintain the momentum of transformation by adapting Army forces and balancing the employment of active and reserve component units and Soldiers. If confirmed, I would lead and partner on efforts to formulate policies that will help facilitate the Department's adaptation to the changing operational environment.

Finally, among the major challenges I would face, if confirmed, is the need to foster and maintain an environment in which Soldiers and civilian employees can serve free of discrimination and harassment and pursue assignments and advancement, that while responsive to the needs of the Army, are based on individual qualification and performance.

If confirmed, what plans do you have for addressing these challenges? If confirmed, I will focus immediately on these matters, review those actions that are underway, and join with other civilian leaders and with my counterparts in uniform to resolve them to the best of my ability. I will build upon this and other recent successes in holding the Department of the Army up as a model employer in both the military and civilian contexts.

In your view, what were the most critical shortcomings in warrior care since 2001? As I understand it, the Army was not prepared for the increase in wounded, ill, and injured Soldiers that resulted from overseas contingency operations such as Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. One area that needed improvement was the management of outpatient Soldiers during their recovery period. If confirmed, it will be my distinct honor and privilege to do all I can to continue to promote a high standard of care for our Wounded Warriors.

What is your assessment of the effectiveness of the Army's response? I am advised that the Army has increased Warrior Transition Unit resources, established a proven approach to care management through the triad of care concept, centralized support to Warriors in Transition and their Families by co-locating support services in Soldier Family Assistance Centers, implemented the Comprehensive Transition Plan approach to helping Soldiers plan and attain their recovery goals and has begun the process of building Warrior Transition Complexes. If confirmed, I will assess the effectiveness of the Army's response and continue to work with Congress to ensure our warriors receive the highest possible care and support.

If confirmed, are there additional strategies and resources that you would pursue to increase the Army's support for wounded soldiers, and to monitor their progress in returning to duty or to civilian life? If confirmed, I will assess continuously the efficiency and appropriateness of the Army's response. I will implement strategies and seek additional resources as appropriate to ensure the Army meets the needs of our wounded Soldiers.

Studies following the revelations at Walter Reed point to the need to reform the Army's disability evaluation system.

What is your assessment of the need to streamline and improve the Army's disability evaluation system? I am informed that beginning November 26, 2007, the Army started to test a revamped physical disability evaluation program at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, streamlining the process used to determine Soldiers' fitness for service or eligibility for military and veterans' benefits. I am advised that key features of this pilot program include a single medical examination and a single-sourced disability rating. It is my understanding that the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) conducts a single comprehensive exam and will rate all medical conditions. The Military Departments accept the DVA

rating for all medical conditions determined unfitting for continued military service unless the condition involves non-compliance, misconduct, or a non-service aggravated medical condition which existed prior to service.

. Based on the limited information I have so far, I believe the process does need to be improved. If confirmed, I will work to this end with stakeholders in the Army, as well as with experts in the Department of Defense (DoD) and the DVA.

If confirmed, how will you address any need for change? If I am confirmed, I will listen to the information presented by the experts in this area and study the process myself. After becoming fully briefed on the issues, I would work with the stakeholders in the Army and appropriate personnel in both DoD and DVA to determine what areas should be changed and how best to accomplish those changes.

Officer Management Issues

As the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs you would have significant responsibilities with regard to officer management policies, the promotion system, and recommending officers for nomination to positions of authority and responsibility.

If confirmed, what changes, if any, would you make to the officer management system? The Army has an exceptionally talented officer corps spanning all three components of the Army. I have been informed that the Army is in the process of initiating a comprehensive review of the laws and policies that govern the management of the officer corps across all components. If confirmed, I look forward to reviewing the report and assessing whether changes might be appropriate. If confirmed, I will not hesitate to seek your assistance should the Army's review indicate that changes to law are needed in order to optimize the development of the officer corps. The management and development of these talented and skilled leaders should be supported by systems, laws and policies that reflect the challenges the Army faces today, and should not be constrained by outdated paradigms.

Do you believe the current Army procedures and practices for reviewing the records of officers pending nomination by the President are sufficient to ensure the Secretary of the Army, the Secretary of Defense, and the President can make informed decisions? I have been assured that the current Army procedures for case review of officer promotion nominations are sufficient and provide Army leadership with accurate and timely information in order to make informed decisions and recommendations. I believe these procedures must be sufficiently rigorous to ensure officers meet the statutory requirement of exemplary conduct both before and after the convening of a promotion selection board.

In your view, are these procedures and practices fair and reasonable for the

officers involved? It is my understanding that if any adverse information is discovered during the screening process, the officer is provided with notice and an opportunity to respond, and that the officer's response is provided to the promotion board. This appears to be reasonable; however, if confirmed, I will have the opportunity to witness these procedures in action and make a more fully informed assessment.

General and Flag Officer Nominations

Under DOD Instruction 1320.4, adverse and alleged adverse information pertaining to general and flag officers must be evaluated by senior leaders in the Services and in the Office of the Secretary of Defense prior to nomination.

If confirmed, what role would you play in the officer promotion system, particularly in reviewing general and flag officer nominations? I have been advised that all officer promotions, including general officer promotions, are provided to the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) for review and coordination. These actions will have received a thorough legal review by both the Office of The Judge Advocate General and the Army General Counsel, prior to Assistant Secretary review. If confirmed, I will ensure that each Army general officer nomination receives my personal review and approval prior to forwarding to the Secretary of the Army for further processing. I will give special attention to any case of a nominee with a report of adverse or reportable information in order to ensure that the Army's support of the officer's nomination is appropriate, and that adverse and reportable information is reported to the Senate Armed Services Committee in a timely, accurate, and comprehensible manner.

What is your assessment of the ability of the Services to timely document credible information of an adverse nature for evaluation by promotion selection boards and military and civilian leaders? While it is too early to make a true assessment, it is my understanding that under current Department of the Army practice, the adverse information presented to promotion selection boards is culled from numerous Army organizations that maintain relevant data, and generally has been found to be accurate and timely. A panel of senior officials conducts a special screening of adverse information to ensure that any credible information of an adverse nature is presented to general officer promotion selection boards as required by Title 10, United States Code, Section 615. I understand that, if confirmed, I would be a member of this panel.

If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure that only the best qualified officers are nominated for promotion to general and flag officer rank? It is my understanding that the Army promotion board system is fair and efficient and consistently produces promotion recommendations of the best qualified officers for promotion at all levels. As stated above, if confirmed, I will personally review each general officer nomination, and I will give special attention to any case of a

nominee with a report of adverse or reportable information, in order to ensure that the Army's support of the officer's nomination is appropriate and that adverse and reportable information is reported to the Senate Armed Services Committee in a timely, accurate, and comprehensible manner.

Technical Training of General Officers

In your view, do a sufficient number of Army general officers have advanced training and degrees in scientific and technical disciplines?

I have been informed that the selection requirements for one- and two-star promotion selection boards are developed based upon the needs of the Army and necessarily include the scientific and technical disciplines projected by Army requirements.

Are the career paths for officers with technical skills appropriate to ensure that the Army can execute complex acquisition programs, adapt to a rapidly changing technological threat environment, and make informed investment decisions on DoD and Army resources?

I have been informed that the Army carefully manages its officer corps to ensure officers have the appropriate level of adaptability and technical expertise relevant to each career field. I have also been informed that the Army is presently growing its Acquisition Corps. If I am confirmed, I will study whether career paths for officers provide them with the technical skills and experiences to take on the responsibilities of our complex acquisition programs.

If not, what will you do to address this deficiency? As stated above, the Army is in the process of shaping and developing a more robust Acquisition Corps. If confirmed as the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Manpower and Reserve Affairs), I will have oversight of this process and will ensure that plans and strategies remain suitable and viable.

Mid-Career Officer Shortfall

The requirement stemming from Army modernization, in addition to the high tempo of operations, has created the need for significantly more officers in the grades of captain and major.

Do you agree that there is a significant shortfall of mid-career officers in the Army? I have been informed that the Army is currently experiencing a shortfall of 4,000 captains and majors, which is a critical issue for the Army. If confirmed, I will review the plans in place to ensure that this shortfall is being appropriately addressed in a timely manner.

What is your understanding of the reasons for the shortfall? It is my understanding that there are three primary reasons for this shortfall. First, during the post-cold war drawn-down from an end-strength of 770K to 480K resulted in

lower accession rates for officers in year groups in the 1990s. Second, the more recent transformation to a modular force structure increased the officer-enlisted ratio. And third, the increase in end strength to 547.4K increased the overall demand for officers.

What is the Army doing to address this shortfall? I have been informed that the Army has a number of initiatives designed to address this critical issue, which includes increasing accessions, incentives, and appropriate adjustments to the time-in-grade requirements. As noted above, if confirmed, I will carefully review all these initiatives.

If confirmed, will you undertake a comprehensive review of the medical support requirements for the Army and the sufficiency of the plans to meet recruiting and retention goals in these specialties? I appreciate the Committee's concerns in this regard and, if confirmed, pledge to consider this matter with the seriousness of purpose it mandates. Medical support requirements are critical to the success of our All-Volunteer force and I intend to pay special attention to healthcare requirements and needs. Recruiting and retention of healthcare professionals is a challenge across the country, and the Army is experiencing shortages in several specialties; however, even during these challenging times, I am pleased to have learned that Army medicine continues to attract and produce world-class physicians, nurses, and medics.

What legislative and policy initiatives, including bonuses and special pays, do you think may be necessary to ensure that the Army can continue to meet medical support requirements? I am not familiar with the full scope of the Army's program for recruiting and retaining military and civilian medical personnel; however, if confirmed, I will work closely with The Surgeon General to evaluate the Army's requirements and to support on-going programs and develop initiatives to enhance the Army's ability to recruit and retain care providers and support personnel with the requisite critical skills. Should legislative or policy changes be required, I will work with the Secretary of the Army, other Army leaders, the leadership of DoD, and the Congress, to bring them to fruition.

Report of the DOD Task Force on Mental Health

The Department of Defense Task Force on Mental Health found that the stigma surrounding PTSD and other mental health issues acts as a barrier to many service members seeking the help that they need. Additionally, the Task Force found that there are significant issues with accessibility and numbers of mental health providers, stating that the "military system does not have enough fiscal or personnel resources to adequately support the psychological health of service members and their families."

If confirmed, what actions will you take to ensure that appropriate numbers

of mental health resources are available to soldiers in theater, and to the soldiers and their families upon return to home station? It appears to me that the Army has made great strides in improving the number and accessibility of mental health care providers. If confirmed, I will continue this effort by reviewing the Army's current force structure and its retention and recruitment programs across all force components, military and civilian. I will endeavor to ensure that the beneficiaries of the Army health care system have access to mental health services of the highest possible quality.

What actions should senior leaders take to erase the stigma associated with seeking mental health care in the Army? The stigma associated with seeking mental health care is not unique to the military; it exists across the country. I perceive that the Army is working diligently to eliminate the stigma associated with seeking mental health care, although it appears that more needs to be done. If confirmed, I would review carefully the factors that contribute to the misperception that seeking mental health care is evidence of personal weakness or that seeking care will derail one's military career. I would continue to support broad-based positive communication, training, and outreach programs, and promote access to mental health services so as to minimize actual and perceived barriers to care.

Active-Duty End Strength

The Army has increased its active-duty end strength to meet current and future operational requirements. The Army had planned to increase its end strength to 547,400 by 2010, but has already achieved this goal in 2009.

In your view, what is the appropriate Army active-duty end strength needed to meet the demand for deployed forces, increase non-deployed readiness, build strategic depth, and relieve stress on soldiers and their families? If confirmed, I will review the Army's projections in light of the demands and ensure that any increases in end strength are well analyzed, coordinated across the Department, and fully justified.

If Army end strength is projected to be above the authorized 547,000 in fiscal years 2009 or 2010, how would you propose, if confirmed, to fund the additional end strength above current authorized levels? If I am confirmed, I would work closely with the A/S FM Under and the Secretary of the Army to identify appropriate funding sources.

Do you believe that an end strength of 547,400 is sustainable in the long term? Yes, given the appropriate level of resourcing.

Modularity

Modularity refers to the Army's fundamental reconfiguration of the force from a large division-based to a brigade-based structure. The new modular brigade combat team is supposed to have an increased capability to operate independently based upon increased and embedded combat support capabilities such as military intelligence, reconnaissance, and logistics. Although somewhat smaller in size, the new modular brigades are supposed to be just as or more capable of full spectrum operations than the divisional brigades they replace.

What is your understanding and assessment of the manpower and personnel management requirements of the Army's modular design and implementation of this transformation strategy? It is my understanding that the increased capabilities resident in the modular brigade combat teams have greatly enhanced their ability to meet current and projected Combatant Commander (COCOM) requirements. This increased capability places additional requirements on numerous skill sets, which are already in high demand. I believe it may take years to mature the full complement of senior officers and NCOs necessary to support these increased capabilities.

In your view, what are the greatest personnel challenges, if any, in realizing the transformation of the Army to the modular design? If confirmed, what actions or changes would you propose, if any, relative to the Army's modular transformation strategy? It is my understanding that the Army remains committed to fielding the best trained, most capable forces possible, and that the Army should not compromise on training to increase availability. The longer train/educate/mature times required by the Army's modular formations for the additional field grade officer and senior NCO personnel requirements may take us years to generate. If I am confirmed, I will assess whether any changes should be considered to address these challenges, and after careful study and deliberation, I will provide the Secretary with cogent advice regarding these changes.

Army Force Generation Model (ARFORGEN)

The Army relies on a force generation model (ARFORGEN) in which units are manned, equipped, and trained to appropriate readiness levels over time as they cycle through "reset and train," "ready," and "available for deployment" force pools.

What is your understanding and assessment of the manpower and personnel management requirements of the Army's force generation methodology? ARFORGEN provides cyclic readiness for the force over a given time period. The current manpower processes and procedures support this cyclic readiness by providing the manpower required for next deployers and other high priority missions. If confirmed, I will work diligently to ensure that the Army's current manpower processes and procedures continue to support the ARFORGEN model.

In your view, what are the greatest manpower and personnel management challenges, if any, in implementing ARFORGEN? It is my understanding that the greatest challenge facing manpower and personnel management is that ARFORGEN and the Army are coping with shortfalls of high-demand grades and skills, which results in a short dwell in CONUS between deployments. High demand personnel are arriving at next deploying units on a Just-In-Time basis for training and deployment.

If confirmed, what actions or changes would you propose, if any, to the design, implementation, or management of ARFORGEN? It is my understanding that ARFORGEN significantly changed the way the Army generates forces to support Combatant Commanders' requirements, moving from tiered readiness to cyclic readiness. At this time I am unaware of any need to amend or modify the ARFORGEN model; however, if confirmed, I will fully assess the manpower processes and procedures that support ARFORGEN and make appropriate recommendations, if required.

Stop-Loss

How does the Army plan to implement the Secretary of Defense's recent direction to end the use of stop-loss without eroding unit manning and unit cohesion? The Secretary of Defense has directed that the Army phase out the use of Stop- Loss over time in order to mitigate manning issues created by Soldier separations and retirements. Further, I understand that adjustments to manning mechanisms are underway that are designed to replace separating Soldiers in units scheduled to deploy; and that incentive programs have been developed to encourage Soldiers who do not intend to reenlist to extend their service long enough to complete a deployment with their units.

Operational and Personnel Tempo

Current Department of Defense policy is that active component personnel will have two years of dwell time for each year of deployment and that Reserve component members have five years of dwell time for each year they are mobilized.

What is your view of the achievability of this goal? What measures must be taken by the Army to be able to achieve it in five years or less? It is my understanding that this is an important aspect of sustaining the All-Volunteer Force because it facilitates predictability for our Soldiers and their families, allows for professional military development, and facilitates time for Army National Guard dual-use with the States. If confirmed, I will undertake a review of the Army's current personnel programs with a view of assessing the achievability of the DoD goal, and when necessary, I will make appropriate recommendations to the Secretary designed to maximize dwell time consistent with the DoD policy.

In your view, how will shifting resources from Iraq to Afghanistan affect dwell-time ratios? It is my understanding that the concept outlined by the President and the plan briefed to senior DoD leaders by CENTCOM will result in increases in the dwell-time ratios for many of the affected units.

How will the end of the use of stop-loss affect dwell time ratios? I have been informed that the reduction of the use of Stop Loss will not affect unit Boots-on-the-Ground (BOG) to Dwell Time ratios. It may, however, have a negative impact on the dwell times of individual Soldiers with high demand skills.

What is your assessment of the Army's ability to support scheduled troop rotation planning in 2009 and beyond, particularly in combat support and combat service support missions, given this goal? I have been informed that based on the anticipated transition force demand in the CENTCOM AOR, the Army will be able to meet validated requirements—combat, combat support, and combat service support missions—while increasing dwell-time ratios across the force.

What measures are being taken to respond to operational requirements for low density, high demand units and personnel whose skills are found primarily in the Reserve components, e.g., civil affairs, medical personnel, and truck drivers? I have been informed that the Army assesses force capabilities and adjusts force unit capacity, as necessary, to respond to operational requirements in low density, high demand units. If confirmed, I would ensure that the Army continues to assess force mix across all three components to meet the strategic demands of conventional campaigns, irregular warfare operations and homeland defense/civil support missions, with a view towards balancing the force structure to minimize risk in availability of low density/high demand units.

In your view, what will be the effect on recruiting, retention, and readiness of the Army of the current rates of operations and personnel tempo through 2010? I have been informed that the Army has experienced no negative effects on recruiting and retention due to operational and personnel tempo. If confirmed, I will continue to monitor this critical area.

In your judgment, what would be the impact on the current rates of operations and personnel tempo of assigning principal responsibility for support to civil authorities for consequence management of natural, domestic disasters to either our active or reserve component forces? If confirmed, I would work with Department leaders, in coordination with appropriate members of the Joint Staff, to make a careful assessment of this issue and provide the Secretary with cogent advice that will fully consider the challenges of today's security environment.

Mobilization and Demobilization of National Guard and Reserves

In the aftermath of the attacks of September 11, 2001, the National Guard

and Reserves have experienced their largest and most sustained employment since World War II. Numerous problems arose in the planning and procedures for mobilization and demobilization, e.g., inadequate health screening and medical readiness, monitoring, antiquated pay systems, limited transition assistance programs upon demobilization, and lack of access to members of the Individual Ready Reserve. Reserve force management policies and systems have been characterized in the past as “inefficient and rigid” and readiness levels have been adversely affected by equipment stay-behind, cross-leveling, and reset policies.

What is your assessment of advances made in improving Army reserve component mobilization and demobilization procedures, and in what areas do problems still exist? It is my understanding that since the beginning of Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom, the Army has made significant advances in improving mobilization and demobilization processes. Most importantly, the Army has achieved improved predictability and pre-mobilization readiness through the implementation of Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) and through achieving earlier notification of sourcing (NOS) and Alert prior to mobilization.

What do you consider to be the most significant enduring changes to the administration of the reserve components aimed at ensuring their readiness for future mobilization requirements? The implementation of ARFORGEN has been a significant change to the administration of the Reserve Components and I believe helped to ensure readiness for future mobilization requirements.

Do you see a need to modify current statutory authorities for the mobilization of members of the National Guard and Reserves?

At this point, based predominantly on my personal experience as a member of the National Guard, I feel current statutory authorities are sufficient to support mobilization requirements. If confirmed, I will be in a better position to assess whether to recommend changes to applicable law and policy.

Do you agree that National Guard and Reserve personnel should be mobilized to augment civilians deployed to Afghanistan? Yes, I believe that National Guard and Reserve Component personnel bring skills and experience that can be used to augment other executive branch agencies and their civilian employees. For example, Army Civil Affairs Soldiers are currently employed in this capacity in Afghanistan.

What are your views on the proper role of the IRR in Army force management planning? It has been explained to me that the IRR is an available manpower pool consisting of individuals who have been trained and previously served in the active forces or in the Selected Reserve. The IRR has proven to be a steady and valuable asset for the Army. Even given my limited knowledge, it would appear that the IRR is serving an important role. If confirmed I will have the opportunity to look more closely at this issue.

If confirmed, what changes, if any, do you foresee making to the Army's IRR recall policy? At this stage of the confirmation process I cannot predict what changes may be required. However, I am informed that the Army continuously monitors and reviews its processes and procedures. If confirmed, I believe that my assigned duties would afford me the opportunity to further evaluate the processes and policies applicable to the IRR.

What are your views about policies affecting continued service by officer and enlisted personnel in the reserve components who have fulfilled their MSO?

It is my understanding that all Ready Reserve Soldiers are retained for the entire period of their Military Service Obligation (MSO) or contractual obligation, or they may voluntarily remain in the IRR. Our Soldiers are very loyal to their country and should be commended for their continuing service. If confirmed I will be in a position to review the relevant policies and better determine if they remain suitable.

What is your assessment of the adequacy of the system in place for members in the IRR receiving orders to active duty to request a delay or exemption for that activation, including the procedures in place for appealing the Army's decision on that request?

I have been informed that the system in place to process requests from an IRR Soldier for delay, exemption, or appeal of an order to active duty allows for appropriate consideration of the Soldier's personal circumstances, together with consideration of the needs of the Army. If confirmed, I will undertake an assessment of this system to determine whether changes should be made.

What is your assessment of the value of the IRR to the All-Volunteer Force?

It is my understanding that the value of the IRR is its ability to provide individual replacements for deploying units and to provide Soldiers to support short term missions throughout the Army. The IRR has allowed the Army to meet critical requirements within mobilizing Army Reserve and Army National Guard units.

Medical and dental readiness of reserve component personnel has been an issue of significant concern to the Committee, and shortfalls that have been identified have indicated a need for improved policy oversight and accountability.

If confirmed, how would you seek to clarify and coordinate reporting on the medical and dental readiness of the reserves?

First, let me say that I am extremely proud of our Reserve Component service members and their service to our Nation during this time of war and transformation. Based upon my own experience as an officer in the National Guard, I believe that all components of the total force must be prepared to deploy at any time. If confirmed I will assess the effectiveness of reporting on the medical and dental readiness and to evaluate the need for policy changes and increased oversight.

How would you improve upon the Army's ability to produce a healthy and fit reserve component? I am advised that the Army has comprised a multi-disciplinary task force to address and promote Comprehensive Soldier Fitness across all components. If confirmed, I look forward to learning more about the Comprehensive Soldier Fitness program, particularly as it applies to the Reserve Component, and working with leaders across the Army to implement it.

Lessons Learned

What do you believe are the major personnel lessons learned from Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) which you would seek to address if confirmed as Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs? Undoubtedly, lessons learned from throughout OEF/OIF will enhance the Army's ability to plan and execute ongoing and future missions. If confirmed, I will seek out and examine these lessons learned, with a focus on their application to manpower and reserve affairs matters and apply them to the challenges and complexities of our ongoing contingency operations.

National Guard Organization, Equipment, and Readiness

Legislative proposals introduced in recent years and recommendations of the Commission on the National Guard and Reserves have proposed numerous changes to the roles and responsibilities of the National Guard and Reserves. Several of the proposed changes have been implemented, and numerous others are under consideration.

How do you assess the changes in the roles, mission, and authorities of the Chief of the National Guard Bureau and the Army National Guard?

I believe that the changes that have been made thus far to enhance, clarify, and refine the roles missions and authorities of the Director of the Army National Guard (DARNG) have been effective. If confirmed, I will study the additional proposals under consideration and determine whether they are appropriate.

In your view, do the current Army processes for planning, programming, and budgeting sufficiently address the requirements of the Army National Guard? What is the appropriate role of the Chief of the National Guard Bureau in this regard? The Army National Guard is an integral part of the Army and has representation in all the Program Evaluation Groups (PEGs) that inform the process including Manning, Training, Organizing, Equipping, Sustaining, and Installations. The Army National Guard also has representatives in all Army staff sections to ensure that Army National Guard requirements and priorities are integrated into the budgeting process.

I believe that in his advisory role to the Secretary of the Army and the Chief of Staff of the Army, the Chief, National Guard Bureau (CNGB) supports the Army planning, programming and budgeting process.

TRICARE Fee Increases for Military Retirees

Secretary Gates recently told officers at the Air War College that “health care is eating the (Defense) Department alive.”

Do you agree with the Secretary’s assessment? Yes.

What is your view of the need for increased beneficiary payments in reducing overall health care costs to the Department? I am advised that costs have grown due to many factors: increased utilization by a mobilized RC force, expansion of benefits to support basic healthcare needs and that of more severely wounded Soldier and their Families, increased use by retiree beneficiaries, health inflation, and finally no change in TRICARE premiums in the last 10 years. It is my understanding that a sound medical benefit program directly impacts retention of Soldiers and their Families. If confirmed, I would support a Department of Defense review of the current beneficiary payment structure to ensure that future benefit costs are sustainable.

What other reforms in infrastructure, benefits, or benefit management, if any, do you think should be examined in order to control the costs of military health care? It is my understanding that to a great extent, the costs of military health care are subject to prevailing rates for labor, equipment and supplies within the health care industry. If confirmed, I will study this issue further and work with the other Military Departments and DoD to determine the best structure for the future.

Personnel and Entitlement Costs

In addition to health care costs, personnel and related entitlement spending continues to soar and is becoming an ever increasing portion of the DOD budget.

If confirmed, what actions will you take to control the rise in personnel costs and entitlement spending? I have been advised that the Military Departments have limited authority to reduce overall personnel costs and entitlement spending. If I am confirmed, I will ensure adequate oversight through processes/procedures and audit reviews to provide early warning regarding the costs and effects of proposed new military pays or benefits.

If confirmed, what actions will you take to avoid a requirement for massive end-of-year reprogramming to cover personnel costs? As is the case with regard to change in any large organization, military personnel changes take time to execute and implement throughout the force. In order to avoid unnecessary

changes, if confirmed, I will work closely within the Army and DOD to accurately budget, and then will monitor execution, strength, and incentives, to ensure the Army remains in balance.

Stress on Army Families

Army families have been under great stress since 2001 as a result of multiple and lengthy deployments in OIF and OEF.

In your view, what are the key indicators of the stress on Army families at this time? I recognize that Soldiers and their Families have made and continue to make significant personal sacrifices in support of our Nation. If confirmed, I will ensure that the Army remains committed to providing Soldiers and Families with a quality of life commensurate with their service. It is my understanding that the Army monitors a number of indicators, and Army Families continue to demonstrate how resilient they are. However, after experiencing Soldier absences during deployments of varying duration and frequency, often with less time between them than needed to truly reset, Families have indicated a need for: expanded support for their children; greater access to health care resources; more robust Family programs and services; additional education and employment opportunities; and available, quality housing.

If confirmed, what will you do to address these key indicators? It is my understanding that the Army Family Covenant formalizes senior leadership commitment and addresses the following key areas for Families: standardizing and funding existing Family programs and services; increased accessibility and quality of health care; improving Soldier and Family housing; ensuring excellence in schools, youth services, and child care; and expanding education and employment opportunities for family members. If confirmed, I would exercise oversight of the execution of the key Soldier and Family programs and services, keep an ear to the ground to ensure the Army meets the needs of its people, and identify funding requirements to continue efforts that are critical to the sustainment of an All-Volunteer Force.

If confirmed, what will you do to address these key indicators? If confirmed, I would exercise oversight of the execution of the key Soldier and Family programs and services, keep an ear to the ground to ensure the Army meets the needs of its people, and identify funding requirements to continue efforts that are critical to the sustainment of an All-Volunteer Force.

What do you consider to be the most important family readiness issues in the Army? Family readiness issues vary by Family, but one commonality among all Families is the need for information and communication. To meet this critical need, I am advised that Family Readiness Groups have been established to provide important support and assistance and a network of communication among the Family members, the chain of command, and community resources.

Additionally, Army OneSource, the Army's online portal for Family support information, programs, and services, provides a comprehensive multi-component approach for community support and services to meet the diverse needs of all Soldiers and Families.

Family Readiness

If confirmed, how would you address family readiness needs in light of global rebasing, BRAC, continuing deployments, and the growth of the Army?

Military families make extraordinary sacrifices as their loved ones advance the cause of freedom around the world. Military Families have set aside careers, interrupted their education, and when living far from a military base, struggled to locate child care equal to the price and quality available at military installations. The Army must recognize those sacrifices and deliver quality programs and services that geographically dispersed and frequently relocating Families must endure.

I am informed that on October 8, 2007, Secretary Geren unveiled the Army Family Covenant, a commitment to provide Soldiers and their Families—Active, Guard, and Reserve—a quality of life commensurate with their level of service and sacrifice to the Nation. I fully support the Covenant's commitment to Soldiers and Families and, if confirmed, will continue to improve Family readiness through the Family Covenant.

If confirmed, how would you ensure support for reserve component families, particularly those who do not reside near an active-duty military installation, related to mobilization, deployment, and family readiness?

Family readiness is a very important issue to me. The Army Family Covenant commits the Army to improve Family readiness—in both the Active and Reserve components—by standardizing Family programs and services, increasing accessibility to health care; improving Soldier and Family housing; ensuring excellence in schools, youth and child services; and expanding education and employment opportunities for Family members. The Soldier Family Action Plan provides the roadmap to implement the Army Family Covenant commitment and improve and/or address gaps in existing Soldier and Family programs and services.

In your view, what progress has been made, and what actions need to be taken in the Army to provide increased employment opportunities for military spouses?

I am extremely appreciative of the undaunted support of military spouses to our Soldiers and am aware of the importance of supporting employment opportunities for military spouses. If confirmed, I will continue to pursue the initiatives that have been set in place to benefit military families during this troubled economic era.

Support for the Single Soldier

While the percentage of married soldiers has steadily increased, a substantial portion of soldiers, especially young soldiers, are single.

What are the unique support needs of single soldiers, especially those returning from combat? It is my understanding that the needs of single Soldiers, especially those returning from deployments, may differ from the needs of Soldiers with spouses and children. I have been informed that in the past few years, the Army has made significant investments in single Soldier barracks and programs to mitigate the stress of deployment and improve single Soldier readiness.

If confirmed, what would you do to address these needs? If confirmed, I will review Army's Soldier Support programs designed to improve the quality of life for all Soldiers – Active and Reserve Component, single and married, with a view toward ensuring that these program are effective in meeting the specific needs of each group.

National Security Personnel System

Section 1106 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 restored the collective bargaining rights of civilian employees included in the National Security Personnel System (NSPS) established by the Department of Defense pursuant to section 9902 of title 5, United States Code. Under section 1106, the Department retains the authority to establish a new performance management system (including pay for performance) and streamlined practices for hiring and promotion of civilian employees. Senior DOD officials have stated that they do not intend to expand NSPS to include employees in bargaining units that are represented by employee unions.

What is your view of the NSPS system, as currently constituted? I understand the NSPS's key features were to support a streamlined and flexible civilian compensation, staffing, classification, and performance management system essential to effective management of a mission-oriented and results-driven civilian workforce that are vital to the success of DoD missions. I understand that the DoD and the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) are currently conducting a comprehensive evaluation of the NSPS system. If confirmed, I look forward to working with DoD and OPM to ensure an optimum system.

Do you support the pay-for-performance approach adopted for civilian employees in the NSPS system? As a general principle, I support pay-for-performance; an employee's compensation should be based on contribution to mission. If confirmed, I look forward to seeing the results of DoD and OPM's comprehensive evaluation of NSPS in order to work toward addressing any identified concerns.

Do you believe that the Department needs streamlined authority for hiring

and promotion of civilian employees to meet its human capital needs? I am advised that the Department is challenged to meet increased civilian labor requirements in critical occupations and to develop human capital strategies to respond to these challenges. It is my understanding that there are situations where specialized hiring authorities are required in order to provide sufficient qualified applicants to meet mission needs. However, before making recommendations for additional authorities, I would want to ensure that managers fully understand the flexibilities and authorities currently available. If confirmed, I will ask managers to creatively and actively use available authorities and will explore the need for and use of direct and expedited hiring authorities to assist in achieving the Department's human capital objectives.

In your view, is it viable in the long run for the Department of Defense to maintain two separate systems (NSPS and the General Schedule) for its civilian employees? It is my understanding that the DoD has a number of other personnel systems, such as Defense Civilian Intelligence Personnel System and that for non-appropriated fund personnel. If confirmed, I will work with DoD and OPM to assess the appropriate number and types of personnel systems for effective and efficient personnel management.

What changes, if any, would you recommend to the NSPS authorizing legislation? It is my understanding that DoD, in conjunction with OPM, is planning to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of NSPS, as currently implemented. If confirmed, I would seek to ensure that the Army participates fully in this evaluation. Depending on the outcome of this evaluation, legislation and/or policy changes may be appropriate to ensure that NSPS is on track to achieve its full potential.

What changes, if any, would you recommend to the NSPS regulations? It is my understanding that DoD, in conjunction with the Office of Personnel Management, is planning to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of NSPS, as currently implemented. If confirmed, I would seek to ensure that the Army participates fully in this evaluation. Depending on the outcome of this evaluation, regulatory changes may be appropriate to ensure that NSPS is on track to achieve its full potential.

Balance Between Civilian Employees and Contractor Employees

In recent years, the Department of Defense and the Army have become increasingly reliant on services provided by contractors. Over the past eight years, DOD's civilian workforce has remained essentially unchanged in size. Over the same period, the DOD's spending on contract services has more than doubled, with the estimated number of contractor employees working for the Department increasing from an estimated 730,000 in Fiscal Year 2000 to an estimated 1,550,000 in Fiscal Year 2007. As a result of the explosive growth in service contracts, contractors now play an integral role in the performance of functions that were once

performed exclusively by government employees, including the management and oversight of weapons programs, the development of policies, the development of public relations strategies, and even the collection and analysis of intelligence. In many cases, contractor employees work in the same offices, serve on the same projects and task forces, and perform many of the same functions as federal employees.

Do you believe that the current balance between civilian employees and contractor employees is in the best interests of the Army? The information set forth in the Committee's question presents cause for concern and warrants comprehensive examination. I agree with President Obama's government contracting memorandum of March 4, 2009, directing the Federal Government to ensure that functions that are inherently governmental in nature are performed by executive agencies and are not outsourced. If confirmed, I would work with the Secretary of the Army, the Under Secretary, and leaders across the Army to assess this matter so as to ensure compliance with the law and with the President's policy.

In your view, has the Army become too reliant on contractors to perform its basic functions? As set forth above, I agree fully with President Obama's memorandum of March 4, 2009, directing the Federal Government to ensure that functions that are inherently governmental in nature are performed by executive agencies and are not outsourced. If confirmed, I would work with the Secretary of the Army, the Under Secretary, and leaders across the Army to assess this matter so as to ensure compliance with the law and with the President's policy.

Do you believe that the current extensive use of personal services contracts is in the best interests of the Army? As I understand it, the Army may use personal services contracts only in limited circumstances, when specifically authorized by law and policy. If confirmed, I would work with the Secretary of the Army, the Under Secretary, and leaders across the Army to ensure compliance with applicable law and policy.

Do you believe that the Army should undertake a comprehensive reappraisal of "inherently governmental functions" and other critical government functions, and how they are performed? I support fully the principles and policies set forth in President Obama's memorandum of March 4, 2009. That memorandum directs the Office of Management and Budget, in coordination with the Secretary of Defense, among others, to develop and issue government-wide guidance to assist executive branch agencies in reviewing the propriety of existing contracts and to formulate corrective action when appropriate. I believe that any such review must include an appraisal of inherently governmental functions and other critical government functions and how they are performed. If confirmed, I will support any such review and corrective action, particularly as it relates to matters under the purview of the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Manpower and

Reserve Affairs).

If confirmed, will you work with other appropriate officials in the Army to address these issues? The issues you raise cross functional lines. Accordingly, I believe that a comprehensive effort involving stakeholders across the Army, DoD, the interagency, and the Congress, will be required to address these issues in a comprehensive fashion. I pledge that if confirmed, I will work collaboratively with other Army officials on these matters, in furtherance of the best interests of the Army and the Department of Defense.

One reason for the explosive growth in DOD's contractor workforce has been the continuing limitation placed on the number of civilian employees of the Department of Defense. Rather than saving money as intended, this limitation has shifted all growth to contractor employees.

Would you agree that the balance between civilian employees and contractor employees in performing Army functions should be determined by the best interests of the Army and not by artificial constraints on the number of civilian employees? Yes, I agree.

If confirmed, will you work to remove any artificial constraints placed on the size of the Army's civilian workforce, so that the Army can hire the number of employees most appropriate to accomplish its mission? I understand that by law, the Army is required to manage its civilian personnel solely on the basis of, and consistent with, the workload required to carry out the Army's functions and activities and the funds Congress appropriates to the Department. If confirmed, I would support all efforts to ensure compliance with the law and to remove inappropriate constraints on the size of the Army civilian workforce.

Sexual Assault Prevention and Response

Numerous cases of sexual misconduct involving soldiers in Iraq, Kuwait, and Afghanistan have been reported over the last several years. Many victims and their advocates contend that they were victimized twice: first by attackers in their own ranks and then by unresponsive or inadequate military treatment. They asserted that the Army failed to respond appropriately by providing basic services, including medical attention and criminal investigation of their charges.

What is your understanding of the resources and programs the Army has in place in deployed locations to offer victims of sexual assaults the medical, psychological, and legal help that they need? I have been advised that the Army goes to great lengths to ensure appropriate levels of support are available to our deployed Soldiers, including medical, psychological, and legal support. While I have not been fully briefed on all Army initiatives, I understand that the Army has taken significant steps to improve the assistance to victims of all sexual assaults, with enhanced recognition of the special circumstances that

apply to deployments. I have been advised, for example, that for the past three years, the Army has had in place a comprehensive Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program. I am informed that under this program, the Army requires every unit, brigade-sized and higher, to appoint and train a deployable Sexual Assault Response Coordinator and requires every battalion to appoint and train two Unit Victim Advocates. If confirmed, I will study this matter in greater depth with a view to ensuring that the Army continues to take appropriate steps to aid victims of sexual assault, both in garrison and in deployed locations.

What is your view of the steps the Army has taken to prevent additional sexual assaults at home stations as well as deployed locations? In my opinion, the Army has taken several extremely important steps in its campaign to prevent sexual assaults both at home stations and deployed locations. For instance, I have been advised that the Army launched a new comprehensive sexual assault prevention campaign in 2008: the “I. A.M. Strong” program in which the letters *I, A, and M* stand for Intervene – Act – Motivate. The “I. A.M. Strong” program features Soldiers as influential role models providing peer-to-peer messages to encourage other Soldiers to take action to promote a positive command climate in which sexual assault is not acceptable. If confirmed, I will continue these vital initiatives and assess whether additional steps should be taken.

What is your view of the adequacy of the training and resources the Army has in place to investigate and respond to allegations of sexual assault? Based upon the information I have been provided to date, it appears that the Army is committed to ensuring that it has trained personnel and resources in place to investigate and respond to allegations of sexual assault. I have been advised that the Army continues to emphasize victim services and response capabilities. I have also been advised that the Army intends to hire and place additional special investigators and prosecutors at Army installations with the highest occurrences of sexual assault and to add examiners to the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Laboratory. If confirmed, I will assess whether additional steps should be taken to support victims and hold offenders accountable.

Do you consider the Army’s current sexual assault policies and procedures, particularly those on confidential reporting, to be effective? I have been advised that the Army has focused both on eliminating sexual assault from its ranks and on victim response—both key elements of an effective sexual assault program. I have been advised that part of the focus on victim response was the implementation of confidential reporting (also called “restricted” reporting), which I understand allows sexual assault victims to disclose confidentially the details of their assault to specified individuals and receive medical treatment and counseling, without triggering the official investigative process. If confirmed, I will work with knowledgeable professionals to assess and ensure the continuation of effective Army programs.

What problems, if any, are you aware of in the manner in which the

confidential reporting procedures have been put into effect? Based on the information I have been provided to date, I am not aware of any problems with the manner in which confidential reporting procedures have been put into effect. If I am confirmed, I will closely monitor the Army's sexual assault response procedures to determine whether improvements are needed in the area of confidential reporting.

If confirmed, what actions would you take to ensure senior management level direction and oversight of Departmental efforts on sexual assault prevention and response? If confirmed, I will have an active role in the oversight and implementation of the Army's Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention (SHARP) Program. I will work with the Secretary and the Chief of Staff to ensure the Army's SHARP program continues to receive the appropriate level of supervision and support.

Religious Guidelines

What is your understanding of current policies and programs of the Department of Defense and the Department of the Army regarding religious practices in the military? I have been informed that the Army's policies support religious tolerance and respect. It appears that Army and DoD regulations provide commanders and other leaders with ample guidance regarding the free exercise of religion in the Army. Army policies provide detailed guidance on the important responsibilities of commanders and leaders in this regard. It is my understanding that these policies are consistent with the First Amendment.

Do these policies accommodate, where appropriate, religious practices that require adherents to wear particular articles of faith? I have been informed that the Army places a high value on the rights of Soldiers to observe the tenets of their respective religious faiths. I have been advised that the Army will approve requests for accommodation of religious practice, to include the wear of particular articles of faith, unless the accommodation will have an adverse impact on unit readiness, individual readiness, unit cohesion, morale, discipline, safety, and health. It is my understanding that Army policies are consistent with the First Amendment.

In your view, do these policies accommodate the free exercise of religion and other beliefs without impinging on those who have different beliefs, including no religious belief? I understand that Army policies require chaplains to support all unit personnel, regardless of their beliefs.

In your opinion, do existing policies and practices regarding public prayers offered by military chaplains in a variety of formal and informal settings strike the proper balance between a chaplain's ability to pray in accordance with his or her religious beliefs and the rights of other service members with different beliefs, including no religious beliefs? I have been advised that,

during mandatory official functions, chaplains are not compelled to offer prayers that are inconsistent with their faith, but are expected to remain sensitive to the pluralistic Army and society they serve. It is my understanding that these policies are consistent with the First Amendment.

United States Military Academy

What is your assessment of the policies and procedures at the United States Military Academy to prevent and respond appropriately to sexual assaults and sexual harassment and to ensure essential oversight? I have been informed that the United States Military Academy continues to institutionalize prevention strategies designed to end sexual harassment and violence by providing consistent policy, removing barriers to victim reporting, ensuring accessible care, and providing comprehensive education and training to all personnel. I am advised that the Superintendent personally chairs the monthly Sexual Assault Review Board, which provides executive oversight of all aspects of the Academy's Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention program. If confirmed, I will continue these initiatives and assess whether any additional steps should be taken.

What is your assessment of the policies and procedures at the United States Military Academy to ensure religious tolerance and respect? It is my understanding that the Chief of Chaplains (CCH) is responsible for religious support activities Army wide, to include at the USMA, and that CCH policies and procedures support religious tolerance and respect. It is my understanding that these policies are consistent with the First Amendment.

Suicide Prevention

The Committee is concerned about the increasing rate of suicides in the Army.

In your view, what is the cause of this surge in suicides? It is my understanding that the increase in suicides in the Army is likely not due to any single cause. Although there are recognized suicide risk factors, such as deployments, that are unique to Army life, it appears that risk factors such as relationship, financial, and legal problems also play a significant role.

What is your assessment of the Army's response to this increase in suicides? It is my understanding that the Army has taken a comprehensive, strategic approach to mitigating suicidal and high-risk behavior. In my view, this approach is the best way to address the problem of suicides by improving the mental, physical, and emotional health of Soldiers, and by taking steps to reduce personal risk; a reduction in suicides should follow. If confirmed, I will fully support suicide prevention and intervention efforts.

The Army recently signed an agreement with the National Institutes of

Health to perform a 5-year study on suicides in the Army. If confirmed, what actions would you suggest the Army take to enhance its suicide prevention program while the study is ongoing? I appreciate and share the Committee's sense of urgency in addressing issues of suicide prevention and intervention. If confirmed, I will work with the leadership of the Army to assess all available options to enhance the Army's suicide prevention program while the National Institute of Health study is ongoing.

What is your understanding of the conclusions and lessons that have been learned about the feasibility of current policies regarding women in combat from Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom and what is your assessment of the Army's compliance with the requirements of law relating to women in combat? It is my understanding that the Army is in compliance with the requirements of law relating to women in combat. It is also my understanding that Army's transformation to modular units took into account and is in compliance with the current DoD assignment policy for women. Women have and will continue to be an integral part of our Army team, performing exceptionally well in all specialties and positions open to them.

In your view, should the current policy prohibiting the assignment of women to ground combat units be revised to reflect changing roles for female soldiers and the changing nature of warfare? If I am confirmed and after careful study and deliberation, that there is a need to seek a change to the policy, I will provide the Secretary with cogent advice regarding the changes sought and their potential impact on the manpower and reserve affairs of the Army.

Foreign Language Proficiency

A Foreign Language Transformation Roadmap announced by the Department of Defense on March 30, 2005, directed a series of actions aimed at transforming the Department's foreign language capabilities, to include revision of policy and doctrine, building a capabilities based requirements process, and enhancing foreign language capability for both military and civilian personnel. More recently, Congress authorized incentive pay for members of precommissioning programs to study critical foreign languages.

SEQ CHAPTER \h \r 1In your view, what should be the priorities of the Federal Government in expanding the foreign language skills of civilian and military personnel and improving coordination of foreign language programs and activities among the Federal agencies? In my view, our nation's current and future involvement in overseas contingency operations will rely heavily on both foreign language skills and cultural knowledge. The Army, as well as other government agencies, should focus on increasing foreign language and cultural awareness skills across their entire force as well as in its language specialists (Foreign Area Officers, Civil Affairs, Special Forces, linguists, etc.). These skills will allow us to strengthen and multiply our forces' capabilities

across the full operational spectrum. Further, I am aware that two of the best Foreign Language schools in the Federal Government exist in the Defense and State departments

If confirmed, what steps would you take to identify foreign language requirements, and to design military and civilian personnel policies and programs to fill those gaps? I have been advised that the Army is in the initial stages of conducting a Foreign Language Capabilities Based Assessment; this joint effort will analyze and identify critical capabilities required to support DoD operations in conventional and irregular warfare as well as contingency operations. If confirmed, I would ensure that policies involving recruiting, training and mobilization are reviewed and adjusted accordingly to meet the validated foreign language needs of the operational environment.

What is your assessment of an appropriate time frame within which results can be realized in this critical area? I have been advised that the timelines in the initial Defense Language Transformation Roadmap have already been met and fulfilled with exception of a couple initiatives. It is critical that the Army continues to look ahead, to meet the needs of the operational commanders. These foreign language needs are ever changing, as the challenges of overseas contingency operations take us into regions of diverse and low density languages. I have been advised that the Army is finalizing a Culture and Foreign Language Strategy that will outline a holistic approach to the development of cultural and foreign language training.

Legislative Fellowship Program

Each year, the Services assign mid-career officers to the offices of Members of Congress under the Legislative Fellows Program. Upon completion of their legislative fellowships, officers are required to be assigned to follow-on positions in their services in which they effectively use the experience and knowledge they gained during their fellowships.

What is your assessment of the value of the Legislative Fellows program to the Army and the utilization of officers who have served as legislative fellows? It is my understanding that the Fellowship program has been a valuable program that provides participants an understanding of the complexities of Congressional operations and Congress's role in the process of government as a whole. Fellowships help participants gain an understanding and appreciation for the strategic relationship between the Army and the Congress. I understand that the Army carefully evaluates Fellows' post-fellowship assignment, taking into account each Fellow's recent experience with the Congress as well as duty specialty and past experiences. The Army has a large requirement for personnel with legislative experience at many levels of command and the Fellows trained each year help fill those needs.

Defense Integrated Military Human Resources System (DIMHRS)

The Department and the Services are moving toward adoption of DIMHRS as a cross-service, fully integrated personnel and pay system. Under the proposed timeline, the Army is the first in line to launch DIMHRS, with the Air Force, Navy, and Marine Corps to follow. Recent reports indicate technical difficulties will postpone the Army's launch date.

What is the status of the Army's implementation of DIMHRS? What is your assessment of the need for an integrated, cross-service personnel and pay system? I have not been informed of the specific status of Army's implementation of the DIMHRS, however, it is my understanding that once fully implemented, this program will substantially improve the accuracy and efficiency of our ability to manage our personnel across the Department of Defense.

If confirmed, what changes, if any, would you recommend to the implementation schedule and process currently in place? If confirmed, I will carefully review the implementation plan and associated milestones. If my review identifies any weakness, I will make appropriate recommendations, after cross-Service coordination, to the responsible officials.

GI Bill Benefits

Last year, Congress passed the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act that created enhanced educational benefits for service members who have served at least 90 days on active duty since 9/11. The maximum benefit would roughly cover the cost of a college education at any public university in the country.

What is your assessment of the effect of the Act on recruiting and retention of service members? It is my understanding that the new Post-9/11 GI Bill is designed to enhance the Army's recruiting efforts in that it will assist the Army in targeting that population of young adults who desire to attend college but cannot afford to do so at the current time. This benefit will open up opportunities for them to achieve their educational goals. The impact of this benefit on retention will require careful monitoring, but the provision in the new program that allows career Service members to share or transfer their GI Bill benefits with immediate Family members may mitigate any negative retention impacts.

What is your understanding of the sufficiency of the implementation plan for the transferability provisions contained in the Act? I have been informed that the Army is working closely with the Department of Defense on the implementation of this new program and that DoD will publish its implementing policies in the near future. If confirmed, I will continue this important work and ensure that the Army's implementation of this program is well executed,

consistent with published DoD guidelines.

Quadrennial Review of Military Compensation

The Department recently completed work on the 10th Quadrennial Review of Military Compensation (QRMC), releasing Volume I of its report in February 2008 and Volume II in July 2008. Among other recommendations, the QRMC proposes a new defined benefit retirement plan that more resembles the benefits available under the Federal Employee Retirement System than the current military retirement benefit; increasing TRICARE fees for retirees; and the adoption of dependent care and flexible spending accounts for service members.

What is your assessment of the QRMC recommendations, particularly the proposed new defined retirement plan? Reductions in current entitlements and benefits could impact the morale of the current force and weaken future recruiting and retention efforts. Proposed changes in military retirement entitlements and benefits must be thoroughly reviewed to fully understand these impacts. If I am confirmed, I will be mindful that our military forces, who are often called upon to fight under extremely arduous conditions, should receive the pay and entitlements promised them and that they deserve.

What is your vision for the management and development of the Army senior executive workforce, especially in the critically important areas of acquisition, financial management, and the scientific and technical fields?

The Army should carefully manage and develop the senior executive workforce to meet the evolving work force challenges facing the Department. With transformation, members of the senior executive service are increasingly being looked to as military replacements in critically important areas of acquisition, financial management, and the scientific and technical fields. To support this effort, I understand the Army's senior executive program focuses on the recruitment, assignment, and development of adaptive, multi-skilled senior civilian leaders and that the current senior executive program includes periodic education and development opportunities and performance based evaluations.

SEQ CHAPTER \h \r 1Congressional Oversight

In order to exercise its legislative and oversight responsibilities, it is important that this Committee and other appropriate committees of the Congress are able to receive testimony, briefings, and other communications of information.

Do you agree, if confirmed for this high position, to appear before this Committee and other appropriate committees of the Congress? Yes.

Do you agree, if confirmed, to appear before this Committee, or designated members of this Committee, and provide information, subject to appropriate

and necessary security protection, with respect to your responsibilities as the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs? Yes.

Do you agree to ensure that testimony, briefings, and other communications of information are provided in a timely manner to this Committee and its staff and other appropriate Committees? Yes.

Do you agree to provide documents, including copies of electronic forms of communication, in a timely manner when requested by a duly constituted Committee, or to consult with the Committee regarding the basis for any good faith delay or denial in providing such documents? Yes.