

**Advance Policy Questions for Frederick Vollrath**  
**Nominee for Assistant Secretary of Defense for Readiness and Force Management (new position)**

**Defense Reforms**

**The Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 and the Special Operations reforms have strengthened the war-fighting 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?**

**If so, what areas do you believe might be appropriate to address in these modifications?**

Currently, I am not aware of a need for modifications to the Act but if confirmed I will review its implementation and will recommend modifications if necessary.

**Duties**

**Section 138 of Title 10, United States Code, provides that Assistant Secretaries of Defense shall perform such duties and exercise such powers as the Secretary of Defense may prescribe.**

**This is a new position. Assuming you are confirmed, what duties do you expect to be assigned to you?**

Upon my appointment as Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Readiness and Force Management (PDASD (R&FM)) in March 2012, it has been my task to establish the Office of Readiness and Force Management and I have been performing the duties of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Readiness and Force Management. In this position, I have been serving as the principal advisor to the Secretary of Defense and the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (USD (P&R)) on all matters relating to the areas of civilian and military personnel policies, readiness of the force, military community and family policy, Total Force planning and requirements, diversity management, equal opportunity, and transition policy.

**What background and experience do you have that you believe qualifies you to perform the duties of this position?**

I have over 40 years of human resource management and executive leadership experience, including organizational development with an emphasis on strategic level efficiencies. I retired in the rank of Lieutenant General after serving 35 years in the U.S. Army human resource management command and staff positions. I last served as the U.S. Army's Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel (G-1), where I directed all aspects of human resources management and administration for the total Army. I have also served as the corporate VP of Human Resources (HR) for a large global Fortune 150 Company. I have the unique experience of both government and non-government HR experience.

**Do you believe that there are any additional steps that you need to take to enhance your expertise to perform these duties?**

Upon starting in the position of PDASD (R&FM), I immediately conducted face-to-face meetings with my staff (collaborative and a open dialogue). I routinely meet with the deputy assistant secretaries, directors and the Acting Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness to stay informed of current issues and to adjust strategies as needed. I will continue to reach out to the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Labor and the office of Personnel Management to better our efforts to collaborate in solutions to DoD HR issues.

**Major Challenges**

**In your view, what are the major challenges confronting the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Readiness and Force Management?**

In my view, major challenges currently confronting the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Readiness and Force Management include the reduced ability to accomplish all of our missions should sequestration and resulting furloughs of the civilian workforce come to pass; finding meaningful ways to combat the Department's rising level of suicides; sustaining the All-Volunteer Force during these fiscally challenging times, as well as ensuring that we have the right Force mix as we drawdown Service end strength while applying greater manpower to emerging areas of growth such as cyber; expanding the Transition Assistance Program (TAP) and implementing the new Civilian Personnel Performance Management System; ensuring the policy provisions are complete to adopt the changes from the extension of Same-Sex Partner Benefits; and ensuring the Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission has the appropriate DoD recommendations prior to the required deadline.

**If confirmed, what plans do you have for addressing these challenges?**

If confirmed, I will work closely with the subject matter experts and leadership in these areas to develop proactive responses and approaches to ensure that all courses of action are timely and appropriate.

## **Relationships**

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

- **The Secretary of Defense-** If confirmed, I would report through the USD (P&R) to the Secretary of Defense as this position reports directly to the USD (P&R).
- **The Deputy Secretary of Defense—** If confirmed, I would report through the USD (P&R) to the Deputy Secretary of Defense as this position reports directly to the USD (P&R).
- **The Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness—**The ASD (R&FM) reports directly to the USD (P&R) and serves as the primary advisor on all matters relating to the areas of civilian and military personnel policies, readiness of the force, military community and family policy, Total Force planning and requirements, diversity management, equal opportunity, and transition policy. The ASD(R&FM) also provides regular updates to USD regarding matters in ASD portfolio.
- **The Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs—**Collaborates with ASD Health Affairs on matters of mutual interest or are cross-cutting in nature.
- **The Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs—**Collaborate with the ASD Reserve Affairs on matters of mutual interest or are cross-cutting in nature.
- **The Assistant Secretary of Defense for Logistics and Materiel Readiness—**The ASD(R&FM) collaborates with ASD (L&MR) on matters of mutual interest or are cross-cutting in nature.
- **The Department of Defense General Counsel--** Seek advice on all legal matters or services performed within the office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Readiness and Force Management.
- **The Department of Defense Inspector General--** Forward or respond to any instances of waste, fraud and abuse within the office of the ASD (R&FM) and cooperate with the Inspector General on any investigative activities.

- **The Service Secretaries**--Collaborate with Service Secretaries on matters of mutual interest or are cross-cutting in nature. Seek Service input on major policy initiatives.
- **The Assistant Secretaries for Manpower and Reserve Affairs of the Army, Navy, and Air Force**--Meet regularly with M&RAs to discuss key personnel issues. Collaborate on matters of mutual interest or are cross-cutting in nature and seek input on major policy initiatives.
- **The Deputy Chiefs of Staff of the Army and Air Force for Personnel, the Chief of Naval Personnel, and the Deputy Commandant of the Marine Corps for Manpower and Reserve Affairs**-- Meet with Service Chiefs on key personnel issues. Collaborate on matters of mutual interest or are cross-cutting in nature.
- **The combatant commanders**-- Formal communications to the Commanders of the Combatant Commands normally is transmitted through the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.
- **The Joint Staff, particularly the Director for Manpower and Personnel (J-1)**-- Meet with J-1 on key personnel issues and collaborate on matters of mutual interest or are cross-cutting in nature.

### **Disability Severance Pay**

**Section 1646 of the Wounded Warrior Act, included in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, enhanced severance pay and removed a requirement that severance pay be deducted from VA disability compensation for service members discharged for disabilities rated less than 30 percent incurred in the line-of-duty in a combat zone or incurred during the performance of duty in combat-related operation as designated by the Secretary of Defense. In adopting this provision, Congress relied on the existing definition of a combat-related disability contained in 10 U.S.C. 1413a(e)). Rather than using the definition intended by Congress, the Department of Defense adopted a more limited definition of combat-related operations, requiring that the disability be incurred during participation in armed conflict.**

**What is your understanding of the number of service members impacted by the DOD interpretation of "combat-related disability," and how did the DOD interpretation affect their compensation?**

**If confirmed, will you reconsider the Department's definition of combat-related operations for purposes of awarding enhanced severance pay and deduction of severance pay from VA disability compensation?**

Since Enhanced Disability Severance Pay is outside the portfolio of OASD (R&FM), I do not have specific details on this program. I will ensure that the proper authorities, namely the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs, understand the concern expressed here and encourage a review of policy to ensure equitable and fair treatment of our disabled service members.

### **Homosexual Conduct Policy**

**The law commonly referred to as “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” was repealed effective September 20, 2011. As part of the implementation of this repeal, the Secretary of Defense appointed a benefits review group to conduct a review of all potential benefits that could be made available to same-sex spouses. The report of this review group is long overdue and has been repeatedly delayed.**

#### **What is your view of the repeal of “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell”?**

On July 22, 2011, the President, Secretary of Defense and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff certified that repeal was consistent with the standards of military readiness, military effectiveness, unit cohesion, and recruiting and retention of the Armed Forces. Repeal occurred September 20, 2011. I fully support the repeal of DADT.

#### **What is your assessment of the implementation of the repeal of this law?**

Since September 20, 2011, the effective date of repeal, the Service Secretaries, the Service Chiefs and the Combatant Commanders have reported no significant issues related to implementation of the repeal of DADT. I believe this success can be attributed to the Department’s comprehensive pre-repeal training programs, combined with the discipline of our Service members and continued close monitoring and enforcement of standards by our military leaders at all levels

#### **What is the status of the report of the benefits review group? When is this group expected to issue its report?**

Following repeal, the Department focused its attention to benefits. The Department conducted a deliberative and comprehensive review of the possibility of extending eligibility for benefits, when legally permitted, to same-sex domestic partners of service members. The benefits were examined from a policy, fiscal, legal and feasibility perspective. That review has been finalized and the Secretary of Defense approved the extension of an additional two member-designated benefits and 22 additional benefits that are to be made available by August 31, 2013 but no later than October 1, 2013.

**What is your view on the issue of providing military and survivor benefits to same-sex partners?**

When DADT was repealed, there remained some areas where our members and their families were not treated equally. In some of these areas, the Department can take administrative action that better cares for members and their families, consistent with the law. When service members don't have to worry about their families back home, they can better focus on the mission.

**If confirmed, will you ensure that completion of the report of the Benefits Review Group is expedited and provided to Congress?**

The Joint Benefits Review Working Group was chartered to provide recommendations to the Secretary of Defense on benefits that could be extended from a policy, fiscal, legal and feasibility perspective. The Secretary of Defense made his decision concerning the recommendation and released a memo on February 11, 2013 detailing which benefits would be extended.

**Religious Guidelines**

**What is your understanding of current policies and programs of the Department of Defense regarding religious practices in the military?**

Current policies and programs of the Department of Defense regarding religious practices in the military ensure Service members' rights to observe the tenets of their respective religions, as well as to hold no specific religious conviction or affiliation. The Chaplaincies of the Military Departments advise and assist commanders in the discharge of their responsibilities to provide for the free exercise of religion in the context of military service as guaranteed by the Constitution, assist commanders in managing Religious Affairs and serve as the principal advisors to commanders for all issues regarding the impact of religion on military operations.

**In your view, do these policies appropriately accommodate religious practices that require adherents to wear items of religious apparel or adhere to certain grooming practices related to their faith?**

Current policies allow for consideration of accommodations of religious apparel that do not interfere with the performance of military duties. If confirmed, I will continue to work with the military services to ensure that we maintain the right balance between military uniform and appearance standards and Service members' personal religious practices.

**In your view, do these policies appropriately accommodate the free exercise of religion and other beliefs without impinging on those who have different beliefs, including no religious belief?**

Yes, in my view, current policies appropriately accommodate the free exercise of religion for all Service members in the pluralistic environment that is the U.S. military. The Department of Defense does not endorse any one religion or religious organization, and provides free access of religion for all members of the military services. The Department respects (and supports by its policy) the rights of others to their own religious beliefs, including the right to hold no beliefs. If confirmed, I will continue to monitor and assess these policies.

**What is your assessment of measures taken at the service academies to ensure religious tolerance and respect?**

My assessment is that these measures have been successful in fostering religious tolerance and respect. Systems are in place to provide the means for cadets to address and resolve any perceived unfair treatment on the basis of race, national origin, color, gender, and/or religious affiliation, or sexual harassment. Service members can use the chain of command, Inspector General or Equal Opportunity channels to raise concerns.

**In your view, 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?**

Existing policies provide military chaplains with sufficient guidance that allows them to balance, in both formal and informal settings, their own faith practices with the rights of others who may hold different or no religious beliefs. I acknowledge that this at times can be a difficult balance to achieve, and if confirmed, I will continue to work with the civilian and military leadership of the Department to ensure this balance is maintained.

**The Independent Review Related to Fort Hood observed that “DOD policy regarding religious accommodation lacks the clarity necessary to help commanders distinguish appropriate religious practices from those that might indicate a potential for violence or self-radicalization.” Recommendation 2.7 of the Final Recommendations urged the Department to update policy to clarify guidelines for religious accommodation and Recommendation 2.8 urged the Department to task the Defense Science Board to “undertake a multi-disciplinary study to identify behavioral indicators of violence and self-radicalization...”.**

**What is your view of this recommendation?**

Ensuring appropriate accommodations for the free exercise of religions and protecting Service members from violence and harm are both of vital importance. Pursuant to Recommendation 2.7, the Department updated its policy on religious accommodation to ensure religious freedoms and practices are accommodated to the fullest extent possible considering mission readiness, discipline and unit cohesion. This policy is currently under revision to incorporate language from The National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for FY13, Section 533 which protects the rights of conscience of members of the Armed Forces and chaplains. Regarding Recommendation 2.8, the Department did task the Defense Science Board (DSB) to undertake a study. The DSB recently completed their study and found that it could not determine a specific list of behaviors that would indicate risk of violent/extremist behavior. If I am confirmed, I will continue to provide oversight regarding the implementation of the recommendations of the Fort Hood Review.

**Will you work to ensure that a scientific fact-based approach to understanding radicalization will drive the Department's relevant policies on this topic?**

Yes, if confirmed I will review the Department's existing policies and its plans to address these challenges and determine what, if any, changes should be made. I agree that any changes to how the Department approaches this issue should be based on a solid factual foundation.

**Muslims in the U. S. Military**

**In your view, did the attack at Ft. Hood encourage harassment or even violence against Muslims in the military?**

The incident at Fort Hood was a tragedy and an isolated event. We must not allow the circumstances surrounding that incident to compromise the military's core values regarding the free exercise of religion and to ensure that we treat every Service member with dignity and respect. Each Service member has the right to practice his or her religious faith without fear of persecution or retribution. This is a core value of our Country and our military.

**If confirmed, what strategies would you advocate to address the potential for harassment or violence against Muslims in the U. S. military?**

This sort of behavior or any form of cruelty and maltreatment is inconsistent with the military's core values, detracts from combat capability, and has no place in the armed forces. Through ensuring clear and consistent policy, commanders and leaders at all levels will have the guidance necessary to maintain an environment that promotes dignity and respect, and will hold them accountable for preventing harassment or mistreatment.



## **Hazing**

**Numerous incidents of hazing have been reported during the last year, several of which involved suicide by hazing victims. Although several of those who committed the hazing were prosecuted, they were acquitted of the most serious allegations.**

**Does the Department of Defense have a comprehensive policy addressing hazing? If so, what is the policy and where is it documented?**

A 1997 Secretary of Defense policy memorandum prohibiting hazing is unambiguous; however, the guidance clearly states it is contrary to good order and discipline and is unacceptable behavior. This guidance also defines the prohibited conduct which constitutes hazing as well as guidance for dealing with violations.

Recent leadership statements have continued to emphasize that such behavior will not be tolerated, to include the Secretary of Defense message of December 2011, the Secretary of the Army's tri-signed message of January 2012, and the All Marine Corps Activities message and revised Marine Corps Order 1700.28A of February 2012.

**In your view, should the Uniform Code of Military Justice be amended to specifically prohibit hazing? Are other changes to the UCMJ needed to adjudicate allegations of hazing?**

It is my understanding that the Joint Service Committee on Military Justice has completed its review of hazing as a separate offense under the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) and the associated report is currently under departmental review.

**If confirmed, what actions will you take to address the issue of hazing?**

The DoD Hazing Review Team is actively examining responsive courses of action in three focus areas – policy, training and education, and reporting – all reinforce the Department's position that hazing is unacceptable behavior.

## **Women in the Military**

**Secretary Panetta, at the recommendation of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, recently rescinded the policy restricting the assignment of women to certain units which have the primary mission of engaging in direct ground combat operations, and has given the military services until January 1, 2016, to open all positions currently closed to women, or to request an exception to policy to keep a position closed beyond that date, an exception**

**that must be approved by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Secretary of Defense.**

**Do you support Secretary Panetta's decision?**

Yes, I support the measures Secretary Panetta has taken to expand the positions available to women.

**What is your view of the appropriate role for women in the armed forces?**

I believe success in our military is based upon ability, qualifications and performance of a person consistent with our values and military readiness. I don't believe there is an appropriate role for men or for women, rather there is an appropriate position for anyone who can meet the requirements of that position.

**Do you believe it is in the national security interest to rescind the policy restricting assignment of women to certain units which have the primary mission of engaging in direct ground combat operations? Why or why not?**

Yes, it is in the best interest of this nation to permit the most qualified individual, who meets the requirements of a position, to serve in that position regardless of gender.

**If confirmed, what action will you take to ensure that physical standards will be realistic and will preserve military readiness and mission capability?**

The Department of Defense is aware of Public Law 103-160, Section 543, which prohibits the Department from changing an occupational performance standard for the purpose of increasing or decreasing the number of women in that occupational career field. To ensure physical standards are being properly developed and accurately correlate with the requirements of the position or occupation, we have partnered with RAND to assess the Services' work against industry standards.

**Do you believe that decisions to open positions should be based on bona fide military requirements? If so, what steps will you take, if confirmed, to ensure that such decisions are made on this basis?**

It is not a requirement to have women in these positions; rather it is in the best interest of the Department to allow both men and women who meet the standards for these positions to compete for them. This is not a program to put women into direct ground combat positions; it's a program to remove gender as a selection disqualifier and, if confirmed, I will ensure that such decisions are consistent with that approach.

**Some family members have expressed concerns about assigning women to what are currently male-only combat units.**

**To what extent do you believe that this will be a problem in the implementation of this policy?**

It's normal for family members to have concerns about their loved ones, however I expect our commanders to select qualified personnel, male or female. Additionally, we have had a number of women in newly opened units since mid-2012, and have already experienced successful integration of women into formerly male-only units.

**If it is a problem, what steps would you take if confirmed to address it?**

We've required the Services to provide us quarterly feedback on their elimination of gender-restrictive policy, which includes feedback on the status of women in these newly opened positions. If problems are encountered, I will, if confirmed, examine the issue and address it considering all dimensions and all recommendations consistent with sustaining readiness.

### **Personnel and Entitlement Costs**

**Personnel and related entitlement spending continues to grow and is becoming an ever increasing portion of the DOD budget.**

**What actions do you believe can and should be taken, if any, to control the rise in personnel costs and entitlement spending?**

Congress, in the 2013 National Defense Authorization Act, established a Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission. Currently, the Department is reviewing all aspects of military compensation and benefits in order to provide recommendations to the Commission later this fall.

As a Department, we must continually strive to balance our responsibilities to our service members, to the nation, and to the American taxpayers. If confirmed, I am committed to exploring options to find savings and more efficient alternatives to help control the rise in personnel and entitlement costs while still fully supporting our men and women in uniform and the All-Volunteer Force.

**In your view, can the Department and the Services efficiently manage the use of bonuses and special pays to place high quality recruits in the right jobs without paying more than the Department needs to pay, or can afford to pay, for other elements of the force?**

Bonuses and special and incentive pays are some of the most cost effective tools available to the Services. These tools provide effective and easily targetable incentives without the long-term costs associated with entitlements and are generally much more cost-effective than across-the-board pay increases. Like any compensation program, however, these tools must be continually monitored to ensure they are used both efficiently and effectively and that the Department is receiving best value for its dollars. If confirmed, I will continue to work to ensure our bonus and special and incentive pay programs are administered effectively and efficiently.

### **Dependent Care and Flexible Spending Accounts**

**The 10<sup>th</sup> QRCMC recommended providing dependent care and flexible spending benefits to active-duty service members. Providing these benefits would seem consistent with the initiatives of First Lady Michelle Obama and Dr. Jill Biden on behalf of military families. It would appear that no new legislative authority is needed for the Department to provide these benefits to service members and their families.**

**If confirmed, would you extend these benefits to the active-duty service members and their families?**

In response to the 2006 National Defense Authorization Act, the Department examined and provided a report on the possibility of providing a flexible spending account to military members. The report identified a number of advantages and disadvantages to the Department offering an Flexible Spending Account (FSA) for military members. The central issue was a debate of whether the tax advantage to military members would warrant the cost the Department would incur implementing and managing such a program. Generally, military members pay very little out of pocket for their health care and are in a low tax bracket. Therefore, the majority of active duty military members would see little, if any, benefit to implementation of an FSA. Finally, most Reservists, who typically receive medical care outside the military system, already have access to an FSA.

### **Suicide Prevention**

**The numbers of suicides in each of the Services continues to concern the Committee. The Army released a report in July 2010 that analyzed the causes of its growing suicide rate and examined disturbing trends in drug use, disciplinary offenses, and high risk behaviors. In addition, studies conducted by the Army of Soldiers and Marines in theater showed declines in individual morale and increases in mental health strain, especially among those who have experienced multiple deployments.**

**In your view, what role should the Department of Defense play in shaping policies to help prevent suicides both in garrison and in theater and to increase the resiliency of**

**all service members and their families, including members of the reserve components?**

Suicide is a complex problem and each individual circumstance is unique. However, I strongly believe that suicide prevention is a leadership responsibility, and the Department encourages everyone to responsibly seek professional behavioral health and other services.

To address the factors that contribute to suicidal behavior, I believe the Department must support a culture that promotes total force fitness and resilience. This requires both military and civilian leaders to be knowledgeable on how to enhance protective factors and a positive working environment. It means involving families in solutions and care planning. Peers and non-medical case managers also need to foster resilience and build a supportive community.

If confirmed, I will partner with the Services to ensure suicide prevention and resiliency building are emphasized at all levels along with the promotion of help-seeking behaviors and improving access to behavioral health care. I will focus on finding best practices and using them to provide guidance from which the Services can most effectively operate their suicide prevention programs across the total force.

### **Readiness Responsibilities**

**Section 136 of title 10, United States Code, gives the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness certain responsibilities for military readiness. Some important issues that affect military readiness, however, such as logistics and materiel readiness, have been placed under the jurisdiction of the Under Secretary for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics.**

**What is your understanding of the responsibilities of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness in exercising policy and program oversight of military readiness, including materiel readiness?**

The responsibilities of the USD (P&R) are to develop policies, plans, and programs for the total force and its allocation among the DoD Components, and between the Active and Reserve Components, to ensure efficient and effective support of wartime and peacetime operations, contingency planning, and preparedness. As part of these responsibilities, the USD (P&R) coordinates closely with the USD (AT&L) by reviewing and evaluating the requirements of the Defense Acquisition Board's major defense acquisition programs and proposed weapons systems for personnel, training, and readiness implications.

**If confirmed, what would you propose as the most critical objectives to improve policy and program oversight over military readiness?**

One of the most critical objectives facing the Department is to oversee the Service's transition, as

rapidly as possible, from a counterinsurgency (COIN) focused force to a Joint force capable of operating effectively across the full range of military operations. This is driven by the recognition that despite today's fiscal challenges, our forces will be expected to provide enhanced presence, deterrence, and must also be prepared to respond rapidly to emerging crises in a diverse and complicated global environment. Specifically, we must create a Joint force capable of maintaining our commitment to rebalancing our global posture and presence to the Asia-Pacific region. These requirements call for a leaner force that is more agile, ready, and technologically advanced. Achieving this force will take time and other resources to fully achieve.

This transition is not about returning to pre-9/11 force profile and readiness standards. The global dynamic, pace of activity, and our military's global responsibilities have changed since then. We must again be ready for a wide range of possible missions across the spectrum of conflict.

**If confirmed, how would you work with the military departments as well as other Office of the Secretary of Defense offices to achieve them?**

Military readiness, by its very nature, has some relevance for nearly every one of the DoD components. For this reason, my office must work closely with other OSD offices, the Services, the Joint Staff, the Combatant Commands, and the Combat Support Agencies (CSAs) to ensure we are all moving toward the same goals.

One of the primary mechanisms for ensuring coordination and synchronization with the DoD components on readiness issues is our participation in the Deputies Management Activities Group (DMAG). The Readiness DMAG series focuses on the Department- level readiness issues that impact current and future military readiness. In support of these DMAGs, the DASD(Readiness) has created a readiness forum that is co-lead by the Joint Staff J3 and comprised of Service readiness leads, SOCOM, nearly every OSD component, and several representatives from across the Joint Staff. This forum meets regularly and serves as an important venue to raise critical readiness concerns as well as share management best practices.

**What is your understanding and assessment of the Department's systems for readiness reporting and monitoring of military forces?**

With the deployment of the Defense Readiness Reporting System (DRRS) and the pending integration of the traditional Status of Resources and Training System (SORTS), the Department's systems are fully capable of capturing accurate and timely readiness reporting indicators. The traditional SORTS metrics provide critical information to the Services that assist in force management and train, organize, and equip decisions. The DRRS provides capability assessments for what the Service's provide that enable better COCOM assessments on their ability to execute the Defense Strategy.

**In your view, does the current readiness reporting system accurately and reliably collect and display the information necessary to establish that our forces are not only “ready” but “ready for what”?**

DRRS, has the capability for all organizations, Service, Joint, and the CSAs, to assess their readiness for any and all missions. The use of Mission Essential Tasks in these assessments provides the fidelity and flexibility for organizations and tactical units to express what capabilities they can provide and what missions they are ready to execute.

### **Readiness of the Armed Forces**

**The Joint Chiefs recently stated that "the readiness of our Armed Forces is at a tipping point. We are on the brink of creating a hollow force due to an unprecedented convergence of budget conditions and legislation that could require the Department to retain more forces than requested while underfunding that force's readiness."**

**How do you currently assess the readiness of the Armed Forces?**

In my assessment, our military forces are exceptionally prepared for the missions they have undertaken for the last eleven years. The investments the nation has made in training technologies, force protection, command and control, and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance systems have helped maintain our military's standing as the most formidable force in the world. Today our forces are postured globally, conducting counter-terrorism, stability, and deterrence operations, maintaining a stabilizing presence, conducting bilateral and multilateral training to enhance our security relationships, and providing the crisis response capabilities required to protect U.S. interests. In the event of an unexpected crisis, large-scale conflict, or a threat to the homeland, ready forces are available to provide the surge capacity to meet wide-ranging operational challenges today.

**Do you agree with the Joint Chiefs that readiness is at a tipping point?**

Maintaining ready forces is a priority and I share that concern with the Joint Chiefs. The current fiscal environment makes maintaining readiness very difficult. Managing readiness after a decade of war was bound to be challenging irrespective of fiscal considerations because the services are beginning the difficult process of resetting and restoring our force's ability to conduct the full range of military operations as required by the current defense strategy.

I believe there is a very real possibility that the readiness effects of sequestration or indefinite operation under a continuing resolution could be devastating. These effects are likely to reduce readiness both directly, through reductions in operations and training, and indirectly through effects on personnel and equipment. Some of those indirect effects, especially those that effect personnel or spares pipelines, could take years to realize and even longer to mitigate.

**If confirmed, how would you assess the impact of budget conditions on the issue expressed by the Joint Chiefs of a hollow force?**

I think that we can all agree that sequestration is not an effective method to both reduce the Department's budget and minimize the impact to the readiness of the force. I agree with Secretary Panetta's description of the current circumstances as a "perfect storm." Adding the devastating effects of sequestration on top of continuing to operate under a continuing resolution will likely cause circumstances that are guaranteed to reduce readiness both directly, through reductions in operations and training, and indirectly through circuitous effects on personnel and equipment.

**How would you define a hollow force?**

A hollow force is a force that has been rendered incapable of performing the mission that we expect it to conduct. While the units may exist, they would not have the personnel, equipment, and/or training necessary to make them capable of executing the defense strategy or responding to the most likely contingencies.

**As the United States draws down the number of forces deployed to Afghanistan, Commanders have voiced concerns about leadership challenges for forces in garrison after 12 years of sustained combat operations.**

**If confirmed, what could be done at your level to assist commanders with force management and readiness?**

I think many of the programs the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Readiness and Force Management provides oversight on are essential to commanders both in garrison and while deployed. These programs such as suicide prevention, safety, drug demand reduction and a multitude of family programs will continue to be essential to commanders to help maintain the health of the force. Additionally, our role to provide oversight of the readiness of the Services to provide manned, trained and equipped forces puts us in a good position to engage with commanders at all levels as they adapt what being ready means as we transition from a counterinsurgency operation (COIN) focused environment to a more full spectrum capable force. In the past year, our R&FM team has established a rich dialogue with the Services over these challenges.

**What will be your roles and responsibilities in monitoring Service goals for reset and reconstitution of combat forces and equipment?**

If confirmed, I will work closely with the Services and Joint Staff to monitor the Service's progress in meeting their goals for reset, reconstitution and a return to the full range of military operations as required by the current defense strategy with clear emphasis on proper training.



## **Readiness Monitoring**

**Section 117 of title 10, United States Code, directed the DOD to “establish a comprehensive readiness reporting system for the Department of Defense” which led to the creation of the Defense Readiness Reporting System (DRRS).**

**What is your understanding of the responsibility you will have, if confirmed, for the implementation and operation of DRRS?**

If confirmed, I will have direct oversight of the DRRS Implementation Office and ensure the program reaches its Full Operational Capability (FOC) as efficiently and effectively as possible. Additionally, moving forward from FOC, through the DRRS Executive Committee, in conjunction with the Joint Staff, I will ensure the Department’s future reporting needs continue to be addressed.

**What is your understanding of the relationship between the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness and the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Logistics and Material Readiness with regard to the implementation and operation of DRRS?**

Materiel readiness is a key component of the Department’s ability to accomplish its assigned missions. Under the auspices of ASD(R&FM), DRRS provides ASD(L&MR) the forum to understand materiel readiness effect on the Department’s current operations and contingency plans.

**What is your understanding and assessment of the current implementation and operating capabilities of the DRRS?**

DRRS is in use across the Department today providing up-to-date readiness information. Presently, an updated version of the system, which fully incorporates the Department’s net-centric architecture to consume and serve up data, is undergoing formal third-party testing to validate its accuracy, suitability and effectiveness. All testing results to date have been positive and the newly tested version of DRRS should be ready for release later this summer.

**How satisfied are you of the current ability of the DRRS to inform and contribute to the development of the National Security Strategy?**

DRRS is a critical Global Force Management capability that supports the National Military Strategy (NMS) which contributes to the National Security Strategy. Specifically, DRRS provides near real-time capability-based readiness of the Combatant Commands, Services, and Joint Organizations. DRRS also provides the ability to view mission capability and readiness

metrics for all DoD organizations which drives plans and actions to ensure mission accomplishment. Finally, DRRS uses Joint and Service provided authoritative data sources in a web-based architecture providing greater fidelity for refined analysis and force management. DRRS provides the holistic picture of the DoD from the highest levels to the tactical to inform the NMS.

**How satisfied are you of the current ability of the DRRS to inform and help shape the development of the defense planning guidance provided by the Secretary of Defense pursuant to section 113(g) of Title 10?**

DRRS permits the Secretary to effectively comply with items Section 113(g) of title 10, as the means by which the Secretary is able to evaluate the Department's readiness to execute its missions and contingency plans. Additionally, the nature of DRRS and its incorporation of the Civil Support Task List allows the Department to evaluate plans for providing support to civil authorities.

**How satisfied are you of the current ability of the DRRS to inform and assist the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in prescribing the National Military Strategy?**

DRRS provides the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs with relevant readiness data to help determine whether Combatant Commanders can perform their assigned missions and associated Mission Essential Tasks (METs) in a Joint, interagency, and multinational operational environment. Involved in this determination are Service assessments of their ability to conduct missions as part of a Joint organization. These assessments are analyzed quarterly in the Joint Forces Readiness Review providing the Chairman a comprehensive view of readiness across the force.

**Do you have any concerns about whether the Quarterly Readiness Report to Congress is providing the best mix of information to clearly inform the Congress of the readiness of the joint force, including near-term risks and areas where congressional action may be needed?**

As you know, the Quarterly Readiness Report to Congress provides a large amount of information and data as they relate to the overall readiness of our Armed Forces. However, we feel this report can be improved, particularly in view of an austere budget climate and the impact that might have on the readiness of our total force. We would like to work with the Congressional staffs in these matters and, if confirmed, I stand ready to brief and discuss the QRRC at any time.

**Are you aware of any readiness information in use within DOD that is not currently shared with Congress that would be useful for the exercise of congressional oversight?**

No, I am not aware of any current readiness information that is not shared with the Congress.

### **Foreign Language Proficiency**

**In previous reporting, the GAO has identified challenges that the DOD and the Services face in identifying pre-deployment training requirements for language proficiency and limitations with some of the Services information management systems to record language proficiency information.**

**What are the current pre-deployment language training requirements for individuals or units deploying to Afghanistan and other geographic combatant commands areas of responsibility and what steps has the DOD taken to ensure that forces have the required levels of language proficiency?**

In 2012, the Commander, U.S. Forces Afghanistan, specified the pre-deployment language and culture training required for all U.S. personnel deploying to Afghanistan. This policy acknowledged that various missions would place differing demands on U.S. personnel based on the anticipated degree of interaction with the Afghan population. The Department supports this policy with on-line training modules for basic cultural and communications skills for personnel expecting minimal contact with the local population. For the personnel expected to interact with Afghan personnel for the majority of their missions, DoD offers Language Training Detachments and command-sponsored classroom programs to supplement its HEADSTART 2 language and culture training modules offered by the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center (DLIFLC). Mobile Training Teams from DLIFLC are available to commanders on request. This approach allows commanders to tailor their training and maximize training resources.

**The Army and Marine Corps have provided substantial language training to select general purpose soldiers and marines deploying to Afghanistan, yet the Services' training and personnel systems have not fully captured information on language training that has been completed and any proficiency gained from the training.**

**What steps have the DOD and Services taken to provide decision makers with greater visibility within training and personnel systems on the language proficiency of general purpose forces that could better inform force management processes?**

The Army and Marine Corps are modifying their training data bases to track language and culture training provided to individuals. Additionally, the Department is successfully tracking the language proficiency of the force using the Language Readiness Index (LRI) in the Defense Readiness Reporting System. This tool allows decision makers and planners to quickly identify DoD military and civilian personnel with tested and self-professed language proficiency, the languages they command, and their proficiency in those languages. This information is provided by the Services' personnel systems and the Defense Civilian Personnel Data System and portrays the DoD language capability inventory.

**At a congressional hearing last year, Undersecretary of Defense for Intelligence Michael Vickers testified that the United States could benefit by having more DOD personnel proficient in foreign languages and that, “it’s an area, frankly, we still need to improve”.**

**What is your assessment of the current level of foreign language proficiency across the Services?**

Our foreign language capability is growing. Our investments have resulted in over 265,000 DoD personnel with foreign language skills an increase of 6,497 from previous years. Our challenge is to generate the language skills to meet the needs of general purpose and special operations forces while at the same time training to the professional language level for strategic capabilities like Foreign Area Officers and Cryptologic Language Analysts. This is our strategy to provide the Department with the assets it needs for regional deployments at the operational and tactical levels. This is especially important as we regionally align combat forces towards specific regions.

**What incentives would you offer, if any, in the form of either financial stipends or professional advancement opportunities?**

The Department has significantly improved the availability of Foreign Language Proficiency Bonuses for our total force over the past five years. The bonus was extended to the Reserve Component and payment rates increased. We are assessing its impact and are considering non-monetary incentives to encourage personnel to pursue competency in a foreign language. This involves a close look at linguist career paths, proper utilization, and promotion opportunities

**Are you concerned with the current level of reliance upon contractors to provide translators to deployed combat units?**

Interpreters and translators provide the Department the ability to provide a high level of foreign language capability, on short notice, to deploying units. The use of contractors to provide interpretation to deployed combat units is closely monitored on a regular basis.

It is not possible within current resources to train sufficient numbers of military or DoD personnel to meet the ever increasing need for personnel with high levels of foreign language and cultural skills. Therefore contract interpreters have and will continue to provide a much needed surge capability to our deploying forces. However, the Department recognizes the value of having foreign language skills organic to a unit and has in the past employed the skills of personnel in the Army 09L Translator Aide program as well as Military Accessions Vital to National Interest (MAVNI) program to provide high levels of language skills to deploying units. The Department is currently exploring other avenues to provide short term surge capability for translation. One of the more exciting initiatives is the National Language Service Corps, which

offers more than 4,000 American Citizens with advanced language skills who are willing to serve as temporary federal employees to meet urgent and surge demands in limited capacities.

### **Safety and Risk Mitigation**

**Since the onset of combat operations over a decade ago, the overall readiness of the force has steadily declined in terms of personnel, training, and equipment readiness. As force readiness is consumed as soon as it is created by the demand of a high operations tempo, our readiness now faces additional challenges in an economically austere environment. If the current sequestration cuts were to occur, our understanding is that approximately \$18 billion would be cut from the DOD's operation and maintenance (O&M) budget. If the DOD were then forced to operate under a one-year continuing resolution, the O&M budget would be cut by an additional \$11 billion. Furthermore, to ensure that Overseas Contingency Operations are funded, another \$11 billion would then have to be cut out of the base O&M budget.**

**If this scenario were to unfold, how would you provide oversight, prioritize resources, and ensure the readiness of the force is sustained?**

The magnitude of sequestration cuts make it impossible for the Services to avoid cuts to vital training capabilities, training infrastructure, and training deliverables. Ensuring the readiness of the force is sustained, other than those units that are next to deploy, will be virtually impossible. The Army has stated that cuts to training and maintenance will put two-thirds of their active brigade combat teams outside of Afghanistan at reduced readiness levels. Navy operations in the western Pacific, including training, will be reduced by as much as one-third. With less training and steaming days, the Navy will inevitably reduce unit readiness levels. The Air Force has stated that sequestration cuts to their flying hour program will put flying units below acceptable readiness standards by the end of the fiscal year. The furlough of DoD civilians will include civilians at training centers across the country, reducing the quality and quantity of training immediately, with long-lasting impacts on readiness.

It is clear that sequestration and a continuing budget resolution will devastate our readiness. When we are not allowed by legislation to manage individual pieces of the budget, readiness accounts inevitably pay the price, thus prioritizing resources is problematic. I will work closely with the Services and Joint Staff, through our various readiness assessment processes, to identify those readiness shortfalls that require the attention of the Department's most senior leadership.

**Are these potential sequestration cuts to the O&M budget accurate?**

As I understand it, as part of the overall cut of the \$46 billion cut, the Department's O&M accounts will be reduced by \$13 billion from the annualized CR level. We must protect the O&M dollars for our men and women in combat, which under sequestration rules we can only do

by cutting base-budget O&M disproportionately—this results in an additional shortfall of \$5 billion in active base-budget dollars, for a total of an \$18 billion cut.

If the continuing resolution is extended in its current form throughout the year, it exacerbates problems because it does not provide enough dollars in O&M – adding an additional shortfall of \$11 billion.

**In your view, what are the indicators of a hollow force?**

It would be a force that has been rendered incapable of performing the mission that we expect it to conduct. While the units may exist, they would not have the personnel, equipment, and/or training necessary to make them capable of executing the defense strategy or responding to the most likely contingencies. Additionally, part of avoiding a hollow force is ensuring we have a clear understanding of the size of the force we can afford to keep ready and then adhering to that plan.

**How has the DRRS contributed to managing risk within the DOD?**

DRRS provides the Department with a capabilities centric look at readiness which has allowed commanders and staffs to understand readiness issues that directly impact their mission and equate to operational risk. This knowledge provides situational awareness that allows them to initiate operational problem solving, identify capability gaps, conduct trend, threshold and predictive analysis, create capability Force Package designs and strategies to solve or mitigate readiness issues and mitigate risks.

**How would the DRRS inform your decision making process in order to reduce risk?**

DRRS contains detailed information on not only what units are capable of; it also contains data on the resources and training status on which those capabilities are based. In this sense, it provides an empirical understanding of why readiness is degraded and what the associated consequences are. This understanding is essential to identifying systematic problems and identifying potential mitigation options.

**Why are commanders allowed to subjectively upgrade their unit's readiness, if the intent of the DRRS is to accurately portray unit readiness up the chain of command?**

DRRS, like Status of Resources and Training Systems (SORTS), allows for commanders' upgrades because an assessment of whether a unit can accomplish their assigned mission is far too complex to rely on simplistic rules on interpreting data. Intangibles, nuances, and positive and negative synergies among causal factors can be extremely important in determining an accurate assessment and we trust commanders with the responsibility to make those calls. One

mechanism that we use to make sure we understand the final assessments is to monitor the empirical/non-subjective data on which they are built. This includes not only unit-level data, but also maintaining some visibility on the man/train/equip pipeline processes that generate unit readiness.

**If either sequestration or a full-year continuing resolution is to be implemented, how should they be modified to reduce the impact on readiness? Would additional reprogramming authority be required?**

Both should be modified to allow the Department the flexibility to allocate our resources to our highest priorities. When we are not allowed by legislation to manage individual pieces of the budget, readiness accounts inevitably pay the price. Everything needs to be on the table. This should include military and civilian force reductions, basing, and balancing active and reserve components. Adequate flexibility will also require support for follow-on reprogramming authority.

### **Joint Training System**

**In June of last year, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff published CJCS Guide 3501: The Joint Training System, which provides an overview of the Joint Training System (JTS) and highlights the role of senior leadership in the planning, execution, and assessment of joint training.**

**What is your assessment of the effectiveness of the current JTS?**

Today's force is more joint than at any time in our history. Through a decade of conflict our military members have evolved from a Service-centric force to a more capable force which includes both Service-unique attributes as well intentional Service interdependencies.

The Joint Training System described in CJCS Guide 3501 is focused on the warfighting organizations – namely the Combatant Commands and their Service components. As such, the JTS focuses at the strategic and operational levels, where combatant commanders can assess their readiness to “integrate and synchronize assigned forces to meet mission objectives.” One additional aspect of joint readiness bears mentioning here. While the JTS focuses at the strategic and operational levels of operations, joint readiness (and by extension, joint training) extends down to the tactical level as well. Services – including Service components of Combatant Commands – must be resourced to “train the way they operate.” This includes joint tactical interoperability training. While tactical training is not the primary focus of the JTS, such training is also at risk in the current fiscal environment. As Services retrench into Title 10 focus on core competencies, adequate resources specifically allocated for joint training must be preserved. JTS would be a more complete system if it provided a conceptual framework for Combatant Commanders and Services to plan, resource, and conduct joint tactical training in

addition to operational training for Combatant Command staffs.

### **Training Ranges**

**The DOD is fielding Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) in greater numbers which has created a strong demand for access to national airspace to conduct training and for other purposes. The demand has quickly exceeded the current airspace available for military operations.**

**What is your understanding and assessment of the DOD's efforts to develop a comprehensive training strategy for the Department's UAS, to include identifying any shortfalls associated with current policies, education, stationing plans, and simulator technologies?**

The DoD UAS Training Strategy is currently being developed and the Department will be providing a report to Congress in July on its progress in this area. The training strategy will address critical elements of UAS training – unit collective training and home station training of pilots, sensor operators, and ground controllers. We anticipate that the report will identify and address shortfalls associated with current policies, training, basing, national airspace, and training technologies.

### **Defense Strategic Guidance**

**The 2012 Defense Strategic Guidance stressed that the Department will need to examine the mix of active and reserve component elements and stated that the expected pace of operations over the next decade will be a significant driver in determining an appropriate mix of AC/RC forces and level of readiness.**

**What is your assessment of the implications of a reduction in the pace of operations on the AC/RC mix and reserve readiness?**

The National Guard and Reserve have clearly proven the ability to accomplish any assigned mission whether overseas or at home. As the pace of operations declines, it is my opinion the National Guard and Reserve will continue to play a vital role in our national defense. Recent changes in laws permitting greater access to the Reserve Component (RC), coupled with the proven abilities and current high state of readiness of the reserve forces affords the Department greater flexibility when determining appropriate force levels and AC/RC mix. In a constrained resource environment, the RC gives the department a unique opportunity to preserve overall operational capability and mitigate risk at reduced costs.

**In your view, how can the missions of the Reserve forces expect to change to meet new priorities?**



Over the last decade, the Department has learned a significant amount about using Reserve Forces in many different mission sets. The upcoming Quadrennial Defense Review will lay the ground work for assigning mission sets to all forces. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Services, the Reserve Chiefs, and the Chief of the National Guard Bureau to determine the most effective mix and makeup of Active, Reserve, and Guard personnel to support the National Military Strategy.

### **Reserve Component as a Trained and Ready Operational Reserve**

**One outcome of 10 years of continuous operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, that has included the mobilization of thousands of Guard and Reserve forces, has been the realization that our reserve components have evolved from a rarely used strategic reserve to a more frequently used operational reserve.**

**In your view, what are the essential elements of readiness, if any, that distinguish the reserve component as an operational reserve as opposed to a strategic reserve?**

The decade plus of war has transformed the reserve component from a strategic force rarely used to an integral partner of our National Defense. In my opinion the most essential element of readiness is people. Today our Reserve Component has experienced and skilled people. The combination of their combat experience and civilian skills make them vitally important to our Nation Defense. I think the continued use of the RC as a full partner in the Total Force is the difference between the strategic reserve of the Cold War and the required efficient use of all elements of the Total Force going forward - Active, Guard and Reserve, civilian, and contractor.

### **Active-Duty and Reserve Component End Strength**

**The Department last year announced its 5-year plan to reduce active-duty end strengths by over 100,000 service members by 2017, and the reserve components by another 21,000 over the same period. These cuts do not include any additional personnel reductions that could result from sequestration or any agreement to avoid sequestration.**

**Do you agree with this plan to reduce active-duty and reserve component end strengths?**

If confirmed, I will continue to review the plan, but I believe the end strength drawdown allows us to achieve the right size force and keep it modern. The plan is designed to maintain capable and ready military forces while managing reductions in a way that “keeps faith” with forces that have been at war for the past ten years. As future national security conditions could change, our planned drawdown could change accordingly.

**What is your view of how these planned end-strength reductions will affect dwell time ratios?**

I understand that all of the Services, on average, are meeting or exceeding the Department's dwell time goal of 2 years at home for every year deployed, or 1:2, for the Active Component. If confirmed, I will continue to monitor this issue closely.

The Reserve Component dwell time is improving, but has not reached the Department's dwell time goal of 5 years at home for every one year of active duty, or 1:5. If confirmed, I will continue to work toward the goal of a 1:5 dwell time ratio for the Reserve Component.

**What effect would inability to meet dwell time objectives have on the decision to implement the planned end-strength reductions?**

The Services are continually monitoring dwell time, if there are any early indicators that the end strength reductions are affecting the ratio, I will work with the Services to address the issues. Re-examination of end-strength reductions would certainly be one of the considerations to remedy potential dwell problems.

**What additional military personnel reductions do you envision if the sequester is triggered in accordance with the Budget Control Act?**

If the Department were required to sequester funding, I believe that it would first require a revision of the current National Security Strategy announced by the President last January. The current strategy could not be met with the significantly diminished resources that sequester would impose. The revised strategy could very well impact all components of the Total Force—Active Duty military, Reserve Component military, government civilians and contractors.

**In your view, what tools do the Department and Services need to get down to authorized strengths in the future, and which of these require Congressional authorization?**

The Department already has or has been granted the Total Force shaping tools necessary to meet the drawdown in its current plan.

**Military Quality of Life**

**In your view, what is the relationship between military recruitment and retention and quality of life improvements and your own top priorities for the armed forces?**

The Military Services must attract and retain people with the necessary talent, character, and commitment to become leaders and warriors in the nation's Armed Forces. The military has consistently used a coordinated recruiting and retention strategy which maximizes the efficient use of our greatest asset – our people. This strategy consists of monetary and non-monetary compensation packages that include the use of special pays, enlistment bonuses, educational benefits and quality of life programs. It has long been said that you recruit an individual and retain a family. As such, it is critical that quality of life (family, education, child-care, housing), quality of Service (work environment, infrastructure capacity, and support, time to train), and Compensation (pay and benefits) are constantly evaluated and adjusted to respond to needs of an evolving force and to varying economic conditions. Recruiting and retention strategies must be able to generate success in both good and bad economic times. The Services cannot afford to wait for recruiting and retention misses to signal a need for adjustments—adjustment tools and authorities to achieve skill and strength requirements must be set as a priority and readily available.

**If confirmed, what further enhancements to military quality of life would you consider a priority, and how do you envision working with the Services, combatant commanders, family advocacy groups, and Congress to achieve them?**

I recognize that the well-being of the force, as well as recruiting and retention efforts, are significantly impacted by quality of life programs. If confirmed, I look forward to coordinating the efforts of the Services and combatant commanders in order to ensure we have a comprehensive, accessible, and affordable suite of programs. We will continue our work with Congress and family advocacy groups to supplement and enhance our programs and services as needed.

**Family Readiness and Support**

**Senior military leaders have warned of growing concerns among military families as a result of the stress of frequent deployments and the long separations that go with them.**

**What do you consider to be the most important family readiness issues for service members and their families, and, if confirmed, how would you ensure that family readiness needs are addressed and adequately resourced?**

Quality of Life programs and services consistently rank high among the considerations of Service members and their families when deciding whether to stay in the military. Families will need assistance to reintegrate, and communicate with each other after a decade of deployments and long separations. Programs and services need to be readily accessible in order to provide

Service members and their families established support programs using a variety of delivery systems, including in-person, web-based, or online support. The DoD Family Advocacy Program (FAP) provides funding and resources to the Military Departments to strengthen families. FAP is one of the many family readiness programs within the Department, and DoD remains steadfast in its commitment to ensure adequate personnel and resources are available to assist, assess, and treat Service members and their families when and where needed. Moreover, we work closely with the civilian community and our federal partners to support military families.

**How would you address these family readiness needs in light of global rebasing, deployments, and anticipated reductions in end strength?**

Key areas of focus will be on downsizing, and providing support for transition planning throughout the military life cycle. This will include the active engagement of family members in the process. It will be important to continue to develop family readiness so that military families can continue to face the anticipated challenges associated with global rebasing, deployments and anticipated reductions in end strength.

**If confirmed, how would you ensure support is provided to reserve component families related to mobilization, deployment and family readiness, as well as to active duty families who do not reside near a military installation?**

DoD is not resourced to meet all the needs of military families. Actively engaging military families in community-based programs and services by encouraging participation in the design, development, and delivery of such programs and services will ensure that they meet the needs of military families. A variety of programs and services are already available to assist with the networking, coordination, and collaboration that is necessary to build community capacity to support military families.

**If confirmed, what additional steps will you take to enhance family support?**

We must continue to work with civilian communities where most military families live to promote quality of life enhancements that address military and family readiness challenges. Beyond looking to the local community, DoD will continue to assist in workforce development efforts already underway to create a cadre of service providers who can provide that support within the DoD. This will occur through our partnership with professional educational institutions and with local, state, federal, public, and private agencies and organizations. If confirmed, I will continue to build upon these relationships with community partners to provide the necessary services.

**Military Child Development Centers**

**Late last year, the Army announced that it was conducting a 100 percent audit of employee background check processes at all 283 of its child care facilities at installations in the U.S. and overseas because “derogatory” information was found in the security background checks of employees at the Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall Child Development Center. As a result, the SECDEF ordered a 100 percent background check audit of all providers who have regular contact with children in DoD Child Development Centers, School Age Care Programs, and Youth Programs, and a 100 percent review and evaluation of the actual background check documentation on file for each individual, employee and volunteer, for compliance with applicable DoD and Military Service policies. Subsequently, DOD reviewed over 44,000 records and reported validation of background checks had been initiated across the Department as required. Additionally, at the time of the review, approximately 1,200 background checks were pending adjudication.**

**What is the status of the remaining background checks pending adjudication?**

Because of the length of time required for the adjudication process, there will always be background checks in adjudication. Adjudication is the process through which an employee is evaluated for suitability of employment. Currently, the adjudication process is specific to each Military Service. It is important to note the FBI background checks, which include fingerprints, often require months for completion and it is typical for all programs to have some background checks in process/pending. For employees whose background checks are pending, those individuals are either working within line of sight supervision (LOSS) in accordance with Public Law 102-190, Section 1094, or are not yet working in the program.

**Are you convinced that the Services performed these reviews adequately and thoroughly?**

Yes. Additionally, this audit revealed some areas for improvement and, as a result, all applicable directives and other regulatory guidelines will be updated to ensure these improvements are incorporated. DOD leadership and child development program staff are committed to high quality and consistent delivery of these service and to ensure the safety and well-being of children in our care.

**Are policies and programs in place now to ensure the safety and welfare of children in Child Development Centers, School Age Care Programs, and Youth Programs in the future?**

DoD has a longstanding standardized and comprehensive process for screening applicants for positions involving child care services on DoD installations and in DoD activities. By law, employment applications must include a question as to whether the applicant has ever been arrested for or charged with a crime involving a child. The application states that it is being signed under penalty of perjury. Additionally, we are required by law to conduct at least two types of background checks on every employee who works with children in child and youth programs. DoD conducts additional background checks, and the military departments and

Defense Agencies have the discretion to conduct more restrictive screenings. These background checks are part of a system of measures currently in place to ensure children's safety in DoD programs.

**Are OSD policies and programs in place to provide continued oversight of these programs in the future?**

Based on the findings of the review, we are strengthening our policies, specifically highlighting prompt and consistent adjudication. In addition, the military departments and Defense Agencies will increase oversight during unannounced annual inspections of these facilities and programs.

**Department of Defense Schools in CONUS**

**Some have questioned the continuing need for DOD-operated schools for military dependent children within the Continental United States (CONUS).**

**In your view, should DOD reassess or update its criteria for the continued operation of DOD schools within CONUS?**

The Department intends to conduct a comprehensive study to determine the feasibility of transferring the CONUS based DoD schools. The Department's planned study that will examine such factors as the quality of education, adequacy of Impact Aid funding, state laws and prohibitions on using tax revenues for a public education on federal property (e.g., Delaware), capacity of LEAs to assume the educational responsibility, adequacy of educational and support services for military dependents, and impact on the morale of military families. The study will also examine any viable educational alternatives to DoD ownership.

**If so, and if confirmed, how would you approach this task?**

If confirmed, I will closely examine the issue and the results of the study considering all dimensions and all recommendations.

**Conditions of K-12 Schools**

**In 2011, The Department of Defense committed to a \$4 billion plan to renovate or construct new K-12 DODEA schools over five years in order to address inadequate and deteriorated facility conditions throughout the DODEA facility inventory. In response, Congress called upon the Department to develop a minimum standard of design to ensure that DODEA would provide world-class education facilities for the children of military members.**

**What is your assessment of this construction program?**

It is critical that we continue with the school construction program. Nearly 70% of our schools are in poor condition. The Department recognized this growing problem, and approved a multi-billion dollar construction program through 2018. These schools are being designed to meet the high-technology teaching and learning requirements of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and leverage “green” technologies to improve the environmental impact and long-term operating costs.

**If confirmed, will you continue the investments to achieve the goal to provide world-class schools?**

A world-class education is a top quality of life and readiness factor for our military families. Dependent education consistently has been a top priority for the Department. I will continue to ensure that we invest in the education of our children, and maintain a top-quality education for our military dependents.

**What is your position on the use of defense funds to pay for facility improvements for schools that are owned and operated by local education activities?**

The Department continues to work closely with local school districts to address the capacity shortfalls and physical condition deficiencies in many of the 160 public schools located on military installations. It remains important for the Department to continue the administration of the public schools on military installation grant program, which, as of February 21, 2013, has distributed more than \$208 million to projects for 10 of the 12 highest priority schools. If confirmed, I would support the President’s FY13 budget request to continue the program.

**If confirmed, how would you work with local education activities to ensure an adequate level of investment is provided to schools with a predominant student population of military dependents?**

If confirmed, I will continue to work with the Department of Education and support the full funding of Impact Aid. Annually, the Department offers about \$35 million dollars in grants which have provided school districts funding to expand learning opportunities in such areas as foreign languages; STEM, and Advanced Placement Math, Science and English and will continue to leverage available resources to provide the educational opportunities for all 1.2 million school-aged children of our military families and remain committed to providing a quality education for all military dependents

**What is your view on the adequacy of the Department of Defense's involvement with the Impact Aid Program?**

The DoD Supplement to Impact Aid program is an important additional source of funding for local school districts that have lost property tax revenue due to the enrollment of a large number of military-connected children. The Department faces challenging budgetary uncertainties at this time. Many programs are underfunded. Impact Aid is no exception.

**If confirmed, would you recommend any changes to the Impact Aid program?**

The Department of Education has made significant enhancements to this program since its inception. The Department's study of the DoD Domestic Schools will also examine Impact Aid issues.

**Office of Community Support for Military Families with Special Needs**

**In the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010, Congress required the establishment of an Office of Community Support for Military Families with Special Needs within the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness. The purpose of this office is to enhance and improve Department of Defense support for military families with special needs, whether educational or medical in nature.**

**In your view, what should be the priorities of this Office of Community Support for Military Families with Special Needs?**

A key priority for the Office of Community Support for Military Families with Special Needs is to strengthen personal readiness for military families with special needs through a comprehensive policy, oversight of programs that support military families with special needs, identification of gaps in services to such families, and the accessibility to appropriate resources.

Presently, over 126,000 military family members are enrolled in the Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP). The EFMP supports military families with special medical and/or educational needs in three components areas: identification/enrollment, assignment coordination to determine the availability of services at a projected location, and family support to help families identify and access programs and services.



**If confirmed, how would you ensure outreach to those military families with special needs dependents so they are able to get the support they need?**

Communication with military families with special needs and the provision of information about the EFMP is a major focus of DoD. If confirmed, I will ensure the Department continues to develop and implement a comprehensive communication and marketing plan designed to deliver consistent information about the EFMP to families, service providers, and leadership. We will also continue to solicit input from families with special needs through the Special Needs Advisory Panel, as mandated by Congress.

### **GI Bill Benefits**

**Congress passed the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act in 2008 (“Post-9/11 GI Bill”) 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 unresolved issues related to implementation of the Post-9/11 GI Bill (e.g., coverage of additional military personnel) do you consider most important to be addressed?**

With the recent change in Public Law 111-277 that corrected technical issues related to National Guard (Title 32) service, I believe all Armed Service Veterans are fully covered.

**What is your assessment of the impact of the Post-9/11 GI Bill on recruiting and retention, including the provision of transferability for continued service?**

Post Service education benefits have been a cornerstone of our military recruiting efforts since 1985, and a major contributor to the success of the All-Volunteer Force. Money for education has been, and remains at the forefront of reasons young Americans cite for joining the military. There is no doubt that the Post-9/11 GI Bill will continue to have this same impact. The Department of Defense is an “education” employer. We hire educated young people, invest in them while in Service, and we encourage them to invest further in themselves when they leave. The VA-administered education benefits, and in particular the Post-9/11 GI Bill, facilitates that investment.

### **Military and Veteran Education Program Oversight**

**Congress remains interested in strengthening oversight of Department of Defense and Department of Veterans Affairs education programs, including the VA’s Post-9/11 GI Bill, and DOD’s tuition assistance and Military Spouse Career Advancement Accounts (MyCAA) programs.**

**What is your view of proposals that would require that all schools participating in these programs be compliant with title IV of the Higher Education Act, so long as the administering Secretaries had the authority to exempt such requirements on a case-by-case basis?**

DoD supports the proposal and is clarifying policies to ensure tuition assistance funding will only be paid to educational institutions accredited by an accrediting organization, recognized by the Department of Education, approved for Department of Veterans Affairs funding, and participating in Federal student aid programs through the Department of Education under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965.

**What is your view of proposals to change the so-called 90/10 rule to exempt these programs from the calculation altogether, as has been proposed by officials of the Bureau for Consumer Financial Protection and others?**

DoD has no objection with the proposal to exempt Title X tuition assistance funds from the 90/10 calculation. Technical assistance and oversight of any statutory changes to the proposed 90/10 rule should reside with the Department of Education.

### **Morale, Welfare, and Recreation**

**What challenges do you foresee in sustaining Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) programs, particularly in view of the budget challenges the Department faces?**

Quality of life programs for our military members and their families are essential to the resiliency of the force, as well as to recruiting and retention efforts. Changes in our basing, deployment patterns and force structure have had a significant impact on our ability to deliver quality of life programs to our military families. With more than 75% of military families now living off installation, there is an increasing need for partnerships and support from local governments, school systems and businesses to ensure we continue to provide comprehensive, accessible, and affordable quality of life programs. Additionally, we are conducting a major assessment of Morale, Welfare, and Recreation programs to ensure they are being operated in as efficient and cost-effective manner as possible.

**How would you seek to deal with these challenges?**

Sustaining family programs in the current fiscally constrained environment will be challenging but of vital importance as we seek to reach service members on and off the installations. If confirmed, I will make every effort to protect funding for family quality of life programs to the greatest extent possible and ensure they are operating efficiently.

Good stewardship demands that available resources are utilized in the most effective manner.

**If confirmed, what improvements would you seek to achieve?**

We have a responsibility to ensure access to quality programs, information and resources regardless of where our service members and their families are located. I've mentioned the need to develop and maintain a strong network of community-based providers. We'll need to enhance our information and referral resources by maximizing electronic opportunities provided through internet social networking avenues and electronic applications. We also have opportunities to improve the effectiveness of outreach programs, to better meet military families where they live. If confirmed, I will evaluate these opportunities, and how we can better coordinate efforts among the various entities providing support to our military members and their families.

**Commissary and Military Exchange Systems**

**What is your view of the need for modernization of business policies and practices in the commissary and exchange systems, and what do you view as the most promising avenues for change to achieve modernization goals?**

Both the Defense Commissary Agency (DeCA) and the military exchanges are progressive organizations seeking to reduce costs within their respective businesses. DeCA, for example, has a proven history of reducing the costs of the commissary system without decreasing the value of the benefit provided. Since its beginning in 1991, efficiencies have allowed DeCA to reduce its workforce by almost 7,000 full time equivalent positions and operating costs by approximately \$700 million in constant FY 1992 dollars. In fact, when measured in constant dollars, DeCA's operating costs are only slightly more than one-half of what they were when the Agency was created.

Exchanges are evolutionary models driven by best business practices and the need to remain relevant to service members in a highly competitive and ever-changing retail environment. Today's exchanges have gone beyond the traditional brick and mortar environment, embracing e-commerce and mobile retail channels to satisfy customer demands. They are using digital marketing and social media that are now common in the marketplace for customer outreach. In the traditional brick and mortar environment, robust infrastructure re-investments, new branding strategies, enhanced customer service postures, supply chain enhancements, and targeted merchandise assortment driven by unique installation customer demographics are all delivering a customer shopping experience on par or better than the most successful retailers in the commercial market place. The exchanges continue to exceed the DoD Social Compact on savings for service members.

For the Exchanges, there are already mechanisms for modernization through the Cooperative Efforts Board. Promising areas for change include non-resale procurement, logistics and distribution, exchange select/ private label, legislative and policy, and seasonal and one time buys.

**What is your view of the proposals by some to consolidate or eliminate commissaries and exchanges?**

Eliminating the commissary and exchanges would be a direct hit on military compensation. In Fiscal Year 2012, commissaries saved military shoppers approximately \$2.76 billion, a return of more than double the \$1.31 billion annual commissary appropriation. At a personal level, a family of four shopping at the commissary regularly can save \$4,500 a year. Exchanges, which receive very little appropriated fund support, save our customers 22 percent, on average, over commercial retail stores.

Commissary and exchange benefits form a major part of the military community support structure that contributes to mission readiness. The commissary continues to be one of the most popular non-pay compensation benefits of our military members. Exchanges provide valuable savings at home and essential health, comfort and convenience items to military personnel in forward deployed and combat areas. Military families would rightfully view the elimination of these systems as a significant reduction of their compensation.

**Civilian Personnel Systems**

**Section 1113 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010 provides DOD with extensive personnel flexibilities for its civilian employees that are not available to other agencies. In particular, section 9902(a) of title 5, U.S. Code, as added by section 1113, directs the Department to establish a new performance management system for all of its employees. Section 9902(b) directs the Department to develop a streamlined new hiring system that is designed to better fulfill DOD's mission needs, produce high-quality applicants, and support timely personnel decisions.**

**What is your understanding of the current status of the Department's efforts to implement the authority provided by section 1113?**

I understand the Department and organizations that represent DoD employees, including unions and the Federal Manager's Association, worked collaboratively over a span of 18 months to design a performance management system and improved hiring processes. The Department launched its pre-decisional collaborative process that came to be known as "New Beginnings" in the spring of 2010. The effort culminated in a comprehensive report from three joint labor-management design teams. All recommendations have been reviewed through the Departmental

process. If confirmed, I will continue to support the work that is underway to comply with the National Defense Authorization Act.

**Do you agree that DOD's civilian employee workforce plays a vital role in the functioning of the Department?**

Yes, DoD's civilian employee workforce plays an instrumental role in the functioning of the Department as part of the Total Force across a range of missions.

**If confirmed, will you make it a priority to implement these flexibilities in a manner that best meets the needs of the Department and promotes the quality of the Department's civilian workforce?**

Yes, if confirmed, I would make it my priority to implement those flexibilities that would facilitate accomplishing the Department's missions.

**Section 1112 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010 directs the Department to develop a Defense Civilian Leadership Program (DCLP) to recruit, train, and advance a new generation of civilian leaders for the Department. Section 1112 provides the Department with the full range of authorities available for demonstration programs under section 4703 of title 5, U.S. Code, including the authority to compensate participants on the basis of qualifications, performance, and market conditions. These flexibilities are not otherwise available to the Department of Defense.**

**What is your understanding of the current status of the Department's efforts to implement the authority provided by section 1112?**

I understand that the Department has designed a new leadership program and has graduated the first cohort. Still in the pilot phase, a second cohort is underway. If confirmed, I will fully engage to ensure the new program meets the intent of the NDAA authority.

**Do you agree that the Department needs to recruit highly qualified civilian personnel to meet the growing needs of its acquisition, technical, business, and financial communities?**

Yes. I completely agree that recruiting highly qualified civilian personnel both in mission critical occupations, such as acquisition and finance, and in leadership positions across the Department is essential to mission success.

**In your view, has the existing civilian hiring process been successful in recruiting such personnel and meeting these needs?**

Although I believe the Department currently has a highly talented workforce, I wholeheartedly support the initiatives to streamline and reform the civilian hiring process. While I understand the Department is making progress, there is still work to be done in this area, and if confirmed, I would ensure the Department continues to actively engage in civilian hiring reform initiatives and aggressively pursues continued improvements.

**If confirmed, will you make it a priority to implement the authority provided by section 1112 in a manner that best meets the needs of the Department and promotes the quality of the Department's civilian workforce?**

Yes, if confirmed I will make it a priority to implement the authority provided by section 1112. The Department recognizes the need for an improved leader-development model to attract, retain, and develop civilian leaders to support pipeline readiness and enhance bench strength. If confirmed, I will assess the section 1112 pilot outcomes to ensure a successful framework for developing the next generation of innovative leaders with the technical competence to meet the future leadership needs of the Department.

### **Human Capital Planning**

**The Department of Defense faces a critical shortfall in key areas of its civilian workforce, including the management of acquisition programs, information technology systems and financial management, and senior DOD officials have expressed alarm at the extent of the Department's reliance on contractors in these areas. Section 115b of title 10, U.S. Code, requires the Department to develop a strategic workforce plan to shape and improve its civilian employee workforce.**

**Would you agree that the Department's human capital, including its civilian workforce, is critical to the accomplishment of its national security mission?**

Yes. I believe such planning would well position the Department to acquire, develop, and maintain the workforce it needs to meet current and future mission challenges.

**Do you share the concern expressed by others about the extent of the Department's reliance on contractors in critical areas such as the management of acquisition programs, information technology and financial management?**

We must ensure that we have a properly sized, and highly capable, civilian workforce that guards against an erosion of critical, organic skills and an overreliance on contracted services,

particularly in such areas as acquisition program management, information technology, and financial management. If confirmed, I will continue to support the Administration's and Department's focus on reducing inappropriate or excessive reliance on contracted support, particularly for critical, and closely associated with inherently governmental, work. I will continue to support the ongoing efforts to further utilize the Strategic Workforce Plan to mitigate against civilian workforce competency gaps and skill shortfalls in these areas.

**If confirmed, will you ensure that the Department undertakes necessary human capital planning to ensure that its civilian workforce is prepared to meet the challenges of the coming decades?**

If confirmed, I would ensure Department decisions on workforce shaping align with the Department's long-term strategic workforce plan, with the understanding that short-term exceptions may be needed due to emerging dynamics in the budget environment. Forecasts for the Department's workforce must be based on validated mission requirements and workload, both current and projected, and any reductions in the civilian workforce must be directly linked to workload so as to not adversely impact overall mission capabilities.

**Section 955 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013 requires a five percent reduction in anticipated funding levels for the civilian personnel workforce and the service contractor workforce of the Department of Defense, subject to certain exclusions.**

**What impact do you expect the implementation of section 955 to have on the programs and operations of the Department of Defense?**

Section 955 requires a reduction in available funding for the civilian workforce and contracted support, and as such, is being led by the Office of the Under Secretary, Comptroller. The impact of how section 955 will be implemented is still being determined and I do not have enough information at this time to speak to specific impacts to programs and/or operations. If confirmed, I will work with my counterparts in Comptroller to ensure that the Department's implementation of section 955 is done in a manner that reduces mission impact and mitigates risk to programs and operations, while maintaining core capabilities and support to our warfighters and their families.

**What steps will you take, if confirmed, to ensure that section 955 is implemented in a manner that is consistent with the requirements of section 129a of title 10, United States Code, for determining the most appropriate and cost-efficient mix of military, civilian and service contractor personnel to perform DOD missions?**

If confirmed, I will work with my counterparts in Comptroller to ensure implementation of section 955 recognizes that the sourcing of work among military (active/reserve), civilian, and contracted services must be consistent with requirements, funding availability, readiness and management needs, as well as applicable laws (such as section 129a of title 10, United States Code) and other Total Force management and workload sourcing mandates. The Department must avoid any inappropriate transfer of work from civilians to contract support or military personnel. We must also ensure the most cost effective performance possible while being mindful that risk mitigation must take precedence over cost considerations to ensure mission success and prevent an overreliance on contractors.

**What processes will you put in place, if confirmed, to ensure that the Department implements a sound planning process for carrying out the requirements of section 955, including the implementation of the exclusion authority in section 955(c)?**

If confirmed, I will work with my counterparts in Comptroller to ensure the requirements of section 955 are implemented in manner which complements the Department's current processes for workforce determinations, which strive to achieve effective and efficient total force manpower solutions consistent with law and available resources. While I cannot speak to specific exclusions, I will work to ensure that the workforces of the Department are sized to perform the functions and activities necessary to achieve the missions and enable the capabilities of the Department.

### **Acquisition Workforce**

**Section 852 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 established an Acquisition Workforce Development Fund to help the Department of Defense address shortcomings in its acquisition workforce. This provision was amended by the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013 to ensure a continuing source of funds for this purpose.**

**Do you believe that the DOD acquisition workforce development fund is still needed to ensure that DOD has the right number of employees with the right skills to run its acquisition programs in the most cost effective manner for the taxpayers?**

The acquisition workforce development fund has been instrumental in the Department's efforts to recapitalize its acquisition workforce and improve oversight, management, and accountability in the procurements of goods and services. I believe that the fund is still necessary to further enhance and sustain the training and expertise of our dedicated acquisition workforce.



**If confirmed, what steps if any will you take to ensure that the money made available through the workforce development fund is spent in a manner that best meets the needs of the Department of Defense and its acquisition workforce?**

It is my understanding that management and execution of the acquisition workforce development fund is a joint responsibility of the Offices of the Under Secretaries of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, & Logistics and Comptroller. If confirmed, I will work with my counterparts in those offices to ensure that application of resources is done in a manner that is consistent with the training, development, and sustainment needs of the acquisition workforce.

**One of the central tenets of the Department's Better Buying Power 2.0 is to improve the "the Professionalism of the Total Acquisition Workforce." The Department has subdivided this tenet into four separate initiatives. These initiatives are:**

- 1. Establish higher standards for key leadership positions.**
- 2. Establish stronger professional qualification requirements for all acquisitions specialties.**
- 3. Increase the recognition of excellence in acquisition management**
- 4. Continue to increase the cost consciousness of the acquisition workforce – change the culture.**

**If confirmed, how will you use funds from the Acquisition Workforce Development Fund to accomplish the objectives of these initiatives?**

These specific initiatives are under the purview of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics and I cannot speak to their specifics. However, to improve overall stewardship of the Department's resources, the continuation of the workforce development fund to recruit, retain, train, and sustain a professional and highly skilled acquisition workforce is critical.

**Section 872 of the Ike Skelton National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2011 codifies the authority for the Department of Defense to conduct an acquisition workforce demonstration project and extends the authority to 2017.**

**Do you believe it would be in the best interest of the Department to extend and expand the acquisition workforce demonstration project?**

The Department is authorized by law up to 120,000 employee participants covered under acquisition demonstration projects. It is my understanding that today the Department has 15,800 employee participants, the majority of which returned to the demonstration project following the repeal of the National Security Personnel System (NSPS) as directed by the NDAA for FY 2010. With that complete, several acquisition organizations across all components have expressed interest in participating in the project. Project participation is voluntary and based on meeting acquisition related workforce demographic eligibility criteria.

**What steps would you take, if confirmed, to implement section 872?**

If confirmed, I will work closely with the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics and the Department components to ensure the Department is effectively positioned to appropriately expand the Acquisition Demonstration project.

**Laboratory Personnel Demonstration Program**

**The laboratory demonstration program founded in section 342 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1995 as amended by section 1114 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2001, section 1107 of the National Defense Authorization act for Fiscal Year 2008, section 1108 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2009, and section 1105 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010, paved the way for personnel management initiatives and new flexibilities at the defense laboratories. These innovations have been adopted in various forms throughout other DOD personnel systems.**

**If confirmed, will you fully implement the laboratory demonstration program and the authorities under these provisions?**

If confirmed, I will work closely with the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics to fully implement laboratory demonstration programs under these authorities.

**If confirmed, will you ensure that the directors of the defense laboratories are provided the full range of personnel flexibilities and authorities provided by Congress?**

If confirmed, I will work closely with the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics and the Department components to ensure the directors of defense laboratories are provided the full range of personnel flexibilities and authorities provided by Congress.

**DOD Scientific and Technical Personnel**

**Recently, the Department issued guidance, as part of its efficiencies initiatives, to centralize certain hiring authorities, including for Highly Qualified Experts (HQE) and Inter-Governmental Personnel Assignment (IPA) positions. Both are heavily used by the Department's scientific and technical (S&T) enterprise, including the DOD's laboratories**

**and the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA). The benefit of these authorities is to use them to make rapid hiring decisions for individuals in a highly competitive national S&T jobs market. However, there is concern that the centralization of the process will actually slow down the Services' and defense agencies' ability to hire rapidly.**

**What will you do to ensure that these special hiring authorities are not negatively impacted in terms of allowing DOD to rapidly hire these types of highly specialized individuals?**

If confirmed, I would ensure that the Department actively engages in initiatives to streamline and reform the civilian hiring system, to include efforts to ensure that the Department's processes for using special hiring authorities are efficient in fulfilling DoD's mission needs.

**Under the Military Accessions Vital to National Interest (MAVNI) program, the Department is able to expedite U.S. citizenship for foreign nationals that enlist in the military and have either specialized medical or linguistic skills.**

**How could this program be extended to include, subject to appropriate security reviews, highly skilled scientific and technical foreign nationals – e.g., graduates of U.S. universities with doctorates in fields the DOD has a demand for and where less than half of these graduates are U.S. citizens?**

Although new enlistees under the MAVNI program are eligible for expedited naturalization under the provisions of section 1440, title 8, U.S.C., the MAVNI Pilot Program was designed to meet critical military readiness needs in the Armed Forces by using the provisions of section 504(b)(2), title 10, U.S.C. to enlist certain legal non-immigrants.

Currently, the Services have identified and scoped the program for fully-qualified health professional in critical medical skills and individuals with heritage-level language abilities and cultural backgrounds in a specific set of languages critical to current and emerging readiness needs.

Although the need for scientific and technical skills has been identified as a shortage in civilian requirements, expanding MAVNI to fill civilian needs would not meet the intent or the language of the statutory provisions under which MAVNI operates.

### **Congressional 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 Defense for Personnel and Readiness?**

Yes

**Do you agree to ensure that testimony, briefings, and other communications of information are provided 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