

Advance Policy Questions for Clifford L. Stanley
Nominee for Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness

Defense Reforms

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

Do you see the need for modifications of any Goldwater-Nichols Act provisions?

Not at this time.

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

N/A.

Qualifications

What background and experience do you have that you believe qualifies you for this position?

During my 33 years of serving in the Marine Corps, I experienced first hand the sacrifices that our Armed Forces make and the daunting challenges the DoD faces now and in the future. I served in a diversified number of positions including the commander of the Marine Corps Combat Development Command, the Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff for Manpower and Reserve affairs at Marine Corps Headquarters. After my wife's paralysis in 1975, she and I personally lived the trials disabled service members and their families encounter today. After retiring from the Marine Corps, I served as the President of Scholarship America where I implemented sweeping reforms that moved this organization forward while overcoming latent bureaucracy and financial challenges. These experiences along with a lifetime devotion to inspiring others towards leadership, education and diversity, have given me a strong appreciation of the formidable tasks ahead.

Major Challenges

In your view, what are the major challenges confronting the next Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness?

I believe the most important challenge is continuing to properly sustain the nation's all volunteer force, particularly during this time of conflict. This includes ensuring appropriate compensation and personnel policies that recognize the talent and sacrifices of our service members. Ensuring quality health care and, particularly, mental health support will be paramount. The DoD must deliver world-class support to families and to wounded, ill, and injured service members. At the same time, I understand that our current engagements have illuminated the need to change the way the Department conducts operations. As the Quadrennial Defense Review charts a course for the Department of the future, the Under Secretary for Personnel and Readiness will need to make sure that the human resource systems for civilian and military personnel, active and reserve, produce service members and employees who are trained and equipped with skills to realize that future.

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

Although I do not have specific recommendations at this time, if confirmed, I would review the plans that are currently in place to address these challenges, and determine whether they need to be modified or amplified. I would intend to collaborate with my colleagues in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the military services, and the Joint Staff in charting the right course for the Department.

Duties

Section 136 of title 10, United States Code, provides that the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, subject to the authority, direction and control of the Secretary of Defense, shall perform such duties and exercise such powers as the Secretary of Defense may prescribe in the areas of military readiness, total force management, military and civilian personnel requirements, military and civilian personnel training, military and civilian family matters, exchange, commissary and nonappropriated fund activities, personnel requirements for weapons support, National Guard and Reserve components, and health affairs.

Assuming you are confirmed, what duties do you expect the Secretary of Defense will prescribe for you?

If confirmed, I expect the Secretary of Defense would assign me all of the duties, functions, and responsibilities currently mandated by law and specified in the Department's directives for the position of Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness.

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

The Secretary of Defense,

If confirmed, I would serve the Secretary as his principal advisor and advocate for the management of human resources in the Department.

The Deputy Secretary of Defense,

If confirmed, I would serve the Deputy Secretary as his principal advisor and advocate for the management of human resources in the Department.

The Chairman and the other members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff,

If confirmed, I would coordinate with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to ensure that he has all the information and support necessary to perform the duties of principal military advisor to the President, National Security Council, and Secretary of Defense.

The Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness,

If I am confirmed, PDUSD(P&R) would be my principal staff assistant and advisor in all matters relating to the management and well-being of the military and civilian personnel in the DoD Total Force structure.

The Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs,

If I am confirmed, ASD(HA) would be my principal advisor for all DoD health policies, programs, and force health protection activities.

The Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs,

If I am confirmed, ASD(RA) would be my principal advisor for all Reserve component matters in the Department of Defense.

The Department of Defense General Counsel,

If confirmed, I would anticipate regular communication, coordination of actions, and exchange of views with the General Counsel and the attorneys assigned to focus on personnel and readiness policy matters. I would expect to seek and follow the advice of the General Counsel on legal, policy, and procedural matters pertaining to the policies promulgated from the USD(P&R).

The Department of Defense Inspector General,

The DoD Inspector General is in charge of promoting integrity, accountability, and improvement of Department of Defense personnel, programs, and operations to support the Department's mission and serve the public interest. If confirmed, I would fully assist in any investigations or issues that relate to personnel and readiness.

The Chief of the National Guard Bureau,

The Chief, National Guard Bureau is a principal advisor to the Secretary of Defense, through the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, on matters involving non-federalized National Guard forces and on other matters as determined by the Secretary of Defense. If confirmed, I would work through ASD(RA) to ensure effective integration of National Guard capabilities into a cohesive Total Force.

The Service Secretaries,

If confirmed, I would work closely with the Secretaries of the Military Departments on all matters relating to the management and well-being of military and civilian personnel in the DoD Total Force structure.

The Assistant Secretaries for Manpower and Reserve Affairs of the Army, Navy, and Air Force,

If confirmed, I would work with these officials as partners in carrying out the human resource obligations of the services.

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,

If confirmed, I would work closely with these officers to ensure that DoD attracts, motivates and retains the quality people it needs.

The combatant commanders, and

If confirmed, I would foster mutually respectful working relationships that translate into providing the Total Force capabilities needed to complete combat missions.

The Joint Staff, particularly the Director for Manpower and Personnel (J-1)?

If confirmed, I would seek a close coordinating relationship and open channels of communication with the Joint Staff regarding personnel and readiness policy issues.

Systems and Support for Wounded Warriors

Service members who are wounded and injured performing duties in Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom deserve the highest priority from their Service for support services, healing and recuperation, rehabilitation, evaluation for return to duty, successful transition from active duty if required, and continuing support beyond retirement or discharge. Yet, as the revelations at Fort Stewart in 2003 and Walter Reed in 2007 revealed, the Services were not prepared to meet the needs of returning wounded service members.

What is your assessment of the progress made to date by the Department of Defense and the Services to improve the care, management, and transition of seriously ill and injured servicemembers and their families?

Although I cannot make a complete assessment at this time, it is my opinion the DoD is improving in these areas, but I believe there is still much to be done. If confirmed, I would work to further the progress for our wounded warriors and their families. I would ensure that the Office of Wounded Warrior Care and Transition Policy continues to ensure wounded, ill, injured and transitioning warriors receive quality care and seamless transition support. I would also work to ensure DoD continues collaborative efforts with the Department of Veterans Affairs on compensation and benefits, transition assistance and care coordination.

What are the strengths upon which continued progress should be based?

The greatest strength is the Department's commitment to take care of its wounded warriors and their families.

What are the weaknesses that need to be corrected?

The challenges lie in being continually vigilant to ensure recovering service members and families receive the full care that they need and deserve.

If confirmed, are there additional strategies and resources that you would pursue to increase support for wounded service members and their families, and to monitor their progress in returning to duty or to civilian life?

I do not have any specific recommendations at this time. If confirmed, I would make providing needed care and support for service members, veterans, and their families one of my top priorities.

Studies conducted as a result of the revelations at Walter Reed point to the need to reform the disability evaluation system.

What is your assessment of the need to streamline and improve the disability evaluation system?

I do not have enough information to make a complete assessment at this time but if confirmed, I would work to create improvements in the system.

If confirmed, how will you address any need for change?

If confirmed, I would work closely with the Department of Veterans Affairs toward reform of the disability evaluation system. I fully support the Department's efforts towards providing a comprehensive, fair and timely medical and administrative processing system to evaluate injured or ill service members' fitness for continued service.

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% 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.

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?

It is my understanding that an evaluation is being conducted on the DOD's definition. If confirmed, I would ensure that process includes in its review the intentions of the legislation.

Homosexual Conduct Policy

The current Homosexual Conduct Policy, commonly referred to as "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," went into effect in February 1994 after months of congressional hearings and debate resulting in the enactment of a Federal statute. Although there have been some changes in how this policy has been implemented, the basic policy has not changed. President Obama has made it clear that he intends to work with the military and with Congress to repeal the policy.

What is your view on repealing or changing this policy?

If confirmed, I would work closely with the service Secretaries and Chiefs to provide the Secretary of Defense the best advice possible on the way forward regarding this issue.

In your view, would changing this policy have an adverse impact on unit cohesion and good order and discipline in the military?

If Congress revises the Homosexual Conduct Policy statute and if confirmed, I would work closely with the services to ensure the revising of this policy is done in a way that maintains our highest state of military readiness.

If confirmed, what role would you play in efforts to repeal or change this policy?

If Congress changes the law and if confirmed, I, as the Under Secretary for Personnel & Readiness, would be responsible for leading the implementation of the change in the policy within DoD.

If the policy is changed by Congress, would you recommend a phase-in period for implementation of the new policy?

If the statute is changed and if confirmed, I would consult with the service Secretaries and Chiefs to ensure the implementation of the new policy is done in a way that maintains our highest state of military readiness.

If confirmed, what role will you play in implementing a new policy?

If the statute is changed and if confirmed, I would lead the effort to implement a new policy while carefully considering the advice of and working closely with the service Secretaries, the service Chiefs, and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. I would ensure that this change is done in a way that maintains our highest state of military readiness.

Muslims in the Military

Last week's fatal attack against soldiers and civilian employees at Fort Hood was allegedly carried out by a Muslim Army officer. There is a risk that heightened sensitivities arising out of this attack could lead to harassment or prejudice against Muslims in the military. Correspondingly, there have been fears expressed about the susceptibility of Muslims in uniform to arguments that current combat operations are, in effect, a war against Islam.

What is your assessment of the role that Muslims play today in our armed forces?

I believe that men and women of our Armed Forces volunteer to defend our Constitution and the freedoms that document afford us. Each service member, regardless of their faith affiliation, or the lack thereof, is pivotal to the success of our national security efforts.

If confirmed, what steps, if any, would you take to address the potential for harassment against Muslims in the military and to improve the ability of the services to identify and respond to any member who displays violent tendencies based on beliefs?

In order to safeguard the rights of service members, there must be both formal and informal feedback procedures that quickly identify and assess any harassment, should it occur. Responses to grievances, or any identified shortcomings in command climate assessments, must be quick, thoughtful, and effective. If confirmed, I would review the viability of these feedback systems, and take measures to correct them as appropriate.

Diversity in the Military

How do you define diversity in the armed forces?

In a broad context, I believe diversity is the combination of attributes from all walks of American life. Some key aspects of diversity are race, ethnicity and gender which are the attributes most associated when we talk about “looking like America.”

Do you believe that achieving greater diversity is a priority for the Department of Defense?

Yes.

Please describe examples in which improved diversity has led to greater organizational effectiveness in your experience.

I believe that every organization improves with more diversity. Diverse perspectives and views make organizational decisions more inclusive, effective, and successful.

If confirmed, what steps would you take to ensure that continued progress toward diversity goals is achieved without violating reverse discrimination principles of law?

If confirmed, I would seek to understand the efforts of the DoD to effectively promote diversity. I think that diversity is a leadership issue, so as part of my initial engagement, I would consult with the Department's senior leaders while monitoring progress toward achieving the Department's goals.

Sexual Assault Prevention and Response

The Department has in recent years developed comprehensive policies and procedures to improve the prevention of and response to incidents of sexual assaults, including providing appropriate resources and care for victims of sexual assault. However, numerous incidents of sexual misconduct involving military personnel in Iraq and Afghanistan are still being reported. Victims and their advocates claim that they are victimized twice: first by attackers in their own ranks and then by unresponsive or inadequate treatment for the victim. They assert that their command fails to respond appropriately with basic medical services and with an adequate investigation of their charges followed by a failure to hold assailants accountable.

Do you consider the current sexual assault policies and procedures, particularly those on confidential reporting, to be effective?

It is my understanding that the Department has put considerable effort into the development of policies and programs designed to address sexual assault. If confirmed, I would review those policies to ensure they provide the appropriate care to victims and hold offenders accountable.

What problems, if any, are you aware of in the manner in which this new confidential reporting procedure has been put into operation?

I have not been informed of any specific problems in the implementation of the confidential reporting option, called restricted reporting. I am aware that the restriction of no investigation when a victim chooses restricted reporting has concerned commanders responsible for the actions of their unit members. I believe that the Department must find a balance between victim care and offender accountability but the most important is to have victims come forward and get the support they need following an assault.

What is your view of the steps the Services have taken to prevent sexual assaults in combat zones?

I do not have enough information to make an assessment at this time, but I am aware the Department has focused on educating service members deploying to combat zones about how to prevent sexual assault and what to do should it occur. If confirmed, I would vigorously continue efforts to eliminate sexual assaults.

What is your view of the adequacy of the training and resources the Services have in place to investigate and respond to allegations of sexual assault?

I cannot make an assessment at this time, but if confirmed, evaluating the adequacy of training and resources allocated to sexual assault investigation and response would be a top priority.

If confirmed, what actions will you take to ensure senior level direction and oversight of efforts to prevent and respond to sexual assaults?

Sexual assault reaches across the Department, and as such, outreach and accountability efforts need to have the same reach. If confirmed, I would ensure that the Department has the right structure in place to engage the Departmental leadership, and the leadership of other agencies such as the Departments of Veterans Affairs, Health and Human Services, and Justice, in planning, guiding, and evaluating our efforts.

Religious Guidelines

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

The Department does not endorse the establishment of religion, but it does guarantee its free exercise. The Department and the military services ensure service members may observe the tenets of their respective religions, including the right to hold no specific religious conviction or affiliation.

Do these policies accommodate, where appropriate, religious practices that require adherents to wear particular articles of faith?

My understanding is that wearing particular articles of faith are permissible so long as the articles are neat and conservative, do not negatively impact the readiness, good order or discipline of the unit and the mission is not jeopardized. If confirmed, I would continue to evaluate this issue.

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

Yes.

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

My experience, and my belief, is that the military chaplaincy has done an admirable job in ministering amidst the pluralistic environment of the military. Even as chaplains express their faith, they and their commanders also are asked to be as inclusive as possible when ministering to an interfaith group. I believe that as a group, military chaplains work to balance these responsibilities well.

Service Academies

What do you consider to be the policy and procedural elements that must be in place at each of the service academies in order to prevent and respond appropriately to sexual assaults and sexual harassment and to ensure essential oversight?

I believe the Department's sexual assault and sexual harassment policies provide a foundation for combating sexual misconduct at the service academies. There must be policies and procedures that encourage victims to come forward and that hold offenders accountable, as well as effective training programs. It is my understanding that the academies have institutionalized prevention and response programs. I further understand that the Department reviews the efforts of the Academies annually. If confirmed, I would continue that oversight and determine whether additional measures need to be taken.

What is your assessment of corrective measures taken at the U.S. Air Force Academy to ensure religious tolerance and respect, and of Air Force guidelines regarding religious tolerance that were promulgated in August of 2005?

I do not have enough information to make an assessment at this time. I believe it is imperative that leaders, at all levels, must continue to ensure that every member of the DoD respects the spirit and intent of laws and policies surrounding the free exercise of religion.

Women in Combat

The expanding role of women and the implementation of women-in-combat policies in the armed forces is a matter of continuing interest to Congress and the American public.

Does the Department of Defense have sufficient flexibility under current law relating to women in combat to make changes to assignment policy for women when needed?

In my opinion, yes.

Do you believe any changes in the current policy for women in combat are needed?

I am not aware of any changes necessary at this time. It is my understanding that Department policy and practices are reviewed on a recurring basis to ensure compliance and effective use of manpower. If confirmed, I would continue that process.

Rising Costs of Medical Care

In testimony presented to Congress in February, 2009, the Assistant Director of the Congressional Budget Office asserted that “medical funding accounts for more than one-third of the growth projected for operations and support funding between 2009 and 2026.” In April, 2009, Secretary Gates told an audience at Maxwell Air Force Base that “health care is eating the Department alive.”

What is your assessment of the long-term impact of rising medical costs on future Department of Defense plans?

I am informed that governmental estimates indicate these costs could rise to nearly 12 percent of the DoD budget in just a few years. If confirmed, I would research means to ensure that DoD provides quality care, and it does so in a way that provides the best value for our service members and their families.

If confirmed, what actions would you initiate or recommend to the Secretary to mitigate the effect of such costs on the DOD top-line?

I cannot make specific recommendations at this time. If confirmed, I would work closely with our healthcare leadership in DoD to examine every opportunity to assure military beneficiaries are provided the highest quality care possible while managing cost growth and to provide that advice to the Secretary of Defense.

What reforms in infrastructure, benefits, or benefit management, if any, do you think should be examined in order to control the costs of military health care?

I believe that to control the costs of military health care we need to research all possibilities. If confirmed, I would examine the costs of our direct care facilities, seeing where efficiencies can be gained and investing wisely in infrastructure requirements. In the long term, the promotion of healthy life styles and prevention among our beneficiaries will also help reduce the demand for health services.

Personnel and Entitlement Costs

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

What actions do you believe can be taken to control the rise in personnel costs and entitlement spending?

I am aware that an increasing proportion of the Department's finite resources are devoted to personnel related costs. At the same time, I believe we cannot fail to adequately provide for and support our all volunteer force and their families. This includes maintaining a sufficient rotation base for both our active and reserve personnel. If confirmed, I know achieving a "right sized" mix of active duty, reserve, civilians and contractors is imperative. An important part of this challenge will be striking the right balance between personnel, recapitalization, and operational and support costs, while ensuring that related entitlements are appropriate and well-reasoned.

If confirmed, what actions will you take to avoid a requirement for massive end-of-year reprogramming to cover personnel costs?

If confirmed, I would work closely with the services and the DoD Comptroller to monitor personnel costs and program execution throughout each year. End-strength, recruiting, and personnel movement/PCS are examples of areas where proactive management can ensure that these programs are realistically funded and minimize the scope of any end-of-year reprogramming.

What is your assessment of the cost effectiveness of the Services' use of bonuses to encourage recruiting and retention?

It is my impression that recruiting and retention bonuses are cost-effective tools available to the services in achieving strength and experience objectives. They provide an effective and easily targetable incentive without the long-term costs associated with entitlements or across-the-board incentives but they must be continually examined to ensure proper implementation and efficacy.

Mental Health Issues

The final report of the Department of Defense Task Force on Mental Health, issued in June 2007, found evidence that the stigma associated with mental illness represents a “critical failure” in the military, preventing individuals from seeking needed care. The report states, “Every military leader bears responsibility for addressing stigma; leaders who fail to do so reduce the effectiveness of the service members they lead.” In light of increasing suicide rates in the Services and the increase in the number of service members diagnosed with post-traumatic stress, it is more important than ever to ensure that service members and their families have access to mental health care and that the stigma associated with seeking such care is eliminated.

In your view, what actions are necessary to alleviate this stigma?

I believe that reducing our service members’ reluctance to seek psychological help is at a critical juncture. If confirmed, I would work to ensure that anti-stigma efforts target command and the service members. Educating leaders on the critical nature of mental health in individual readiness reinforces the importance of seeking assistance for mental health problems.

What is your view of the need for revision of military policies on command notification when service members seek mental health care?

I am informed that recent updates provide more explicit guidance to better balance patient confidentiality rights and the commander's right to know for operational and risk management decisions. This is a very sensitive area and if confirmed, I would favor efforts to continuously refine policies to strike the right balance between an individual's health care privacy and the commanders’ responsibilities to their fellow service members and to the mission.

If confirmed, what actions will you take to ensure that sufficient mental health resources are available to service members in theater, and to the service members and their families upon return to home station?

I am generally aware of the Department’s recent efforts to determine workforce requirements necessary to meet the mental health needs of our service members and their families. Achieving the military and civilian workforce goals and fully utilizing all the medical, educational, and counseling resources at the Department's disposal will help meet these critical needs.

Officer Management Issues

If confirmed as the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, you would have significant responsibilities with regard to officer management policies, the promotion system, and recommending officers for nomination to positions of authority and responsibility.

Do you believe the current Department of Defense procedures and practices for reviewing the records of officers pending nomination by the President are sufficient to ensure the Secretary of Defense and the President can make informed decisions?

Yes.

Are these procedures and practices fair and reasonable for the officers involved?

Yes.

If confirmed, what changes, if any, would you make to the officer management system?

I have no specific recommendations at this time. If confirmed, I would make an assessment of the officer management system a priority.

General and Flag Officer Nominations

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

If confirmed, what role would you play in the officer promotion system, particularly in reviewing general and flag officer nominations?

If confirmed, I would ensure all procedures and practices regarding general and flag officer nominations allow the leadership to thoroughly vet all officer records and enable the Department to nominate the best qualified officers for consideration by the President.

What is your understanding of the ability of the Services to timely document credible information of an adverse nature for evaluation by promotion selection boards and military and civilian leaders?

I genuinely and fully appreciate the importance of fully considering credible adverse information during the evaluation of military candidates for advancement. If appointed, I would make certain that these procedures are viable and strong, and that the Secretary of Defense and the President have all the information on nominations required to make a fully informed decision.

If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure that only the best qualified officers are nominated for promotion to general and flag officer rank?

If confirmed, I would ensure the most careful review of all general and flag officer nominations at the highest levels of the military and civilian leadership of the Department. Nominations including adverse or alleged adverse information should be intensely scrutinized.

Technical Training of General and Flag Officers

Do you believe that the appropriate numbers of general officers in the military services have advanced training and degrees in scientific, acquisition, and technical disciplines, and that career paths for officers with technical skills are appropriate, so as to ensure that the Department can better execute complex acquisition programs, adapt to a rapidly changing technological threat environment, and make informed investment decisions of DOD resources?

Although I cannot make a detailed assessment, I believe the Department must sustain officer development programs that are responsive to ever-changing and emerging needs. This imperative is particularly acute in the technical, scientific, and acquisition arenas. If confirmed, I would work with the Department's senior leaders to create a responsive personnel and training program.

If not, what will you do to address this deficiency?

Identifying appropriate skills and education to maintain currency in the technological threat environment is a continuous process. If confirmed, I would aggressively seek to ensure that human resource policies and practices are fully adaptable to the needs of the nation in this dynamic, and often complex, environment.

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. Furthermore, the secretaries of the military services have the title 10 responsibilities for most readiness issues including training, equipping, and maintaining the military forces.

If confirmed, where would the readiness responsibilities of these other officials end, and where would your readiness responsibilities begin?

I view the responsibilities of the Under Secretary for Personnel and Readiness as to advise the Secretary on all matters of readiness. These include oversight of military training, personnel and medical readiness, and the analysis of broad mission assessments from the Combatant Commanders to the readiness of key units in support of the Secretary's deployment decisions. As for readiness responsibilities across the Department, if confirmed, I would work collaboratively with OSD, Joint Staff and Service colleagues to ensure our forces are ready to execute the National Military Strategy.

What specific readiness issues would you and your subordinates be assigned?

That would depend on the type of readiness issues. If confirmed, I would direct the readiness staff to focus on the identification of readiness and training issues. For those identified, the action would be taken up by the appropriate lead within the Department. For example, personnel retention issues would be addressed by the military personnel policy and our military service partners. Other issues, such as H1N1 response, would be led by the ASD for Health Affairs, leaders at NORTHCOM and in the interagency.

Would you recommend any changes to the current organization to more effectively align some of these responsibilities?

Not at this time.

In 1999, Congress required the Department to develop and implement a new readiness reporting system, uniformly applied, which would provide decision makers with more accurate and reliable assessments and data regarding the actual capabilities and readiness of U.S. forces. In June 2002, DOD issued a directive establishing the Defense Readiness Reporting System (DRRS) and requiring that all military departments align their readiness reporting processes with DRRS. Since then, DOD and the Services have taken a number of developmental steps, but DRRS is not yet fully operational and aligned with the Services' reporting processes. According to a Government Accountability Office study released in September 2009, entitled "DOD needs to strengthen management and oversight of the DRRS" (GAO-09-518), the Department has yet to successfully plan, organize, resource, and execute relevant or necessary interoperability, user, and other tests to validate DRRS for deployment as the Department's readiness reporting system replacement.

In your view, what is the importance to the mission and activities of the Department of an accurate, reliable, and timely system for the measurement and reporting of the readiness of military forces?

I believe the Department needs accurate and timely readiness assessments of military forces. These are the gauge by which we measure the ability to execute the missions assigned by the President and Secretary of Defense. Accurate assessments allow the Department to effectively plan and manage its forces, and signal where capability shortfalls exist or assets are needed.

What is your understanding and assessment of the Department's current readiness reporting systems, the DRRS program, and the progress made to date developing and deploying DRRS? If confirmed, what actions, if any, would you direct to improve the development and deployment of DRRS?

I do not have detailed knowledge on the current situation, but it is my understanding the DRRS effort is focused toward establishing accurate mission assessments from our combatant commanders and the military services. If confirmed, I would personally review DRRS implementation to ensure we are meeting the needs of the senior leadership and a unity of effort across the Department to drive this important effort to a fully operational capability.

Active-Duty End Strength

In the recently enacted National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010, Congress authorized higher active-duty end strengths for all the services.

In your view, what is the appropriate active-duty end strength for each of the Services?

I cannot make an informed assessment at this time. I believe strongly that our forces, both active and reserve, must be large enough to not only satisfy deployed demands, but also have a rotation base that recognizes the personal needs of our volunteers and their families. If confirmed, I would devote considerable attention to this important issue.

What challenges will the Services face in maintaining these higher end strengths?

Foremost, the challenge of monitoring and responding to retention and recruiting trends, especially as the economy improves. Recruiting challenges could include education level, aptitude, weight, and medical issues that render a number of potential recruits ineligible.

Medical Personnel Recruiting and Retention

The Department of Defense continues to face significant shortages in critically needed military medical personnel in both the active and reserve components. The Committee is concerned that growing medical support requirements will compound the already serious challenges faced in recruitment and retention of military medical, dental, nurse, and behavioral health personnel.

If confirmed, will you undertake a comprehensive review of the medical support requirements for the Department of Defense and the sufficiency of the plans to meet recruiting and retention goals in these specialties?

Yes.

What legislative and policy initiatives, including bonuses and special pays, do you think may be necessary to ensure that the military services can continue to meet medical support requirements?

Although I do not have any specific recommendations at this time, I believe there may be a need for more flexible recruiting and retention strategies such as the recently granted authority to use bonuses and special pays as needed to recruit, hire and retain medical specialties.

Dwell Time

For many military members, dwell time goals are not being met, and recent testimony suggests that dwell time will not improve appreciably over the next 12-18 months.

In your view, what can be done to increase dwell time for both active and reserve component members, and when will these improvements be seen?

From my perspective the largest impact to dwell time will come from the balance of the drawdown in Iraq and the President's upcoming decision on the force plans for Afghanistan. Increases in end-strength for the Army, the Marine Corps, and Special Operations forces over the past several years should translate into dwell times increasing.

In your view, would additional Army end strength in 2011 or 2012 improve dwell time ratios and reduce stress on the force, and if so, what numbers of active and reserve component members would be necessary?

I do not have enough information to make an assessment at this time. I would defer to the analysis of the Quadrennial Defense Review as to whether current end strength increases are sufficient in light of anticipated strategy and projected needs.

Operational and Personnel Tempo

Section 136 of title 10, United States Code, states that the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, subject to the authority, direction, and control of the Secretary of Defense, is responsible for the monitoring of operations and personnel tempo of the armed forces, and to establish uniform standards, where practicable, for the deployment of personnel.

In your view, how will shifting resources from Iraq to Afghanistan affect personnel tempo and dwell time ratios?

The Iraq drawdown should increase the dwell time for our units as fewer forces will need to be deployed. How much this would increase dwell time depends on the level of forces needed for Afghanistan. There will be more clarity on this issue when the strategy and commensurate force plans for Afghanistan are finalized.

In your view, what will be the effect on recruiting, retention, and readiness of the Army and Marine Corps of the current rates of operations and personnel tempo through 2010?

I do not have enough information to assess the impacts on readiness. It is my understanding that current rates of operations and personnel tempo have not negatively impacted recruiting and retention. If confirmed, I would monitor these areas carefully as the Department's recent successes may be due to current economic factors.

In your judgment, what would be the impact on the current rates of operations and personnel tempo of assigning principal responsibility for crisis and consequence management for natural, domestic disasters to reserve component forces?

I cannot make an informed assessment at this time. If confirmed, I would certainly study this matter closely.

Mobilization and Demobilization of National Guard and Reserves

Over the past 8 years, the National Guard and Reserves have experienced their largest and most sustained employment since World War II. Numerous problems arose in the planning and procedures for mobilization and demobilization, e.g., inadequate health screening and medical readiness, monitoring, antiquated pay systems, limited transition assistance programs upon demobilization, and lack of access to members of the Individual Ready Reserve. Reserve force management policies and systems have been characterized in the past as "inefficient and rigid" and readiness levels have been adversely affected by equipment stay-behind, cross-leveling, and reset policies.

What is your assessment of advances made in improving reserve component mobilization and demobilization procedures, and in what areas do problems still exist?

It is my understanding that improvements have been made in increasing the alert and mobilization times prior to mobilization; however, we need to ensure that we provide predictability to service members, their families and employers. If confirmed, I would monitor this issue as I believe strongly that National Guard and Reserve personnel deserve first-class mobilization and demobilization procedures, health screening, and transition assistance programs.

What do you consider to be the most significant enduring changes to the administration of the reserve components aimed at ensuring their readiness for future mobilization requirements?

It is my understanding that one of the most significant enduring changes is in the implementation of service force generation plans, which have transitioned many of the reserve components into an operational force. This enables units to train for a mission prior to mobilization and deploy and redeploy on a predictable time line.

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

Not at this time. If confirmed, I would review existing authorities and determine if any modifications are necessary.

Do you believe that National Guard and Reserve personnel should be mobilized to perform duties that should more appropriately be assigned to civilians deployed to Afghanistan?

I do not have detailed knowledge on this matter, but it is my understanding that some Guard and Reserve personnel have been utilized to provide a bridge to meet immediate operational needs until more civilians are available to respond to the requirements.

Medical and Dental Readiness of the Reserves

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

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

I do not have any recommendations at this time. If confirmed, I would review these reporting responsibilities and recommend changes as appropriate.

How would you improve upon the Department's ability to produce a healthy and fit reserve component?

I do not have specific recommendations at this time, but I believe strongly that command emphasis and individual accountability must be in place for producing and maintaining a healthy and fit force. Both medical and dental readiness requires senior level attention and direction.

Lessons Learned

What do you believe are the major lessons learned from Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) which you would seek to address if confirmed as Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness?

Our Nation's Total Force is a combination of interrelated components: Active, Reserve, and Civilian, and all are necessary for a successful campaign. Success also depends on the care given to those deployed and to their families as we keep the trust of our nation by properly caring for our warriors and their families. We must ensure that the force is adaptive in acquiring necessary skills, such as foreign language capability to meet today's missions.

Defense Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO)

Some survivors of POW/MIA military personnel and their advocates allege that insufficient attention and resources are being committed to recovery of U.S. personnel missing from conflicts from World War II to the present.

In view of the mission of DPMO, do you think that this organization, as well as the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC) should receive greater resources in terms of personnel and budget than is currently the case?

The Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO) is under the purview of USD(Policy), and I respectfully defer to USD Flournoy on the appropriate levels of personnel and budget to support DPMO's mission.

Do you believe the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness should have a larger role in the oversight of the POW/MIA accounting community?

DPMO has an important mission that I fully support. If confirmed, I would work closely with USD(Policy) to provide any assistance she may need from me.

Military Quality of Life

In January 2009, the Department published its second Quadrennial Quality of Life Review, which focused on the importance of key quality of life factors for military families, such as family support, child care, education, health care and morale, welfare and recreation services.

How do you perceive the relationship between quality of life improvements and your own top priorities for military recruitment and retention?

Quality of life efforts impact the recruitment and retention of military personnel and are key to maintaining the all-volunteer force. Satisfaction with various aspects of military life by the service member and the family affects members' decision to reenlist. If confirmed, I would assess how effectively our programs meet the needs of service members and their families, and ensure that they are contributing positively to recruitment, retention, and readiness.

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

I would aggressively pursue the President's agenda to improve quality of life for military families by focusing our efforts on identifying the clearest possible understanding of the needs of our force and their families, and rapidly responding to gaps or shortfalls with quality programs. We must communicate effectively to ensure families know how to access available support when they need it.

Family Support

Military members and their families in both the active and reserve components have made, and continue to make, tremendous sacrifices in support of operational deployments. 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.

80. 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?

If confirmed, I would make family readiness issues one of my top priorities. I would prioritize and resource appropriately quality physical and mental healthcare, spouse career assistance, childcare, other elements of dependant support, and education needs.

How would you address these family readiness needs in light of global rebasing, BRAC, deployments, and growth in end strength?

If confirmed, I would continue the Department's current approach to identify and address family readiness needs, to gather information from commands, service members and families, professional organizations, and researchers about these and other stressors.

If confirmed, how would you ensure support 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?

If confirmed, I would ensure that the Department's Yellow Ribbon Program is properly focused and funded to address the issues faced by members of the guard, reserve, and their families. The program should provide information, access, referrals, and outreach to military members and their families. This needs to be underwritten by a coordinated, community based network of care encompassing DOD, VA, state, local, and private providers. My goal would be a full range of services available to Active, Guard, and Reserve members and their families.

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

If confirmed, I would encourage the implementation of flexible family support programs that meet the needs of our service members and their families whether they live on military installations, near military installations, or far from military installations.

Access to Health Care

As evidenced in a family support hearing held by the Subcommittee on Personnel earlier this year, one of the major concerns for military family members is access to health care. Military spouses told the Subcommittee that the health care system is inundated, and those stationed in more remote areas may not have access to adequate care.

If confirmed, what steps would you take to ensure complete access to health care for the families of service members?

If confirmed, I would strive to deliver on our obligation to fully support the families of our service members with a health care organization that anticipates and meets all of their health care needs with an accessible, top quality system that puts the patient and family at the center of its focus.

Office of Community Support for Military Families With Special Needs

In the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010 (section 563), 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, be they 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?

If confirmed, I would support the establishment of this office and work with the services to identify and make available those programs that already exist that can provide special services to this population. Medical and education programs for military families with special needs would be a high priority for me.

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?

If confirmed, I would ensure increased communication effort to reach families with special needs, to include base newspapers, commissaries and exchanges, childcare centers and youth facilities, DoD schools, and a variety of DoD and service websites, blogs and social media outlets.

Medical Research Programs

What do you see as the highest priority medical research investment areas for the Department of Defense?

I believe the highest priorities are to address critical research capability gaps related to the treatment and recovery of wounded warriors, such as the diagnosis and treatment of Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and other elements of combat related stress, development of improved prosthetics, treatment of eye injury, and other deployment and battlefield-related injuries.

If confirmed, how will you assess the amount of investment made in these research areas to determine if they are sufficient to meet DOD goals and requirements?

If confirmed, I would review the current research portfolio to ensure it prioritizes and resources research appropriately.

How will you ensure that DOD medical research efforts are well coordinated with similar research programs within the private sector, academia, the Services, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and the National Institutes of Health?

If confirmed, I would support coordination efforts to ensure that research is being conducted jointly, building on and partnering with industry, academia, and other government agencies to ensure the greatest return to our warfighters. I am aware that joint technology coordinating groups have been established to engage with those partners to ensure that our research reflects the best interests of our soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines.

How will you ensure that new medical technologies (including drugs and vaccines) are independently and adequately tested before their use by DOD organizations and personnel?

If confirmed, I would ensure that the Department applies the highest standards of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to ensure new medical technologies, drugs, and vaccines are safe and effective before they are adopted for use in the Department.

What are your biggest concerns related to the DOD medical research enterprise?

Although I do not have detailed knowledge of the entire research portfolio, I am especially interested in ensuring the responsiveness of the research program to medical readiness and our warfighters medical needs.

TRICARE Support Contracts

TRICARE managed care support contracts are among the largest service support contracts in the Department of Defense, and are a critical element of ensuring access to health care for DOD's 9.3 million beneficiaries. After months of delay, 3 vendors were selected for performance under the so-called T-3 TRICARE contracts, however, GAO has sustained protests filed in two of these contracts. If confirmed, large health care and information technology contracts and acquisitions will be under your purview.

How will you assess the adequacy and appropriateness of the Office of P&R's acquisition and contracting processes, and what steps would you take to improve them?

I am informed that care for all DoD beneficiaries will continue without interruption under extensions of the Department's current TRICARE contracts. If confirmed, I would conduct a review of the existing acquisition workforce to ensure that they are properly trained and staffed, understand their responsibilities, and are aligned within the organization in accordance with the principles and guidelines from OMB and the Department, as well as good management practices. I would also evaluate the existing policies and processes governing the contracting for DoD health care and complementary products to determine if the Department is leveraging the best practices of government and industry in meeting these acquisition challenges. Finally, I would partner with subject matter experts in the Office of

the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics to seek their ideas and support to implement these solutions.

Armed Forces Retirement Home

Although defined as an independent government entity, the Armed Forces Retirement Home is subject to the authority, direction and control of the Secretary of Defense. As such, the Committee expects oversight of not only the quality of operations of the Home in serving our nation's veterans, but also prudent business planning for its future financial viability.

If confirmed, what would be your relationship with the COO of the Armed Forces Retirement Home?

The Secretary of Defense has delegated oversight responsibilities to the USD(P&R) and the PDUSD(P&R). These responsibilities include the appointment, performance evaluation, and compensation of the Chief Operating Officer (COO), appointment of the Home(s) Directors, Deputy Directors, Associate Directors and members of the local Board(s) of Trustees. If confirmed, I would exercise oversight responsibilities and ensure medical care and retirement community services meet or exceed those established in law. I would ensure the local Board(s) of Trustees operate consistently with statute, provide guidance to the COO and Directors of the facilities, and provide me with an annual assessment of all aspects of AFRH. I would ensure health care accreditation is maintained and all findings from the recently completed DoD Inspector General comprehensive management and medical services inspection are resolved. I would also ensure staff and resident concerns are addressed through climate assessments and frequent monitoring of AFRH and DoD IG hotline complaints and I would be responsive to all complaints to ensure appropriate corrective action is taken.

What is your view of the challenges that the Department faces in ensuring the highest quality service and care for veterans, as well as ensuring the future viability of the Home in challenging economic times?

If confirmed, the highest quality of care and services for residents would be a primary focus of mine. I would maintain accreditation by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities and Continuing Care Accreditation Commission (CARF/CCAC) for independent, assisted living and long term care.

It is my understanding that one of the biggest challenges in 2010 will be the opening of a new facility in Gulfport MS, with resident occupancy beginning in October. Another significant project is approved for 2010 construction at AFRH-Washington.

Morale, Welfare, and Recreation

Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) programs are critical to enhancement of military life for members and their families, especially in light of frequent and lengthy deployments. These programs must be relevant and attractive to all eligible users, including active duty and reserve personnel and retirees.

What challenges do you foresee in sustaining MWR programs and, if confirmed, what improvements would you seek to achieve?

From my own military experience, I know that commanders have long appreciated the benefits of strong MWR programs so critical to Espirit de Corps, stress reduction, and personal health and well-being. Although there are very extensive installation MWR facilities and programs, I believe there is an immediate challenge in ensuring that MWR programs for our deployed forces meet their needs. In the longer term, I believe the Department needs to understand what programs are valued by service members and their families in order to make wise investments. In addition, there is a need to understand where gaps exist. The MWR customers need to be involved in expressing their needs and satisfaction with our programs and policies. If confirmed, these are all areas I would aggressively pursue.

Commissary and Military Exchange Systems

Commissary and military exchange systems are critical quality of life components for members of the active and reserve forces and their families.

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?

The commissary and exchange operate within a broad structure of military community and family support programs and policies that have a profound impact on the military quality of life and standard of living. The commissary and exchange programs and policies must continue to evolve to meet the needs and expectations of our changing force and a changing marketplace. We need to ensure commissaries and exchanges provide the necessary support for today's total military force.

I believe management efforts should be aimed at reducing overhead and pursuing new avenues to reach our military families who do not live on military installations. The commissary system should deliver customer savings and also achieve high satisfaction ratings.

The military exchange resale community must continue to work, individually and collaboratively, to adapt marketing and selling practices, invest in technologies, and improve merchandise availability to be more responsive to military customers.

In the Ronald W. Reagan National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2005, Congress required the Secretary of Defense to establish an executive governing body for the commissary and exchange systems to ensure the complementary operation of the two systems.

What is your understanding of the purpose, composition and performance of the executive governing body?

The Department established the DoD Executive Resale Board as the governing body to provide advice to the USD(P&R) regarding the complementary operation of the commissary and exchange systems. The Board works to resolve issues and has been instrumental in pursuing matters of mutual benefit to the elements of the military resale system. The Board is chaired by the PDUSD(P&R), and members include both the senior military officers and civilians who oversee and manage the commissary and exchanges systems.

If confirmed, what would your role be with respect to the governing body, and what would your expectations be for its role?

The Secretary designated the PDUSD(P&R) as the chairperson of the Executive Resale Board. If confirmed, I would ensure the Board would continue to meet regularly to review operational areas of mutual interest to the commissary and exchange systems.

Civilian Personnel Systems

Section 1113 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010 repealed the statutory authority for the National Security Personnel System (NSPS), and required that all NSPS employees be converted to other personnel systems by no later than January 1, 2012.

If confirmed, will you ensure that NSPS employees are converted to other personnel systems as quickly as practical, and with as little disruption to their organizations and their work as possible?

Yes.

Section 1113 also 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 experience have you had in the development and implementation of civilian human resource management systems?

During my military career, I worked extensively with both military and civilian human resource systems, particularly when I served at Marine Corps Headquarters for Manpower and Reserve affairs and also as the Commanding General of Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center at Twentynine Palms, CA. During my tenure at the Center, we were honored to receive the Department of the Navy's Nathaniel Stinson Equal Employment Opportunity Award. As the President of Scholarship America, I worked extensively at addressing human resource challenges.

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

Yes.

What is your view of the personnel flexibilities provided by section 1113?

I understand these flexibilities have been provided by Congress to better enable the Department to meet its mission requirements. If confirmed, I would explore these flexibilities and work to implement those that would best support the Department's mission and the well-being of the workforce.

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.

How will you approach this task?

If confirmed, I would work to assess which flexibilities more effectively support mission accomplishment, while addressing the well-being of the workforce. I would ensure these flexibilities are implemented in an expeditious, fair, and transparent manner. Furthermore, I would establish assessment criteria and conduct periodic assessments to ensure the flexibilities are meeting the stated objectives.

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.

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.

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. There is much work to be done in this area, and if confirmed, I would ensure that the Department is actively engaged in the Government-wide initiative to reform civilian hiring and aggressively pursues improvements within the Department.

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.

Human Capital Planning

Section 115b of title 10, United States Code, as added by section 1108 of the National Defense Authorization Act for 2010 requires the Secretary of Defense to develop and annually update a strategic human capital plan that specifically identifies gaps in the Department's civilian workforce and strategies for addressing those gaps. Section 115b requires that the plan include chapters specifically addressing the Department's senior management, functional, and technical workforce and the Department's acquisition workforce.

Would you agree that a strategic human capital plan that identifies gaps in the workforce and strategies for addressing those gaps is a key step toward ensuring that the Department has the skills and capabilities needed to meet future challenges?

Yes

Do you see the need for any changes in the requirements of section 115b, regarding the requirement for a strategic human capital plan?

I have no recommendations at this time. If confirmed, I would look at the strategic human capital planning that the Department has conducted over the past years against the section 115b requirements to determine if any changes may be needed to improve the Department's overall workforce planning effort.

If confirmed, will you ensure that the Department of Defense fully complies with these requirements?

Yes.

Balance Between Civilian Employees and Contractor Employees

In recent years, the Department of Defense has become increasingly reliant on services provided by contractors. Over the past eight years, DOD's civilian workforce has remained essentially unchanged in size. Over the same period, the Department's spending on contract services has more than doubled, with the estimated number of contractor employees working for the Department increasing from an estimated 730,000 in Fiscal Year 2000 to an estimated 1,550,000 in Fiscal Year 2007. As a result of the explosive growth in service contracts, contractors now play an integral role in the performance of functions that were once performed exclusively by government employees, including the management and oversight of weapons programs, the development of policies, the development of public relations strategies, and even the collection and analysis of intelligence. In many cases, contractor employees work in the same offices, serve on the same projects and task forces, and perform many of the same functions as federal employees.

Do you believe that the current balance between civilian employees and contractor employees is in the best interests of the Department of Defense?

If confirmed, I would support the Secretary's initiative announced with the Fiscal Year 2010 budget to reduce the number of support service contractors from the current 39 percent of the workforce to the pre-2001 level of 26 percent. I believe the desired outcome of the Department's in-sourcing initiative is a balanced total workforce of military, government civilians, and contractor personnel that appropriately aligns functions to the public and private sector, and results in the best value for the taxpayer.

In your view, has the Department of Defense become too reliant on contractors to perform its basic functions?

If confirmed, I would support the Department's on-going efforts to critically examine currently contracted functions. Striking a balance between government and contractor performance that ensures uncompromising government control of critical functions, while providing best value to the taxpayer, is imperative.

Do you believe that the current extensive use of personal services contracts is in the best interest of the Department of Defense?

I cannot make an informed assessment at this time. It is my understanding that, as part of the Department's in-sourcing initiative, all contracts for services will be reviewed to ensure unauthorized personal services are not being provided.

Do you believe that the Department of Defense should undertake a comprehensive reappraisal of "inherently governmental functions" and other critical government functions, and how they are performed?

I am informed that the Office of Management and Budget is reviewing the definition of "inherently governmental" function and the manner in which agencies identify critical functions to be performed by Federal employees. If confirmed, I would review the OMB study and evaluate if a reappraisal of the Department's critical and "inherently governmental" functions is required.

If confirmed, will you work with other appropriate officials in the Department of Defense to address these issues?

Yes.

Acquisition Workforce

Over the past 15 years, the Department of Defense has dramatically reduced the size of its acquisition workforce, without undertaking any systematic planning or analysis to ensure that it would have the specific skills and competencies needed to meet current and future needs. Since September 11, 2001, moreover, the demands placed on that workforce have substantially increased. 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. The fund would provide a minimum of \$3 billion over six years for this purpose.

Do you believe that DOD acquisition workforce is large enough and has the skills needed to perform the tasks assigned to it?

No. If confirmed, I would fully support the Secretary's goal to add approximately 20,000 acquisition workforce professionals to the Department over the next five years.

Do you support the use of the DOD Acquisition Workforce Development Fund 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?

Yes.

Laboratory Personnel Demonstration Program

The laboratory demonstration program founded on 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?

Yes.

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?

Yes.

Scientific and Technical Workforce

Do you feel that the Department of Defense's research and technology organizations (e.g., DARPA, laboratories, and technical centers) have sufficiently innovative and flexible personnel systems to enable them to compete successfully to hire a very limited pool of clearable scientists and engineers in the face of competition from industry, academia, federally funded R&D centers, and other federal (non-DOD) laboratories?

I cannot make an informed assessment at this time. If confirmed, I would explore with DoD's research and technology organizations whether they have the flexibilities they need to compete successfully for the scientists and engineering talent and to address shortfalls, as appropriate.

What new personnel system innovations and flexibilities would you delegate to DOD technical organizations to enable them to better compete for technical talent?

Although I have no recommendations at this time, if confirmed, I would explore with the DoD technical organizations the additional flexibilities they may need to better enable them to meet their mission requirements.

Defense Civilian Intelligence Personnel System

Section 1114 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010 suspends the implementation of the Defense Civilian Intelligence Personnel System (DCIPS) for one year, and requires that a review of DCIPS be conducted by an independent organization.

What is your view of DCIPS?

I do not have detailed knowledge of the program. I am informed that an independent review of DCIPS will be undertaken shortly and, if confirmed, I would look forward to the results of that review.

If confirmed, will you ensure that the independent review required by section 1114 is carried out as required, and is used to guide the Department's decisions on the further implementation of DCIPS?

Yes.

Foreign Language Proficiency

A Foreign Language Transformation Roadmap announced by the Department on March 30, 2005, directed a series of actions aimed at transforming the Department's foreign language capabilities, to include revision of policy and doctrine, building a capabilities based requirements process, and enhancing foreign language capability for both military and civilian personnel.

124. In your view, what should be the priorities of the Federal Government to expanding the foreign language skills of civilian and military personnel and improving coordination of foreign language programs and activities among the Federal agencies?

The Department of Defense is the nation's largest employer of personnel with foreign language skills, both civilian and military. If confirmed, I would support efforts to educate a broader pool of Americans with skills in critical languages. I believe the nation must build a globally-competent workforce by educating a larger pool of language and internationally competent high school and college graduates from which the Department of Defense and other Federal Government agencies can recruit.

If confirmed, what steps would you take to identify foreign language requirements, and to design military and civilian personnel policies and programs to fill those gaps?

It is my understanding that the Department is currently engaged in building programs to address the need for language capability in its forces and its civilian workforce. If confirmed, I would work with the Joint Staff and the Military departments to ensure that requirements are identified within the force, and that training, education, and personnel management programs are designed to meet those requirements.

What is your assessment of an appropriate time frame within which results can be realized in this critical area?

If confirmed, I would support efforts to build foundational language capability within the Department. Language acquisition, particularly at advanced levels, takes a considerable amount of time, this is particularly true in the more difficult languages. To improve language proficiency and regional expertise in the officer corps, the Department needs to start early in service members' careers and grow capability over time.

Defense Integrated Military Human Resources System (DIMHRS)

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

What is your assessment of the need for an integrated, cross-service personnel and pay system?

The functional needs that formed the basis for DIMHRS still exist. However, it is my understanding that each service will be allowed to build their own integrated, personnel and pay systems using the original DIMHRS configured software investment to the maximum extent practical. If confirmed, I would assess this plan to ensure that it meets DoD's needs.

What metrics would you use to assess the Department's and Services' progress in developing and deploying DIMHRS?

I believe the best metrics for determining success are improved accuracy and timeliness of military compensation and better tracking of our service members as they change status from active to reserve/guard, and possibly back, and compliance with policies and laws governing personnel and pay eligibility.

What is the status of the implementation of DIMHRS?

I do not have details of the status of DIMHRS, but it is my understanding that since implementation of DIMHRS is now a service responsibility, there are specific implementation plans or schedules for each service. If confirmed I intend to closely monitor each service's progress and implementation.

If confirmed, what changes, if any, would you recommend to the implementation schedule and process currently in place?

I do not have any recommended changes at this time. If confirmed, I would review and assess the current schedule and process.

If confirmed, what role do you plan to play in oversight over and direction of Service efforts to develop and deploy DIMHRS?

The USD(P&R) is responsible and accountable for any system whose primary purpose is Human Resources Management (HRM) activities within the DoD. If confirmed I would review and assess the current direction and effort the services are taking in development and deployment of their respective systems. I would actively participate in the governance structure to include the NDAA 2010 mandated DIMHRS Transition Council and would focus on compliance with enterprise standards the individual service systems must support.

GI Bill Benefits

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

What is your assessment of the effect of the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act on recruiting and retention of service members?

The Post-9/11 GI Bill only became effective on August 1, 2009, so it is premature to fully gauge the impact of the Post-9/11 GI Bill on either recruiting or retention. If confirmed, I would monitor the effects of the implementation of this act very closely.

What is your view of the effectiveness of the transferability provisions contained in the Act on retention of mid- and late-career service members?

Since participation requires substantial time in service, and a commitment to additional service, the impact promises to be positive, even though it has just begun. I am informed that almost 80,000 career service members have taken advantage of this provision. If confirmed, I would monitor the effects of the provisions of this act very closely.

Quadrennial Review of Military Compensation

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

What is your assessment of the QRMC recommendations, particularly the proposed new defined retirement plan?

I have not reviewed this report in detail, but I know that one of its major recommendations was the consolidation of special and incentive pays – a provision already enacted and now being implemented.

It is my understanding that the 10th QRMC explored and examined alternatives to the current compensation system and proposed alternatives for the Department to consider. If confirmed, I look forward to reviewing this and other proposals with the Military Departments and Services.

Do you believe that service members should have access to flexible spending arrangements?

I don't have a recommendation at this time but, if confirmed, I would review this issue carefully.

Legislative Fellowship Program

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

What is your assessment of the value of the Legislative Fellows program to the Department of Defense?

I believe this program is a valuable educational experience for our military and civilian members. Fellows coming to Congress from DoD provide a valuable perspective. From my past experiences, I know that those with the clear understanding of how the Department interacts with Congress are advantaged when they move to senior leadership positions.

What is your assessment of the career development and the utilization of officers who have served as legislative fellows?

I do not have sufficient insight to make an assessment, but I believe the experiences and insights Legislative Fellows gain are valuable in senior leadership positions.

What do you consider to be the appropriate number of legislative fellows by Service each year?

I cannot make a specific recommendation, but it is my understanding that DoD expanded from 26 to 100 legislative fellows over the past two years. If confirmed, I would review this program and recommend changes as appropriate.

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 Under 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.