

Senate Armed Services Committee
Advance Policy Questions for Dr. Mark T. Esper
Nominee for Appointment to be Secretary of Defense

Duties and Qualifications

Section 113 of title 10, U.S. Code, establishes the Secretary of Defense as the head of the Department of Defense (DOD) and principal assistant to the President in all matters relating to the Department. Subject to the direction of the President and applicable law, the Secretary of Defense exercises authority, direction, and control over the Department.

What background, experience, and expertise do you possess that qualify you to serve as Secretary of Defense?

My three decades of experience in the military, government, and private sector have focused on advancing our Nation's security. Throughout my service, my foundation has been my twenty-one years as an Infantry officer in the U.S. Army, with ten years of active duty and eleven years in the National Guard and Army Reserve. During this time I had the privilege of serving with and leading soldiers in both wartime and peace, in a variety of command and staff assignments, and across the globe in the United States, the Middle East, and Europe.

My experience on Capitol Hill as a Professional Staff Member in both the Senate and House, working in key national security positions, provides me with a solid understanding of the variety of challenges facing the U.S. military from a Hill perspective. My time working in the Congress impressed upon me a deep appreciation for Congress' vital Article I responsibilities with regard to the Armed Forces. To that end, I understand the importance of Pentagon leaders partnering with defense committees to address the challenges facing the Department.

My broad private sector experiences, especially as a senior executive at a major defense company, have provided me with a good sense of the acquisition challenges facing the Department, ideas on how Industry can perform better, insights on how the Department can better partner with the private sector, practical knowledge of modern-day business practices that maximize effectiveness, and how to best lead others to drive positive, long-term results.

Finally, my experience working in the Pentagon, first as a war planner on the Army Staff, then as a Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense in OSD Policy, and most recently as Secretary of the Army, has given me a very good understanding of how the Pentagon works, and how to make it work better. In my time as Secretary of the Army, I leveraged my cumulative experiences in the U.S. Army, on the Hill, in private industry, and in a variety of roles at the Pentagon to drive positive change, with a focus on improving readiness, modernizing the force, and making necessary

reforms, all while placing priority on taking care of our Soldiers, their families, and our civilian workforce.

As a Service Secretary I have a deep appreciation for the responsibilities entrusted to me and other senior Pentagon leaders, great respect for the role of Congress in our Nation's security, and sincere admiration and gratitude for all those who serve our Nation. All of these experiences and more have prepared me well to assume the role of Secretary of Defense.

Do you believe there to be any actions that you need to take to enhance your ability to perform the functions and duties, and exercise the powers of the Secretary of Defense?

Not at this time.

To the extent that the functions of DOD Components overlap, what would be your approach, if confirmed, to consolidating and reducing unnecessary duplication?

If confirmed, I will fully support efforts, such as those currently underway by the acting CMO, to drive consolidation and reduce duplication through review of Fourth Estate organizations.

If confirmed, what duties and functions would you assign to the Deputy Secretary of Defense?

If confirmed, I would expect the Deputy Secretary to play a central role in managing the Department as it implements the National Defense Strategy. The primary focus of the Deputy Secretary would be on the internal management of the Department. This would include, among other areas, program and budget issues related to modernizing the Department and reforming the Department for greater performance and affordability.

Major Challenges and Opportunities

What do you consider to be the most significant challenges you will face if confirmed as Secretary of Defense?

As the National Security Strategy and National Defense Strategy outlined, we are in an era of renewed great power competition, with China and Russia attempting to match or surpass the United States in multiple domains. Concurrently we face challenges posed by regimes such as Iran and North Korea, instability in countries such as Venezuela, and the ongoing fight to counter terrorism across the globe. At the same time, we must make internal changes so that the Department can compete and win in the new domains of warfare of space and cyber. The Department must do all of this simultaneously, with limited resources, working with Congress, and remaining

transparent with the American people to ensure the security of the United States.

What plans do you have for addressing each of these challenges, if confirmed?

If confirmed, my focus would be executing the National Defense Strategy, and continuing to expand the competitive space for the U.S. Armed Forces in all domains to counter the challenges we face. Fundamental to this is ensuring the health and welfare of our military and civilian personnel through leadership that commits to the values and behaviors that represent the best of the military profession, while always taking care of families and ensuring they have the resources they need to thrive. Within the Department, I commit to measuring all decisions based on whether they ensure the readiness of the total force to deploy, fight, and win in all domains. In order to enhance long-term readiness, I would seize the opportunity to modernize and expand our margin of dominance, while balancing risk, and reforming to improve business practices.

Are there significant opportunities that, in your view, DOD has been unable to leverage (or has leveraged only in part) during the period of your service as Acting Secretary of Defense and Secretary of the Army?

I am not aware of any significant opportunities that the Department has been unable to leverage during my service in the Pentagon the past two years. We have put forward a strategy-driven budget, anchored on the National Defense Strategy, which prioritizes modernization for great power competition, sustaining and building on readiness gains over the past two years, and taking care of our Service members and their families.

If confirmed, what specific actions will you take to ensure that DOD leverages these opportunities in a suitable and timely way?

If confirmed, I would work closely with Congress to fully fund the Department of Defense's readiness, modernization, and reform efforts to continue building on the progress that we have made. As these efforts materialize into actions, programs, and reorganizations, I would stay closely linked with Congress to ensure that these changes are transparent, fully funded, and continue to mature under the purview of Congressional oversight.

Civilian Control of the Military

If confirmed, specifically what would you do to ensure that your tenure as Secretary of Defense epitomizes the fundamental requirement for civilian control of the Armed Forces embedded in the U.S. Constitution and other laws?

I am deeply committed to the bedrock American principle of civilian control of the military. Having served as the Secretary of the Army, I have been a member of the

civilian leadership team that controls our military forces. If confirmed as the Department's civilian leader, I will ensure civilian control of the Armed Forces by serving as a conduit for the President as Commander in Chief, promoting effective communication between our civilian and military leaders, and ensuring the Department of Defense is responsive to Congress.

In its 2018 report, *Providing for the Common Defense*, the National Defense Strategy Commission observed, “there is an imbalance in civil-military relations on critical issues of strategy development and implementation. Civilian voices appear relatively muted on issues at the center of U.S. defense and national security policy.”

Do you agree with this assessment? If so, specifically what would you do to address this issue, if confirmed?

I do not agree with the NDS Commission's assessment of civil-military relations within the Department of Defense. Civilian leaders within the Department continue to exercise their necessary authorities and responsibilities for U.S. defense and national security policy, while working closely with the military leadership. If confirmed, I will continue to stress the importance of close collaboration between civilian and military personnel.

The National Defense Strategy Commission report also states, “. . . allocating priority—and allocating forces—across theaters of warfare is not solely a military matter. It is an inherently political-military task, decision authority for which is the proper competency and responsibility of America's civilian leaders.”

Do you agree with the Commission's recommendation that “the Secretary of Defense and Under Secretary of Defense for Policy . . . fully exercise their responsibilities for preparing guidance for and reviewing contingency plans?”

Yes. Planning for crisis and war is the most fundamental responsibility of the Department of Defense. Title 10 is clear in assigning these responsibilities to the Secretary of Defense and to the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, and, if confirmed, I will be committed to fulfilling our statutory responsibilities.

If confirmed, specifically how would you fully exercise your responsibilities in this regard?

If confirmed, I will ensure the full implementation of the Presidentially-approved 2018-2020 Contingency Planning Guidance, including thorough reviews of the Department's contingency plans developed in accordance with that guidance.

What civilian officials and organizations, in your opinion, should participate in decisions regarding allocating priority and forces across operational theaters? If confirmed, how would you ensure the participation of these officials and organizations in such decisions?

If confirmed, I will be the ultimate approval authority for global force allocation priorities and specific force deployment decisions. The Under Secretary of Defense for Policy plays a key role in ensuring those decisions are fully informed by all relevant offices in the Department of Defense and our partners across the U.S. Government, especially the Department of State. I will ensure that the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy is empowered to execute this comprehensive coordination fully.

2018 National Defense Strategy

The 2018 NDS moved beyond the “two-war construct” that has guided defense strategy, capability development, and investment for the past three decades, and refocused DOD on a “2 + 3 framework”. That framework prioritizes “great power competition and conflict” with China and Russia as the primary challenges with which the United States must contend, together with the imperative of deterring and countering rogue regimes like North Korea and Iran. Finally the framework emphasizes the defeat of terrorist threats to the U.S. and the consolidation of gains in Iraq and Afghanistan, while moving to a “more resource sustainable” approach to counterterrorism.

In your view, does the 2018 NDS accurately assess the current strategic environment, including the most critical and enduring threats to the national security of the United States and its allies? Please explain your answer.

Yes. The Department recently completed its first assessment of the National Defense Strategy (NDS) and found that the NDS remains valid. If confirmed, I will maintain the commitment to evaluate our strategy continuously in light of potential changes in the strategic environment.

In your view, does the 2018 NDS correctly specify the priority missions of the DOD and the capabilities by which DOD can achieve its objectives in the context of the current strategic environment? What do you perceive as the areas of greatest risk?

Yes. If confirmed, I will work to ensure the Department is prepared to defend the homeland, remain the preeminent military power in the world, ensure the balance of power in key regions remains in our favor, and advance the free and open international order. Implementing the NDS’s three lines of effort – enhancing lethality, strengthening alliances and expanding partnerships, and reforming the way DoD does business – is necessary to achieve these objectives. The nation faces a number of risks in a complex strategic environment. The greatest risk is failing to meet the Strategy’s call to ensure our military’s competitive advantage in an era of strategic competition with China and Russia.

If confirmed, what changes might you propose to the missions and responsibilities (including geographic boundaries) of the Combatant Commands, better to implement the 2018 NDS? Please explain your answer.

If confirmed, I will work closely with the Department's senior leadership to look carefully at how the responsibilities of the Combatant Commands align with the Department's priority missions in implementing the NDS.

Does DOD have the requisite modeling and simulation capabilities and tools to support you, if confirmed as Secretary of Defense, in assessing whether the Combatant Commanders' operational plans will achieve the national security objectives identified by the NDS? Please explain your answer.

Our operational plan reviews leverage a variety of tools, including modeling and simulation, to identify relative risk in addressing potential near-term contingencies based on guidance derived from the 2018 NDS. These findings help us know where we as a Department need to do better. If confirmed, I will continue to push the Department to evaluate more fully and effectively how well the Joint Force is prepared to fight, tomorrow or in the future, to uphold the Nation's interests.

Are the forces of each of the Military Services appropriately sized, structured, and resourced to implement the 2018 NDS and the associated operational plans? Please explain your answer.

My understanding is that the Joint Force presently has the necessary capability, capacity, and readiness to contend with today's threats at an acceptable level of risk, and to implement National Defense Strategy (NDS) priorities, but that the level of risk is increasing as the threat environment evolves. This is particularly the case regarding China's and Russia's growing ability to contest U.S. military advantages; we cannot allow that trend to continue. If confirmed, I will work to ensure the Department adapts and strengthens our warfighting approach in line with NDS priorities, including by improving how we develop, posture, and employ the Joint Force to implement the strategy most effectively. In a resource-informed way, I believe the Department should continue to prioritize Joint Force modernization, future high-end readiness, and the development of new operating concepts, while accepting risk in growing major combat units, to ensure a more lethal, resilient, and agile military for an era of strategic competition.

Does the DOD have the requisite analytic capabilities and tools to support you, if confirmed as Secretary of Defense, in evaluating the Military Services' force structure and sizing strategies to ensure that each Service can and will generate forces that are manned, trained, and equipped to execute the operational plans associated with the 2018 NDS? Please explain your answer.

It is vital that the Department's operational plans are resource-informed and executable. Beyond these plans, the Department's analytic "Tri-Chairs" –

OSD/CAPE, the Joint Staff, and OSD/Policy – are overseeing efforts to revitalize the Department’s ability to develop and assess concepts and capabilities to address the challenges identified in the NDS. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Services to ensure the Department makes strategy-driven choices between maintaining capacity and readiness for today’s threats and prioritizing modernization investments necessary to address those of the future.

If confirmed, what revisions or adjustments would you make to DOD’s implementation of the 2018 NDS?

If confirmed, I look forward to continuing the work of Secretary Mattis and Acting Secretary Shanahan in driving implementation of the 2018 NDS. The Department made notable progress in NDS implementation with our FY 2020 budget and continues to make progress with our work to develop new concepts for force employment and warfighting for priority theaters of operation.

However, there is still important work to be done. First and foremost, we must have the resolve to see through a range of activities needed to meet the strategic direction in the NDS, including to develop a more lethal, resilient, and ready force; solve tough operational problems; build a combat-credible forward presence; and strengthen our alliances and partnerships. If confirmed, I will steadfastly continue this work.

If confirmed, what revisions or adjustments would you make to the 2018 NDS as a result of changes in assumptions, policy, or other factors?

The NDS remains our guidepost for defense priorities; its assessment of the threat environment and outlining of resultant Departmental priorities remain unchanged. But I am mindful of the continuing evolution of the security environment, and the NDS recognizes that threats to national security are not static.

I believe that, if confirmed, it will be important for me to ensure the threats and prioritization set forth in the NDS are kept under rigorous, thoughtful assessment and that we remain flexible to adapt as appropriate. We already undertake this “health check” through assessment of the NDS annually, and, if confirmed, I intend to continue this under my tenure.

DOD Readiness

How would you assess the current readiness of the DOD Components—across the domains of materiel and equipment, personnel, and training—to execute operational plans in furtherance of the 2018 NDS?

Readiness is better now than it was when I rejoined the Defense Department in 2017, and we are absolutely the most capable military in the world. Stable and predictable funding, and the avoidance of a continuing resolution during FY 2019, allowed the Department to make much needed investments that contribute to short-term readiness

gains while simultaneously providing the foundation for long-term readiness growth. The FY 2020 budget sustains and builds on these readiness gains, for example, by investing in critical training for Armored Brigade Combat Teams and making continued improvements in the tactical aviation enterprise.

In what specific ways have the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Military Departments and Services, and the Combatant Commands utilized their increased budgetary authority over the past two years to foster readiness recovery?

The increased funding the Department received in FY 2018 and 2019 has made a significant contribution to the Department's ability to restore our readiness. Fiscal Year 2018 readiness execution was \$114.5 billion, \$15.3 billion higher (15.4%) than FY 2017 levels, and FY 2019's enacted level of \$119.5 billion represents a further \$5 billion (4.4%) growth in readiness funding. This is a 20% increase in readiness funding from FY 2017 to FY 2019.

What is your assessment of the risk the Military Departments and Services and the Combatant Commands have accepted in regard to their readiness to execute operational plans in furtherance of the 2018 NDS?

As the National Defense Strategy stipulates, the United States is in an increasingly complex security environment, one that requires difficult choices and prioritization of resources to field a lethal, resilient, and rapidly adapting Joint Force. Risk is inherent in the choices that are made to attain and maintain the Joint Force necessary for long-term strategic competitions with China and Russia, the principal priorities for the Department. Stable, timely, and predictable funding, and the lack of continuing resolutions, have allowed the Department to make much needed investments to recover readiness of the Joint Force.

If confirmed, specifically what would you do to restore full spectrum readiness in all DOD Components—across the domains of materiel and equipment, personnel, and training—and on what timelines?

As recommended by the National Defense Strategy Commission, I am committed to ensuring that the Defense Department utilizes state-of-the-art analytical capabilities in order to make informed decisions on both force and operational concept development in order to ensure our Nation has a military organized, trained, and equipped to deter and, if necessary, defeat a peer competitor.

What officials and organizations, in your opinion, should participate in evaluating and reporting on the readiness of, and mitigating readiness gaps and shortfalls in the DOD Components?

The Department has established a senior-level coordination and implementation readiness process, which is led by the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Readiness

(ASD(R). The Executive Readiness Management Group (ERMG), which is co-chaired by the ASD(R) and Director, Joint Staff, is responsible for providing oversight of current and projected readiness-related issues, including the Defense Readiness Reporting System-Strategic and the Department's Readiness Recovery Framework, and maintains decision authority as required to ensure the readiness enterprise remains proactive in improving the readiness of the force. The ERMG is composed of senior leaders from OSD, the Joint Staff, and the Military Services who are able to directly assess and address readiness challenges and resource requirements. The ERMG is fed by lower-level working groups to ensure refinement of the critical matters as well as the Readiness Reporting Reform Senior Steering Group (R3SSG), which is currently conducting a review of readiness reporting reform that will assess the current process for collecting, analyzing, and communicating readiness data and recommend changes to improve and establish readiness metrics using DRRS-S. The ERMG is an empowered body that is also able to directly elevate readiness matters that need the attention of the DSD or, should I be confirmed, myself.

National Security Budget

The discretionary caps imposed by the Budget Control Act (BCA) will be in effect for Fiscal Years (FYs) 2020 and 2021. Absent a budget agreement, the Department will not receive adequate or on-time funding. Continuing resolutions are likely and sequestration remains a possibility.

How does this budget uncertainty affect DOD in your view?

Budget uncertainty negatively impacts the Department's ability to rebuild, remain ready, restore competitiveness, provide response options, and carry out the National Defense Strategy on behalf of the nation.

In your assessment, what would be the effects of continued application of the BCA discretionary caps through 2021 on the Department? What would be the specific implications for the implementation of the 2018 NDS?

Under Budget Control Act caps, the Department would face a sequester estimated at \$98 billion and would be unable to implement the NDS. Such a sudden cut would reverse readiness and modernization gains and force decisions to delay or cancel activities, such as training, hiring, depot maintenance, facility sustainment, and procurement. The Department must invest heavily in space and cyber domains and modernize capabilities in the air, maritime, and land domains to enhance lethality and provide the combat-credible military forces needed for the United States to deter or defeat great power adversaries. These investments would not be possible under BCA caps.

The President's Budget for FY 2020 requests \$576 billion in base DOD funding,

coupled with \$174 billion in Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO). Together, the proposed base and OCO request reflect a total budgetary increase of less than 3% in *real growth* over the FY 2019 defense budget. In its 2018 report, the National Defense Strategy Commission—supported by then-Secretary of Defense Mattis and Chairman Dunford—recommended that Congress increase the base defense budget at an average rate of three to five percent above inflation through the Future Years Defense Program (FYDP).

Do you believe that DOD requires 3-5% real budgetary growth through the FYDP to implement effectively the 2018 NDS? Please explain your answer.

I believe the Department requires an average rate of 3-5% real growth through the FYDP, while harvesting returns on aggressive reform opportunities. Under my tenure as Secretary of the Army, we brought fiscal discipline and focus to ensure we maintained budget discipline while prioritizing the most capable technology investments to modernize the Army. The momentum gained during recent years, with the help of Congress, to build, equip, and train our forces will be unnecessarily interrupted without continued funding growth. The Department needs consistent modest growth to build on the recent success to repair damaged readiness and strengthen the lethality of the military force to preserve and expand the competitive advantage we have against our great power adversaries.

If confirmed, by what standards would you measure the adequacy of DOD funding going forward?

If confirmed, I would measure the adequacy of the Department's funding by our ability to execute the National Defense Strategy (NDS), which requires adequate resources to position the United States for great power competition, maintain the nation's technological edge, and preserve the health of the joint force, while providing the ability to respond and provide options to the President. Funding needs to be predictable, adequate, sustained, and timely.

It is generally agreed that every defense budget must balance the size of the joint force, its readiness, and its possession of and ability to wield advanced military technology. Further, the budget must reflect the relative prioritization of today's military operations against the need to prepare for the future.

Senior DOD officials asserted that the FY 2020 budget would be the first to perfectly align resources with strategy. Do you believe the Department's FY 2020 budget submission achieved that goal? Please explain your answer.

The FY 2020 President's Budget request aligns the Department's resources with the NDS. It focuses on great power competition with China and Russia, while also preserving readiness and addressing the threats posed by rogue states and violent extremist organizations. Our enemies and adversaries will adapt to advance their capabilities and influence. Therefore, flexibility is critical. We must remain agile to

meet those threats as they emerge, outside the budget cycles, if necessary, and I believe the FY 2020 budget submission achieves these goals.

How would you respond to the assertion that the FY 2020 defense budget request perpetuated longstanding biases in favor of force size and near term challenges, as opposed to addressing current threats sustainably—at lower cost, and with fewer forces—and shifting investment toward prevailing in the long-term?

I would disagree. Recognizing that resources are finite, the NDS focuses on great power competition and the need to continue to respond to threats posed by rogue states and violent extremist organizations in more sustainable ways. Implementation, however, will naturally take some time. Working by, with, and through our allies and partners, the FY 2020 budget continues to leverage robust investments in numerous security cooperation efforts to train and equip partner nations, which allow U.S. forces to build readiness and capability for great power competition and to be more readily available for other contingency operations, build better relationships with partners, and promote global security in a more cost-effective manner. We will need Congressional support when hard choices need to be made to allow us to redirect our funding to address the high-end threats.

Chain of Command

In accordance with title 10, U.S. Code, the President and Secretary of Defense exercise authority, direction, and control of the Armed Forces through two distinct branches of the chain of command. One branch runs from the President, through the Secretary of Defense, to the Combatant Commanders—for missions and forces assigned to their commands. For purposes other than the operational direction of the Combatant Commands, the chain of command runs from the President, to the Secretary of Defense, to the Secretaries of the Military Departments, and to the commanders of Military Service forces.

Do you believe this structure facilitates clear and effective chains of command?

Yes. From my service as the Secretary of the Army, I have personal experience with that bifurcated chain of command and believe it functions clearly and effectively.

How could the effectiveness of each branch of the chain of command be improved, in your view?

I currently have no recommendations for improving either the operational or administrative chain of command. If confirmed as the Secretary of Defense, I will evaluate the ongoing effectiveness of the chains and offer recommendations if there is an opportunity for improvement.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff

Section 921 of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for FY 2017 made changes to section 151 of title 10, U. S. Code, concerning the role of the Joint Chiefs as military advisors to the President, the National Security Council, the Homeland Security Council, and the Secretary of Defense.

What is your assessment of the authorities and process by which members of the Joint Chiefs would provide military advice and opinions to the President, and to you, if confirmed?

The FY2017 NDAA enhanced the roles of the Chairman, the other Joint Chiefs, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff as a corporate body, to provide military advice to civilian leaders. I have seen this provision implemented, and I assess the authorities and process as sufficient and appropriate for providing military advice and opinions to the President, the National Security Council, the Homeland Security Council, and the Secretary of Defense.

What is your level of confidence that these authorities and this process will generate and provide you, if confirmed as the Secretary of Defense, the best military advice, including “minority opinions” that may diverge from those of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs or the majority of members of the Joint Chiefs?

I have a high level of confidence that, if confirmed, this process will provide me with the best military advice. I am also confident that if there is an instance when the advice or opinion of another member of the Joint Chiefs differs from that of the Chairman, the information would be provided to me, along with the reasoning behind the differences.

What would be your level of commitment, if confirmed, always to provide your best advice to the President, even when your advice and opinions might differ from those of other members of the Cabinet, the President’s other senior advisors, or from the President’s own views?

If confirmed, I would always convey to the President, members of the Cabinet, and any other senior advisors the best advice that I and the Department of Defense have to offer.

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

Section 151 of title 10, U.S. Code, provides that the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is the principal military adviser to the President, the National Security Council, the Homeland Security Council, and the Secretary of Defense. Pursuant to Section

163(a) of title 10, the President has directed that communications between the President or the Secretary of Defense and the Commanders of the Combatant Commands be transmitted through the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. In addition, although he does not exercise command authority, in matters requiring global military strategic and operational integration, the Chairman is responsible for providing advice to the President and Secretary of Defense on ongoing military operations and advising the Secretary on the allocation and transfer of forces among geographic and functional Combatant Commands, as may be necessary to address transregional, multi-domain, and multifunctional threats.

If confirmed, how would you structure your relationship with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff?

If confirmed, I would constantly seek the advice and counsel of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. If General Milley is confirmed as the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, he and I have the added benefit of having worked together closely as Chief of Staff and Secretary of the Army, respectively.

If confirmed, would you modify the current duties and responsibilities of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in any way? What other duties and responsibilities would you consider assigning or delegating to the Chairman?

I believe the current duties and responsibilities of the Chairman are appropriate.

Use of Military Force

If confirmed, what factors would you consider in making recommendations to the President on the use of military force?

In evaluating whether the use of military force is appropriate, I would consider a variety of factors, but principally the threat to the United States, including its imminence, the nature of the U.S. interest at issue and its importance; whether non-military means have been considered and are being integrated into any proposed response; whether we would have a clear and achievable objective for using force; the likely risks, costs, and consequences of the operation; whether the proposed action is appropriate and proportional; the views of the Congress; the willingness of foreign partners to support the action; and the legal basis in domestic and international law.

Do you agree with the interpretations and applications of the 2001 Authorization for the Use of Military Force made by both the Obama and Trump Administrations?

Yes, the 2001 Authorization for Use of Military Force may be applied to al-Qa'ida, the Taliban, and associated forces that are engaged in hostilities against the United States and its coalition partners, including the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria.

What groups are currently assessed to be associated forces of al Qaeda for purposes of the 2001 Authorization for the Use of Military Force, and in what countries are U.S. military operations against such groups authorized?

The 2001 Authorization for Use of Military Force is the legal basis for currently authorized operations against al-Qa'ida; the Taliban; certain other terrorist or insurgent groups affiliated with al-Qa'ida or the Taliban in Afghanistan; al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula; al-Shabaab; al-Qa'ida in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb; al-Qa'ida in Syria; and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria. Direct action operations are authorized in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Syria, and Yemen.

In your view, is a “new” Authorization for the Use of Military Force needed at this time? Please explain your answer.

No, the President does not need a new or revised Authorization for Use of Military Force. The United States has sufficient legal authority to continue the fight against al-Qa'ida, the Taliban, and their associated forces, including against the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). A repeal or substantive revision of the 2001 Authorization for Use of Military Force could create substantial, avoidable, and unnecessary litigation risk by unsettling the existing legal framework.

What factors would you consider, if confirmed, in determining which forces of other nations are eligible for Collective Self-Defense by U.S. forces, and under what conditions?

Rules of engagement authorizing U.S. forces to come to the assistance of foreign forces often are a necessary element of working alongside foreign partners. In considering such rules of engagement, I would expect to prioritize foreign forces that are participating in a combined operation with U.S. forces, such as combined counterterrorism operations. I would also prioritize forces of foreign nations that host U.S. forces, because those forces may have important responsibilities for the security of U.S. forces and facilities in the host nation. Lastly, I would prioritize nations that the United States has an important national interest in defending, such as a mutual defense treaty commitment.

Are there circumstances in which you believe it appropriate for U.S. military forces to be under the operational command or control of an authority other than the chain of command established under title 10, U.S. Code?

There are times when military capabilities may need to be made temporarily available to support an activity of the government other than the Department of Defense. Under such circumstances it may be appropriate for the head of another department or agency to direct operations while working with the Secretary of Defense. The Commander-in-Chief always remains at the top of the chain of command, and the U.S. military operates under U.S. control. Further, U.S. military personnel are always subject to the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

What is your understanding and assessment of the authorities and agreements in place to permit U.S. military personnel to carry out missions under the provisions of title 50, U.S. Code? If confirmed, how would you modify these agreements or authorities, if at all?

I understand that relevant authorities and agreements provide the necessary framework for U.S. military personnel to support activities of other U.S. Government departments and agencies when called upon by the President or Secretary of Defense as the situation may require. I believe that the current authorities and agreements are sufficient. If confirmed, I look forward to continuing to work within the Department and with colleagues in other U.S. Government departments and agencies to adjust existing arrangements as the need arises.

According to the 2018 NDS, Dynamic Force Employment (DFE) will allow for the more “flexibl[e] use [of] ready forces to shape proactively the strategic environment while maintaining readiness to respond to contingencies and ensure long-term warfighting readiness.”

In your view, have past DFE operations had the desired effect in “shaping the strategic environment”? Please explain your answer.

DFE is a relatively new NDS concept, the full impacts of which have yet to be realized. The Department will need to continue to assess results as it further implements DFE operations.

In your view, have past DFE operations promoted, strained, or degraded the long-term readiness of U.S. forces?

When forces are used for DFE operations, the Department focuses on ensuring that they maintain their readiness. Short-duration episodic DFE deployments are intended to build long-term readiness. If confirmed, I would carefully monitor the impact of DFE operations on force readiness.

If confirmed as the Secretary of Defense, what factors would you consider in authorizing the use of particular forces to execute a DFE mission?

The DFE "First Principles" -- gain or maintain initiative, demonstrate flexibility and agility, challenge adversary strategic calculus, and control the pace of operations -- authored by former Secretary of Defense Mattis, remain relevant factors when considering DFE recommendations. Other factors include assessment of relative NDS strategic priorities and the strategic loss/gain to be realized when assessing the opportunity costs associated with a particular DFE mission.

Joint Force Headquarters and Component Commands

Is the current model for creating joint force headquarters below the unified command level appropriate and adequate to meet the global challenges articulated in the 2018 NDS?

Yes, the current model is appropriate and adequate to support the NDS.

In your view, would Combatant Commanders' operations and contingency planning and preparedness be improved by creating and exercising subordinate joint force headquarters prior to the emergence of a crisis?

Depending on the specific circumstances of the crisis, there may possibly be advantages in such an approach. Creating a subordinate joint force headquarters prior to emergence of crisis, however, may result in unnecessary staff actions and expense if the crisis does not matriculate.

What are the most significant obstacles to establishing and exercising such joint force headquarters in advance of a crisis, and what could be done to overcome those obstacles, in your view?

I am not convinced presently that creating a JFHQ in advance of a crisis would be effective. Our combatant commanders are appropriately staffed to manage day-to-day operations up to crisis, and prematurely establishing a joint force headquarters in a contingency pulls resources from other priorities around the globe. If confirmed, however, I will examine this possibility based on the recommendation of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Close Combat Lethality Task Force

In February 2018, then-Secretary of Defense Mattis established the Close Combat Lethality Task Force (CCLTF)—a cross-functional task force charged to “strengthen the . . . lethality, survivability, resiliency, and readiness” of U.S. squad-level infantry formations to “ensure close combat overmatch against pacing threats.”

If confirmed, would you continue to support the CCLTF, ensuring that it is properly resourced for mission accomplishment?

Yes. Having served as both an Infantry Officer and as Secretary of the Army, I am well aware of the unique challenges our squad-level infantry formations face if we are to achieve close combat overmatch against peer competitors. As Secretary of the Army, I worked with the CCLTF and, if confirmed, I will continue the direct and close relationship between the Secretary and this task force to ensure it is properly resourced and supported for mission accomplishment.

What is your view of the value of the CCLTF in advancing the Department's implementation of the 2018 NDS?

This unique organization is an invaluable tool for the Secretary because it brings a focused expertise that provides timely recommendations and solutions that can be taken for action now. The cross-functional nature of the CCLTF increases coordination of effort department wide, but most importantly it is an oversight mechanism for the Secretary ensuring follow through on decisions.

Alliances and Partnerships

Mutually beneficial alliances and partnerships are crucial to U.S. success in competition and conflict against a great power. To this end, the 2018 NDS stresses the importance of strengthening existing U.S. alliances and partnerships, building or enhancing new ones, and promoting “mutual respect, responsibility, priorities, and accountability” in these relationships.

If confirmed, what specific actions would you take to strengthen existing U.S. alliances and partnerships, build new partnerships and leverage new opportunities for international cooperation—in each Combatant Commander’s geographic area of responsibility?

If confirmed, as I continue implementation of the National Defense Strategy, I expect to focus my attention on engaging key ally and partner interlocutors, and to steer the Department to focus on strengthening collaborative planning and interoperability with allies and partners. I will strive to strengthen our relationships, enhance cooperation, improve readiness, and increase both capacity and capability, especially with NATO and Asian allies.

Also, if confirmed, I will confer with the geographic Combatant Commanders on how best to enhance their efforts to strengthen defense relationships in their areas of responsibility.

How would you characterize your familiarity with the civilian leaders of the defense enterprises of other nations and multi-national and international defense-focused consultative forums?

As Secretary of the Army, I was able to meet and work with many civilian defense leaders. I recently attended the NATO Defense Ministerial, where I engaged in robust conversations with Allied Defense Ministers and leaders from partner nations participating in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS as well as the NATO RESOLUTE SUPPORT MISSION in Afghanistan.

If confirmed, on which leaders and forums would you focus your engagement, with a view to advancing most effectively the national security interests of the United States?

If confirmed, I will continue to have an active level of engagement with key allies and partners, and will also continue to participate actively in international fora. My focus

will be on those allies and partners that are important as DOD implements the National Defense Strategy, which clearly recognized the critical role that American alliances and partnerships play in the security of the Nation.

U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM)

AFRICOM does not have any assigned forces and, as a result, is required to compete for forces in the global force management process.

What is your assessment of the availability and predictability of forces and associated capabilities to support the AFRICOM Theater Campaign Plan and other emergency requirements?

The by, with, and through approach to achieve security and stability in Africa has been effective with a limited forward presence. Often our security cooperation also enhances larger partner force operations, which achieve shared strategic objectives and build enduring relationships. Key to this approach is the limited forward presence on the continent and a focus on building African partner nation capabilities while supporting efforts of other international partners, all of which must be consistent with the National Defense Strategy.

Are there any changes you would implement to the allocation or assignment of forces to AFRICOM, if confirmed?

DoD assets have been allocated based on the priorities set out in the 2018 National Defense Strategy, and the Department's FY 2020 allocations for USAFRICOM are appropriate. However, if confirmed, I will consider the Combatant Commander's requirements and requests for forces, and assess risk based on changes in the strategic environment and the direction provided in the National Defense Strategy.

What is your assessment of U.S. counterterrorism strategies being executed currently in the AFRICOM Area of Responsibility (AOR)? If confirmed, what changes, if any, would you propose to these strategies?

I support the current counterterrorism strategy in Africa. Our strategy is to disrupt and degrade priority threats to the U.S. homeland, our interests, and our allies. A key element in the Department's approach is burden-sharing with our allies and partners, which is an area where we can improve. A whole-of-government and coalition approach is a necessity given competing priorities among our allies and partners and finite counterterrorism resources across such a vast continent. If confirmed, I will continue to assess our strategies across all combatant commands.

In your opinion, what additional steps, if any, should be taken to reduce the risk of attacks on U.S. embassies, consulates, and personnel by terrorist organizations and other threats throughout AFRICOM?

The Department continues to take steps to ensure U.S. lives are not lost in attacks against U.S. government facilities. Following the attack on the consulate in Benghazi in 2012, the Department implemented a process whereby forces are positioned to deploy rapidly to respond to crises across the vast continent. Given the Department's world-wide requirements for forces, and the growing threat posed by terrorist organizations in Africa, the Department has prioritized degrading and disrupting the al-Qaeda and ISIS affiliates that pose direct threats to U.S. personnel. The intent is to leverage allies, partners, or other elements of U.S. power to diminish the terrorists' capacity to obtain funds, territory, recruits, and other resource they need to attack our interests in Africa. If confirmed, I will continue to prioritize enabling partners to combat shared threats so that, over time, the majority of the effort and resource burden shifts to partners.

What is your assessment of the strategic objectives of Russia and China in Africa?

China's engagement in Africa reflects the Chinese Communist Party's overriding strategic objectives, including sustaining economic growth, securing great power status, and advancing its national interests abroad. China seeks to use its extensive political, economic, and security engagement with Africa to compete against the United States and our allies and partners and shape a world consistent with its authoritarian model. Politically, these objectives include building support for China's political positions, including at the United Nations. Economically, China seeks to obtain access to raw materials and expand the reaches of its state-driven economic model, including by securing market opportunities for its state-backed champions and exporting surveillance technologies. China also continues to provide security assistance to African nations and likely is planning to expand its military basing presence on the continent to advance China's national interests and ensure the security of overseas Chinese economic projects, including those that are part of its One Belt, One Road initiative.

Russia is positioning itself as a strategic competitor of the United States and is attempting to undermine U.S. influence in Africa while increasing its own. Russia is expanding its influence on the continent through increased political, economic, and security engagements.

What is your assessment of the efficacy of the current U.S. strategy to compete against Russia and China to be the security partner of choice in Africa?

The current U.S. strategy focuses on African partnership – building capacity, working toward shared objectives, operating transparently, and promoting accountable institutions and good governance for sustainable security -- while highlighting the dangers associated with dealing with China and Russia. DoD's competitive security edge lies primarily in (1) the superior quality of the equipment, training, education, and myriad other security assistance we provide; and (2) our unmatched support to counterterrorism operations. In the face of motivated and capable competitors, we

must work to enhance our ability not only to compete, but to win. This means, for example, demonstrating our commitment to advancing our shared objectives and developing positive messaging that will resonate with African leaders.

Health issues are a significant concern in many African nations and in their militaries. The U.S. Government's engagement strategy in Africa includes an emphasis on health-related issues.

To what extent should AFRICOM be involved in broader U.S. Government "health diplomacy" and capacity building efforts in Africa?

USAFRICOM should play a supporting role in the broader U.S. Government "health diplomacy" and capacity-building efforts in Africa. The military is adept at training, advising, and assisting partner nations, including through DoD's medical and health operations.

Libya

What is your understanding of the current U.S. strategy and objectives in Libya?

Lasting peace and stability in Libya will only come through a political solution. The United States supports the ongoing efforts of UN Special Representative Ghassan Salamé and the UN Support Mission in Libya to help avoid further escalation and chart a path forward that provides security and prosperity for all Libyans.

Who are the U.S. counterterrorism and security partners in Libya and what is your understanding of how those relationships advance stability and security in Libya?

The United States' goal is a stable, unified, and democratic Libya able to stand on its own against terrorism and to deliver security and prosperity for all Libyans, including through stable oil production. I believe U.S. Government officials continue to engage with a broad range of Libyan leaders to advance that goal.

Are there any areas in which U.S. interests and those of our security partners in Libya diverge?

The United States desires a stable, unified Libya, a goal shared by our partners in the international community, and calls on all parties to return rapidly to political mediation, the success of which depends upon a ceasefire in and around Tripoli. I am concerned about the mounting civilian casualties and damage to vital civilian infrastructure as the fighting continues.

Niger Incident Investigation

According to the redacted report of the Army’s administrative investigation into the October 2017 incident in Niger, the “investigation revealed several problems with the advise, assist, and accompany activity. Exercised conservatively, with advisors remaining far from the fight, advising higher echelon commanders, [activities] could be executed in accordance with Presidential Policy. Exercised aggressively, with U.S. advisors accompanying platoons, squads, and fire teams, the direct actions of our partners cannot be distinguished from U.S. direct action. U.S. provision of ‘advice and assistance’ look more like U.S. direct combat operations that are not reported that way to Congress or acknowledged that way to the public.”

In light of this finding, what policy changes or clarifications have been made to ensure U.S. advisors assigned to “advise and assist” missions like that in Niger remain in an advisory role?

As explained in the report pursuant to Section 1276 of the FY 2019 NDAA, as a result of the cited finding, then-Secretary Mattis instructed U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), in conjunction with the Department of the Army, to review the training Special Forces Soldiers receive, and provide to partner forces, that reinforces their proper roles as foreign partner advisors during counter-terrorism operations. By incorporating lessons learned from the Niger ambush across all Service components, USSOCOM has ensured that SOF operators have a complete understanding of expectations and limitations of working “by, with, and through” partner forces.

If confirmed, what additional changes or clarifications to counterterrorism and security assistance policies and guidance, including Execute Orders, would you make to prevent the sort of mission conflation identified by the Niger report of investigation?

If confirmed, I will work to ensure that any limitations on the role of U.S. forces are communicated clearly and implemented in a disciplined manner, as needed.

Do you agree with the investigation’s findings that U.S. advise, assist, and accompany missions, as executed in the AFRICOM AOR, were not properly reported to Congress?

The Department fully honors its congressional reporting requirements. However, the Niger 15-6 investigation found that the U.S. Special Operations Force Team commander and the next higher level commander at the Advanced Operations Base inaccurately characterized the nature of the mission in the concept of operations. Because the mission was mischaracterized, it was not originally reported as required. A USSOCOM review found that training, discipline and leadership issues were confined to this specific battalion and not widespread; therefore, it would be inappropriate to comment on whether all advise, assist, and accompany missions within the USAFRICOM AOR met congressional reporting thresholds as outlined in Section 130f of Title 10, U.S. Code.

Congress subsequently modified reporting requirements in Section 130f in Section 1031 of the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2019. The Department remains fully committed to fulfilling the new responsibilities, and since the NDAA's passage has sought to provide the committees with timely, appropriate, and sufficiently detailed information consistent with Congressional direction.

In light of these findings, will you commit, if confirmed, to ensuring that U.S. military activities are properly reported to Congress, in a timely manner, as mandated by law and policy?

Yes.

U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM)

To what extent does achieving U.S. national security interests in the Middle East require a continuous U.S. military presence there, in your view?

The Middle East remains critical to our national security interests. We are continually reviewing our presence in the region to ensure we are postured to support our partners, defend against threats to our interests, and respond to contingencies. First and foremost, our military presence in the region is focused on ensuring the safety of the homeland through counter-terrorism operations against those who seek to do us harm. Second, we use our presence to partner with friends in the region to build interoperability and enable them to manage their own security more effectively. Finally, we use our presence to support regional stability, deter aggression, and ensure the free flow of commerce.

What opportunities exist for increasing burden-sharing with U.S. regional and European partners to counter threats emanating from and affecting the CENTCOM AOR?

Since 2001, our allies and partners have consistently contributed political support, financial resources, and military capabilities to multiple U.S.-led operations in the USCENTCOM AOR, including most recently to defeat ISIS. Our NATO Allies and partners help project stability through the NATO missions in Afghanistan, in Iraq, and through the many NATO-led defense capacity-building programs. Allies have helped fight terrorism through their participation in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS by providing enabling capabilities, training, and funding. We expect that support to continue. Regional partners provide select support, especially as host nations for U.S. and coalition forces operating in the AOR.

That said, although our allies and partners have contributed to these missions, in many cases they can and should do more. The violent extremist organizations that seek safe haven in Afghanistan, Syria, and elsewhere seek to harm our allies and partners as much as they do us. If confirmed, I will continue to grow our vital

network of allies and partners around the globe, but I will also press them to do their fair share when it comes to burden sharing, whether it is providing combat forces, contributing financially, providing political support, or limiting national caveats, as previous Administrations also have worked to do.

Moreover, in line with the National Defense Strategy, we are talking with allies about how to evolve military efforts in the USCENTCOM AOR to be more cost-effective, so that we can focus greater resources on the higher-priority challenges presented by China and Russia.

Afghanistan

What are the U.S. national security objectives in Afghanistan, and if confirmed, what strategy would you implement to achieve them?

We never forget our purpose in Afghanistan: to protect our citizens and our homeland by denying terrorists a safe haven. We remember what it felt like on 9/11 and will do what is necessary to prevent such an attack from occurring again. Ultimately, we seek to end the war through a negotiated peace settlement, while continuing to maintain pressure on the battlefield to mitigate terrorist threats.

In your view, should U.S. troop levels in Afghanistan be tied to the achievement of certain conditions on the ground? If so, what conditions would you factor into your recommendation to the President on troop levels in Afghanistan, if confirmed?

U.S. force levels should be tied to levels of violence and the ability of our Afghan partners to mitigate terrorist threats. As levels of violence decline and the capabilities of our Afghan partners improve, force levels could be adjusted accordingly. Progress in peace negotiations would reduce levels of violence and therefore factor into recommendations on force levels.

Is it your understanding that the U.S. military presence in Afghanistan is currently “conditions-based”? If so, what is your understanding of the conditions prerequisite to eliminating U.S. military presence there?

Yes. As it currently stands, our strategy in Afghanistan is conditions based. Withdrawal of foreign forces is one component of the negotiations with the Taliban, along with reduction in violence, intra-Afghan dialogue, and assurances on counterterrorism.

What are the major challenges you foresee, if confirmed, to achieving U.S. goals of stability and security in Afghanistan?

The threat of terrorist attacks against the United States and our allies emanating from Afghanistan remains our primary challenge. Our Afghan partners have made great

improvements in their capabilities but more improvement is required barring a political solution to the conflict that denies terrorists the use of Afghanistan as a safe haven.

In your assessment, are current target end strengths for the Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police sufficient to enable Afghan security forces to project security and stability throughout Afghanistan in 2019 and beyond? Are these numbers sustainable?

U.S. Forces-Afghanistan, working with the Afghan government, will continue to assess the size and structure of the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF) to ensure the ANDSF can adequately address security challenges in Afghanistan. For the first time in several years, ANDSF recruitment and retention outpaced attrition as the ANDSF, which bears the brunt of the fighting in Afghanistan, continued to improve its ability to fight the insurgents. In the future, the required size of the ANDSF should be directly related to the threats it faces. Reconciliation would reduce the required ANDSF end strength necessary to ensure security throughout Afghanistan and to prevent threats against the United States and our allies.

In your view, what role should DOD play in supporting the reconciliation negotiations with the Taliban that Ambassador Khalilzad has undertaken?

DoD supports reconciliation negotiations by applying military pressure on the Taliban leaders to negotiate.

In your view, what role should the Afghan government play in the reconciliation negotiations with the Taliban?

An enduring peace settlement can only result from direct negotiations among Afghans, including the Taliban, the government, and representatives of all political groups as well as civil society. The Afghan government is a central component of an enduring political solution.

In your view, what should be the role of Afghanistan's neighbors—Pakistan, in particular—in the reconciliation process?

The U.S. Government is taking a regional approach to the conflict, noting the importance of garnering support from neighbors like Pakistan, while deterring other regional actors, such as Russia and Iran, from serving as spoilers to the peace process. We have seen Pakistan take some constructive steps on Afghan reconciliation.

In your opinion, does the Taliban have the will and capability to undertake counterterrorism efforts against ISIS? Against al Qaeda?

If confirmed, I will support DoD's efforts to consider carefully the terrorist threats that remain in Afghanistan and the resources and capabilities needed to defeat them. In the event of a peace deal, we would have to evaluate the Taliban's ability to work with the Afghan security forces to combat terrorist threats, such as ISIS-K and al Qaeda.

Syria and Iraq

What is your understanding of the current U.S. strategy and objectives in Syria?

The U.S. Syria strategy seeks to achieve three primary objectives: 1) the enduring defeat of ISIS; 2) an irreversible political process in accordance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 2254 calling for a ceasefire and political settlement in Syria; and 3) the withdrawal of Iranian-commanded forces in Syria.

From a DOD standpoint, what must be done to ensure the enduring defeat of ISIS, in your view? What non-military efforts are necessary to sustain the enduring defeat of ISIS?

DoD must consolidate military gains against ISIS while providing security assistance to local partners to help enable interagency partners such as the Department of State and USAID to address the political, social, and economics grievances ISIS aims to exploit. We must continue working by, with, and through local partners such as the Syrian Democratic Forces and Iraqi Security Forces to maintain security pressure on ISIS while building those partners' capacity so that they can sustain such operations without U.S. military assistance in the future. Finally, we must bring a more international approach to this global threat, marshalling contributions from the robust Global Coalition to Counter-ISIS and tailoring our strategy to those ISIS nodes outside of Iraq and Syria. In the immediate term, a whole of government and coalition effort is required to deal with the overflowing prisons and IDP camps that include ISIS fighters and supporters.

What do you perceive to be the role of the Syrian Democratic Forces and Iraqi Security Forces in countering ISIS, now that its caliphate has been eliminated?

The Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) and Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) will continue to play a vital role now that the defeat-ISIS campaign in Syria and Iraq has transitioned from liberating territory to enabling local security and countering ISIS's attempts to foment insurgency. The efforts of the SDF and ISF will be central to countering ISIS's attempts at insurgency, preventing the spread of ISIS, and preventing foreign terrorist fighters from returning and bolstering the remnants of ISIS.

In your view, should U.S. troop levels in Syria be tied to the achievement of certain conditions on the ground? If so, and if confirmed, what conditions would you factor into your recommendation to the President on future troop levels in Syria?

DoD's mission in Syria remains the enduring defeat of ISIS, and we will continue to work by, with, and through our partners to achieve that goal. A residual force of the U.S. military will remain in northeast Syria for now as part of a multinational force to continue the campaign against ISIS. However, in the interests of operational security, I will not discuss force numbers or timelines.

Earlier this month, Acting Assistant Secretary Kathryn Wheelbarger said, “Syria is a prime example of Moscow’s efforts to influence world events for its own advantage and prestige in a manner that contributes nothing but additional instability to the region and beyond.”

Do U.S. troops in Syria help “push back” on Russian influence in the Middle East, in your view?

Our forces are in Syria to defeat ISIS, but our forces do "push back" on Russian influence in some measure in the Middle East, and more specifically in Syria. From a broader perspective, everything we do in the Middle East, including D-ISIS activities, our Security Cooperation efforts with regional partners, our regular military-to-military engagements, and the deterrence provided by our standing forces in the region, has the effect of “pushing back” on Russian influence.

What is your understanding of the current U.S. strategy and objectives in Iraq?

Our principal objective in Iraq is to ensure the enduring defeat of ISIS. The best way to honor U.S., Coalition, and Iraqi sacrifices is to empower Iraq’s security forces to prevent an ISIS resurgence and defend its sovereignty against internal and external threats. U.S. and Coalition forces are operating at the express invitation of the Iraqi government for the purpose of helping Iraqis secure Iraq. The more capable Iraq’s security institutions, the more resilient Iraq will be in the face of terrorists and malign regional actors bent on coercion and exploitation.

What steps would you recommend for normalizing security assistance to the Iraqi Security Forces in the coming years?

The Office of Security Cooperation-Iraq (OSC-I), in support of the U.S. Ambassador and USCENTCOM Commander, conducts security assistance, defense institution building, and regional engagements to enhance ISF capabilities and maintain the enduring strategic partnership between the U.S. military and the ISF. OSC-I ultimately requires permanent staffing and stable, reliable Title 22 and Title 10 resources in order to be effective in this mission. To support implementation of an enduring, normalized security relationship, DoD is implementing a multi-phase plan that balances ongoing contingency operations and the need for continued Coalition support to the Government of Iraq. The Department of Defense’s decision to put a Senior Defense Official / Defense Attaché in place this past February was an important first step in beginning the process of validating new manpower

requirements and establishing permanent manning for OSC-I.

Iran

What is your assessment of the current military threat posed by Iran?

Iran is the United States' most formidable conventional and unconventional threat in the Middle East. Its unconventional, naval, and missile capabilities are its primary military capabilities. The Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps – Qods (IRGC-QF) directs, trains, supplies, and funds Shia groups across the region to advance Iran's interests. Proxies give Iran unconventional options for operations in Lebanon, Iraq, Syria, Yemen, and Bahrain. The IRGC-QF also has longstanding bonds with select Sunni groups, including Palestinian Islamic Jihad, HAMAS, and the Taliban. Iran's Navy is capable of only a limited menu of operations, but it is the Persian Gulf's preeminent naval force and features many small boats and naval mines that can complicate freedom of movement. Iran has the region's largest surface-to-surface missile (SSM) arsenal, including both ballistic and cruise missiles and mobile launchers. Some of the SSMs have a range of up to 2,000 kilometers.

Regular Iranian ground forces continue to focus on internal security and territorial defense, while also deploying limited numbers to Iraq and Syria.

Are U.S. military forces and capabilities currently deployed to the CENTCOM AOR adequate to deter and, if necessary, respond to threats posed by Iran?

The United States maintains a strong military presence in the U.S. Central Command Area of Responsibility. Given the recent tensions in the region, the Department of Defense will continue to ensure the U.S. military is adequately postured to deter Iran from committing aggressive actions and, if necessary, to provide the President with a broad range of military options to respond to potential acts of aggression by Iran or its regional proxies.

What is your understanding of the objectives of the “maximum pressure” strategy with respect to Iran? What is the role of the U.S. military in this strategy?

The “maximum pressure” campaign is primarily a diplomatic and economic effort to curb Iranian destabilizing activities in the region and pressure Iran to return to the negotiating table. DoD's policy in the Middle East is to support stability in the region, continue to develop our partners' capabilities through security cooperation, maintain freedom of navigation and commerce, deter Iranian aggression, and, if necessary, respond to attacks.

How has Iran responded to the April 2019 U.S. designation of the Iran Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) as a terrorist organization?

Iranian officials condemned the designation as an illegal and escalatory move intended to curb Iran's regional successes and their fight against ISIS. The Iranian parliament passed legislation designating USCENTCOM as a supporter of terrorism, apparently as a perceived proportionate response. Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif warned that the designation would have long-term consequences for the US-Iran relationship.

If the current situation vis-a-vis Iran continues to escalate, what off-ramps exist for “dialing down” the tension?

The President has been clear in offering talks to the Iranians without any pre-conditions. The State Department is leading this effort. The Department of Defense is postured to dissuade further aggressive actions to encourage the diplomatic effort.

Pakistan

If confirmed, what changes, if any, would you recommend to U.S. relations with Pakistan, particularly in terms of military-to-military relations and International Military Education and Training?

The President's South Asia Strategy recognizes Pakistan as a key partner in advancing U.S. interests in South Asia, including developing a political settlement in Afghanistan; defeating AQ and ISIS-K; providing logistical access for U.S. forces; and enhancing regional stability. However, the 2018 suspension of security assistance remains in place. If confirmed, my objective would be to maintain decision space and preserve the defense relationship, including select military-to-military exchanges, between the United States and Pakistan, even as we urge Pakistan to take action on U.S. requests.

Have you seen any change in Pakistan's cooperation with the U.S. since the U.S. decision to withhold security assistance to Pakistan in September 2018?

We have seen Pakistan take some constructive steps on Afghan reconciliation. Pakistan has also taken initial, promising steps against anti-Indian groups, such as Lashkar-e-Tayyiba and Jaish-e-Mohammed, which threaten regional stability. It is difficult to assess whether the security assistance suspension itself has driven these constructive actions, or whether progress on Afghan reconciliation and the escalation following the Pulwama terrorist attack have also influenced Pakistan's calculations.

What other levers does the United States have to compel Pakistan to ensure that its territory does not continue to be used as a sanctuary for militants and violent extremist organizations (VEOs)?

If confirmed, I would aim to make use of all of the tools at our disposal to promote a change in Pakistan's strategic approach to the region. The strongest may be building relationships with Pakistan's military; such relationships allow us insight and the

ability to encourage cooperation on key issues. Assistance and operational reimbursements, such as Coalition Support Funds (CSF) and International Military Education and Training (IMET), currently are suspended but may be useful to reinforce positive actions Pakistan takes in response to U.S. requests related to terrorism, militant sanctuaries, and nuclear programs. If confirmed, I will advocate for DoD to maintain the right set of tools and authorities to maintain decision space and flexibility in our policy approach, in order to maintain a “bridge back” for Pakistan.

U.S. European Command (EUCOM)

Cost-Sharing with Allies

On March 14, 2019, then-Acting Secretary of Defense Shanahan testified to this Committee that, “[w]e won’t do cost-plus-50 percent,” referring to reports that DOD was considering a formula for cost-sharing and host-nation support that would require a country hosting U.S. troops to pay the full cost of the presence of those troops plus 50 percent.

If confirmed, would you recommend applying to a “cost-plus-50” formula to any country or set of countries?

I share the President’s goal for allies to increase defense investments and contribute a greater share of the costs of our common defense. There are multiple avenues for achieving this goal, and since there are significant differences in our global alliances and partnerships, we should tailor our implementation of arrangements to provide more balanced burden-sharing to each alliance and partnership.

In your view, what is the risk that a U.S. policy approach to cost-sharing that is perceived to be maximalist or unreasonable would result in negative consequences for U.S. force posture, alliances and partnerships, and national security?

U.S. military advantages and the Department’s ability to execute the President’s National Security Strategy depend on forward-deployed forces. As we seek increased allied defense investments and more favorable burden-sharing, the Department will emphasize the vital need for continued access to forward locations in relation to shared security challenges.

When engaging in cost-sharing negotiations with a U.S. ally, how should the United States prioritize the relative importance of long-term benefits to the alliance, as compared to short-term financial benefits?

I believe the long-term goal of healthy alliances and the near-term goal of fairer burden-sharing are compatible and reinforcing aims, since financially viable alliances are also sustainable alliances that are more capable of deterring conflict.

Implementation of the 2018 NDS

In testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee on March 5, 2019, then-Commander, EUCOM, General Scaparrotti stated, “I am not comfortable yet with the deterrent posture that we have in Europe in support of the National Defense Strategy.”

Do you agree with General Scaparrotti’s assessment that the deterrent posture in Europe is not yet sufficient to support the 2018 NDS?

I have not yet reviewed the full joint posture in Europe in my current position, but I think the current funding for the European Deterrence Initiative (EDI) (through 2024) and associated Military Department investments have us moving in the right direction. If confirmed, I will continue to monitor progress and press our Allies to make additional investments as well.

In your assessment, what capability and/or capacity shortfalls in the current Joint Force present the most significant challenge to addressing the threats in EUCOM?

As Secretary of the Army, I have not reviewed the full Joint Force posture in USEUCOM. If confirmed, I will work closely with the USEUCOM Commander and update my assessment if necessary.

In your assessment, does the United States have sufficient air and missile defense capability and capacity to defend critical infrastructure in EUCOM, such as command and control locations and air bases, against cruise missile attack? What do you perceive as the areas of highest risk?

As Secretary of the Army, I have not reviewed the full Joint Force posture in USEUCOM. U.S. military capabilities, however, including Integrated Air and Missile Defense, have improved in recent years through the European Deterrence Initiative (EDI) and other initiatives, and will likely continue to do so. Russia's broad military modernization efforts, including long range cruise missiles and undersea and cyber capabilities, pose the highest risk

In his March 5 testimony, General Scaparrotti recommended adding two destroyers at Rota, Spain, stating, “in order to remain dominant in the maritime domain and particularly under sea [the United States] need[s] greater capability, particularly given the modernization and the growth of the Russian fleets in Europe.” During his confirmation hearing on April 2, 2019, current EUCOM Commander, General Wolters testified that he agreed with General Scaparrotti’s recommendation.

If confirmed, would you commit to reviewing the merit and feasibility of increasing forward-deployed naval forces in Europe, including the option of additional destroyers at Rota, Spain?

Yes.

If confirmed, what other specific enhancements to forward-deployed naval forces in Europe would you recommend?

If confirmed, I will work with the Chief of Naval Operations, the USEUCOM Commander, the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff before specifically recommending any enhancements to forward-deployed naval forces in Europe.

If confirmed, what specific enhancements would you make to other U.S. capabilities and force posture in Europe to execute the NDS more effectively?

If confirmed, I would first want to ensure current funding for EDI (through 2024) and associated Military Department investments properly enhance both capability and posture in Europe. Second, I would leverage our allies by pressing them and monitoring their progress towards increased investment in modernization and new defense capabilities. Finally, I would continue to assess our capability and posture needs in Europe in concert with our NATO Allies.

European Deterrence Initiative (EDI)

The FY 2019 NDAA authorized \$6.3 billion for EDI, to support the stability and security of the region and deter further Russian aggression.

Do you believe continued, dedicated funding for EDI is required to support implementation of the 2018 NDS in Europe?

I believe that EDI funding can provide important warfighting capabilities and capacity to USEUCOM that are essential for maintaining a combat-credible force in Europe to deter and, if necessary, defeat aggression against the United States or our allies.

Do you believe DOD could fully perform its mission to deter and, if necessary, defeat aggression in Europe in the absence of the funding provided by EDI?

EDI is an important component in DoD's efforts to provide the USEUCOM Commander the capabilities he needs to execute his mission.

In your view, how important is EDI for improving EUCOM's warfighting capabilities?

EDI funding has enabled DoD to increase our force presence in Europe, improve critical capabilities, establish pre-positioned equipment sets, and execute readiness-building exercises, all of which have contributed greatly to USEUCOM's warfighting capabilities.

In your view, what role does military construction—a significant component of EDI—play in posturing EUCOM to deter Russian aggression? Please explain your answer.

EDI military construction allows DoD to increase its steady-state force posture in Europe and to improve the capabilities of bases at which U.S. forces may have to operate in the event of a contingency. That said, we should continue to press allied governments to pick up a greater share of these investments.

If confirmed, would you comply with NDAA requirements and/or Committee requests for DOD to provide detailed funding information concerning future years' plans for EDI?

As DoD has done in the past, if confirmed, I would continue to comply with NDAA requirements or Committee requests for information concerning future years' plans for EDI.

NATO Alliance

In your view, how important to U.S. strategic interests is the U.S. commitment to its obligations under Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty?

As Secretary Pompeo said here in Washington while celebrating NATO's 70th anniversary, "we believe in our common defense, as captured in Article 5." The U.S. commitment to the collective defense of the Alliance remains ironclad. Our shared commitment to the values enshrined in the Washington Treaty is what has made NATO the most successful alliance in history.

What do you view as the essential strategic objectives of the NATO Alliance in the coming years and what do you perceive to be the greatest challenges in meeting those objectives?

NATO's top strategic objectives are deterring aggression, defending Allied populations and territory if deterrence fails, and projecting stability beyond NATO's borders. Allies agreed to a number of priorities at the 2018 Brussels Summit that will support these objectives. However, in order to sustain progress that has been made, all Allies must share the burden by making robust investments in their own military capabilities, and investing at least 2% of their GDP on defense.

At the Wales Summit in 2014, NATO Allies committed that by 2024, each would spend at least 2% of its Gross Domestic Product on defense and 20% of that on new

military equipment. Although not all NATO Allies have put forward realistic plans to meet the “2 percent” goal, collective defense spending by NATO Allies is projected to increase exponentially to \$100 billion by 2020 and \$350 billion by 2024.

Does the 2% defense spending threshold reflect an appropriate allocation of NATO Alliance burden sharing, in your view? Is there some other measure or formula you would propose to use, if confirmed? Please explain your answer.

In my view, the 2% defense spending threshold reflects an appropriate level of NATO Alliance burden-sharing, and, more importantly, it is what all of the Allies have committed to achieving. If all of our Allies achieved this threshold, the capabilities of the Alliance would be greatly improved. And if our Allies committed to spend more than 2% on defense, that would be even better.

Although the “2 percent” goal is important, it is also critical that NATO Allies invest in, and make actual warfighting capability available to the Alliance at operationally relevant speeds, when required. As part of the NATO Readiness Initiative, Allies have committed to a “Four Thirties” plan—30 battalions, 30 air squadrons, and 30 naval combat vessels—ready to use within 30 days.

If confirmed, what realistic plan would you propose to train, certify, and maintain the readiness and interoperability of these “Four Thirties” units?

During my meetings in Brussels last month, I learned that NATO is working on individual deployment readiness plans to ensure NATO’s new pool of ready forces is properly trained, manned, equipped, and maintained. If confirmed, I will consult with our uniformed leaders to ensure these plans are implemented, and to deliver on our commitment to reinstitute a culture of readiness and deliver the “Four Thirties” by 2020.

In your view, is there a continuing requirement for U.S. nuclear weapons to be deployed in NATO countries?

The presence of nuclear weapons in NATO countries for the last 50 years has been an excellent deterrent against aggression. With renewed tensions in the region, these nuclear weapons continue to serve the same deterrent mission and should remain in NATO countries.

Under what conditions, if any, would you envision further enlargement of NATO in the coming years?

As agreed in Article 10 of the North Atlantic Treaty, Allies, by unanimous agreement, may at any time invite a European State that is in a position to further the principles of the Alliance and to contribute to the security of the North Atlantic area to join the Alliance. The United States remains committed to NATO’s Open Door policy.

How will the new NATO Joint Force Command for the Atlantic in Norfolk, Virginia, and the Enabling Command in Ulm, Germany, enhance credible deterrence in Europe? How would you define and measure success for these new NATO commands, if confirmed?

Both the Joint Forces Command (JFC) Norfolk and the Joint Support and Enabling Command in Ulm are a part of an adaptive NATO Command Structure that will improve how the Alliance addresses a range of challenges. I am encouraged by the progress in establishing JFC Norfolk and its ability to focus on the trans-Atlantic area. Working with our newly established U.S. Second Fleet, JFC Norfolk will increase Allied maritime domain awareness and capability. This command will also lead focused exercises and operations in the Atlantic to maintain our sea lines of communications. Joint Support and Enabling Command in Ulm will greatly assist the Alliance's ability to move, reinforce, and supply forces throughout the area of responsibility.

What role does the European Union (EU) play in ensuring that the United States and our NATO Allies are able to deter and, if necessary, defeat Russian aggression and/or counter Russian malign influence?

Continued EU cooperation with NATO Allies and longstanding transatlantic partners that are not EU members is vital. As I explained to Allies and partners at the NATO Defense Ministerial in June, these partners bring technical capabilities that build upon NATO efforts to deter and defend against threats to transatlantic security, including those posed by Russian malign influence. The EU's efforts to enhance cyber security, improve hybrid defense, and hasten military mobility are examples that point to the criticality of NATO-EU cooperation.

What effect would a decision to exclude non-EU countries from participation in projects associated with the European Defense Fund (EDF) and Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) have on the alignment of EU and NATO defense efforts?

In my meetings at the NATO Defense Ministerial, I shared with Allies and partners that the United States is deeply concerned that approval of the EDF regulations and PESCO general conditions as they stand now risks EU capabilities developing in a manner that produces duplication, non-interoperable military systems, diversion of scarce defense resources, and unnecessary competition between NATO and the EU, reversing the considerable progress we have made over the past several years in advancing NATO-EU cooperation.

What is your assessment of NATO's readiness to detect, deter, and respond to attacks from adversaries in the cyber domain?

NATO takes cyber threats very seriously and has recently taken steps to strengthen the security of their networks, impose costs on adversaries, and posture the Alliance

to respond in and through cyberspace. NATO adopted an Enhanced Cyber Defense Policy at the Wales Summit in 2014. At the 2016 Warsaw Summit, NATO Heads of State and Government adopted a Cyber Defense Pledge to enhance the cyber defenses of national networks and also recognized cyberspace as a domain of operations. At the 2018 Brussels Summit, NATO agreed to a mechanism to incorporate voluntary national offers of offensive cyber effects in support of Alliance Operations and Missions, greatly improving the Alliance's ability to address cyber threats.

Russia

What do you believe are appropriate objectives for U.S.-Russia security relations?

The overriding objective in U.S.-Russia security relations is to ensure Russia is deterred from aggression against vital U.S. interests, including defending allies from military aggression and bolstering partners against coercion.

Are there, in your view, any areas of common interest between the United States and Russia in the security sphere?

The United States and Russia share common interests in countering terrorism, preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and deconflicting operations where our forces operate in close proximity.

In your view, which EUCOM and NATO activities are most important to deterring Russian aggression and mitigating the threat Russia presents to our NATO Allies and partners?

It is the combination of all of our activities in Europe with our Allies that allows us to deter Russian aggression effectively. Consistent U.S.-NATO deterrent presence and training exercises that demonstrate the Alliance's combat-credible capability and capacity to operate throughout Europe are paramount.

What aspects of U.S. and NATO force posture do you assess as having the most significant deterrent effect on Russia?

In my view, maintaining combat-credible conventional and nuclear forces, along with our Allies, is one of the most effective deterrents against Russian aggression. Although not wanting to speculate on the Russian deterrence calculus, U.S. and NATO force posture that is credibly lethal, resilient, agile, and ready is likely critical to our forward deterrent.

Are United States policies and the associated authorities—as applicable to the EUCOM AOR—sufficient to counter Russia's influence, or are there additional measures we should be considering?

The Department of Defense is orienting its resources to support competition with Russia below the level of armed conflict, consistent with the 2018 National Defense Strategy. DoD currently supports broader U.S. Government initiatives to counter Russian influence by deterring and defending against all forms of aggression, building partner capacity to resist hybrid threats, and holding Russia accountable for its malign actions. If confirmed, I will review our authorities and policies to ensure we are best positioned to support whole-of-government efforts.

Given current advances in Russian attack submarine capability, as evidenced in the deployment of the new Russian submarine *Severodvinsk*, what additional capabilities or capacity can or should the Navy provide to maintain the U.S. advantage in undersea warfare?

The Navy is committed to maintaining its decisive advantage in the undersea domain and denying any potential adversaries the same advantage. Undersea warfare is becoming more challenging as our adversaries continue to make improvements in their platforms. The Navy will sustain its undersea advantage through continued advances in our offensive undersea warfare forces, principally our attack submarines, future unmanned undersea vehicles, and our anti-submarine warfare forces that include P-8 POSEIDON aircraft and our Integrated Undersea Surveillance family of fixed, mobile, and deployable systems.

In the fall of 2018, the Russian Navy conducted a large maritime exercise in the Mediterranean Sea.

In your view, what are Russia's strategic goals in the Black Sea and in the Mediterranean?

Russia's strategic goals in the Black Sea are likely to maintain access to the Mediterranean Sea and facilitate homeland defense, while its presence in the Mediterranean Sea enables power projection. Russia's maritime activities in the Black Sea and eastern Mediterranean Sea are likely intended to challenge U.S. and allied operations and freedom of maneuver. Concurrently, Russia seeks veto authority over nations on its periphery in terms of their governmental, economic, and diplomatic decisions, to weaken or shatter the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and change European security and economic structures to its favor.

The NDS expressly calls out Russia's robust anti-access, area denial (A2/AD) capabilities and the challenges they pose for U.S. forces.

In your assessment, does DOD currently have a mature joint concept of operations and the necessary capabilities in sufficient capacity to mitigate the challenge of Russian A2/AD capabilities? If not, what additional capabilities or capacity are required in Europe to ensure U.S. forces are able to achieve operational freedom of maneuver at decisive points?

In my role as Secretary of the Army, I have focused on the Army segment of the

A2/AD challenge from Russia. If confirmed, ensuring a mature joint concept of operations and the related capabilities will be one of my top priorities.

Russian tactics in eastern Ukraine have been called “hybrid”—combining hard power with soft power—including lethal security assistance to separatists, the use of special operations forces, extensive information operations and propaganda, withholding energy supplies, and economic pressure.

In your assessment, does DOD currently have sufficient resources to counter Russia’s cyber-enabled information campaigns and other hybrid warfare operations? If not, what additional capabilities or capacity are required to effectively counter these Russian hybrid operations below the level of military conflict?

USEUCOM continues to expand online counter-propaganda efforts and continues to collaborate with USCYBERCOM to compete with Russia below the threshold of armed conflict. Moving forward, additional information operations capability would benefit USEUCOM in countering Russian’s malign influence campaign.

What is your assessment as to whether our counter-influence efforts to date are effecting any change in Vladimir Putin’s behavior?

DoD efforts to date have not yet achieved a significant change in Putin’s behavior. Putin continues to exert malign influence in the USEUCOM AOR and globally as evidenced by Russian activities in Ukraine, Syria, and Venezuela. I anticipate that DoD efforts will continue to support the U.S. whole-of-government effort, along with allies and partners, to resist Putin's malign influence efforts.

Do you support a whole-of-government approach to countering Russian hybrid warfare against the United States? In your view, how important is it to invest in non-military tools of national power as part of a whole-of-government approach?

Yes, I support a whole-of-government approach. In fact, for many aspects of hybrid, or irregular, warfare, the Department of Defense cannot achieve success without unified and integrated efforts by our interagency partners, particularly in diplomacy, development, law enforcement, information, and intelligence. The United States must invest in broadening the unique non-military capabilities of our interagency partners.

How important is it to synchronize our campaign to counter Russian hybrid aggression with the efforts of our allies and partners?

Russia’s hybrid warfare operations are multilayered and sophisticated. As such, a successful campaign to counter Russian hybrid aggression demands a comprehensive approach involving allies and partners, other U.S. Government departments and

agencies, and even the private sector. The Joint Force must improve how it integrates and employs its capabilities, how it applies these capabilities more effectively, and how it empowers our allies and partners in the process. This requires a multi-domain effort, including in law enforcement, intelligence, diplomacy, development, finance, stabilization, and security. Whole-of-government synchronization enables us to develop tailored strategies that capitalize on the strengths of each department and agency while minimizing weaknesses and gaps.

What do you assess as key priorities for, and limitations on, the conduct of information operations against Russia in Europe?

DoD activities against Russia in the information space should focus on building the capacity of our allies and partners to recognize, counter, and resist Russian disinformation and false narratives. To the extent possible, our efforts should aim to expose and attribute Russian malign activities and underscore that Russia is an unreliable actor that has deliberately destabilized the security environment in support of its political objectives.

Ukraine

The Russian attack on Ukrainian ships in the Black Sea in November 2018 was a major escalation in Russia's war on Ukraine. In FY 2019, for the first time in its existence, DOD's Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative will be used to provide lethal assistance to Ukraine.

In your assessment, should a greater proportion of Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative funding be dedicated to lethal assistance? What are the obstacles, if any, to providing increased lethal assistance?

My understanding is that there is a good balance of defensive lethal and non-lethal assistance for Ukraine. However, as former Acting Secretary Shanahan noted in a recent letter to Chairman Inhofe, one potential limiting factor for the provision of additional defensive lethal capability needs through the Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative (USAI) is the statutory requirement to obligate all funds before the end of the fiscal year they are appropriated.

In your assessment, would multiyear funding improve the effectiveness and flexibility of the Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative? If so, how?

If confirmed, this is an issue I will assess in more detail with the USEUCOM commander, the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Lengthy technology release processes, contracting, and procurement timelines do limit DOD's ability to provide Ukraine more advanced defensive lethal capabilities through USAI. Although DoD is currently able to address Ukraine's most pressing operational needs through the USAI authority, the ability to execute funds

over a multi-year period could potentially allow DoD to support more complex capabilities, as appropriate, such as defensive lethal systems in the maritime domain.

Do you believe corruption, including but not limited to that in the defense sector, presents a national security threat to Ukraine?

Yes. In the defense sector, Ukraine must pursue reforms to enhance transparency and accountability in acquisition and budgeting as well as broader defense industrial sector reforms to support the Ukrainian warfighter more efficiently in the face of continued aggressive Russian actions. I understand that DoD is encouraged by President Zelenskyy's early commitments to pursuing defense and anti-corruption reforms that will bolster Ukraine's ability to defend its territorial integrity and support a more secure, prosperous, democratic, and free Ukraine.

If confirmed, what specifically would you do to incentivize Ukraine to expedite its progress toward defense reform?

Ukraine has made significant strides on improving its military capabilities, but more work remains to be done. If confirmed, I will emphasize the need to continue to implement the provisions of the 2018 Law on National Security to strengthen democratic civilian control of the military, promote command and control reforms, enhance transparency and accountability in acquisition and budgeting, and advance defense industry reform to enable certification of Ukraine's defense reform progress to receive half of the funds appropriated by Congress through the USAI. These reforms will bolster Ukraine's ability to defend its territorial integrity and advance its NATO membership aspirations. I will also underscore DoD's continued commitment to help Ukraine tackle these tough challenges, including through the support of our U.S. Senior Defense Advisor on Ukraine and U.S. Senior Defense Industry Advisor.

Turkey

If Turkey accepts delivery of the Russian S-400 air and missile defense system, do you believe the United States should continue with plans to transfer F-35 aircraft to Turkey?

Turkey is a longstanding and important Ally, but its pursuit of the S-400 undermines the security of Turkey and NATO. The United States has been clear at all levels that if Turkey procures the S-400, it will not receive the F-35. The Department of Defense has taken steps to suspend Turkey's participation in the program, including the freeze of F-35 materiel deliveries into Turkey, no new operator or maintainer training and removal of all CONUS-based Turkish F-35 personnel by July 31, and the development and certification of alternate sources to Turkish-produced component parts. This is a deliberate, orderly, and respectful approach intended to allow our Turkish counterparts to adjust to this transition. We seek to protect the long-term security of the F-35 program and the capabilities of the NATO alliance from threats

related to Turkey's planned procurement and operation of an S-400. At the same time, Turkey remains a close NATO Ally. We seek to preserve our strong military-to-military relationship and cooperation on mutual defense and regional security and stability, including current counter-terrorism operations in the region.

NATO-led Kosovo Force (KFOR)

KFOR includes approximately 650 U.S. service members.

What do you see as the major challenges in the Western Balkans? What is DOD's role in addressing these challenges?

The Western Balkans is important to a Europe that is whole, free, and at peace with its neighbors. Historical tensions and issues between the Balkan countries have required and will continue to require NATO, bilateral-defense, and diplomatic relationships to address Russian disinformation, which continues to portray the United States and NATO in a negative light while concurrently sowing domestic discord. Russia's destabilizing activities have so far failed to meet its major objectives in the region, as demonstrated by the failed coup in Montenegro and the successful conclusion of the Prespa Agreement in North Macedonia. The region is also stressed by migration flows and radicalization that challenge the ability of individual nations to respond domestically while maintaining defense commitments. I understand that the Department is working closely with partners and allies to bolster their deterrence capabilities against any malign activity, respond to the risks of radicalized violent extremists, and improve their ability to contribute to peacekeeping and military operations worldwide.

In your assessment, is there a continuing role for KFOR in maintaining security and stability in the Western Balkans?

The role of KFOR remains essential to the security and stability of the Western Balkans. KFOR remains the underlying element that allows for the continued safe and secure environment to exist within Kosovo while allowing for required institutions and processes in the country to continue to take hold. KFOR allows for the implementation of the Kosovo Security Force (KSF) 10-year transition plan along with the continued efforts towards normalization of relations between Kosovo and Serbia. KFOR further provides a key capability to deter malign Russian influence that seeks to play upon both current and historical instability in the region viewed historically as the "powder-keg" of Europe.

Do you believe the United States should maintain its commitment to KFOR?

As the largest troop contributing nation to the organization, the United States currently provides the personnel, capability, and resources necessary to execute the mission. Continued regional stability and deterrence against malign Russian influence in the Western Balkans are in the best interest of U.S. national security.

If confirmed, do you commit to taking all appropriate steps to ensure that KFOR has the necessary personnel, capabilities, and resources to perform its mission?

If confirmed, I commit to ensuring that KFOR has the personnel, capabilities, and resources necessary to perform its mission consistent with the NDS.

U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (INDO-PACOM) and China

China

The 2018 NDS identifies China as a “strategic competitor” and describes China as pursuing a military modernization program that “seeks Indo-Pacific regional hegemony in the near-term and displacement of the United States to achieve global preeminence in the future.”

Is the current posture of U.S. forces in the Indo-Pacific region sufficient to support the NDS? Please explain your answer.

As Secretary of the Army, I have not reviewed the full Joint Force posture in the Indo-Pacific region. If confirmed, I will work closely with the USINDOPACOM Commander and update my assessment if necessary.

How would you restructure U.S. security posture in the Indo-Pacific best to counter Chinese aggression, if confirmed?

Our U.S force posture in the Indo-Pacific region should evolve to ensure combat-credible forces forward—alongside allies and partners—are capable of degrading, delaying, or denying competitors’ military objectives until reinforcements arrive in theater. This approach is intended to present potential challengers with a dilemma, by ensuring that they cannot quickly, cheaply, or easily achieve their goals through military force. Competitors are therefore incentivized to advance their interests through other, more peaceful means, subject to internationally recognized rules or widely accepted State practice.

In your assessment, what are the priority investments DOD could make to implement the NDS and improve the military balance in the Indo-Pacific?

I believe the most critical investments for increasing joint force lethality in the Indo-Pacific region include: survivable and resilient communications and ISR systems; survivable long-range strike platforms, systems, and munitions; and cost-effective missile defenses capable of engaging sophisticated air, cruise, ballistic, and hypersonic threats. In particular, DoD will have to make significant investments to maintain and/or extend the joint force’s advantages in the undersea, air, space, and cyber domains.

What are the key areas in which each Military Service must improve to provide the necessary capabilities and capacity to the Joint Force to prevail in a potential conflict with China?

The Joint Staff has the lead to generate a 2030 Joint Concept of Operations, which will integrate and deconflict the Services' future warfighting concepts. I understand the intent is to develop a joint, concept-driven, and threat-informed 2030 concept of operations to underpin the Chairman's Joint Force Design and Development recommendation. If confirmed, I intend to work with the Secretaries of the Military Departments, the Service Chiefs, the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to continue these efforts.

How would you assess the threat to U.S. forces and bases from Chinese missile forces? Is it accurate to say that U.S. forces and bases in the Indo-Pacific could face sustained missile attack from the beginning of a contingency? What does the threat from China's missile forces mean for how U.S. forces will operate? In your assessment, have U.S. investments, concepts of operations, and/or posture shifts to date sufficiently addressed this threat?

China has made significant technological advancements in weapons systems designed to defeat, or drastically reduce the effectiveness of U.S. forces, including in the range and accuracy of its missile forces. China has invested in a substantial buildup of land attack cruise missiles and short, medium, and intermediate-range ballistic missiles, seeking to hold targets at risk as far as the second island chain. DoD will continue to develop new concepts, build a distributed and resilient force posture, and field new capabilities to counter these threats. In confronting a peer adversary, we should not expect that any one set of investments or shifts will address the threat completely; rather, DoD must continue to adapt as the threat evolves.

In your assessment, does DOD need to invest in a wider range of primary bases as well as secondary and tertiary operating locations throughout the Indo-Pacific?

Yes, the Department needs to develop alternate operating locations throughout the Indo-Pacific region.

How do you assess the current military balance across the Taiwan Strait? If confirmed, what would you do to assist Taiwan in maintaining a sufficient self-defense capability? How would you ensure that DOD upholds the spirit of the Taiwan Relations Act throughout your tenure as Secretary of Defense, if confirmed?

China seeks to alter the status quo and, if directed by the Chinese Communist Party, compel unification with Taiwan by force. I am deeply concerned about China's failure to renounce the use of force against Taiwan and increasing PLA exercises and

operations in the vicinity of Taiwan. Consistent with the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA), if confirmed, I will support the provision of defense articles and defense services to Taiwan in such quantity as may be necessary to enable Taiwan to maintain a sufficient self-defense capability. Additionally, I will ensure these obligations include maintaining the capacity of the United States to resist any resort to force or other forms of coercion that could jeopardize the security, or the social or economic system, of the people on Taiwan.

Should the United States revisit or change its “one China” policy, in your view?

I support maintaining the U.S. one-China policy.

China has embarked on a massive shipbuilding program. By 2030, China will have almost 100 more ships than the U.S. Navy; China will possess more major surface combatants and more attack submarines, most of which will be newer and more capable. And while all of China’s Navy will be focused on the Indo-Pacific, the United States maintains only about 60 percent of its fleet in the Pacific.

In your assessment, how should the United States adapt to this shifting maritime balance in the Indo-Pacific?

To maintain DoD’s military edge in the Indo-Pacific region, the Joint Force will develop all-domain solutions that expand our advanced capabilities beyond the maritime environment, including new joint capabilities in the space, cyberspace, air, electromagnetic spectrum, and land domains. These capabilities must all work in unison. Future Service and Joint concepts must also incorporate asymmetric and irregular approaches that create dilemmas for adversaries on a global scale. DoD should also exploit its subsurface advantages and, when required, use standoff air and surface long-range fires to hold surface combatants at risk. It is also critical that we work with our allies and partners to ensure freedom of navigation in peacetime and freedom of action in crises.

The Korean Peninsula

How would you describe the value to U.S. national security interests of the U.S. South Korea alliance?

The security of the United States and the Republic of Korea are intertwined, and our alliance is ironclad. Ever since the United States led the forces of the United Nations to repel the armed attack against South Korea in 1950, the United States and the ROK have had an alliance that is solid, steady, reliable, and based upon mutual respect. The United States and the ROK have a mutual security treaty, the value of which has been demonstrated time and again. In the last decade, the ROK has gone from being a net security recipient to a regional and global security provider. The ROK shares our commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific region. The ROK is one of a select few countries, along with Australia, that have been with us in every postwar conflict.

ROK security is Asia's security. A stable and prosperous Korean Peninsula supports the free peoples of the region and the world. If confirmed as Secretary of Defense, I will continue the precedent set by my predecessors of honoring and recognizing our mutual security while working toward a permanent peace on the Korean Peninsula.

Do you believe it important that the United States and the Republic of Korea resolve fairly and amicably their negotiation of a new Special Measures Agreement for 2020 and beyond? Please explain your answer.

Yes. I believe it is important that our negotiators approach the next Special Measures Agreement as allies and settle on a fair share. The President has consistently stated that he expects wealthy allies to contribute more to the stationing of U.S. forces in their territory and to their own defense.

Do you believe the transfer of wartime operational control from the U.S. to the Republic of Korea should be conditions-based? If so, what conditions would you delineate as the threshold for transfer of control, if confirmed to be the Secretary of Defense?

I fully support the conditions-based wartime operational control transfer from the United States to the Republic of Korea once the mutually agreed upon criteria are met.

In your assessment, what is the value of combined joint exercises for maintaining the readiness of U.S. forces on the Korean Peninsula?

Combined Joint Exercises are essential to maintaining the military readiness of U.S. forces in Korea. They ensure that the U.S. and Republic of Korea (ROK) militaries can respond together to any potential North Korean military threat. This past February, the ROK Minister of National Defense, Jeong Kyeong-doo, and then-Acting Secretary Shanahan jointly adopted a modernized exercise program that better suits the evolving security situation on the Korean Peninsula. This program focuses on maintaining military readiness and achieving proficiency in mission-essential tasks, without the large-scale exercises that the Combined Force has relied on for decades. U.S. Forces Korea (USFK) continues to implement this program successfully with its ROK military counterparts, preserving military readiness while also sustaining an environment conducive to diplomatic efforts.

In your view, are there additional steps that DOD could take to improve U.S. and allied defenses against North Korea's missile capabilities?

The Department of Defense remains postured with assets assigned throughout the region to detect and respond to a North Korean missile threat. The Missile Defense Agency continues to improve regional integration and improvements in allied missile defense capabilities, such as the Japanese Maritime Self Defense Force Aegis. The Department of Defense is also adapting existing and emerging capabilities to

strengthen defenses against North Korea's missile threats, such as integrating the F-35 Lightning II sensor systems into missile defense.

If confirmed, what additional steps would you direct DOD to take to ensure that North Korea does not proliferate missile and weapons technology?

I understand that DoD works as part of a whole-of-government approach to prevent North Korean proliferation of missile and weapons technology. If confirmed, I will continue the work with the intelligence community and other key departments and agencies, such as the Departments of State and Treasury, to ensure that DoD capabilities are brought to bear to address this issue.

If confirmed, how would you ensure that United States Forces Korea has the capability to defeat sites in North Korea at which weapons of mass destruction are processed, handled, or stored? How would you expect the U.S. interagency to be involved in such actions? Will you commit to reporting to this Committee on any such actions you might authorize, if confirmed to be the Secretary of Defense?

I understand U.S. Forces Korea is improving its ability to reduce the threat of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and missile sites in North Korea in the event of a contingency. If confirmed, I would work closely with the Department of Energy and the intelligence community to ensure we have the information necessary in a contingency to eliminate the threat from the sites without causing unintended effects on the broader North Korean population. Yes, I will commit to reporting to this Committee on any such actions I might authorize, if confirmed to be the Secretary of Defense.

DOD policy constraining the use of certain cluster munitions went into effect on December 31, 2018. How will these constraints affect the ability of the U.S. military to meet requirements on the Korean peninsula?

The 2017 DoD Policy on Cluster Munitions (dated November 30, 2017) adjusts earlier policy constraints related to standards for the procurement of new cluster munitions and the authority to retain and use cluster munitions in active munitions inventories. The 2017 policy allows DoD to retain cluster munitions in active munitions inventories until the capabilities they provide are replaced with enhanced and more reliable munitions. Under the 2017 policy, military planners may plan for the availability of cluster munitions, including during planning efforts for a contingency on the Korean Peninsula. During a contingency on the Korean Peninsula, the authority to approve the use of cluster munitions that do not meet the updated standards for the procurement of new cluster munitions (*i.e.*, those that contain submunitions that do not result in more than one percent unexploded ordnance or that possess advanced technical features), is the Commander, U.S. Indo-Pacific Command.

India

What would be your strategy, if confirmed, for bolstering the overall defense relationship between the United States and India? What specific priorities would you establish for this relationship?

If confirmed, my overall guiding objective for our relationship with India would be to solidify an enduring strategic partnership underpinned by strong defense cooperation with an Indian military able to collaborate effectively with the United States to address shared interests. We would continue to bolster the overall defense relationship through senior-level engagement such as the 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue. Within the context of our Major Defense Partnership, I would continue to prioritize increasing our information-sharing capabilities with the Indian Armed Forces; expanding the scope and complexity of military-to-military exercises, including incorporating joint aspects into service-level exercises; encouraging enhanced Maritime Domain Awareness cooperation; and continuing to promote co-development/co-production opportunities and industrial cooperation.

U.S. Northern Command (NORTHCOM)

Defense Support to Civil Authorities

The Department of Defense may be requested to provide support to civil authorities in responding to domestic disasters resulting from fires, hurricanes, floods and earthquakes. Defense support to civil authorities also may include certain counter-drug operations and managing the consequences of a terrorist event employing a weapon of mass destruction.

In your view, are the procedures by which other Federal, State, and Local agencies request DOD support efficient and effective?

I believe so. DoD receives between 50 and 150 requests for assistance each year and has managed to provide the right capabilities where they are needed, when they are needed, on each occasion. If confirmed, I will continue working with Federal, State and local agencies to ensure processes for requesting assistance from DoD remain efficient and effective to support speed of response most effectively on behalf of the requesting agency.

In your view, are DOD procedures for evaluating and approving the provision of support requested by a civil authority efficient, effective, and timely?

In my view, the current procedures work to get DoD capabilities where they are needed, when they are needed. These procedures are “field-tested” by the approximately 50-150 requests for assistance DoD receives every year. If confirmed, I will continue working within DoD to ensure processes for approving requests of DoD remain efficient, effective and timely to support speed of response most

effectively.

What is your understanding of the factors that are considered in determining whether DOD will provide support to a civil authority?

DoD policy requires that all requests for DoD assistance be evaluated based on six factors: (1) compliance with the law (legality); (2) potential use of lethal force by or against DoD forces (lethality); (3) risk to the safety of DoD forces (risk); (4) the source of funding and the effect on the DoD budget (cost); (5) whether providing the requested support is in the interest of DoD (appropriateness); and (6) the impact on DoD's ability to perform its other primary missions (readiness).

Are the procedures DOD employs to secure appropriate reimbursement for any support it provides to a civil authority efficient and effective, in your view?

It is my understanding that the policies and procedures are efficient and effective. If confirmed, I would be interested in examining how well these procedures are being executed in practice, and how they might be improved.

What is your perception of the utility of appointing a “Dual-hatted Commander” to lead an approved DOD civil support mission or support to a national special security event?

A dual-status commander can play a key role in improving unity of effort between National Guard forces operating in a State status and Federal forces supporting civil authorities. Use of a dual-status commander can facilitate a rapid response to save lives, prevent human suffering, and protect property in the United States. Moreover, a dual-status commander promotes complementary efforts, including improving situational awareness by sharing information between the two separate chains of command to achieve common objectives more effectively and efficiently. Appointment of a dual-hatted commander, however, depends on the situation at hand and the objectives that must be achieved.

The Arctic

What threat, if any, do Russian and Chinese activities in the Arctic pose to U.S. interests?

The United States is an Arctic nation, and the complex Arctic security environment has direct implications for U.S. national security interests. The Arctic is strategic terrain and is a potential strategic corridor between the Indo-Pacific region, Europe, and the U.S. homeland. The immediate prospect of conflict in the Arctic is low, and DoD cooperation with Arctic allies and partners strengthens our shared approach to regional security and helps deter strategic competitors from seeking to change the existing rules-based order unilaterally. Even so, there are trends in the Arctic security environment that present risks to U.S. national security interests.

Russia and China present different strategic challenges in the Arctic. The Arctic is a potential vector of attack for Russia's advanced cruise missiles, which could pose a risk to the U.S. homeland. Russia is also investing in military capabilities and infrastructure in the Arctic to strengthen territorial defense and its ability to control the Northern Sea Route, which it seeks to regulate contrary to international law. China seeks a role in Arctic governance despite having no territorial claims in the region, and there is a risk China could use predatory economic behavior in the Arctic to advance its objectives. China's civilian research efforts in the region could support a strengthened future Chinese military presence in the Arctic Ocean, potentially including the deployment of submarines.

U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM)

If confirmed, what recommendations would you make to the President to deter Russian, Cuban, and Chinese influence in the SOUTHCOM Area of Responsibility (AOR)?

One way to deter Russian, Cuban, and Chinese influence in the USSOUTHCOM Area of Responsibility is to maintain an active presence in the region. Another way is by ensuring continuity and stability in military-to-military relationships. Finally, continued engagement with our partners through traditional security cooperation tools, such as personnel exchanges, exercises, IMET, and appropriately approved Foreign Military Sales, is also very useful.

Do you believe that these influences threaten hemispheric security and prosperity?

Russia and Cuba are destabilizing influences in the Western Hemisphere. They support regimes unfriendly to the United States, and encourage autocratic governments that allow illicit activities that further harm economic potential in the region.

China is the top trading partner for many countries in the region. However, China's influence presents security challenges because of the access Chinese infrastructure, technology, and cyber investments provide to strategic locations. These investments paired with Chinese debt diplomacy further the corruption of elites and the control of key trade routes.

Detainee Treatment and Guantanamo Bay Naval Station

Do you support the standards for detainee treatment specified in Army Field Manual 2-22.3, *Human Intelligence Collector Operations*, issued in September 2006 and DOD Directive 2310.01E, *Department of Defense Detainee Program*,

dated August 19, 2014, and required by Section 1045 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016 (Public Law 114-92)?

Yes, I support the standards for detainee treatment in the Army Field Manual on Interrogations, FM 2-22.3, issued in September 2006, and in DoD Directive 2310.01E, the Department of Defense Detainee Program, dated August 19, 2014, and required by section 1045 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016 (Public Law 114-92). Individuals in the custody or control of the U.S. Government may not be subjected to any interrogation technique or approach, or any treatment related to interrogation, that is not authorized by and listed in the Army Field Manual.

If confirmed, how would you ensure that DOD detainee operations and interrogations comply strictly with these standards?

If confirmed, I would exercise leadership to ensure that DoD detainee operations and interrogations comply strictly with these standards. I would emphasize the need for the continued safe, humane, and legal care and treatment of detainees. I would also work through the Combatant Commanders to ensure that DoD policies on the humane treatment of detainees continue to be effectively implemented in military operations, including the requirements to report, investigate, and, where appropriate, take corrective action with respect to any suspected or alleged incidents of detainee maltreatment.

What are your views on the continued use of the detention facility at Guantanamo?

If confirmed, I will support the continued operations of the detention facility at Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. As the Department's only long-term detention facility for law of war detainees, I will also ensure the continued safe, humane, and legal care and treatment of detainees through Joint Task Force – Guantanamo (JTF-GTMO).

Do you believe the U.S. Government should be keeping detainees in long term detention, without charges or prosecution? In your view, under what circumstances would such long-term detention be appropriate?

Yes, we need a facility that provides us the capability to conduct long-term law of war detention in order to keep our enemies off the battlefield. Long-term detention would be appropriate in those cases where an enemy cannot be prosecuted but continues to pose a continuing significant threat to the security of the United States.

If confirmed, what specific actions would you take to reinvigorate the Periodic Review Board (PRB) process established by Executive Order 13567, *Periodic Review of Individuals Detained at Guantánamo Bay Naval*

Station Pursuant to the Authorization for Use of Military Force?

If confirmed, I believe we should continue to conduct a review process using available information to determine whether a detainee no longer poses a continuing significant threat to the security of the United States and whether there is a suitable country to which to transfer such a detainee. In my opinion, the Periodic Review Board Process is currently the best means available for making such determinations in a systematic manner.

If confirmed, what specific actions would you take to address the cases of detainees already recommended by a PRB for transfer from Guantanamo to another nation?

Should the PRB process find that the threat from individual detainees may be sufficiently mitigated with appropriate security assurances, then I believe, if confirmed, we should consider the transfer of such detainees to other countries that have provided credible security assurances in accordance with the NDAA requirements.

Will you commit to notifying Congress if a decision is made to transfer a detainee to Guantanamo *before* any such transfer occurs?

If confirmed, I will ensure the Department will continue to notify Congress as required.

In your view, what standard of care should govern the physical and mental health services provided to detainees at Guantanamo, particularly as the detainee population ages?

The health and well-being of the detainees at Guantanamo are an important mission of JTF-GTMO. Accordingly, USSOUTHCOM, through JTF-GTMO, provides adequate and humane care for the detainees at Guantanamo that complies with the standards of Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions of 1949. As the detainee population ages and chronic medical conditions rise, it will remain Department policy to protect the life and health of detainees by humane and appropriate clinical means, and in accordance with all applicable law and DoD policy.

Cuba

For decades, the centerpiece of U.S. policy toward Cuba consisted of economic sanctions aimed at isolating the Cuban government. In 2015, the Obama Administration took steps toward a policy of engagement with Cuba. In 2017, however, President Trump unveiled a new policy toward Cuba, increasing sanctions and partially rolling back some of the prior Administration's efforts to normalize relations.

Under what conditions would you recommend the establishment of military-to-military engagement between the United States and Cuba?

The Cuban regime continues to suppress its people's rights and freedoms and export non-democratic ideals throughout the region, including interference in Venezuela. Aside from limited contacts at longstanding, practical meetings regarding routine issues at the Guantanamo Naval Station and between the U.S. Coast Guard and its Cuban counterparts, Cuba's conduct must change dramatically before any normal type of military-to-military engagement is established.

Venezuela

What is your assessment of the current situation in Venezuela?

The illegitimate Maduro regime's history of corrupt and incompetent governance, use of repression and torture, all aided by external actors with malign agendas, has caused Venezuelans untold suffering and created the need for urgent international assistance. The lack of basic services, starvation, and insecurity are generating mass migration; more than four million Venezuelans have migrated to neighboring countries, straining our regional partners. The United States and the 50-plus countries that have recognized the democratically elected national assembly and Interim President Juan Guaidó continue to support the legitimate government in the pursuit of a peaceful democratic transition.

To what degree is the illegitimate *Maduro* regime dependent on support from external actors like Russia, Cuba, and China?

The illegitimate regime of Nicolas Maduro is dependent on the financial and military support of actors like Russia, Cuba, and China. Russia provides technical and military training and support, while Cuba provides direct intelligence and security support to Maduro's repressive practices targeting the political opposition, military, and others. China provides financial support, as well as other support like communications technology to the Maduro regime. Together, these external actors enable the Maduro regime to remain in power against the wishes of the Venezuelan people.

What would be the threshold condition at which you would recommend U.S. military action in Venezuela, if confirmed?

DoD continues to support the whole-of-government effort to encourage a peaceful transition of power in Venezuela. The Venezuelan crisis must be resolved by the Venezuelans with the support of the international community.

Counternarcotics Activities

DOD serves as the single lead agency for the detection and monitoring of aerial

and maritime foreign shipments of drugs flowing toward the United States. On an annual basis, DOD expends nearly \$1 billion to build the counternarcotics capacity of U.S. Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies and certain foreign governments; provide intelligence support on counternarcotics-related matters; and foster a variety of other unique counternarcotics-enabling capabilities.

Do you believe that the U.S. broadly, and the U.S. military more narrowly, have been effective in achieving their counternarcotics objectives?

Many of our nation's adversaries, including nation-states, non-state actors, and terrorist groups, depend on proceeds generated from drug trafficking and other illicit activities to fund their operations. I understand DoD's contributions to multi-agency efforts have prevented hundreds of tons of illicit drugs from entering the United States, and have disrupted revenue flows essential to the activities of terrorists, transnational criminal organizations, and state actors who threaten our national security. If confirmed, I will review the Department's contributions and advise the President and the Committee as appropriate.

What changes, if any, should be made to DOD's counternarcotics strategy and supporting activities?

I understand the Department seeks to strengthen collaboration among U.S. Government and international partners that support our nation's security interests at home and abroad. These efforts, along with those of our partners, will help break the links between transnational criminal organizations, violent extremist organizations, and state and non-state adversaries who exploit these organizations to advance their own interests at the expense of the safety of the American people. As noted above, if confirmed, I will review the Department's contributions and advise the President and the Committee as appropriate.

Corruption and the absence of the rule of law are the two factors that contribute most heavily to the illegal narcotics trade in the Northern Triangle countries and contribute to the flow of drugs into the United States.

How should U.S. security assistance be scoped to address those factors at the root of counternarcotics trafficking?

As I understand it, one of the Department's key strengths is its strong, collaborative relationships with other U.S. Government agencies and partnering with regional nations to foster safer, more secure, conditions for their citizens. I believe that we should assist partner nations with building capabilities that are tailored to their unique security needs and will contribute to and enhance regional security. Our efforts need to take a long view, recognizing that each partner nation has unique circumstances owing to its historical and cultural context.

In your view, what should be DOD's role in countering the flow of narcotics to

nations other than the United States?

DoD possesses unique capabilities to support the overall U.S. Government effort to reduce the flow of illicit drugs headed to the United States, including when the drug trade supports violent extremist organizations or other non-state actors. By leveraging DoD's inherent military capabilities and expertise in support of U.S. and foreign law enforcement partners, these efforts help disrupt illicit networks that threaten U.S. national security interests and reduce the flow of dangerous drugs such as heroin and fentanyl entering our country. The Department believes its current role in counterdrug efforts is appropriate given the resources provided, DoD's support role to law enforcement, and competing DoD priorities. If confirmed, I will review the Department's role and advise the President and the Committee as appropriate.

U.S. Space Command (SPACECOM)

The United States is increasingly dependent on space, both economically and militarily—from the Global Positioning System on which many industrial and military capabilities rely, to the missile warning systems that underpin U.S. nuclear deterrence. Our great power competitors—China and Russia—are engaged in a concerted effort to leap ahead of U.S. technology and impact U.S. freedom of action in the space warfighting domain.

In your view, does the 2018 NDS accurately assess the strategic environment as it pertains to the domain of space?

Yes. The NDS's assessment of the increased competition in the space domain is accurate. As we experience the re-emergence of great power competition vis-a-vis China and Russia, our historic advantage in space has narrowed over time. Our advantage was built on a space-based command and control network, and our over-reliance on that network has become a vulnerability. We can no longer treat space as a sanctuary. We must be prepared to defend our critical space sensors and increase the overall resilience of our space assets.

In your view, what will “great power competition” look like in space and to what extent do you view China's and Russia's activities related to the space domain as a threat or challenge to U.S. national security interests?

Over the past two decades, China and Russia have observed how critical space power is to the U.S. way of life and way of warfare. Accordingly, they have continued to improve their counter-space weapons capabilities and instituted military reforms to improve the integration of space, cyberspace, and electronic warfare into military operations. Competitors in space are looking to develop increased capability for both offensive and defensive military applications. Additionally, lead nations will seek new ways of integrating civil space development to advance both domestic and military capabilities. According to the Defense Intelligence Agency's "Challenges to Security in Space Report," both China and Russia have potential counter-space assets

on the ground and on orbit today. These capabilities will continue to be developed, exercised, and integrated into war plans. Because of these increased capabilities, there is increased need for the United States to protect sensors and improve the resilience of our space-based capabilities.

Are there other nation-states or other actors operating in space that you perceive as a risk to the United States, or as cause for concern? Please explain your answer.

China and Russia pose the most pressing threats to U.S. interests in the space domain; however, I am also concerned about North Korea and Iran. Although the DPRK has no space assets and its doctrine and operational concepts are unclear, it will avail itself of space-based services, such as ISR, communications, and navigation to increase civil and military capabilities. The DPRK will try to deny an adversary use of space in a conflict and has demonstrated non-kinetic counterspace capabilities including GPS and satellite jamming. Iran openly pursues a national space program to support both military and civilian goals. Iran recognizes the value of space and counterspace capabilities and will attempt to deny adversaries the use of space during a conflict. At present, Iran is only capable of low earth orbit launches of microsattellites but continues to advance its technologies along with the pursuit of ICBMs. In the long term, I anticipate global access to the space domain to broaden as we have seen in other domains, resulting in a greater competition for access, capability, and protection.

How would you assess current DOD readiness to implement the 2018 NDS and U.S. strategic objectives as they relate to the domain of space?

DoD is making progress in implementing the NDS and achieving our national objectives in space. With the recent Senate confirmation of General Jay Raymond as Commander of U.S. Space Command, the newly established Combatant Command will be singularly focused on space as a warfighting domain. Moreover, this new command will work to sustain our advantages in space, engage with allies and partners, and ensure that space remains a free and open domain.

The Senate version of the FY 2020 NDAA includes a provision directing the creation of a U.S. Space Force that is focused on warfighting in the space domain and charged to transform historically late-to-need processes for developing, procuring, and fielding space warfighting capabilities, without creating an extensive and unreasonably expensive new bureaucracy.

What is your assessment of this “Space Force” legislation?

I appreciate Congress’s support for the establishment of a Space Force and, if confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress on this important initiative. Elevating the space domain to be on par with the air, land, and sea domains is critical

to the nation's defense. Although the SASC language provides key elements to elevating the space domain, such as the 4-star military leadership with membership on the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the direct report to the Secretary of the Air Force, I urge the committee to provide the necessary technical legislative authority to establish the Space Force as the sixth branch of the Armed Forces within the Department of the Air Force. I also request the committee to provide the Department with the necessary resources to ensure its success.

Why were the National Reconnaissance Office and other Intelligence Community organizations intentionally omitted from the "Space Force" legislative proposal that DOD presented to Congress?

Although I was not involved in this decision at the time, it is my understanding that the legislative proposal was developed consistent with Presidential direction outlined in Space Policy Directive-4 (SPD-4), *Establishment of the United States Space Force*. SPD-4 states "...the legislative proposal...shall...not include the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the National Reconnaissance Office, or other non-military space organizations or missions of the United States Government."

Concern about the vulnerability of our nation's space-based systems and supporting architecture continues to grow.

What do you perceive as the most significant threats to our national security space satellites?

China and Russia are developing weapons systems and doctrine to degrade the U.S. advantage in space-enabled warfighting. China continues to develop jammers that target some intelligence collection and communications capabilities aboard military satellites. China is also developing sophisticated on-orbit capabilities, such as satellite inspection and repair, some of which could also function as a weapon. Lastly, China likely is pursuing laser weapons to disrupt, degrade, or damage satellites and their sensors. China may already have a limited capability of this type. China likely will field a ground-based laser weapon that can counter low-orbit space-based sensors by 2020. Russia is pursuing a similar set of counterspace capabilities.

What do you perceive as the most significant threats to commercial space systems owned by U.S. companies?

We anticipate that adversary nations are unlikely to discriminate between U.S. military satellites and commercial satellites providing services to the U.S. Government, in the event of a conflict.

What would be your role, if confirmed, in ensuring the protection of U.S. on-orbit satellite systems?

If confirmed, my role would be to ensure Combatant Commanders have the appropriate guidance, authorities, resources, personnel, and capabilities to fulfill their Presidentially directed responsibilities of the Unified Command Plan. It would be my role to ensure the Military Services develop and field appropriate capabilities to protect U.S. space-systems based on Commander, U.S. Space Command, requirements. If confirmed as Secretary of Defense, it would be my role to approve appropriate actions and plans to protect U.S. space systems, or, if it is beyond my authority, to request approval from the President.

Do you support the development of offensive and defensive space systems to counter threats in the space warfighting domain?

Offensive and defensive space systems should be considered and pursued to ensure survivable and resilient space operations necessary for the execution of war plans.

The Presidential memorandum of December 18, 2018, directed the establishment of USSPACECOM as a Unified Combatant Command, with responsibility for Joint Force space operations. Space Policy Directive (SPD)-4, dated February 19, 2019, specified, “[t]his command will have all of the responsibilities of a Unified Combatant Command in addition to the space-related responsibilities previously assigned to United States Strategic Command. . . . The Commander of this command will lead space warfighting through global space operations that may occur in the space domain, the terrestrial domains, or through the electromagnetic spectrum.”

On what timeline do you expect SPACECOM to reach Initial Operating Capability? Full Operating Capability?

The timeline for maturation of U.S. Space Command (USSPACECOM) will be event-driven rather than calendar-driven. At establishment of USSPACECOM, U.S. Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM) will still provide vital support to USSPACECOM such as personnel, coordination, and facilities support, among other things. In order to declare initial operational capability (IOC), the command must have appropriate agreements and support structures in place to operate partially independent of USSTRATCOM. Full operational capability (FOC) would require USSPACECOM to be able to operate completely independent of legacy USSTRATCOM support relationships. Once the Commander is appointed and has his staff performing the detailed analysis and planning required, they will be able to make a better assessment of when to declare IOC and FOC.

What missions, functions, and tasks will transfer from U.S. Strategic Command to SPACECOM? If confirmed, how would you ensure that there is no diminution in strategic capability during the period in which these missions, functions, and tasks are being transferred to SPACECOM?

The missions, functions, and tasks transferring to U.S. Space Command include conducting defensive and offensive space operations as well as space support to

terrestrial operations. U.S. Space Command, from its roots as U.S. Strategic Command's Joint Functional Space Component Command, will inherently focus on ensuring no reduction in strategic capability. U.S. Space Command will continue to support U.S. Strategic Command in its assigned strategic missions. Examples include providing missile warning and assessment of attacks on space assets supporting nuclear operations.

The Commander, SPACECOM is responsible for the planning and execution of global space operations, missions, and activities; providing space-related support to other combatant commands and their operational plans; and the defense of space assets.

If confirmed, what guidance would you give the Commander, SPACECOM as regards his role in leading Joint Force operations and activities in the space warfighting domain?

If confirmed, I will expect Commander, U.S. Space Command (USSPACECOM), to lead his new command to full operational capability. He will continue to transform the mindset of the joint force from one that views space operations as a purely support function to a recognition that space is a warfighting domain in which we must defend our nation's capabilities. He will integrate with our allies and partners, and be the single point of contact for military space operational matters to the U.S. Government and commercial entities. He will also closely integrate with other space organizations such as the National Reconnaissance Office.

If confirmed, what guidance would you give the Commander, SPACECOM as regards his role as Joint Force provider for space?

The Administration has proposed establishing the U.S. Space Force as the Joint Force provider for space, not the Commander, USSPACECOM. If confirmed, I would expect the Joint Force provider to fill a traditional Title 10 Service Chief-like role to organize, train, and equip the nation's space forces. My initial guidance to him would be to build a plan, in conjunction with the Department of the Air Force, the other Services, and the Joint Staff, for the Department's review and approval, that outlines the major associated efforts, events, and milestones required to develop, establish, and implement his Joint Force provider responsibilities.

What is your vision for inclusion of the Reserve Components as a part of the U.S. Space Force and as contributors to Joint Force space operations and activities?

The Reserve Components already play a key role in our space operations and activities today and I anticipate they will continue to do so in the future. Several Army and Air Force National Guard and Reserve units deliver critical space capabilities to the Joint Force on a daily basis, providing much-needed continuity of operations as they partner with active duty units. If Congress agrees to establish the

Space Force, the role of the Reserve Component would likely grow as the Space Force evolves.

Should there be a conflict in space or a related domain, what are your views on the importance of unity of command as compared to unity of effort between DOD and Intelligence Community assets, both in space on the ground?

When it comes to protecting and defending our space capabilities, DoD and the Intelligence Community must work together in a well-integrated manner despite having distinct responsibilities and authorities. Joint Task Force – Space Defense, which is a critical element within the new U.S. Space Command, is an integrated DoD, NRO, and IC organization. This element provides unity of effort for DoD and IC assets in defense of our on-orbit assets. It also serves as a single command charged with the preservation of critical national capabilities with both military and civil objectives, and takes advantage of DoD-unique and IC-unique authorities.

As part of DOD’s approach to the domain of space, the Department established the Space Development Agency. In testimony before this Committee, DOD officials reinforced that the first and most important task assigned to the Space Development Agency is to develop, in cooperation with the space industry, a highly distributed and resilient space layer to support military targeting operations.

Does the national security space enterprise need a revised approach to space-related acquisition, in your assessment? How would you propose to improve and streamline space acquisition, if confirmed?

If confirmed, I would continue DoD’s work with Congress to ensure our space acquisition enterprise becomes more agile so that we can strengthen resilience in our current systems, rapidly deploy future capabilities, and dynamically adapt to changes in the threat environment. To do so, we have made reforms to our existing space enterprise to streamline program decision-making and quickly respond to urgent warfighter needs. We also need to leverage the innovation represented by our commercial space industry partners. We have established the Space Development Agency (SDA) in order to do that. The new SDA will have streamlined acquisition authorities and will be focused on rapid development, experimentation, and incorporation of commercial technology.

In your view, what steps should the Space Development Agency undertake to solve—in short order—the long-standing problems associated with overly bureaucratic and late-to-need processes for developing, procuring, and fielding space warfighting capabilities?

I support the Space Development Agency and its mission to unify and integrate the development of space capabilities across the Department. To address redundancy, reduce bureaucracy, and shorten development timelines, the SDA should:

- Develop agreement on an architecture into which current and planned investments can be integrated to address emerging threats;
- Leverage commercial technologies and manufacturing processes to reduce non-recurring engineering costs and shorten integration timelines;
- Maintain a lean approach that embraces best-of-breed across the enterprise.

If confirmed, how will you ensure that commercial technology is appropriately incorporated into Space Development Agency products and SPACECOM mission execution at acceptable risk levels? What particular challenges do you perceive to increasing collaboration between the private sector and DOD in the domain of space acquisition?

To support USSPACECOM mission execution, I believe it is important to identify investments that advance and allow for a hybrid architecture that includes both a limited number of high value assets and a proliferated small satellite constellation. This approach balances risk against opportunity to deliver a threat-driven space systems architecture.

I support working closely with potential commercial vendors and exploring mutually beneficial ways to collaborate. Standardization of components and systems is critical to such public-private collaboration. SDA should influence and invest in standards development to ensure compatibility across the entire space enterprise, which will also encourage a diverse commercial supply base.

The national security space community has begun to blend the use of traditional spacecraft and new flexible smallsats to provide improved mission support to users. In your view, how can the Space Development Agency and SPACECOM exploit commercial and other less expensive launch options to allow for more rapid replenishment and on-orbit employment of vital warfighting systems, while minimizing the risk of mission failure?

The development and launch of new flexible small satellites affords the Department capabilities complementary to those already provided by the existing national space enterprise suite of assets. Rapid, inexpensive launch of small satellites enables a threat-driven, resilient architecture underpinned by a proliferated low earth orbit constellation.

In the long-term, where should the Space Development Agency reside, in your view?

In my view, a key benefit to the Space Development Agency is the unification and integration of space systems development across DoD. As such, I support existing plans for SDA to transition eventually into the U.S. Space Force (USSF), if established, as part of the last planned phase of the USSF establishment, along with all other non-USAF DoD space entities.

U.S. Cyber Command (CYBERCOM)

In May 2018, the Cyber Mission Force achieved full operational capability. In September, DOD released its 2018 Cyber Strategy. The Strategy charges DOD to “defend forward, shape the day-to-day competition, and prepare for war” to compete, deter, and win in the cyber domain.

What do you envision as the role of DOD and the Cyber Mission Force in defending the Nation from an attack in cyberspace? In what ways is this role distinct from those of the homeland security and law enforcement communities?

When directed by the President or requested by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), DoD is prepared to assist DHS in the event of a significant cyber incident. DHS and the law enforcement community operate under authorities that are domestically aligned, whereas DoD’s focus is with respect to foreign State and non-state actors that threaten the interests of the United States.

How will operationalization of the “defend forward, shape the day-to-day competition, and prepare for war” concepts deter and disrupt Russia and China’s aggression in cyberspace?

China and Russia are conducting persistent malicious cyber campaigns to erode U.S. military advantages, threaten our infrastructure, and reduce our economic prosperity. DoD is taking the initiative to deny, disrupt, degrade, and expose these malicious cyber activities, which threaten the Department, U.S. interests, and the American people. This initiative includes collaboration with other U.S. Government departments and agencies, private industry, and international allies and partners to “defend forward” by preemptively responding to and disrupting these threats well before these activities reach their intended targets and cause harm. Operationalizing these concepts enables the Department to compete, deter, and win in the cyber domain.

Is it feasible, in your view, for DOD to operate in cyberspace below the level of armed conflict?

Routinely operating outside the context of armed conflict is both feasible and necessary in cyberspace. We need to engage our adversaries and defend forward persistently to disrupt, deter, and deny malicious cyber activity. These operations range from intelligence collection and preparation to strengthening the security and resilience of our cyber networks. DoD can focus these efforts on states that conduct malicious cyber activities and that pose strategic threats to U.S. security and prosperity, while collaborating with our interagency, industry, and international partners.

What role should DOD and the Cyber Mission Force occupy in combating foreign influence operations, especially those conducted via social media?

The Department's 2018 Cyber Strategy embraces the concept of "defend forward" by which we strive to see and understand malicious cyber actors' behavior, help warn of imminent threats, and remain continually postured to take action against those threats – at their source – before they reach the homeland. The Cyber National Mission Force plays a significant role in these efforts.

What role should DOD and the Cyber Mission Force occupy in anticipating, preventing, or responding to attacks on commercial entities?

Through a series of partnerships with DHS and sector-specific agencies (SSAs), such as the SSAs for the financial and energy sectors, DoD is executing "Pathfinder" initiatives to build the expertise and gain the experience needed to support our critical infrastructure partners' efforts to anticipate, prevent, and respond to significant cyber incidents. Specifically, we have focused on lessons learned from our election security efforts, and have focused on the sharing of threat information and collaborative analysis of vulnerabilities and threats. The Department has a plan to leverage the National Guard's resources and capabilities, and to expand these partnerships to other critical sectors where DoD and the private sector have shared interests.

What is your view as to whether the "dual hatting" of the Commander of U.S. Cyber Command as the Director of the National Security Agency should be maintained or terminated? Please explain your answer.

The challenge of determining whether the "dual-hat" relationship should be maintained or terminated is balancing the U.S. Cyber Command and National Security Agency responsibilities and priorities in a way that is optimal for the national security of the United States. A recommendation to the President will require careful collaboration and coordination with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Director of National Intelligence, and must be fully informed by the benefits, costs, and risk mitigation factors to ensure there is no degradation to national security. Regardless of whether the leadership of these two organizations remains dual-hatted, the organizations will continue to have a unique and enduring relationship.

In March 2019, the Secretary of the Navy's *Cyber Readiness Review* presented a scathing assessment of the Department of the Navy's approach to cybersecurity and highlighted the urgent need for the Navy to modify its business and data hygiene processes to protect data as a resource.

In your view, would DOD writ large benefit from a "Cyber Readiness Review" similar to that of the Navy? Please explain your answer.

In August 2018, DoD submitted to Congress the 2018 Cyber Posture Review (CPR), which established the criteria that the Navy Cyber Readiness Review of March 2019 followed. Both reviews were very similar in intent, purpose, and findings. The Office of the Secretary of Defense worked collaboratively with the Joint Staff and other DoD stakeholders in the formulation of the CPR, and our team was able to account for the challenges the Joint Force must contend with in the cyber domain. If confirmed, I will ensure DoD remains decisively engaged in the implementation of the 2018 DoD Cyber Strategy, which was formulated specifically to address the gaps highlighted in the CPR. This effort is a continuous evaluation where we need constant vigilance across a dynamic cybersecurity landscape.

If confirmed, specifically what measures would you take or direct to improve the cybersecurity culture across the DOD workforce—military, civilian, and contractor? How would you empower and hold key leaders accountable for improvements in DOD cybersecurity?

Cybersecurity is a key component of military readiness, and improving our cybersecurity is a requirement for creating a more lethal Force. If confirmed, I will drive efforts to recruit, train, and retain our cyber workforce more effectively, and to improve cybersecurity training and awareness for the entire workforce. The Department has created a scorecard to show progress in mitigating the top cyber risks to DoD. The scorecard is also a tool that I can use to hold senior leaders accountable, if I am confirmed.

U.S. Special Operations Command (SOCOM)

Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict (ASD(SOLIC))

Section 922 of the FY 2017 NDAA empowered the ASD(SOLIC) to serve as the “service secretary-like” civilian official with responsibility for the oversight of and advocacy for special operations forces. Among other reforms, the law defined the administrative chain of command for USSOCOM as running through the ASD(SOLIC) to the Secretary of Defense for issues impacting the readiness and organization of special operations forces, special operations-peculiar resources and equipment, and civilian personnel management.

Has the Department fully implemented the “service secretary-like” responsibilities of the ASD(SOLIC) for special operations forces? If confirmed, specifically what more would you do to ensure that the ASD(SOLIC) is properly empowered and resourced to execute these critical responsibilities, as mandated in law?

The Department continues to make progress towards enhancing the ASD(SO/LIC)'s Title 10 "Service Secretary-like" administrative responsibilities overseeing the

readiness and organization of special operations forces (SOF); special operations-peculiar capabilities; and the planning, allocation, and execution of USSOCOM resources. These efforts include the establishment of the Secretariat for Special Operations (SSO), an office whose sole purpose is to support the ASD(SO/LIC) in the performance of responsibilities in the administrative chain-of-command for USSOCOM. The SSO was established to support the ASD SO/LIC's role in performing administrative oversight (or, Military Department Secretary-like) responsibilities under Title 10, which were strengthened by Section 922 of the FY 2017 NDAA. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Congress to ensure the Department has the necessary resources and authorities to institutionalize these reforms

In your view, does the ASD(SOLIC) require additional authorities to maximize efficiency and effectiveness in the administration and oversight of special operations forces?

My understanding is that some authorities have been delegated to the ASD(SO/LIC) in response to the changes in duties and responsibilities in Title 10, Section 138(b). If confirmed, I will review the existing authorities for the ASD(SO/LIC) and consider delegation of additional authorities, if needed, to provide appropriate administrative oversight of special operations forces.

Section 361 of the NDAA for FY 2019 included an exception to the overall cap on personnel in the Office of the Secretary of Defense to provide for the establishment and growth of the ASD(SOLIC) Secretariat for Special Operations. Further, the law mandated that not less than \$4 million be used to fund additional civilian personnel to man the Secretariat.

What is the status of efforts to hire additional civilian personnel to support the Secretariat for Special Operations and when do you expect the office will be fully manned in line with congressional intent?

The Secretariat for Special Operations has continued to make progress in staffing the office with personnel with requisite expertise in personnel and readiness, acquisition, sensitive activities, and financial management. I understand that, as of July 2019, the Secretariat has hired against 11 of the 32 permanent civilian positions made available through the transfer of MFP-11 funds, bringing its current strength to 32 full-time employees.

Violent Extremist Organizations

What is your assessment of the threat to U.S. interests posed by Al-Qaeda, the Islamic State, and their affiliates and adherents? Which group, in your view, presents the greatest threat to the United States?

Global jihadists in dozens of groups and countries threaten local and regional U.S.

interests, despite having some significant setbacks in recent years, and some of these groups remain intent on striking the U.S. homeland.

Al-Qa'ida senior leaders are strengthening the network's global command structure and continuing to encourage attacks against the West, including the United States, although most al-Qa'ida affiliates' attacks to-date have been small-scale and limited to the regional areas.

ISIS still commands thousands of fighters in Iraq and Syria, and it maintains 14 branches, multiple networks, and thousands of dispersed supporters around the world, despite significant leadership and territorial losses. The group will exploit any reduction in counterterrorism pressure to strengthen its clandestine presence and accelerate rebuilding key capabilities, such as media production and external operations.

If confirmed, what changes, if any, would you recommend to the U.S. counterterrorism strategy and DOD's role in supporting it? What condition-based metrics would you apply to measure the effectiveness of the strategy? Should efforts to prevent the underlying causes of extremism be a component of our counterterrorism strategy?

The President's National Strategy for Counterterrorism, which was signed in October 2018, recognizes the full range of terrorist threats that the United States confronts within and beyond our borders, and emphasizes the use of all elements of national power to combat terrorism and terrorist ideologies. Certainly DoD plays a key role in carrying out the President's vision for counterterrorism, but the Department seeks to complement interagency, partnered, allied, and industry efforts – perhaps more so than we have in the past 18 years.

It is often difficult to measure deterrence, but the absence of large-scale terrorist attacks on the U.S. homeland certainly cannot be ignored. However, one metric that can gauge the success of our strategy is the capability and willingness of our counterterrorism partners to thwart terrorism far from the homeland. Some of our counterterrorism partners have progressed better than others, but DoD remains committed to those that share common interests and a sense of urgency with the United States.

Terrorism remains a persistent condition driven by political, religious, and socioeconomic trends. The President's strategy directs the Department to combat violent and extreme ideologies that purport to justify the murder of innocent victims. So we must simultaneously acknowledge that, although the United States and our partners have achieved many battlefield victories, we still face a resilient threat.

If confirmed, what specific actions would you take to promote a “more resource sustainable” approach to counterterrorism, as directed by the 2018 NDS?

One of the three pillars of the NDS is to reform the Department for greater performance and affordability. This is true for everything we do, including our counterterrorism activities.

This effort goes far beyond just the Department of Defense and requires a whole-of-government approach. The Department must work with interagency partners to achieve these results. The Department must also work with our allies - another key pillar of the National Defense Strategy - to leverage their regional expertise and unique capabilities. This includes enabling local partner forces to counter violent extremist organizations regionally and prevent them from posing a trans-regional threat. If confirmed, I look forward to reviewing the enterprise-wide efforts in reform and sustainable counterterrorism approaches to determine if additional opportunities exist.

How would you endeavor to manage risk under this “more resource sustainable” approach to counterterrorism?

In a "more resource sustainable" approach to counterterrorism we manage both types of risk – that to the force and that to the mission. The risk to mission involves deliberately prioritizing the threats and the corresponding resources that must counter those threats. Lower priorities must be curtailed to allow greater resourcing, that can be continued for the long term, against the highest-threat areas. In addition, we must produce viable partners that can share in the burden and conduct operations in concert with us or unilaterally. This approach will allow for resource consolidation while still providing pressure on threat networks. The risk to the force is managed by allowing low-density/high-demand organizations to focus on specific prioritized threats, which will allow for appropriate deployment-to-dwell cycles. Also, relying on partners to burden-share more allows the force to reset and assume less risk. This is a disciplined and resource-sustainable approach to counterterrorism.

Section 127e and Section 1202 Activities

Section 127e of title 10, U.S. Code, authorizes U.S. special operations forces to provide support (including training, funding, and equipment) to regular forces, irregular forces, and individuals supporting or facilitating military operations for the purpose of combatting terrorism.

Similarly, section 1202 of the NDAA for FY 2018 authorizes U.S. special operations forces to provide support (including training, funding, and equipment) to regular forces, irregular forces, and individuals supporting or facilitating irregular warfare operations.

What is your assessment of the national security utility of each of these authorities in the current strategic environment?

The authority provided by Section 127e and its predecessor has been used in multiple theaters over the last 14 years, and the strategic value greatly exceeds the dollar amount we spend. The authority to support foreign and irregular forces, groups, and individuals who are engaged in supporting counterterrorism operations of U.S. special operations forces provides a low-cost, small-footprint approach to combat international terrorism. Geographic Combatant Commanders (GCCs) have repeatedly confirmed that the authority is a critical element of their combating terrorism effort. GCCs continue to express strong support for it.

Section 1202 authority provides the Department a tool to work with select partner forces to enable indirect action. It differs from Section 127e in that its application is against non-terrorist threats, including malign state actors. It is a highly useful tool for enabling irregular warfare operations in support of National Defense Strategy priorities. It's aligned with the Department's emphasis on expanding the competitive space to deter and defeat coercion and aggression by revisionist powers and rogue regimes.

Both of these authorities provide flexibility to the Department and allow it to work by, with, and through partners that provide unique access and capabilities for niche, complex defense requirements. I believe these authorities will maintain their utility for the foreseeable future. As the Department prioritizes great power competition, the Section 1202 authority may need to be extended and expanded.

If confirmed, what criteria would you use to evaluate proposals for the use of each of these authorities, particularly with respect to mitigating the risks associated with conducting irregular warfare activities below the level of traditional armed conflict?

Appropriate civilian oversight is a central aspect of implementing these authorities. All programs require Chief of Mission concurrence, Secretary of Defense approval, and written notification to Congress. If confirmed, I will ensure that selection, screening, and vetting procedures for partner forces continue to be robust and that implementation of the authorities is consistent with U.S. objectives and informed by careful analysis of risks.

U.S. Strategic Command

Nuclear Policy

The 2018 Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) reaffirmed long-held American doctrine that includes limiting the use of nuclear weapons to “extreme circumstances” and the need to maintain the nation’s nuclear triad of land-, sea-, and air-based capabilities. The NPR also recommended the development of a low-yield nuclear weapon to deter threats from Russia, and potentially, the return of a nuclear sea-launched cruise missile to the Navy fleet.

Do you agree that modernizing each leg of the nuclear triad and the Department of Energy (DOE) nuclear weapons complex is a critical national security priority?

Yes. Although still reliable and credible today, our current delivery systems, platforms, weapons, and infrastructure are rapidly aging into obsolescence. We are out of margin for modernizing our nuclear deterrent enterprise, and, if confirmed, I will continue to support all of the just-in-time modernization programs as a critical national security priority.

Do you believe the current program of record is sufficient to support the full modernization of the nuclear triad, including delivery systems, warheads, and infrastructure?

Yes, I do. The Administration's nuclear modernization plan, which also includes updates to the global Nuclear Command, Control, and Communications architecture, is a carefully considered, national response to our aging nuclear forces – one that will preserve our ability to deter the only existential military threats to the Nation.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress and the Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration to ensure these programs are completed as efficiently and as cost-effectively as possible.

What are your ideas for working across the Joint Force to mitigate the risk that all three legs of the nuclear triad could “age out” simultaneously at the end of the 2020s?

By executing the guidance in the 2018 Nuclear Posture Review, and receiving the necessary and timely funding from Congress for modernization, the Joint Force will be able to mitigate the risk of our aging nuclear triad. Technological advancements will reduce the development, production, and sustainment costs of the triad, which will allow us to keep each leg fully ready to provide the required deterrence.

Do you support and intend to advocate for the Long Range Stand-Off weapon?

Yes, if confirmed. The AGM-86B Air-Launched Cruise Missile will be nearly 50 years old when the Long-range Stand-off (LRSO) weapon is scheduled to replace it. The AGM-86B is decades past its anticipated service life. To maintain the effectiveness of the bomber force, we must replace the Air-launched Cruise Missile (ALCM) with a system capable of performing the mission in the decades to come.

Do you believe a nuclear “No First Use” policy would be appropriate for the United States? Please explain your answer?

No. The United States has never adopted a “No First Use” policy and should refrain from doing so in this increasingly complex and dangerous nuclear environment. A

No First Use policy could increase the likelihood an adversary could miscalculate U.S. resolve and redlines. It could also create doubt among allies and partners that the United States would effectively and in a timely way come to their defense in extreme circumstances to defend vital interests. Such a policy would not decrease nuclear dangers but would potentially increase them by undermining deterrence of adversaries and eroding assurance of allies and partners.

In your view, does the Stockpile Stewardship Program provide the tools necessary to ensure the safety and reliability of the nuclear weapons stockpile without testing? If not, what tools are needed?

The Stockpile Stewardship Program is an integral part of ensuring the safety and reliability of our nuclear weapons, but it does not stand alone. We need to continue the Stockpile Stewardship Program while simultaneously rebuilding a resilient and responsive production infrastructure to manufacture replacement components for our weapons in addition to preserving the ability to conduct simulated testing. The United States remains committed to a moratorium on nuclear explosive testing and would only consider a return to nuclear explosive testing if there is a severe technical or geopolitical challenge that cannot be addressed through other means.

In 2014, then-Secretary of Defense Hagel directed a comprehensive review of the DOD nuclear enterprise in response to incidents involving U.S. nuclear forces and their senior leadership. The review culminated in recommendations to improve personnel management, enforce security requirements, increase deliberate senior leader focus and attention, enact and sustain a change in culture, and to address numerous other concerns. Almost five years later, responsibility for addressing these recommendations and monitoring implementation of corrective actions has been transferred from OSD to the Military Services.

Based on your recent experience as Acting Secretary of Defense and Secretary of the Army, are the Military Services maintaining appropriate focus on implementing the corrective actions required by the Nuclear Enterprise Review?

Given my limited time as Acting Secretary of Defense, and the fact that the Army did not have responsibility for any part of the nuclear enterprise, I cannot make an informed assessment at this time. It is my understanding, however, that David Norquist, who is performing the duties of Deputy Secretary of Defense, closely tracks issues from the Nuclear Enterprise Review through his leadership of the Nuclear Deterrence Enterprise Review Group (NDERG). If confirmed, I will work closely with Mr. Norquist to ensure the Department maintains leadership focus and prevents the kinds of issues that occurred in the past.

Arms Control

On February 2, 2019, after years of Russian treaty violations, Secretary of State

Pompeo announced that the United States would suspend its participation in the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, triggering the six-month withdrawal countdown.

How can DOD mitigate any negative consequences of withdrawal from the treaty, and reassure NATO allies regarding stability in Europe?

In the event that Russia does not return to compliance with its obligations under the Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF) by the August 2, 2019, deadline, we should pursue development of ground-based, conventional, intermediate-range missile systems. Failing to do so could cause allies and others to question our resolve in ensuring Russia cannot achieve a military advantage through its INF violation. We worked closely for years with our NATO Allies on this issue, and I saw first-hand the results of that coordination at the June Defense Ministerial in the strong message of solidarity and support from the NATO Secretary General and our Allies on the Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty issue. The best way to mitigate negative consequences and reassure NATO Allies is to maintain this close coordination as we work cooperatively within the Alliance to adapt NATO's deterrence and defense posture in light of Russia's actions and ongoing malign behavior.

The New START entered into force in 2011 and will expire in 2021, but can be extended by up to five years by agreement between the United States and Russia. It covers long-range bombers, ballistic missile submarines, and intercontinental ballistic missiles, but does not cover new Russian strategic-range systems.

Do you believe the new strategic-range systems announced by President Vladimir Putin in February 2018 should be included under the New START central limits?

Yes, certainly for two of the five systems, since they will fall under current New START Treaty definitions. The other three do not meet any current New START Treaty definition, but do meet our criteria for "new kinds of strategic offensive arms": they are nuclear-armed and have strategic range. I believe we should seek a broader agreement with Russia that would capture a broader number of nuclear weapons beyond ICBMs, SLBMs, and nuclear-capable bombers.

Do you believe it to be in the national security interests of the United States to extend the New START Treaty?

New START Treaty extension could potentially fit into a new arms control framework, provided the net result improves the security of the United States and of our allies and partners. DoD is concerned that the New START Treaty does not capture Russia's improving and increasing arsenal of nonstrategic nuclear weapons. DoD is also concerned by Russia's poor pattern of compliance with numerous treaties and agreements. I understand the President has charged his national security team to

think more broadly about arms control, both in terms of the systems covered and the countries involved including the need to constrain a rapidly growing Chinese nuclear capability. If confirmed, I look forward to supporting that process.

What are your views on Russian tactical nuclear forces not covered by the New START Treaty and whether arms control measures can adequately address them?

Russia is modernizing and expanding an active existing stockpile of approximately 2,000 nonstrategic nuclear weapons that can be deployed on ships, submarines, and aircraft, with ground forces, and on air and missile defense interceptors. None of these weapons are limited by any arms control treaty. I believe it is time to bring all of Russia's nuclear arsenal under a new arms control agreement. Unfortunately, Russia has rebuffed past U.S. efforts to pursue reductions in nonstrategic nuclear weapons but I am mindful that the Senate included the requirement for the future treaties to include Russian non-strategic nuclear weapons in the resolution of ratification to New START.

Missile Defense

The United States enjoys a measure of protection against ballistic missile threats from rogue nations like North Korea and Iran, but the threat from Russian and Chinese ballistic, cruise, and hypersonic missiles against U.S. forces, allies, and the U.S. homeland continues to grow. The 2019 Missile Defense Review (MDR) codified existing policy on missile defense and endorsed follow-on actions to improve U.S. capability.

What are your views on the relationship between missile defenses and nuclear deterrence?

In 2019, the Department of Defense released the Missile Defense Review (MDR), which presents a comprehensive and layered approach to prevent and defeat adversary missile attacks through a combination of deterrence, active and passive missile defenses, and attack operations to destroy offensive missiles prior to launch. This comprehensive approach to missile defense strengthens our ability to deter adversaries and, should deterrence fail, protect the U.S. homeland, U.S. forces abroad, and allies and partners. But missile defense is broader than and should not be conflated with nuclear deterrence—more than 20 nations now possess offensive missile capabilities that can threaten the United States homeland, our forward-deployed forces, and our allies and partners. Effective missile defenses are needed to protect and defend U.S. national interests in this increasingly complex threat environment.

If confirmed as Secretary of Defense, what would be your priorities for U.S. missile defense capabilities for the homeland?

The United States is currently defended from existing intercontinental missile threats posed by countries such as North Korea by the U.S. Ballistic Missile Defense System (BMDS). Specifically, there are 44 ground-based missile defense interceptors – with 40 interceptors located at Fort Greely, Alaska, and 4 interceptors at Vandenberg Air Force Base, California.

As directed by the Missile Defense Review, the Department is also examining an architecture for the defense of the homeland from cruise missile threats.

If confirmed, I would support continuing BMDS improvement, including enhancing BMDS sensors and developing space-based sensors to improve tracking and discrimination, through rigorous flight testing against realistic targets as we work to develop more cost-effective, sustainable, and scalable solutions.

For defense against cruise and hypersonic missiles?

Current global trends indicate ballistic and cruise missiles are becoming more capable, and, if confirmed, I would continue the focus on cruise and hypersonic missile defense in the MDR. I support the tasks outline in the MDR, and will ensure our defense posture remains increasingly flexible and adaptable to meet evolving threats and new classes of offensive missiles.

Hypersonic missile defense requires globally persistent, low-latency tracking of an unpredictable threat, improved communications and fire control systems, and new kinetic interceptors with very high agility in a harsh aerothermal environment. If confirmed, I will advocate for continued development of an overhead architecture capable of providing the advanced warning, tracking, and fire control solutions necessary for hypersonic missile defense.

In your view, what should we do to improve the protection of deployed U.S. and allied forces from growing missile threats in operational theaters, particularly from advanced cruise missiles?

In keeping with the 2019 MDR, I support taking a comprehensive look at the integration of air and missile defense capabilities and believe we must invest in interceptors and sensors, while encouraging allies to do the same. As Secretary of the Army, we made development of modern integrated air and missile defenses a top priority for the operational force.

The MDR also described the advantages of space-based sensors to provide capability for improved tracking and targeting of advanced threats.

Do you agree that a space-based sensor layer is a required next step to enable a wide variety of missile defense capabilities?

I agree. Emerging complex missile threats (e.g., hypersonic weapons) frustrate

current tracking and sensor systems due to higher speeds and relatively lower signatures. A space-based sensor layer would provide the global persistence and low-latency needed to identify, track, and target hypersonic missiles and is an imperative if we are to defend against such complex threats.

Military Operations in the Information Environment

What is your assessment of DOD's ability to conduct effective military operations in the information environment to defend U.S. interests against malign influence activities carried out by state and non-state actors?

The Department has continued to evolve and refine our thinking about how to plan, resource, and conduct Operations in the Information Environment. When executed correctly, DoD can achieve its mission more effectively, more affordably, and with reduced risk to our operating forces. That was the impetus for then-Secretary Carter's signing of the Strategy for Operations in the Information Environment in 2016 and for then-Secretary Mattis to endorse the Chairman's addition of Information as a seventh joint function in 2018. Based upon the publication of the new National Defense Strategy, designation of Information as a joint function, and other factors, the Department is currently revising the strategy. This new strategy is focused on the central idea that DoD must evolve from a primary focus on executing its preferred method of warfare to one that incorporates information as a foundational element of plans and operations. If confirmed, I will continue to support the development and implementation of this strategy.

Are DOD's efforts in this regard appropriately integrated with other U.S. Government organizations and activities?

DoD efforts throughout the information environment cross traditional department and agency lines. We coordinate and deconflict programs and activities at several echelons with departments and agencies across the U.S. Government. For some activities, this includes close coordination on the ground with U.S. Country Teams. We also have ongoing initiatives with the Department of State and with the U.S. Agency for Global Media. If confirmed, I intend to sustain those relationships. We also support the National Security Council (NSC) staff's efforts to connect and coordinate these activities more broadly across the U.S. Government, particularly through the newly established Information Statecraft Policy Coordination Committee. Such synchronization of holistic efforts will be critical to us in pursuit of our collective goals.

Does DOD have sufficient authorities and resources to conduct these operations effectively? If not, what additional authorities and resources would you request, if confirmed?

The Department does not assess that we need new authorities at this time. The Department has been providing written and in-person status reports of progress on

this topic to the congressional defense committees at least quarterly, as prescribed by the FY 2018 NDAA, and will continue to do so. If confirmed, I will regularly assess our authorities, resource availability/allocation, and strategic alignment, and prioritize appropriately to support operations in the information environment.

Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) Program

The CTR Program, which has focused historically on accounting for, securing, and eliminating Cold War era weapons of mass destruction and materials in the states of the former Soviet Union, has expanded its focus to other countries. As part of this expansion, the CTR Program is widening its focus to biological weapons and capabilities, including biological surveillance and early warning, and encouraging the development of capabilities to reduce proliferation threats.

What are your views on the efficacy of the CTR Program?

I have not tracked the CTR Program in detail as Secretary of the Army. If confirmed I will work to ensure its efficacy.

(244) How could coordination of the CTR Program across U.S. Government agencies that engage in threat reduction efforts (i.e., the Department of Defense, the Department of Energy, and the State Department) be improved?

I have not tracked the CTR Program in detail as Secretary of the Army. If confirmed, though, I will work to ensure that the CTR Program is well coordinated across the government to optimize its effectiveness and efficiency.

Notwithstanding the use and proliferation of chemical weapons documented recently in Libya and Syria, about 60% of CTR resources are allocated to biological programs.

Do you believe this shift in focus to biological programs accurately reflects the current threat?

I am aware that the Department reviews WMD threats on an annual basis and reprioritizes its programs and activities as required. If confirmed, I would seek to ensure the CTR program retains the ability to adapt to current and emerging threats.

If confirmed, specifically what would you do to ensure the CTR program is capable of meeting its mission to roll back the threat of weapons of mass destruction?

If confirmed, I will work to ensure CTR efforts are supportive of our broad Counter WMD strategies and Combatant Commands' plans, and are synchronized with other U.S. departments and agencies, which has different roles, authorities and responsibilities in countering WMD threats.

If confirmed, would you recommend adjustment in the allocation of CTR resources? If so, how?

Not at this time. If adjustments become necessary, I will address them as needed, if confirmed.

Air Force Issues

The 2018 NDS provides that the United States must be capable of striking targets inside adversary air and missile defense networks. A major component of that ability is the F-35 which, after a painstakingly slow start, is now beginning to have a major impact on current operations.

Based on current and future threats outlined in the NDS, what are your views on the requirements and timing of the F-35 program?

It is my understanding that the F-35 is making steady gains in advancing joint warfighting capabilities to deter and, if deterrence fails, fight and win future wars. The F-35 is integral to any future conflict with peer or near-peer adversaries. The Chief of Staff of the Air Force describes it as the quarterback of the joint, penetrating team. The current program is on track with aircraft procurement costs continuing to decrease and production rates increasing, though significant work remains to drive down operations and sustainment costs that are still too high. Planned upgrades provide improved sensors to find, fix, and track enemy targets; weapons to strike those targets at range; and countermeasures to ensure the F-35 remains survivable.

Even if all of the current aircraft modernization programs execute as planned, the average age of the tactical, strategic, and tanker fleets will continue to increase. Aging aircraft require ever-increasing maintenance, which incurs ever-increasing costs. Nonetheless, readiness levels continue to decline.

What are your views on balancing current aircraft capacity and future capability to meet expected threats?

Warfighting analysis shows sufficient fighter capacity is critical in a fight with a near-peer adversary in both the near and long terms. This resulted in the decision to invest in advanced fourth-generation aircraft like the F-15EX to recapitalize the F-15C fleet, while continuing to modernize with advanced fifth-generation aircraft like the F-35. Although the Air Force would prefer to invest in an entirely fifth-generation fleet, proceeding with a mixed fleet is necessary at this time to balance near and mid-term readiness with future needs.

What monetary and non-monetary incentives is the Air Forces employing to address the pilot retention crisis? What approaches have the other Military Services found to be successful? In your view, which incentives or combinations

thereof have proven most effective and why?

There is a national shortage of pilots, and it affects how we retain our Airmen. Retention initiatives aimed at improving Quality of Service and Quality of Life are critical in addressing the Air Force's pilot shortage. With the help of Congress, the Air Force increased aviation bonuses for pilots and focused non-monetary initiatives at the squadron level, including programs to provide additional support to allow pilots to focus on flying, reducing 365-day deployments, and targeted, proactive talent management.

All the Military Departments and Services are addressing a broad array of retention issues simultaneously—from job satisfaction to quality of life to professional development. Their initiatives, although differing in implementation, include increasing career path flexibility, identifying non-monetary career-enhancing opportunities, addressing operational tempo, and managing operational commitments to reduce the strain of deployments.

In September 2018, then-Secretary of Defense Mattis ordered the Air Force and Navy to increase mission capable rates for the F-35, F-22, F-16, and F-18 inventories to above 80 percent by the end of September 2019. In addition, Secretary Mattis directed the Military Services to achieve demonstrable reductions in operating and maintenance costs on all four platforms, beginning in FY 2019.

What progress has the Department made in increasing mission capable rates and decreasing costs for all four platforms?

The Air Force has improved mission-capable rates for the F-16 fleet by increasing parts supplies and adding maintenance shifts, and is expected to meet the 80 percent goal. The F-22 fleet is still challenged by the lack of low-observable maintenance capacity, exacerbated by the extreme damage at Tyndall Air Force Base from the effects of Hurricane Michael. Although F-22 mission-capable rates are improving, the fleet is not expected to achieve the 80 percent goal this year. Improving mission capable rates for both fleets required additional funding investment for this fiscal year.

The Navy is on track to meet its FY19 goal of 80 percent mission capable F/A-18 E/F and EA-18G by September 2019. Aircrew qualifications (flight hour execution) hit a high for FY19 in May. To meet the 80% goal and readiness recovery objectives, the Navy has taken the following actions: established Maintenance Operations Center (MOC) to coordinate maintenance activities and optimize resources; instituted Organizational-level and Depot-level (Fleet Readiness Center) reforms improving the processes for 150-Day and 80-Day periodic inspections; improved maintenance squadron manning (fit, fill, and experience level) and improved processes for component production; instituted supply chain reform eliminating issues driven by fragmentation of data across multiple sources/functions; and coordinated deployment of engineering and supply chain resources to address top-degraders.

The F-35 fleet is not expected to make the 80 percent goal. Transparency (canopy) supply shortages continue to be the main obstacle to achieving this. We are seeking additional sources to fix unserviceable canopies.

If confirmed, specifically what would you do to expedite progress toward achieving the goals set by Secretary Mattis?

I understand the Air Force is examining and investing in a number of commercial best practices, such as conditions-based maintenance, to increase mission capability rates, improve readiness, and reduce sustainment costs across all aircraft fleets. If confirmed, I intend to press for higher mission capable rates as well, and to support the Services' efforts to achieve these goals.

Army Issues

Aviation Restructuring Initiative (ARI)

The reorganization of the ARI is programmed for completion this year. By 2028, ARI will be fully modernized. Are both the reorganization and modernization efforts on track for completion on time and to standard?

The Army's plans to complete the Aviation Restructure Initiative (ARI) reorganization is heavily reliant on timely, adequate, predictable, and sustained funding. The Army is on track to complete ARI force structure reorganization and related fieldings for the Regular Army, Army National Guard, and Army Reserve by Fiscal Year 2021. The Army is also planning to modernize its aircraft across the force to counter the operational challenges Russia and China pose.

What challenges, if any, still remain in regard to the modernization of the Total Army Aviation portfolio? Will the reallocation of funds to support modernization slow aircraft procurement or the transfer of aircraft between components?

The Army's greatest challenge is carefully balancing Army Aviation modernization with readiness across the existing fleet. In making hard choices, associated with the Army's reallocation of funds, the Army carefully assessed the current and future Total Army Aviation requirements. The age of the Army's aviation fleet and its current capabilities allow for a sweeping modernization effort to create new Future Vertical Lift manned and unmanned aircraft, advanced munitions, and other capabilities to satisfy the 2018 National Defense Strategy. Any significant decrements to the plan or funding of proposed aircraft modernization and procurement will have an adverse effect on unit readiness, modernization programs, and industry partners. Timely, adequate, predictable, and sustained funding is critical to ensuring Total Army Aviation is ready for today and in the future.

Integrated Air and Missile Defense

Section 1676 of the FY18 NDAA required the Secretary of Defense to transfer the total obligational authority for any missile defense program that is beyond Milestone C (or equivalent) from the Missile Defense Agency (MDA) to a Military Department before submission of the FY 2021 budget request. The Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) program falls into this category, having passed its production decision years ago.

Do you have any reservations about the transfer of THAAD procurement and operations and maintenance funding and responsibilities from MDA to the Army? If so, what are your concerns?

THAAD is a BMD purpose-built weapon system that is integrated into the MDA Ballistic Missile Defense System (BMDS). Transfer as required by Section 1676 may bring some risk of disruption, but I believe the Army can manage this transfer provided it receives the associated budget and authorities, and works closely with MDA throughout the process.

The current validated requirement for THAAD batteries is nine, yet only seven batteries are fully manned and equipped. The Army has allocated manning for an eighth battery, but has no equipment; the ninth battery has neither manning nor equipment. THAAD and Patriot batteries, in the meantime, are some of the highest-demand, lowest-density assets in the Army. The 2019 Missile Defense Review (MDR) tasked a new study of the total THAAD battery requirement.

In your view, if the MDR-tasks study evidences a greater requirement for THAAD batteries, should the Army begin planning for procurement and operations and maintenance funding, as well as the end strength to buy and man these additional batteries?

If confirmed, I will work closely with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, consult with the Army, review the MDR-tasks study, and assess the options currently under review, in order to make the best decision consistent with the NDS.

Do you believe the Army's current program of record is sufficient to address theater base defense, including from both subsonic and supersonic cruise missiles?

I believe the missile threat long ago proliferated in scope and quantity past the point where any one Service alone can address theater base defense. This year, the Defense Planning Guidance provided specific guidance highlighting new initiatives that informed my view that cruise missile defense is a joint and integrated effort. In the near term, the Army will field the Iron Dome missile defense system as an interim capability, and the Army Futures Command is currently working with industry to field an initial maneuverable directed energy capability, in limited numbers.

Who do you believe should be responsible for addressing theater point defense against hypersonic missiles?

I believe the Missile Defense Agency, with support from the Army, should be the lead for hypersonic missile defense capability development; that is how the Army is postured today.

Next Generation Squad Weapon

The Army is developing both the Next Generation Squad Weapon-Automatic Rifle (NGSW-AR) and Next Generation Squad Weapon-Rifle (NGSW-R) for fielding only to infantry and front line combat units. These new weapons will be chambered for 6.8mm rounds that feature significant improvements in both ballistics and penetrating power at greater ranges.

Do you believe that fielding these new weapons only to combat formations is appropriate?

Yes. The Army has made the initial decision to field the NGSW to the infantry, scouts, combat medics, forward observers, and combat engineers within brigade combat teams in the active, guard, and reserve components. The Army has the follow-on decision in the FY 2026-2027 time period to expand production beyond close combat forces.

In your opinion, should the Marine Corps leverage the Army's program to field these same rifles? Please explain your answer.

Increasing the lethality of close combat forces (infantry squads) who locate, close with, and destroy enemy combatants, has been a priority of the Department of Defense since 2018 when Secretary of Defense James Mattis established the Close Combat Lethality Task Force. If confirmed, I intend to make it a priority of mine as well. The Marine Corps is in constant contact with the Army regarding any increase in lethality that can be gained through better weapons systems. No final decision has been made at this point. If confirmed, I intend to work with the Secretary of the Navy and Secretary of the Army on these and other CCLTF issues.

In terms of logistics, what is your opinion as to the operational effects of the need for sustainment forces to track, transport, and issue to combat formations rounds that are different from those issued to the remainder of the enabling force?

The tactical and operational effects of the new 6.8mm round will not require additional sustainment forces to track, transport, and issue the new round. This round will be tracked, distributed, and issued at the tactical and operational levels in accordance with existing doctrinal formations, just as 5.56mm, 7.62mm, and all other

types of ammunition are delivered to the close combat force.

Navy and Marine Corps Issues

Recapitalizing the Fleet

Despite the Navy's 355-ship requirement, it is currently operating with only 289 battle force ships. Additionally, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) concluded that the Navy has underestimated the costs for its FY 2019 30-year shipbuilding plan by approximately 30 percent.

Do you consider the 355-ship force structure requirement to be appropriate given the current and future strategic environment?

The 355-ship force structure requirement, informed by the 2016 Force Structure Assessment (FSA), was the appropriate future (circa 2030) battle force structure based on 2016 strategic guidance, warfighting concepts and operating constructs, intelligence estimates and approved defense planning scenarios. The Navy is conducting a 2019 FSA to reflect changes to strategic guidance, warfighting concepts and operating constructs, among other things, that have occurred since 2016. If confirmed, I will study the 2019 FSA closely, make my own assessment, and ensure Congress is briefed on the results of the FSA.

How would you characterize the risks to national security posed by the current shortfall in battle force ships?

The 355-ship force structure requirement was informed by the 2016 Force Structure Assessment (FSA). An updated Force Structure Assessment is underway and will help to characterize any gap that might exist relative to the current environment and strategy. If confirmed, once that assessment is complete, I look forward to discussing risks and potential mitigations with leaders and the Congress, in appropriately classified environments.

The Truman

The President reversed the decision in the budget request that would have canceled the mid-life refueling of the USS Harry S. Truman. Did you support the original decision? What drove the reversal of that decision?

As Secretary of the Army, I was aware of the issue but did not engage on it or have an opinion. It is my understanding that the President reversed the decision on April 30, 2019 after re-evaluating and re-prioritizing the refueling as a fraction of the cost of building a new aircraft carrier, which the Fiscal Year 2020 President's Budget also supports.

Improving Government Technical Control in Shipbuilding

A June 2018 Government Accountability Office report found that the last eight combatant lead ships cost a total of \$8 billion more than the initial budget; were delivered at least six months late; and were marked by dozens of deficiencies. As an example, the first procurement dollar for the *Ford*-class was spent in 2001. Nineteen years later, procurement dollars continue to be spent to finish construction on the lead ship, which is \$2.5 billion over budget, was delivered 20 months late, and remains incomplete.

Do you believe acquisition performance on recent lead ships has been satisfactory?

No, acquisition performance on recent lead warships has not been satisfactory. We should continue to improve the acquisition, technology development, and contracting strategies to maximize the output for every taxpayer dollar. Historical lead ship lessons learned are being incorporated into future ships of a class and further need to be incorporated into new classes of ships.

However, it is my understanding that lead ship performance on our commercial based Auxiliary and Expeditionary ships has been very good, and that the Navy is looking to incorporate best practices from those efforts as practicable into its combatant warship programs.

What actions do you believe should be taken or explored to improve on recent lead ship performance, particularly in regard to improving technical foundations?

As with most programs, stability in requirements, design, schedule, and budget is essential to controlling ship construction cost, and therefore is of highest priority for the Navy. If confirmed, I will work with the Navy to improve their performance on lead ship construction.

What adjustments to the Navy's shipbuilding programs are necessary and appropriate to improve adherence to shipbuilding cost, schedule, and performance criteria? To reduce operational risk related to executing the NDS?

It is imperative we assess the cost, schedule, and performance of our shipbuilding programs to ensure they are meeting warfighting needs at an affordable cost. We must improve accountability for our programs, and incentivize our shipbuilders to deliver on schedule, at or below cost, and with the level of technical quality that is required to produce exceptional warships. To do this, we must recruit, develop, and retain a high quality military and civilian acquisition workforce. We must partner with industry early and often as we establish new shipbuilding programs, and we must embrace competition as an essential component of our approach.

Ford-class Aircraft Carriers

What is your understanding of the current capability and reliability of each of the key systems on the *USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN-78)*?

The Navy is committed to its decision to build the Ford-class CVN, as demonstrated by the recent two-ship buy of CVN 80/81. It is my understanding that the capabilities of survivability, maintainability, and power projection in the high-end fight have been designed into our FORD-class CVNs. Every system was designed to allow for evolving carrier air wings, reduced manpower requirements, adaptability for future threat environments, and greater reliability over existing, legacy systems.

Performance and reliability have increased with each of these key systems during every underway period. Reliability will improve with additional runtime at sea.

The Advanced Arresting Gear (AAG) and the Electromagnetic Aircraft Launch System (EMALS) have the capability to recover and launch faster, with improved safety margins while allowing for the capability to launch heavier aircraft carrying more fuel for longer range and heavier weapons payloads. AAG/EMALS are being upgraded during the current maintenance period to correct previously identified deficiencies and improve system reliability.

Advanced Weapons Elevators (AWE) carry more than double the load of NIMITZ class elevators and move 50% faster. The shipbuilder has turned over 2 of 11 AWE, which have been certified by the Navy and are in the hands of the ship's company. All weapons elevators are scheduled for turnover to the crew following the ship's current post-shipyard availability.

Dual Band Radar (DBR) addresses capability requirements for current and future missile threats, ship navigation, and Air Traffic Control surveillance with modern, solid-state design. A ratio of reliability for the system improved steadily from 85% of the time during the early at-sea periods to 99.8% of the time during the final underway event.

What is your understanding of the measures being taken to ensure these key systems are stable for the next aircraft carrier, *USS John F. Kennedy (CVN-79)*, and those that follow?

The Navy is incorporating lessons learned from USS GERALD R. FORD (CVN 78) into the next aircraft carrier USS JOHN F. KENNEDY (CVN 79) and those ships that follow. The Navy experienced technical challenges during development and shipboard integration testing of advanced systems into CVN 78, including Electromagnetic Aircraft Launch System (EMALS), Advanced Arresting Gear (AAG), Dual Band Radar (DBR), and Advanced Weapons Elevators (AWE). Critical technologies in the FORD Class aircraft carrier program have stabilized. CVN 79 construction performance reflects this stabilization and is further demonstrated in the confidence of Industry and the Navy demonstrated earlier this year with the fixed price contract for CVN 80 and CVN 81 two-ship construction.

In your view, is it still advisable and suitable for the Department to procure large-deck, nuclear-powered carriers and large-deck amphibious ships after CVN-81 and LHA-9? Should the Department conduct a capabilities-based assessment of the future of ships that embark fixed-wing aircraft?

Large-deck, nuclear powered carriers and large-deck amphibious ships will continue to play a critical role in the Navy for decades to come. The Navy is currently conducting a Force Structure Assessment of the ship mix needed to counter future threats. The FSA will inform future budgets. If confirmed, I will study the 2019 FSA closely, make my own assessment, and ensure Congress is briefed on the results of the FSA.

Attack Force Submarine Levels

The Navy's current requirement for attack submarines is 66. However, the Navy projects that its number of attack submarines will fall as low as 42 boats in 2028 and remain below the 66-boat requirement until 2048.

What options, including improved maintenance and life extensions of current submarines, exist to ensure the Navy deploys attack submarines sufficient to meet Combatant Commander requirements and other intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance needs?

The Navy's attack submarine target was increased from 48 submarines to 66 submarines with the 2016 Force Structure Assessment. The March 2018 Report to Congress, "Extending the Service Life of Select LOS ANGELES Class Submarines," identified seven reactor cores for potential LOS ANGELES Class refueling. The FY 2019 budget requested funds for the first of the 7 potential refuelings. In addition to the refuelings, the Navy conducts a comprehensive technical assessment on each submarine to evaluate if the ship can be extended beyond its original planned service life. The Navy is also relying on a steady-state production of at least 2 SSNs per year with VA Class being delivered within contractual requirements to reach the force structure requirement of 66 SSNs. In addition to steady-state production, PB-20 adds \$3.2B for a third submarine in FY 2020 to take advantage of the available labor resources in the industrial base prior to the start of Columbia construction in FY 2021.

What risks are incurred by allowing the attack submarine force levels to remain below 66 boats until 2048?

This question is most appropriately answered in a classified forum. In the short term, we assess this is manageable risk.

Ready Reserve Force (RRF) Recapitalization

DOD has developed a three-pronged recapitalization strategy for the Ready Reserve Force (RRF) and Military Sealift Command surge fleet consisting of a combination of new construction, extending the service life of certain vessels, and acquiring used vessels.

What is your understanding of the Navy’s recapitalization strategy for the RRF and the affordability of acquiring more than 40 sealift vessels as outlined in the latest 30-year shipbuilding plan?

The Navy’s Sealift Recapitalization Strategy is a three-pronged approach to maintaining required sealift capability in support of the Joint Force. This strategy aligns to the March 2018 Sealift the Nation Needs Report to Congress and consists of new construction procurements, used-ship procurements, and service life extension program (SLEP) of existing inventory. The Ready Reserve Force (RRF) consists of 46 ships, managed by the Maritime Administration (MARAD), which are maintained in a reduced operating status. The average age of these ships is 44 years old. PB20 FYDP includes plans to SLEP 20 RRF ships and the acquisition and conversion of two used vessels in FY 2021 and FY 2022. Initial concept study contracts for the new construction ships were recently awarded (June 2019) to four industry teams.

To what extent do you believe the Navy has identified the appropriate mix of used and new ships to continue to meet sealift and auxiliary requirements?

In my current role as the Secretary of the Army, I have not reviewed the details of the Navy’s plan. If confirmed, I will review this plan to ensure that we meet the warfighting requirements consistent with the NDS and available resources.

Marine Corps Modernization

The Marine Corps’ current concepts for modernization of its amphibious capabilities includes ships, ship to shore connectors—such as the Landing Craft Air Cushion—and armored amphibious combat vehicles. Modernization across these systems is complex, technically challenging, and costly.

What is your assessment of the current capability of amphibious maneuver and assault systems in the Navy and Marine Corps?

As a maritime nation, freedom of movement and freedom of access are key to our national security and economic prosperity. We retain the world's finest naval expeditionary force, but our competitors are gaining ground and seeking to erode our advantage. The Navy and Marine Corps team continually works together to improve the survivability and capabilities of our amphibious warfare ships as part of the Joint Maritime Force. The dynamic strategic environment requires us to review our operational concepts continually to employ Naval forces effectively. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Secretary of the Navy and the Commandant of the Marine

Corps to ensure the Navy and Marine Corps team remains a capable and lethal joint force.

If confirmed, how would you propose to prioritize the development and acquisition of capabilities required for sea basing, connectors, and armored amphibious assault and tactical mobility ashore to achieve a full spectrum capability in the Marine Corps?

In my current role as Secretary of the Army, I have not had the opportunity to assess the range of full-spectrum capabilities the Marine Corps needs. If confirmed, I will work with Marine Corps and Navy leadership to ensure that the Marines have the capabilities they need to fight and win today and in the future.

In your view, what is necessary to ensure that modernization of the amphibious force—ships, connectors, and vehicles—is achievable and affordable in the near and long terms?

The Department's investment strategy must be clear, deliberate, predictable, and consistent with the NDS. Predictable, adequate, sustained, and timely funding provides the means to rapidly obtain, train with, and employ the high-end Naval combat power that will be essential to fighting and winning in the future.

Do you support the Defense Posture Realignment Initiative (DPRI), including the realignment of some U.S. Marines from Okinawa to Guam and the build-up of facilities at other locations, such as Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, Japan?

I support the implementation of the realignment plans known as the Defense Posture Realignment Initiative as it is the agreed-upon way forward, but I do understand that the Marine Corps has some concerns about the impact aspects of this plan may have on their ability to build and sustain readiness over time. As such, if confirmed, I want to hear and understand all views on the DPRI so that I am satisfied it is consistent with the NSS, NDS, and other relevant plans, policies, and agreements.

Reform of DOD Business Operations

Reform of DOD business operations is the third pillar of the 2018 NDS, with the goal of saving \$46 billion over four years—savings that would be reinvested in enhancing the readiness and lethality of the force. In your role as the Secretary of the Army, you guided and oversaw the Army's participation in the Department's Reform Management Group. On February 8, 2019, *Defense News Online* reported that DOD business reform efforts had yielded a validated \$4.7 billion in savings for FYs 17 and 18—slightly more than 10% of the overall goal.

What reforms did DOD execute to generate the \$4.7 billion in savings reported?

Although the Office of Management and Budget set no savings goals for Fiscal Years 2017 and 2018, the Department of Defense saved \$4.7 billion through reform efforts in contracting, IT, healthcare management, civilian personnel management, acquisition, and financial management.

To what readiness and lethality objectives or programs will these \$4.7 billion in savings be transferred?

The \$4.7 billion in savings was attributed to FY 2017 and FY 2018. The reform savings were realigned throughout the Department to support priorities of the NDS to strengthen lethality and readiness, including: support of the Strategy Capabilities Office and its focus on enhancing and improving the performance of existing operating systems; Army readiness and modernization priorities, such as the Mobility, Lethality and Protection for BCTs; Navy procurement for weapons critical to achieving the DON's mission; and increased Air Force Ballistic Missile Systems, A-ISR capabilities, and modernization of F-35 Joint Strike Fighter.

How much has the Department's Reform Management Group process cost?

Although there is no set cost of the Reform Management Group, the Department has spent \$112.9 million* on reform efforts through the Reform Management Group since 2017.

**This number does not reflect any costs to support reform for the Military Departments. The totals include funds provided by the Military Departments for some enterprise efforts, such as those related to Information Technology.*

If confirmed, how would you lead the Department in meeting the \$46 billion savings goal?

If confirmed, I will continue to support the emphasis on an enterprise-wide approach to support the third line of effort of the National Defense Strategy, including ongoing efforts in contract management; healthcare management; Fourth Estate management; acquisition; IT and business systems; civilian personnel management; and logistics and supply chain management.

If confirmed, specifically what would you do to improve the governance and performance accountability of the so-called "Fourth Estate"?

If confirmed, I will work with the Deputy Secretary and the Chief Management Officer to review charters, budgets, infrastructures, resource needs and utilization, and key performance outputs of the Fourth Estate.

DOD Auditability

Since 1995, DOD's financial management has been on the Government Accountability Office's High-Risk list—identified as vulnerable to fraud, waste, abuse,

and mismanagement. Yet despite the Department’s investment of significant effort and dollars, the FY 2018 DOD audit resulted in a disclaimer of opinion—auditors could not express an opinion on DOD financial statements because the financial information was not sufficiently reliable—and more than 1,000 auditor-issued notices of findings and recommendations (NFRs). Since then, the Department has developed Corrective Action Plans (CAPs) to address each of the NFRs.

If confirmed, what specific actions would you take or direct to achieve better outcomes than have past initiatives intended to improve DOD auditability?

Better audit outcomes occur if we leverage auditor feedback to prioritize remediation actions that bring the greatest value to our operations and warfighters, while addressing material weaknesses that keep us from passing an audit. Better outcomes also occur if leaders emphasize the importance of audits and stay engaged. The Department is now on a viable path and, if confirmed, I will maintain that engagement and focus.

If confirmed, by what metric would you evaluate the success of each CAP in remediating the NFR to which it responds? Have you or would you track the costs of implementing each CAP and assess the return on investment?

Only the independent auditor can determine whether a CAP has been successful in remediating its corresponding NFR. However, if confirmed, I would continue DoD metrics that validate CAP implementation and internal control rigor to ensure the remediation addresses root causes, can sustain compliance, and is ready to withstand the auditor’s independent validation.

It is difficult to track implementation costs of each CAP, as many corrective actions address more than one deficiency and fit with coincident system or process changes already slated to occur. If confirmed, I plan to track the total cost of remediation to ensure the Department continually improves audit efficiency and reduces audit costs.

Acquisition Reform

Recent NDAAAs enacted sweeping reforms of defense acquisition organizational structures and systems. Further, in February 2019, the Congressionally-established Advisory Panel on Streamlining and Codifying Acquisition Regulations (the “809 Panel”) submitted its final report, detailing 98 recommendations to enhance DOD’s ability to acquire and deliver warfighting capability in a cost-effective and timely manner.

Given your observations and experience as the Secretary of the Army, has the Congressionally-mandated division of the former Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics into two Under Secretaries: one focused on Acquisition and Sustainment (USD(A&S)); and one focused on Research and

Engineering (USD(R&E)), proven effective? Please explain your answer.

Implementation of Section 901 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 in conjunction with changes resulting from section 825 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016 represents a fundamental shift in how the Department oversees major defense acquisition programs (MDAPs). The establishment of the Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering (USD(R&E)) as the Chief Technology Officer and the assignment, through delegation of many legacy MDAPs and the designation of the Service Acquisition Executives as the milestone decision authority for new MDAPs has permitted the USD Acquisition & Sustainment (A&S) office to focus on enabling acquisition within the Department to become more agile, and to focus on those programs that are joint, critical, or high risk, while engaging with Congress and industry stakeholders to position the Department to maintain our strategic advantage over our adversaries and implement the National Defense Strategy (NDS).

Although the transition is still in its infancy, the establishment of the Chief Technology Officer focused on maturing technology was the right thing to do, and I fully support the congressionally mandated division.

Section 804 of the FY 2016 NDAA authorized DOD to employ an acquisition approach that enables the rapid delivery of new capability to meet emerging operational needs.

In your view, what are the benefits of establishing major acquisition programs under Section 804 authority? What are the risks?

Section 804 authority is useful to accelerate technology maturation or fielding, specifically, for technologies that are sufficiently mature enough to be rapidly prototyped or fielded within five years and subsequently transitioned to a more traditional acquisition pathway. The ability to prototype faster and to field capabilities more quickly are tenets of the Section 804 authority that the DoD is currently using to keep pace with evolving threats.

Using this authority depends on the unique characteristics and risk profile of a particular program. Middle-Tier authorities allow for greater tailoring and streamlining than the traditional process. The major risk associated with such programs is the potential for a diminution of sound program planning and rigor.

One of the challenges facing many acquisition programs—ranging from weapons systems to business systems—is unrealistic and infeasible technical requirements.

What best practices can the Department employ to generate realistic and feasible requirements, particularly in sophisticated, rapidly-evolving technical areas such as cybersecurity, hypersonics, and artificial intelligence?

The Department should capitalize on the full range of prototyping authorities to ensure requirements are informed by mature technologies that have been effectively demonstrated in a relevant environment. The resulting requirements will be feasible and the associated programs more likely to succeed. Additionally, the Department has fully embraced the recommendations from the DIB SWAP to modernize and accelerate delivery of cyber secure software in support of mission needs.

In your view, what role should the Military Service Chiefs play in delivering acquisition programs on time, and on budget? Who should be held responsible for large-scale acquisition failure, in your opinion?

The Military Service Chiefs should continue to represent the customer in decisions related to the fielding of Major Defense Acquisition Programs. More specifically, they should be engaged in determining requirements and involved in decisions regarding issues such as resources and priorities and procurement quantities.

Acquisition is a team sport. Most programs are managed at the Service level. The Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment is ultimately responsible for the health and performance of the defense acquisition system. If the Department has a large-scale acquisition failure, I would, if confirmed, hold the Military Service or Component acquisition executive with milestone decision authority responsible for that failure.

Program managers are encouraged to take, manage, and mitigate prudent risks. When there are failures, my priority, if confirmed, would be to identify the root-cause to fix the impacted program and avoid making the same error in the future by applying lessons learned to acquisition policy and workforce development, without creating more bureaucracy.

Would you see benefit, if confirmed, in directing more joint acquisition programs, such as the Joint Light Tactical Vehicle, the Future Long Range Assault Aircraft, and Future Vertical Lift?

Whether a program is joint or not should be driven by the requirements and relevant risks and benefits. If the requirements for a capability are common across more than one Service and can be efficiently met by a joint program office, then it should be considered for designation as a joint program.

In light of the recommendations of the 809 Panel, what additional acquisition-related reforms would you implement, if confirmed?

There are several areas of acquisition reform that I would consider implementing, if confirmed. These areas are drawn from the Section 809 panel, Defense Innovation Board, and Defense Science Board recommendations, among others. Areas of emphasis include:

- 1) Streamlining the Defense Acquisition System to include rewriting DoD policy to include a separate software pathway;
- 2) Expansion of acquisition workforce initiatives, education, and training;
- 3) Expansion of pilots to streamline DoD contracting, including foreign military sales;
- 4) Offensive and defensive cybersecurity measures for the Defense Industrial Base, weapons systems, and critical infrastructure.

Test and Evaluation

A natural tension exists between the goals of major defense acquisition programs to reduce cost and accelerate schedule and the need to ensure performance meets requirements and specifications—the objective of the test and evaluation function.

Under what circumstances, if any, do you believe it appropriate to procure weapon systems and equipment that have not been demonstrated through test and evaluation to be operationally effective, suitable, and survivable?

I support ensuring weapon systems are verified as operationally suitable before proceeding to high-rate production. Only in extraordinary, highly urgent circumstances should exceptions be considered.

What do you see as the role of the developmental and operational test and evaluation communities with respect to rapid acquisition, spiral acquisition, and other evolutionary acquisition processes?

The developmental and operational test and evaluation communities are critical to all of the Department's warfighting capability development pathways. It is essential that we understand the performance capabilities, effectiveness, and safety limitations of new systems prior to delivering them to the warfighter. This can only be accomplished through the test community. Under the rapid acquisition models such as Middle-Tier Acquisition, we tailor testing requirements, and other acquisition processes, to speed the new capability forward. The test community remains a critical component of all acquisition and prototyping strategies. To accommodate incremental delivery of capabilities, the test community needs to incorporate automated testing capabilities and to be engaged early and throughout the development and delivery cycle. If confirmed, I would ensure the test community uses a combined testing approach to collect operationally relevant data as early as possible during system development.

Are you satisfied with DOD's test and evaluation capabilities, including the test and evaluation workforce and infrastructure of the Military Services? In which areas, if any, do you feel the Department should be developing new test and evaluation capabilities?

DoD has fielded the greatest military force in history and its having done so has been enabled by thorough testing of the equipment provided to our warfighters. This commitment will not change under my leadership. As DoD develops the advanced technologies identified in the National Defense Strategy (NDS), these technologies must be thoroughly tested before employment. To accomplish this, the Services need the testing infrastructure and workforce to do so adequately. Investments in testing infrastructure for hypersonics, directed energy, autonomy, and cyber security are occurring. Similarly, additional investments are warranted to develop new workforce skills in these and the other NDS technology areas.

If confirmed, how would you approach your relationship with the Director, Test and Evaluation, particularly in light of the independence and direct reporting relationships and responsibilities accorded the Director in law?

It is critical to the future success of the armed forces that the Director, Test and Evaluation, provide objective, unvarnished information to the Secretary of Defense. The independence provided to the Director in statute enables that objectivity.

Defense Security Cooperation

Is the Department of Defense appropriately organized and resourced to execute security sector assistance effectively? If not, what changes would you make or direct, if confirmed?

The Department's commitment to working by, with, and through our allies and partners to achieve shared security objectives is resolute. If confirmed, I will maintain this commitment and explore innovative ways to leverage security cooperation resources as a key element in the implementation of the National Defense Strategy and to make the current processes more timely and efficient. I appreciate the important tools the Congress has provided to the Department, particularly with the security cooperation reforms in the NDAA for FY 2017. If confirmed, I will advise the Committee if I conclude that additional legislative or organizational changes are necessary to execute this mission as effectively and efficiently as possible.

Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC)

It has been noted repeatedly that the 2005 BRAC round resulted in major and unanticipated implementation costs and saved far less money than originally estimated.

Do you believe that another BRAC round is needed? If so, what changes to law and implementation policy would you recommend to improve on the outcomes of the 2005 BRAC process?

The President's budget did not include a request for BRAC authorization. As such, the Department is focused on sustaining our installations and using existing

authorities to optimize facility usage. If confirmed, this is an issue I will assess for future consideration as appropriate.

If you are confirmed, and were Congress to authorize another BRAC round, how would you set priorities for infrastructure reduction and consolidation across DOD?

If confirmed, and if Congress were to authorize another BRAC round, my focus would be on the military value of installations, as informed by the National Defense Strategy.

What is your understanding of the responsibilities for working with local communities with respect to property disposal that would vest in DOD and the Military Services, were Congress to authorize another BRAC round?

If confirmed, and if Congress were to authorize another BRAC round, I would consult with the Department's experts on this matter.

Operational Energy and Energy Resilience

The Department defines *operational energy* as the energy required for training, moving, and sustaining military forces and weapons platforms for military operations, including the energy used by tactical power systems, generators, and weapons platforms. As early as 2004, then-General Mattis testified before Congress that DOD must “unleash us from the tether of fuel” if U.S. forces are to sustain momentum and retain freedom of maneuver. He cautioned that “units would be faced with unacceptable limitations because of their dependence on fuel” and resupply efforts “made us vulnerable in ways that would be exploited by the enemy.” Today, DOD energy requirements are projected to increase geometrically due to technological advances in weapons systems and distributed operations over longer operating distances.

If confirmed, what would you do to harness innovations in operational energy and link them with emerging joint operational concepts?

If confirmed, I will ensure that OSD, the Joint Staff, the Services, the Combatant Commands, the DoD Research & Development communities, and industry work together to identify and capture innovative operational energy concepts that will ensure the operating forces have the energy they need to be able to accomplish their mission. We will continue to test and evaluate new operational energy concepts and innovations during exercises and war-games to ensure that we are providing the technology and information necessary to meet Warfighter needs.

In what specific areas, if any, do you believe DOD needs to improve the incorporation of energy considerations into its strategic planning processes?

DoD must look closely at energy requirements. The lessons learned from Iraq and Afghanistan must not be lost, but the consideration process must adapt to consider the risks associated with near-peer adversaries in a high-intensity conflict, and the global nature of the threat. As our concepts of operation change, we must make commensurate changes in our planning process to account for the energy implications necessary to power and fuel the future fight.

How can DOD acquisition systems better address requirements related to the use of energy in military platform? In your view, should energy supportability be a key performance parameter in the requirements process?

DoD does not have unfettered access to unlimited energy. Therefore, the energy costs and demands of future military platforms must be considered in the context of current energy demands, the Department's ability to support them, and the NDS. These considerations go beyond the acquisition process; concepts of employment, changes in force structure, and acceptance of risk, for example, also factor into energy supportability. The energy key performance parameter is just one tool in the tool box.

If confirmed, specifically what would you do to prioritize energy resilience and mission assurance for DOD, including acquiring and deploying sustainable and renewable energy assets to support mission critical functions, and address known vulnerabilities?

Assured access to available, reliable and quality power is a critical enabler for our warfighters. If confirmed, I will ensure the Department explores resilient, secure, and cost effective energy technologies, including sustainable and renewable energy, that reduce the risks of dependence on vulnerable sources of energy while meeting the needs of the operational force.

Section 2805 of the FY 2017 NDAA accorded the Secretary of Defense the authority to plan and fund military construction projects directly related to energy resiliency and energy security.

In your view, for what types of construction projects could DOD leverage section 2805 authorities best to enhance mission assurance?

Implementing projects that provide assured access to available, reliable, quality power to support critical missions is essential to the Department's readiness and mission assurance at its installations. If confirmed, I will ensure the Department makes use of the Section 2805 authority, as well as other applicable authorities, to implement energy resilience solutions. These may include microgrids, improved utility distribution systems, distributed on-site generation (such as renewable energy), and battery energy storage systems, among others, to improve the energy security of our bases.

Environment

If confirmed, how would you ensure that DOD and the Military Services comply with environment protection laws, regulations, and guidance from the Environmental Protection Agency?

If confirmed, I will work with the Military Services to ensure compliance with all legal requirements, including those related to the environment.

If confirmed, how would you structure investments in DOD's Environmental Research Programs?

If confirmed, I will structure the Department's environmental research programs to address the pressing issues of DoD and support Administration priorities.

What are your ideas for improving DOD collaboration with the Department of Interior and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to find cooperative ways to ensure military readiness, while protecting the environment on and around military installations?

If confirmed, I will work with all relevant Federal, State, Indian tribal, and local agencies, including the Department of Interior and its Fish & Wildlife Service, to improve collaboration.

Environmental Contaminants

According to GAO, DOD has identified 401 military installations affected by known or suspected releases of Perflourooctane sulfonate (PFOS) and Perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA).

If confirmed, what actions would you take to address PFOS/PFOA contamination on DOD installations?

No one should drink unclean water, and if the Department is responsible for a contamination, we are responsible for cleaning it up. If confirmed, I will work with the Military Departments to take appropriate actions to address PFOS/PFOA contamination on DoD installations.

If confirmed, what would be your approach to addressing the health concerns of service members and their families regarding alleged exposures to potentially harmful contaminants on U.S. military installations and in the context of performing military duties?

The Department has addressed and always will address any and all health concerns of our Service Members and their family members resulting from exposure to potentially harmful substances in garrison, during training, and during deployments. I

assure you that, if I am confirmed, the combined responsible authorities within the Department and Military Services - including medical, installation, facilities, and environmental - will work together to prevent, assess, mitigate and document exposures, and provide thorough medical evaluations and treatment as necessary. We will be vigilant and responsive, caring and understanding, as the health and well-being of our Service Members and family members are one of my highest priorities.

Readiness and Resource Impacts from Extreme Weather

In 2017, three hurricanes resulted in over \$1.3 billion in damage to military installations across the U.S. In 2018, extreme weather events caused roughly \$9 billion in damage at Tyndall Air Force Base, Camp Lejeune, and Offutt Air Force Base. Hurricane season for 2019 already has begun.

How would you assess the readiness and resource impacts on DOD from recent extreme weather events?

From my previous experience as the Army Secretary, severe weather events have had an impact on DoD's ability to conduct training and operations at certain installations. It has been my experience that DoD assesses resilience holistically throughout the installation planning and basing processes. If confirmed, I would work with DoD leadership to ensure our planning considers extreme weather events.

Based on these readiness and resource impacts, do you believe it necessary to use more resilient designs in DOD infrastructure?

I do believe having more resilient designs for our facilities and infrastructure is prudent.

Science, Technology, and Innovation

U.S. superiority in key areas of innovation is decreasing or has disappeared, while our competitors are engaging in aggressive military modernization and advanced weaponry development. DOD has identified ten key areas in which investment to develop next generation operational capabilities is imperative: hypersonics; fully networked C3; directed energy; cyber; space; quantum science; artificial intelligence (AI)/machine learning; microelectronics; autonomy; and biotechnology. Much of the innovation in these technologies that could prove suitable for national defense purposes is occurring outside of the traditional defense industry.

What do you see as the most significant challenges (e.g., technical, organizational, or cultural) to DOD's development of these key technologies?

Although the U.S. military remains the most technically advanced fighting force across the globe, and the United States leads technological innovation more broadly, we face increasing challenges to our superiority. U.S. intellectual property, for

example, is continually threatened. Nowhere is this more evident than in the microelectronics industry. If confirmed, I plan work hard to preserve our microelectronics technological superiority and protect U.S. intellectual property.

In addition, maintaining dominance across a diverse set of disciplines will require a robust industrial base and pipeline of talent from universities.

Finally, we must continue to improve collaboration across the Services and reduce multiple, individual development efforts. This is something I worked on with the Secretary of the Air Force and Secretary of the Navy during my tenure as Secretary of the Army.

Are the Department's investments in these technologies appropriately focused, integrated, and synchronized across all Military Departments and Agencies?

From my experience as Army Secretary, we are making strides to synchronize and integrate investments across the Department. The coordination and synchronization in Conventional Prompt Strike efforts is one such example. Work to integrate efforts across the Department remains, and, if confirmed, I will work closely with USD(R&E) to synchronize investments in key technologies in the Department's FY 2021 submission to the President's Budget.

In addition to the technologies identified in the 2018 NDS, are there other technology areas in which you believe DOD must invest to ensure that the United States maintains its technological superiority in the long-term?

Yes, two such technologies not included in the 2018 NDS yet vital to our technological superiority are next-generation, information communications technology (i.e., 5G) and biotechnology.

What efforts is DOD making to identify new technologies developed commercially by the private sector and apply them to national security and warfighter purposes?

The Defense Innovation Unit (DIU), a component of OUSD (R&E), accelerates the adoption of commercial technology to strengthen national security. DIU has achieved success collaborating with Military Departments, Combatant Commands, and component organizations to prototype rapidly and deliver commercial solutions that address military challenges. To date, DIU has awarded more than 120 prototypes to firms in 20 States, welcoming more than 50 first-time entrants and more than 100 non-traditional companies into the national security innovation base.

Another similar effort across DoD is the 5G initiative. 5G represents a transformational shift in the use of information communications technology. We have established an RDT&E program that will enable collaborative experimentation with the private sector to (1) accelerate the development and deployment of 5G

capabilities that have both military and commercial relevance, (2) identify and develop mitigation approaches to 5G vulnerabilities through red teaming, and (3) develop the capability to share spectrum dynamically in congested and contested environments.

The current budget request falls short of the Defense Science Board’s recommended goal of dedicating 3% of the total defense budget to Science and technology (S&T).

If confirmed, by what metric would you assess whether DOD is investing adequately in S&T programs and whether the DOD enterprise has achieved the proper balance between near-term research and long-term S&T?

If confirmed, I would work with the USD(R&E) and the Military Department Service Secretaries to ensure a balanced S&T portfolio, guided by DoD modernization priorities, that pursues scientific breakthroughs and advance technologies required for our future warfighting capabilities. Long-term basic research generates needed seed corn for technological advances. Balancing basic research with investment in a portfolio of applied research and advanced technology development efforts focused on maturing the most impactful and promising technologies is key.

In its 2018 report, *Foreign Economic Espionage in Cyberspace*, the National Counterintelligence and Security Center warned that “foreign economic and industrial espionage against the United States . . . represent a significant threat to America’s prosperity, security, and competitive advantage.” The report confirmed that China and Russia are engaged in campaigns to steal trade secrets, proprietary information, and other forms of intellectual property from the United States, through infiltration of the software supply chain, acquisition of knowledge by foreign students at U.S. universities, and other nefarious means—all as part of a strategic technology acquisition program.

What steps have you taken, or will you take, if confirmed, to strengthen National Security Industrial Base and National Security Innovation Base systems and processes to ensure that critical information is protected?

The National Defense Strategy and the Department of Defense Cyber Strategy highlight the importance of harnessing and protecting the National Security Innovation Base, which encompasses the Defense Industrial Base (DIB) sector, in order to compete, deter, and win in an increasingly complex global security environment.

Given the scale and complexity of the underlying challenges, the Department recognizes that a combination of both materiel and non-materiel solutions are required and that partnerships with industry and across government are critical. The Protecting Critical Technology Task Force (PCTTF) was established in October 2018 to address the cross-cutting nature of this problem.

The Department is working closely with the DIB sector (including industrial associations and the DIB Sector Coordinating Council), Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDCs), and University Affiliated Research Centers (UARCs) on multiple lines of effort.

The Department is actively working with industry to conduct multiple pilots or pathfinders. These include efforts focused on enhanced security and cybersecurity assessments, supply chain illumination, innovative commercial tools and technologies, and cost-effective, secure architectures and cybersecurity services. The Department has initiated the development of Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification (CMMC). CMMC will be a unified standard that encompasses multiple maturity levels ranging from “basic cybersecurity hygiene” to “advanced.” The implementation of CMMC will be cost-effective at lower CMMC levels so that small businesses can achieve certification.

Some in the Department have directed efforts to realign the Strategic Capabilities Office within the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency.

If confirmed, would you support such a realignment?

If confirmed, I will review the proposed move.

United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea

Many DOD officials, including previous Chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, have advocated for accession to the Law of the Sea Convention.

Do you support United States accession to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea?

The United States has long supported the United Nations Convention’s provisions related to the freedom of navigation and overflight as reflective of longstanding and customary international law, and our military has acted in a manner consistent with these freedoms. These are vital to U.S. national security interests, and, if confirmed, I will continue to support them.

In my current role as Secretary of the Army, the question of accession to the Law of the Sea Convention has not been my responsibility. If confirmed, I will review the issue as required.

In your view, what impact, if any, would U.S. accession to the Law of the Sea Convention have on emerging maritime disputes, such as in the South China Sea and in the Arctic?

It is my understanding that the United States does not take a position on competing sovereignty claims in the South China Sea. If confirmed, I am committed to

promoting a rules-based international order and to exercise the rights and freedoms of all nations by flying, sailing, and operating wherever international law allows. That commitment extends to maintaining a free and open Arctic domain, where DoD, in partnership with other Federal departments and agencies and our Arctic allies and partners, will ensure continued access for legitimate civilian, commercial, and military purposes.

Integrated Disability Evaluation System

The Integrated Disability Evaluation System (IDES) integrates DOD and Department of Veterans Affairs disability processes to improve the progress of service members through the systems, expedite their receipt of compensation and benefits, and ensure a seamless transition to veteran status.

If confirmed, how would you improve processing timeliness for both Active duty and Reserve Component service members at each phase of the multi-step disability evaluation process?

If confirmed, I will maintain DoD's commitment to improve IDES performance. I will maintain the previous Secretary's decision to reduce the IDES timeline from 230 days to 180 days by October 1, 2019, to enhance force readiness and ensure transparent, timely disability evaluation and receipt of compensation and benefits for injured or ill Service members. I will also continue to work collaboratively with our VA partners in exploring new opportunities to optimize the IDES process and improve the timeliness and efficiency of the disability evaluation system.

Sexual Assault Prevention and Response

Despite significant efforts by the Military Services to enhance their response to sexual assaults, including measures to care for victims and hold assailants accountable, the *DOD Annual Report on Sexual Assault in the Military for Fiscal Year 2018* documented a statistically significant increase in past-year prevalence of sexual assault and unwanted sexual conduct, primarily for female service members aged 17 to 24. These findings echoed earlier reports of alarming increases in the prevalence of sexual harassment and assault at the Military Service Academies.

Do you believe the policies, programs, and resources that DOD and the Military Services have put in place to prevent and respond to sexual assault, and to protect service members who report sexual assault from retaliation, are working? If not, what else must be done?

Sexual harassment and assault are detractors to readiness and erode the trust, unity, and esprit required for the Department of Defense to succeed. There can be no tolerance for this behavior; one incident is too many. The Department's approaches have worked, but we have much more to do. The challenges posed by sexual assault constantly evolve; our efforts must also adapt. As Secretary of the Army I

continually looked for ways to better support survivors in their recovery, promote reporting, and encourage participation in the military justice process. We can and, if I am confirmed, we will continue to refine and improve our approach to prevention through expanded support and training to advance military climates that internalize dignity and respect.

In your view, why hasn't the Department been more successful in preventing sexual assaults?

The Department's approach to sexual assault reduced the number of men and women estimated to experience the crime in the ten years between 2006 and 2016. However, in 2018, surveillance measures indicated efforts, while previously successful, were waning – particularly for the 17-24 year old cohort; as a result, I believe efforts must also adapt. We can and, if I am confirmed, we will improve our approach to prevention through expanded support and training to advance military climates that demand dignity and respect, while demonstrating zero tolerance for sexual assault and sexual harassment.

What is your view of the necessity of affording a victim both restricted and unrestricted options to report a sexual assault?

The Department is continually looking for ways to better support survivors in their recovery, promote reporting, and encourage participation in the military justice process. However, not all victims wish to participate in the military justice system and some would not report at all if not given the option of making a report that did not trigger a mandatory investigation. The Department promotes the recovery of those victims through the Restricted Reporting provision. I believe the confidential Restricted Reporting option is essential to readiness because it provides a Service member with an avenue to obtain care and may, in time, result in conversion to an unrestricted report when the survivor feels ready.

What is your assessment of the potential impact, if any, of proposals to remove disposition authority from military commanders over felony-level violations of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, including sexual assault?

Commanders are responsible for everything their commands do or fail to do. We must give commanders the necessary tools to promote mission readiness, good order and discipline, and unit morale and hold them accountable. Commanders' ability to refer cases for trial by court-martial is one of those tools. Commanders' exercise of such authority is particularly important in our efforts to eliminate the scourge of sexual assault from our ranks. We must ensure that commanders are fully engaged in that fight. The exercise of prosecutorial discretion is an important means commanders use to signal what behavior is unacceptable and to influence the actions of their subordinates.

Why are the number of prosecutions for sexual assault and retaliation in all Military Services so low? Why are conviction rates so low?

It would be inappropriate for a senior DoD official to characterize prosecution or conviction rates or speculate about them. Doing so could lead to legal difficulties in subsequent cases. Convening authorities and fact-finders in courts-martial must evaluate every case on its individual merits.

If confirmed, would you extend the U.S. Air Force Academy's *Safe to Report* policy to other types of units and organizations across the DOD? Please explain your answer.

It is important to assess how barriers to survivors' reporting sexual assaults can be eliminated while maintaining the effectiveness of sexual assault response systems. However, I believe blanket immunity for all victim collateral misconduct could have unintended side effects on the military justice process. I believe a flexible solution that fully considers the facts in each case would be the most helpful to both victims and the administration of justice.

If confirmed, what initiatives will you implement that focus on the prevention of sexual assaults in the military?

I believe there is no single solution for sexual assault; multiple strategies are required. For the Army, I felt that better leveraging the chain of command and the Army culture was essential to driving down the problem. If confirmed, I intend to support prevention approaches that are part of a comprehensive plan to address sexual assault and other problems that give rise to the crime, such as sexual harassment, hazing, and bullying while also giving the Services the freedom to pursue their own unique paths. Consequently, I would also support the Department's Prevention Plan of Action, recently released in May 2019, which provides the Department and Services an evidence-based roadmap to optimize prevention resources.

If confirmed, what specific role and tasks would you establish for yourself in DOD's program of preventing and responding to both sexual harassment and sexual assault?

If confirmed I would continue the proactive approach I took while serving as the Secretary of the Army by focusing on the areas of challenge, including the feasibility of identifying leading indicators of the crime and testing new approaches. I would also lead by example and regularly engage with staff and the Military Services to identify and add emphasis to new and ongoing prevention initiatives.

Do you perceive that you need additional authority from Congress to improve the Department's programs to prevent sexual assaults?

Not at this time.

Active and Reserve Component End Strength

Active force end strength continues to grow across all Military Services.

What aggregate Active end strength do you believe is necessary to meet the demands placed on the Military Services by the 2018 NDS and associated operational plans?

The forecast for growth to Active Duty end strength—including the growth requested in the most recent President’s Budget submission—is what is necessary to meet the demands associated with the 2018 National Defense Strategy (NDS). The Military Services all have rigorous requirements-determination processes that they employ to ensure that new and emerging capability requirements are resourced appropriately. The Department is posturing itself to meet the challenges posed by the 2018 NDS not only through modest growth, but also by undertaking other lines of effort to prevent unnecessary growth, or taking other actions such as enhancing the lethality of the force by realigning military personnel to higher priority military functions. Undertaking these efforts across the Department will ensure that the growth proposed by the Department is reasonable and achievable.

If Active end strength is increased in FY 2020, what specific parameters would you use to determine what the corresponding Reserve Component end strength should be?

The Total Force must be carefully balanced to maximize the relative strengths of the Active, Guard and Reserve appropriate for each service. If confirmed, I will seek to ensure an appropriate balance.

In your view, do the Reserve Components serve as an operational reserve, a strategic reserve, or both? In light of your answer, should the Reserve Components be supported by improved equipment, increased training, and higher levels of overall resourcing for readiness going forward?

The Reserve Components are both an operational and a strategic reserve. They provide strategic depth and operational agility when properly resourced, trained and equipped. Resourcing levels for the Reserve Components should be determined by their respective Services, using a Total Force concept, based on the validated requirements placed on them by the Combatant Commands in support of their war plans.

Recruiting and Retention

The National Defense Strategy Commission asserted unequivocally that the most critical resource required to produce a highly capable military is highly capable people, in the quantity required, and willing to serve. Yet, DOD studies indicate that only about 29% of today’s youth population is eligible for military service. Further, only a fraction of those who meet military accession standards are interested in serving.

Do you agree with the premise that the shortage in the number of American youth eligible, qualified for, and interested in serving in the Armed Forces poses an existential threat to national security?

The more limited the population who are eligible to serve, the greater the challenge to recruit applicants who meet the high standards required for military service. This challenge is compounded by the fact that most young people do not have a propensity to serve even if they could qualify for military service. As Secretary of the Army, I have spoken out publicly about this long-term challenge that faces our country, and instituted a recruiting initiative that got America's Army back into the nation's top 22 cities in a more focused manner. If confirmed, I would like to work with Congress on ideas to get more young Americans interested in military service in order to sustain the All-Volunteer Force.

In your opinion, why are so few individuals in the 17-24 age range eligible for service, and what can be done to increase the pool of individuals qualified for, and interested in military service?

Most youth in this age group are disqualified due to medical reasons, with nearly a third being disqualified for being overweight. As Secretary of the Army, I worked with DoD on a pilot program to allow the Army to screen applicants who slightly exceed body fat standards, but perform well on physical fitness tests, and will enter physically demanding career fields, such as combat arms. If confirmed, I would like to work with Congress on ideas to get more young Americans interested in and qualified for military service in order to sustain the All-Volunteer Force.

What programs, policies, or tools does the Department need to increase the propensity to serve of today's youth?

If confirmed, I will look carefully at the current efforts across the Department to improve the propensity to serve. I am particularly interested in efforts to increase the propensity to serve for women and for under-represented minority applicants. I believe the Department must actively educate both the youth market and influencers about military service and how service can benefit an applicant's career and life. I recognize the importance of connecting with youth on digital platforms. The services have made great strides in creating more personal and relatable content on social media to share authentic experiences of service life.

If required to choose between maintaining high recruitment and retention standards and achieving authorized end strength levels, which would be more important, in your view?

Quality over quantity. That was my mantra as Secretary of the Army, and will be as well if I am confirmed as Secretary of Defense. If given a choice between recruiting and retaining high quality Service members or achieving an end strength target, I

would choose quality over quantity every time.

What impact, if any, do you believe DOD's new Blended Retirement System (BRS) will have on recruiting and retention?

It is too early to tell. While we have not seen an impact from the BRS in recruiting or retention in the Services, I believe, in general, the BRS offers a positive incentive to applicants and Service members who may choose to serve, but for whom military service is not a 20-year career.

Religious Accommodation

As mandated by the Religious Freedom Restoration Act and the NDAA's for FYs 2013 and 2014, do each of the Military Service's policies and processes appropriately accommodate the religious practices of individual service members, in your view?

Yes. I believe the Services have demonstrated the importance of training their leaders concerning religious accommodation.

Do you support a policy that allows a prospective recruit to request and receive an accommodation of religious practices prior to enlisting or accepting a commission in the Air Force?

Yes.

Do you support a policy that allows a service member's religious accommodation, once granted, to follow the member throughout his/her military career—no matter where he/she is stationed or the nature of his/her specific duties—unless it can be demonstrated that the accommodation adversely affects military mission accomplishment?

Yes, provided again it does not adversely affect mission accomplishment or their own safety.

In your view, do existing DOD policies and practices regarding public prayers offered by a military chaplain in both official and unofficial settings strike the proper balance between a chaplain's right to pray in accordance with the tenets of his/her religious faith and the rights of other service members who may hold with different beliefs, including no religious beliefs, who may be present in these settings?

Yes, existing DoD policies and practices currently strike a proper balance.

In your view, does a military climate that welcomes and respects open and candid discussions about personal religious faith and beliefs in a garrison

environment contribute in a positive way to preparing U.S. forces to be effective in overseas assignments?

Yes, such a climate can contribute in a positive way.

In your view, would a policy that discourages open discussions about personal faith and beliefs be more or less effective at preparing service members to work and operate in a pluralistic environment?

In my view, a DoD or Military Service policy that would discourage an appropriate and respectful discussion about personal faith and beliefs would not be prudent.

Do you believe that allowing service members of certain faiths, such as Sikh, Orthodox Judaism, or Islam, to maintain beards or wear turbans or other religious headwear, while in uniform, strengthens or weakens the United States military's standing in areas of the world where such religions predominate? Would such allowances help or hurt our coordination and engagement with such foreign nations?

I believe the responsible and respectful accommodation of religious exercise of Service members strengthens our Department and our relations with our allies.

Military Quality of Life and Family Readiness

The Committee remains concerned about the sustainment of key quality of life programs for military families, such as family advocacy and parenting skills programs; child care; spouse education and employment support; health care; and morale, welfare and recreation (MWR) services.

If confirmed, what quality of life and MWR programs would you consider a priority?

If confirmed, I will focus on supporting quality of life programs that reinforce a strong military community much as I did as Secretary of the Army. To that end, my priorities include spouse employment and child care programs. I will work collaboratively across the Department and with Congress to sustain programs that have the greatest impact on readiness, retention, and resiliency, while ensuring good stewardship of public funds and an appropriate return on investment.

What factors would you consider in assessing which MWR programs are ineffective or outmoded and thus potentially suitable for elimination or reduction in scope?

MWR programs foster physical and mental well-being; aid in readiness, retention, and resiliency of personnel; and are a key part of maintaining Total Force Fitness. I believe the Department should continually seek ways to find efficiencies while

maintaining the benefits MWR programs provide to our Service members and their families, as appropriate to each Service and installation. It is my understanding that the Department is currently conducting a full review of MWR programs and funding policies to ensure they meet Service member needs, are properly funded, and provide the Services sufficient flexibility to ensure MWR programs continue to meet their mission.

If confirmed, how would you ensure that support related to mobilization, deployment, and family readiness is provided to Army Reserve and National Guard families, as well as to Active Army families who do not reside near a military installation?

As a former Regular Army, National Guard, and Reserve Army officer, I believe that the Department's approach must continue to be one that focuses on the Total Force – both active duty and reserve component (RC) members and families. It is imperative that the Department leverage a full spectrum of mechanisms to support our vast geographically dispersed population. Military OneSource, the Department's 24/7/365 solution to providing Service members and their families with resources, tools and information, is one of these solutions. I believe that a coordinated network of care encompassing support and services provided by the Department and other Federal, State, local, non-profit and private entities, can be very effective in reaching and serving geographically dispersed Service members and their families.

The Committee often hears that Active component military families have difficulty obtaining child care on the military installation and that there are thousands of families on waitlists to receive infant care.

What are your innovative ideas for increasing the availability of accessible, high-quality childcare, at an appropriate cost, for military families?

I recognize that finding accessible, quality child care remains a critical issue for military families. This issue was a priority for me as Secretary of the Army. There is no single solution to this challenge, although much can be done by updating our current policies. If confirmed, I will commit to working with the Military Services and Congress to develop a multipronged strategy that addresses the challenges in staffing and limited on-installation spaces. The Department has successfully implemented Militarychildcare.com, a universal, online child care request-for-care portal. It is this type of dynamic, state-of-the-art solution that is needed to help address this critical challenge.

If confirmed, would you support the consolidation of commissaries and the Service Exchanges into a single defense resale system?

Yes, if it can be done in a way that maintains or improves the benefit while achieving savings.

Women in the Service

Since 2015, all military occupations and units have been open to the assignment of any service member who can meet the occupational standards, including women.

What challenges still exist with regard to the assignment of women—to infantry and submariner occupations, in particular—and what proactive measures would you take or direct to address those challenges, if confirmed?

Ensuring access to all military occupational specialties for qualified women is a priority of mine. Each of the Services has made targeted recruiting and advertisement efforts to increase female awareness of these opportunities (for both currently serving members and new recruits). If confirmed, I will work with the Military Services to review and address potential gaps in policies and programs that may hinder this effort.

The retention rate of female officers in some Military Services declines precipitously between 8-12 years of service. To what do you attribute this decline? What specifically would you do, if confirmed, to increase the retention rates of mid-grade female military officers?

All Service members strive to strike a balance between service to country and personal priorities. My experience has been that many women leave the service early in order to start or raise families. If confirmed, I will work with the Military Services to ensure their personnel policies, programs, and procedures can accommodate, to the greatest extent possible, the various competing demands that military service imposes on women and families with the aim of retaining higher numbers of women in uniform.

Earlier this year, the Marine Corps integrated 50 female recruits into a historically all-male training battalion aboard recruit depot Parris Island.

In your view, how should the Marine Corps apply the lessons learned from this trial run going forward?

As Secretary of the Army, I am not familiar with the details of this trial run or its results. It is my understanding, though, that the single gender platoon training model remains the cornerstone of the civilian to Marine transformation process for the Marine Corps based on how it has successfully conducted this training in the past. I do believe that each of the services should continually, thoughtfully, and deliberately study and experiment with ways to improve training writ large, consistent with the NDS and relevant policies, and be willing to make adjustments (or not) if doing so improves the readiness and lethality of the force.

Non-Deployable Service members

Recently, the Department published DODI 1332.45, *Retention Determinations for*

Non-Deployable Service members.

Do you agree that service members who are non-deployable for more than 12 consecutive months should be subject either to separation from service or referral into the Disability Evaluation System?

I believe each and every Service member must be able to deploy, fight, and win when the nation calls. If a Service member is non-deployable for 12 consecutive months, an assessment is needed to determine if continued service is in the best interests of the military, with the default being either separation or referral into the IDES system.

DODI 1332.45 provides that the Secretaries of the Military Departments may “retain . . . those service members whose period of non-deployability exceeds the 12 consecutive month limit . . . if determined to be in the best interest of the Military Service.”

Given your experience as the Secretary of the Army, under what circumstances might the retention of a service member who has been non-deployable for more than 12 months be “in the best interest of the Military Service”?

Non-deployable Service members impact the Total Force’s ability to meet Geographical Combatant Commander requirements and source unexpected demand. There are specific circumstances when a service member who has been non-deployable for more than 12 months is retained to fill critical mission requirements. The Army’s use of the Continuation on Active Duty (COAD) program facilitates the retention of otherwise qualified Service members to fill critical mission requirements, such as cyber and military intelligence.

In your view, how should this policy be applied to service members with HIV? To service members who identify as transgender?

This policy should be applied equitably to all Service members, and each Service member is evaluated for retention on a case-by-case basis.

Have any of the Military Services established any class or group of personnel deemed “deployable with limitations,” such that the class or group is exempt from the 12-month non-deployable retention determination requirement?

Service members must be able to deploy, fight, and win when the nation calls. Service members in the IDES system are exempt. There are some service members who are “deployable with limitations.” For example, a service member with a vulnerability to heat injury may not be deployable to certain locations, but able to deploy to other locations.

In your view, what is the percentage of service members in the Active force and the percentage of service members in the Reserve Components who can be non-

deployable at any given time without adversely affecting the readiness of the force to execute the 2018 NDS and associated operational plans?

In order to maintain our lethality and readiness, all Service members are expected to be deployable. Our objective is to reduce the number of non-deployable Service members, which improves personnel readiness and lethality across the joint force. Today, we have established our non-deployable threshold at no more than 5%, with a goal of 100% deployability.

Military Health System Reform

Section 702 of the NDAA for FY 2017, as modified by Sections 711 and 712 of the NDAA for FY 2019, transferred the administration and management of military hospitals and clinics from the Military Departments to the Defense Health Agency (DHA), a Combat Support Agency.

If confirmed, specifically what would you do to ensure the rapid and efficient transfer of the administration and management of military treatment facilities to the DHA?

If confirmed, I will ensure the Department continues to make the transfer of the administration and management of the military treatment facilities to the DHA a top priority by getting personally involved in this very important issue. Moreover, I will adjust the plan as necessary to ensure we meet (and preferably exceed) the milestones laid out by the implementation team. The Military Health System is in the midst of the most significant change to the system in over three decades. This change represents a superb opportunity to more effectively and efficiently maintain a medically ready force and a ready medical force, while taking care of our beneficiaries.

In your view, do military medical providers across the Military Departments possess today the critical wartime medical competencies required to save the lives of service members injured in combat or contingency operations?

Yes, it is my understanding that they do. I believe we must remain vigilant, however, to ensure that our medical professionals are provided ample opportunities to maintain their expeditionary skills in the prevention and treatment of the injuries that are likely to occur in combat or contingency operations. As an example of the work supporting this effort, the Department has recently developed additional metrics to rigorously measure the expeditionary knowledge, skills and abilities of our medical personnel to ensure our continued medical excellence on the battlefield and in future operations.

Would you see value in restructuring the DHA as a new combatant command—a Unified Medical Command?

I believe we need to fully implement the current set of reforms first. After full implementation, it should be clear whether or what additional authorities may be needed to achieve our goal to most effectively and efficiently maintain a medically ready force and a ready medical force while providing quality healthcare for all of our beneficiaries. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress to consider and identify additional areas for reform to strengthen the Military Health System after we fully implement the present transformation plan.

Suicide Prevention

The number of suicides in each of the Military Services continues to concern the Committee.

If confirmed, what new initiatives would you implement to prevent suicides by military personnel and their family members?

I believe one suicide is too many, and I am dedicated to ensuring the health and well-being of all our military members. I believe suicide is complex – involving a wide range of factors – and is affecting our society writ large. As Secretary of the Army we jumpstarted new initiatives to get at this issue, such as improving leader awareness and knowledge at the lowest levels, and leveraging the chain of command to get more involved with and personally know their Soldiers. My personal view is that more often than not, someone close to that Service member is aware of changes in behavior that suggest someone is considering suicide. We need to empower these individuals to better identify these indicators, and then act on them to prevent a suicide, whether you are a friend, fellow Service member, or leader. If confirmed, I would continue to work closely with the Services, our partners in the VA, and other subject matter experts as we all learn more about how to prevent these tragedies.

If confirmed, what specific role and tasks would you establish for yourself in DOD's program of preventing suicide?

If confirmed, I would assess the avenues for the Secretary of Defense's personal involvement in preventing suicide. I would stress the importance of every leader, especially at the junior NCO level, getting to personally know their subordinates well in order to identify issues before they become problems that might prompt a service member to take his/her life. I also would continue to work closely with the Services, our partners in the VA, and other subject matter experts to ensure our strategies are targeted and driven by the latest research and best-practices in the field.

If confirmed, specifically what would you do to enhance the reporting and tracking of suicide among family members and dependents of service members across both Active and Reserve Components?

If confirmed, I will assess opportunities for enhancing the accurate and timely

reporting and tracking of suicides among family members and dependents of Service members.

Service of Transgender Persons

In January of 2019, the Supreme Court issued an order allowing DOD to implement this Administration’s policy prohibiting some transgender persons from joining the military. The new DOD policy took effect on April 12, 2019.

In your view, what would be the impact on readiness of permitting the enlistment or accession into the military of otherwise qualified individuals who are stable in their preferred gender?

The military is a standards-based organization. Whoever can meet the standards without special accommodations can serve. Transgender individuals may serve so long as they can adhere to all military standards, including the standards associated with their biological sex.

I would refer you to the Department’s 2018 Report and Recommendations on Military Service by Transgender Persons, which states that persons who have a history of gender dysphoria, who have undergone medical treatments for gender transition, or who are unable or unwilling to meet the military’s standards associated with their biological sex, could adversely impact military readiness and effectiveness and should be evaluated for the purposes of either accession or retention.

If confirmed, how would you determine which transgender service members should be “grandfathered” under the prior Administration’s policy?

As the Department’s 2018 policy states,

- Individuals who prior to April 12, 2019, were either contracted for enlistment or selected for entrance into an officer commissioning program through a selection board or similar process and were medically qualified for military service in their preferred gender are considered exempt from the new policy.
- Similarly, contracted ROTC and military service academy cadets/midshipmen, with a diagnosis of gender dysphoria confirmed by a military medical provider prior to April 12, 2019, are exempt and may transition.

Each of the Military Service Chiefs has testified before this Committee that in their personal experience, the service of transgender individuals in their preferred gender has had no negative impact on unit or overall readiness.

In your personal experience, has the service of transgender service members in their preferred gender had any negative impact on unit or overall readiness?

I have no specific reports on such impacts. DOD policies protect the privacy of all Service members, prevent discrimination against them, and preclude the systematic tracking of transgender Service members to assess their performance and impact on unit cohesion and effectiveness. I believe that anyone who can meet the standards (physical, mental, conduct, and security) without special accommodations and is worldwide deployable should be able to serve.

The DOD Civilian Workforce

DOD is the federal government's largest employer of civilian personnel. The vast majority of DOD civilian personnel policies comport with requirements set forth in title 5 of the U.S. Code, and corresponding regulations under the purview of the Office of Personnel Management. Although this Committee does not have jurisdiction over title 5, over the years, it has provided numerous extraordinary hiring and management authorities tailored to specific segments of the DOD civilian workforce.

In your judgment, what is the biggest challenge facing the Department in effectively and efficiently managing its civilian workforce?

In my opinion, the Department's biggest challenge is competing for talent in cutting-edge technical fields. This talent is in high demand in both the private and public sectors, and is absolutely necessary to advancing the National Defense Strategy. Data scientists, software engineers, cybersecurity professionals, and other highly skilled professionals command salaries that can be two or three times higher than government is able to pay. Statutory and regulatory restrictions hinder DoD's ability to offer competitive, market-based salaries. Further, in many cases private sector employers are able to offer a suite of attractive work-life benefits, such as flexible work schedules and virtual work. Ultimately, DoD must be an employer of choice for such high demand professionals.

In addition, it is my understanding that DoD's ability to effectively and efficiently hire has been complicated by dozens of special hiring authorities and complex rules, resulting in policies that are uncoordinated and difficult to administer. The Department could benefit from HR reform that provides streamlined, simplified, and standardized authorities and processes. This would enable the Department to improve hiring quality and timeliness and focus on strategic workforce planning to achieve mission outcomes.

In your view, do supervisors across the Department have the necessary authorities to address and remediate civilian employee misconduct and poor duty performance, and ultimately to divest of a civilian employee who fails to meet established standards of conduct and performance? If so, are DOD civilian and military supervisors adequately trained to exercise such authorities? If not, what additional authorities or training do DOD supervisors require?

In my view, the Department generally does have the necessary authorities to hold our civilian workforce accountable for misconduct and poor performance. The challenge is ensuring that all DoD supervisors, both military and civilian, are adequately trained and have the resources and time they need to supervise and lead the workforce. To that end, and if confirmed, I will ensure the Department is committed to examining opportunities to improve awareness and use of these authorities through additional training opportunities for its supervisors and leaders as appropriate.

Do you advocate the creation of a new “title 10” DOD civilian workforce and a concomitant body of title 10 personnel authorities applicable only to the DOD civilian workforce? If so, what should be the key components of this new body of personnel law, and how should it improve on title 5, in your view?

Yes. I support the creation of a new title 10 system for the DoD civilian workforce where needed to attract, hire, and retain highly technical personnel, such as cyber and intelligence experts, in support of the DoD national security mission. The current title 5 civilian personnel construct is not sufficient for outpacing our competitors in an emergent strategic environment; DoD is competing for talent in cutting edge fields with a private sector unconstrained by bureaucratic hiring regulations. DoD cannot risk an inability to recruit and retain exceptionally qualified talent to advance its national security mission.

The key components of a title 10 system would include direct hire authority to efficiently recruit and appoint highly qualified personnel, and the flexibility to pay and incentivize individuals to meet market demands, thus enabling the Department to effectively acquire, compensate, retain, and reward highly skilled civilian talent. Such authorities would enable the Department to be more responsive to future hiring needs, better compete with the private sector, reduce time to hire, and meet the requirements of the Department’s strategic goals and initiatives.

Under current law, the civilian pay raise to adjust for wage inflation is set at the Employment Cost Index (ECI) minus 0.5 percent, or at about a 2.6 percent increase for FY 2020. Yet, the Department’s budget did not provide funding for a civilian pay increase, notwithstanding submission of the largest topline defense budget request in the Nation’s history.

If confirmed, would you personally support a pay raise for DOD civilian employees, consistent with current law?

Civilian employees are a key component in supporting the warfighters and the Department’s mission to protect our country, so it is important to ensure their pay is not disadvantaged. If confirmed, I would support a pay raise for DoD civilian employees if such a law is enacted.

How would you assess the morale of the DOD civilian workforce? What is your assessment of the effect that past pay and hiring freezes have had on the DOD

civilian workforce?

It is my understanding that results from the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey indicate that employee morale is high and has been steadily increasing over the last 6 years. That said, pay and hiring freezes can increase risk to an organization's ability to attract and/or retain the best talent. However, even with pay freezes, the DoD civilian workforce has remained resilient and staunchly committed to the Department's mission.

Civilian Senior Executives and General/Flag Officers

The FY16 and FY17 NDAA's reduced the number of Senior Executive Service (SES) and General/Flag Officer (G/FO) positions in the Department of Defense by about 12%.

What progress has been made in reducing the number of SES across the DOD Components? In reducing the number of G/FO and restructuring the G/FO grade pyramid?

Section 1109 of NDAA for FY 2017, "Limitation on Number of DoD Senior Executive Service Positions," requires the reduction of the number of SES positions from 1,418 to 1,260 by December 31, 2022. I am informed that DoD is on track to reduce 158 positions by the end of FY 2022 to meet the 1,260 target. To date, 40% of the positions have been identified for reduction. As of May 31, 2019, 18 positions have been eliminated.

The Department has made progress in reducing the overall number of G/FO positions as well. The Military Services have developed, and are executing, plans to realize their mandated reductions not later than December 31, 2022. Additionally, the Joint Staff has successfully identified 78 G/FO positions for reduction. It is my understanding that the Department, to date, has reduced from 310 joint duty positions to 289 positions and has a plan to reach 232 by December 31, 2022. In conjunction with the overall reduction of G/FO positions, the Military Services and the Joint Staff have developed corresponding plans for the G/FO grade pyramids.

If confirmed, what specific actions would you take to ensure the Department is successful in meeting these reduction and restructuring mandates?

If confirmed, I will work with the Military Department Secretaries, and the Chairman and members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to ensure we meet the reduction and restructuring mandates. The Department has established a G/FO reduction plan timeline, which I will monitor, if confirmed, on a regular basis to ensure progress is being made.

Are you satisfied that OSD, the Joint Staff, and the Military Services have in place sufficient training and resources to provide members of the SES and

G/FOs the training, advice, and assistance they need to “play the ethical midfield”? Please explain your answer.

Yes. I believe the Department’s senior leaders have sufficient training and resources to lead in this area. If confirmed, I will ensure that our senior leaders continue to receive the training, advice, and assistance they need to uphold the highest ethical standards to support the Department’s continuing efforts to employ and sustain a high-performing, engaged, and professional executive workforce.

Defense Department and the Intelligence Community Collaboration

Since September 11, 2001, collaboration—both analytical and operational—between the Defense Department and the Intelligence Community has grown increasingly close. On one hand, seamless collaboration is vital to effective and rapid responses to non-traditional threats, and bringing together the strengths of the full spectrum of defense and intelligence capabilities can generate more effective solutions to complex problems. On the other hand, without effective management and oversight, such collaboration risks blurring distinct agency missions, authorities, and funding, as well as creating redundant lines of effort.

In your view, are there aspects of the current relationship between the Department and the Intelligence Community that should be re-examined or modified?

I am not aware of any needed modifications at this time. If confirmed, I look forward to a strong working relationship with the Intelligence Community and am open to change if necessary.

Security Clearance Reform

By Executive Order dated April 24, 2019, President Trump directed transfer to DOD of the background investigation mission presently executed by the Office of Personnel Management through its National Background Investigations Bureau. The newly-designated Defense Counterintelligence and Security Agency (DCSA) will be the primary entity for the conduct of background investigations to inform security clearance, employment suitability, and credentialing determinations for the entirety of the Federal Government. As well, DCSA will serve as the DOD proponent for the National Industrial Security Program; operate the continuous vetting and insider threat programs; and undertake other responsibilities as assigned by the Secretary of Defense.

If confirmed, would you assign to DCSA the mission of developing common Federal-Government-wide security clearance investigative and adjudicative standards?

If confirmed, I will continue the implementation of Executive Order (EO) 13869, including the directed transfer of functions. This implementation includes ensuring

the Department operates in accordance with the federal investigative standards established jointly by the Director for National Intelligence (DNI), who serves as the Security Executive Agent, and the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, who serves as the Suitability and Credentialing Executive Agent, pursuant to their assigned responsibilities in EO 13467, as amended. Those Executive Agents have been assigned the responsibility to prescribe and develop the Federal investigative standards, and similarly, the Security Executive Agent is responsible for establishing the national security adjudicative guidelines. DCSA's responsibility is to conduct background investigations in accordance with the Federal investigative standards and adjudicative guidelines.

If confirmed, how would you direct DCSA to address national security and suitability background investigation and adjudication processes as regards non-citizens who apply for enlistment or accession into the U.S. military?

If confirmed, I will ensure DCSA conducts security and suitability background investigations and adjudications in accordance with established federal investigative standards and adjudicative guidelines. The same standards and guidelines apply to all applicants, regardless of citizenship status, for determinations of suitability for military service.

In your view, what additional authorities or resources does DOD need to implement its Executive Order responsibilities more effectively?

It is my understanding that the Department has all the authorities needed to implement Executive Order 13869 and that any additional resource requirements are included in the Department's fiscal year 2020 budget request.

Execute Orders (EXORDs)

On May 8, 2019, then-Acting Secretary of Defense Shanahan issued a written policy memorandum governing Department of Defense responses to congressional requests for access to operational plans and orders, including Execute Orders (EXORDs).

If confirmed, will you personally undertake a reassessment of this policy and report to this Committee in a timely manner on the outcome of your reassessment and any changes to the policy that may result?

Yes.

Congressional Oversight

In order to exercise legislative and oversight responsibilities, it is important that this committee, its subcommittees, and other appropriate committees of Congress receive timely testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information from the executive branch.

Do you agree, if confirmed, and on request, to appear and testify before this committee, its subcommittees, and other appropriate committees of Congress?

Yes

Do you agree, if confirmed, to provide this committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate committees of Congress, and their respective staffs such witnesses and briefers, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information, as may be requested of you, and to do so in a timely manner?

I respect Congress's authority to seek information from the Department. If confirmed, I agree to accommodate all congressional requests for information by supplying the requested information to the fullest extent, consistent with the constitutional and statutory obligations of the Executive Branch.

Do you agree, if confirmed, to consult with this committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate committees of Congress, and their respective staffs, regarding your basis for any delay or denial in providing testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information requested of you?

I respect Congress's authority to seek information from the Department. If confirmed, I agree to accommodate all congressional requests for information by supplying the requested information to the fullest extent, consistent with the constitutional and statutory obligations of the Executive Branch.

Do you agree, if confirmed, to keep this committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate committees of Congress, and their respective staffs apprised of new information that materially impacts the accuracy of testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information you or your organization previously provided?

Yes

Do you agree, if confirmed, and on request, to provide this committee and its subcommittees with records and other information within their oversight jurisdiction, even absent a formal Committee request?

I respect Congress's authority to seek information from the Department. If confirmed, I agree to accommodate all congressional requests for information by supplying the requested information to the fullest extent, consistent with the constitutional and statutory obligations of the Executive Branch.

Do you agree, if confirmed, to respond timely to letters to, and/or inquiries and

other requests of you or your organization from individual Senators who are members of this committee?

I respect Congress's authority to seek information from the Department. If confirmed, I agree to accommodate all congressional requests for information by supplying the requested information to the fullest extent, consistent with the constitutional and statutory obligations of the Executive Branch.

Do you agree, if confirmed, to ensure that you and other members of your organization protect from retaliation any military member, federal employee, or contractor employee who testifies before, or communicates with this committee, its subcommittees, and any other appropriate committee of Congress?

Yes, I agree to protect the member from unlawful retaliation.