

Advance Questions for General Darren McDew, USAF
Nominee for Commander, United States Transportation Command

Defense Reforms

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

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

At this point, I don't see the need for any significant changes. Over the last three decades Goldwater-Nichols has led to an unprecedented level of integration and cooperation among the Services. This has not only yielded a far more effective fighting force, it has positioned us well to maintain that effectiveness as we face an increasingly constrained fiscal environment and diverse array of threats. However, to build on this success and guarantee a cadre of joint officers in the future I do believe we need to continually review joint officer requirements to ensure we are building the most qualified joint forces for the future.

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

JPME is essential to building a cadre of joint professionals prepared to meet the challenges of the future strategic environment. Expanding access to JPME to the Total Force community through advanced learning technologies is one area for consideration. If confirmed, I will work with Congress, the Secretary of Defense and other senior leaders of our military to ensure Goldwater-Nichols continues to meet the needs of our armed forces, and will support any changes to the legislation that might become necessary.

Duties

What is your understanding of the duties and functions of the Commander, U. S. Transportation Command?

The Commander, United States Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM), is responsible for providing air, land and sea transportation for the DOD, in peace, crisis and war. USTRANSCOM depends on three Component Commands to accomplish this mission: Air Mobility Command (AMC), Military Sealift Command (MSC), and the Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command (SDDC). The Commander is assigned multiple responsibilities in the Unified Command Plan (UCP) to include: the Distribution Process Owner (DPO) mission to improve the worldwide DOD distribution system; DOD single manager for global patient movement; Global Distribution Synchronizer (GDS) mission to synchronize

planning for worldwide distribution operations; and facilitating the rapid establishment of joint force headquarters for Combatant Commanders through its Subordinate Command, the Joint Enabling Capabilities Command. The USTRANSCOM team employs a mix of active and Reserve military members, government civilians and commercial industry partners to execute the Command's missions in support of the full range of military operations.

What background and experience do you possess that you believe qualifies you to perform these duties?

Throughout my 33 years in uniform, I have had held numerous positions in and out of the Department of Defense that have prepared me, if confirmed, to perform the duties as the Commander of USTRANSCOM. I was fortunate enough to be selected to spend a year as a Secretary of Defense Corporate Fellow at Sun Microsystems. During that year in the Silicon Valley, I was exposed to companies with reputations for insightful long-range planning, organizational and management innovation, and implementation of new information and other technologies.

As the Director of Public Affairs, Office of the Secretary of the Air Force, I was responsible for providing trusted counsel to the Secretary of the Air Force, the Chief of Staff, and all other principal military and civilian leaders of the Department of the Air Force concerning Public Affairs activities to assist in building public support and achieving the Air Force core competencies. I became adept at working with the civilian press, DOD and Congressional inquiries.

While still at the Pentagon, I was chosen as the Vice Director for Strategic Plans and Policy on the Joint Staff. In this role, I helped provide strategic direction, policy guidance, and planning focus to develop and execute the National Military Strategy. Through the Director, I enabled the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to provide military advice to the President, the Secretary of Defense and the National Security Council.

Finally, I served as Commander of the 18th Air Force which I was responsible for providing worldwide rapid, global mobility and sustainment for America's Armed Forces through airlift, aerial refueling, aeromedical evacuation, and contingency response. This position directly led to my selection as Commander, AMC. I command over 118,000 Airmen from across our Air Force, Active, Reserve, and Air National Guard who provide worldwide cargo and passenger delivery, aerial refueling, special air mission and aeromedical evacuation. This includes the crucial role of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief to victims of natural disasters both at home and around the world.

Do you believe that there are any steps that you need to take to enhance your expertise to perform the duties of the Commander, U. S. Transportation Command?

As the current AMC Commander I am aware of the breadth of USTRANSCOM's worldwide responsibilities. If confirmed, I will engage with all of USTRANSCOM's component commands, DOD agencies, and our commercial partners to guarantee I fully understand the range of challenges they face in order to accomplish USTRANSCOM's crucial mission.

Relationships

Section 162(b) of title 10, United States Code, provides that the chain of command runs from the President to the Secretary of Defense and from the Secretary of Defense to the combatant commands. Other sections of law and traditional practice, however, establish important relationships outside the chain of command. Please describe your understanding of the relationship of the Commander, U. S. Transportation Command to the following offices:

The Deputy Secretary of Defense

The Deputy Secretary of Defense has full power and authority to act for the Secretary of Defense when serving as his designated representative in the Secretary's absence. As such, the USTRANSCOM Commander will report to and through the Deputy Secretary when serving in that capacity. The Deputy Secretary also is the Chief Management Officer of the Department, responsible for optimizing the business environment across the Defense enterprise. USTRANSCOM strongly supports these optimization efforts as we strive to improve our support to the other Combatant Commands and Defense agencies in a cost-effective and operationally efficient manner.

The Under Secretaries of Defense

Under Secretaries of Defense coordinate and exchange information with DOD components, including Combatant Commands, which have collateral or related functions. In practice, this coordination and exchange is normally routed through the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. In addition, as the Distribution Process Owner, the USTRANSCOM commander receives oversight from the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics in his role as the Defense Logistics Executive via the Defense Logistics Board. This relationship works very well. If confirmed as a combatant commander, I look forward to the continuing collaboration.

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

As specified in title 10, the Chairman is the principal military advisor to the President, the National Security Council, the Homeland Security Council and Secretary of Defense. The Chairman serves as an advisor, and is not, by law, in the chain of command, which runs from the President through the Secretary to each Combatant Commander. The President normally directs communications between himself and the Secretary of Defense to the Combatant Commanders via the Chairman of the Joint Chief of Staff. This keeps the Chairman fully involved and allows the Chairman to execute his other legal responsibilities. A key responsibility of the Chairman is to speak for the Combatant Commanders, especially on operational requirements. If confirmed, I will keep the Chairman and the Secretary of Defense fully informed regarding USTRANSCOM matters.

The Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

Although the Vice Chairman does not fall within the Combatant Command chain of command, he is delegated full power and authority to act for the Chairman in the Chairman's absence. If confirmed as a Combatant Commander, when he is representing the Chairman, I will keep the Vice Chairman informed as I would the Chairman.

The Director of the Joint Staff

The Director of the Joint Staff assists the Chairman in managing the Joint Staff. The Director of the Joint Staff does not fall within the Combatant Commander's chain of command. However, he enables important decisions to be made as the Combatant Commander's staff interacts with the Joint Staff. The Director is also a key interface with Office of the Secretary of Defense Principals and interagency leadership, and can assist Combatant Commanders working issues below the Chairman's level.

The Secretaries of the Military Departments

Each Service Secretary is responsible for equipping, training, maintaining and administering forces belonging to that Service. Close coordination with each Service Secretary providing forces to USTRANSCOM is essential to ensure that there is no infringement upon the lawful responsibilities held by a Service Secretary.

The Chiefs of Staff of the Services

The Chiefs of Staff of the Services organize, train, and equip their respective forces. No Combatant Commander can ensure preparedness of assigned forces without the full cooperation and support of the Service Chiefs and their respective Reserve Components. As members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Service Chiefs have a lawful obligation to provide military advice. The experience and judgment the Service Chiefs provide is an invaluable resource for every Combatant Commander. If confirmed, as Commander USTRANSCOM, I will continue my predecessors' frank and productive dialogue with the Service Chiefs and the Commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard.

The other combatant commanders

USTRANSCOM's primary mission is to support each of the Combatant Commanders in accomplishing the responsibilities they are assigned in the Unified Command Plan. Given the complexity of today's security environment, it is essential that all the Combatant Commanders work together to execute U.S. national security policy. If confirmed, I will continue to build upon the trust and mutual support my predecessors have fostered with the other Combatant commanders.

Major Challenges and Priorities

In your view, what are the major challenges confronting the next Commander, U. S. Transportation Command?

Currently, the Command's number one priority is "Readiness" for the enterprise. USTRANSCOM has the capability to meet existing surge requirements; however, major future challenges may erode our key, asymmetric military transportation and logistics advantages. These challenges include: maintaining assured Command and Control (C2) in a contested cyber domain; impending mobility capability degradation due to reduced budgets, a shrinking force structure, diminished cargo volumes, and increasingly dynamic commercial market trends; and, also, growing peer and near-peer adversary's anti-access and area denial capabilities.

Additionally, USTRANSCOM focuses on providing both effective and efficient transportation solutions for all its customers. Future budget challenges may reduce Enterprise readiness and flexibility, subsequently degrading the Defense Transportation System to be less responsive and less resilient. While these challenges are formidable, given the talents of the USTRANSCOM team, they are not insurmountable.

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

If confirmed, I will work with my fellow Combatant Commanders to assess risk from these challenges and collaboratively develop mitigation strategies to ensure USTRANSCOM will meet its steady state and surge requirements. I will advance USTRANSCOM's cyber defenses to protect DOD networks and systems, partnering with other U.S. government departments, agencies, and the private sector to improve our cyber security. To overcome readiness challenges, we will work within the constraints of Public Law and National policy to leverage operations and implement transportation solutions that preserve readiness for both our organic forces and the critical surge capacity provided by commercial transportation providers.

In order to ensure our global distribution network, I will work with USTRANSCOM's commercial partners and the interagency to continue USTRANSCOM's global efforts to secure diplomatic and physical accesses to ground and airspace infrastructure for logistics. I will work to improve USTRANSCOM's global ability to deliver to the point of need in the most effective and cost-effective ways possible – projecting American influence and power when and where our national interests dictate. This includes collaboratively developing, in concert with our fellow Combatant Commands, Services and agencies, innovative concepts and capabilities to overcome the anti-access/area denial efforts of our peer and near-peer adversaries.

If confirmed, what broad priorities would you establish?

If confirmed, I will immediately become familiar with the all aspects of the defense transportation enterprise with a focus on preserving readiness of the Defense Transportation System to meet national objectives and to support the Joint Force into the future. Always mindful of our obligation to make the most of our existing resources, I intend to seek process

improvement and enterprise synchronization efforts through relationships within the Department, across the U.S. Government, and with commercial and international partners.

What do you consider to be the most serious problems in the performance of the functions of the Commander, U. S. Transportation Command?

As Commander, I will focus on operating a Combatant Command with global responsibilities in a challenging environment of declining budgets, smaller forces, reduced resources, and global rebalance of force posture. I will ensure synchronization of the entire Joint Deployment and Distribution Enterprise – a vast network of organizations both in and out of the Department of Defense that relies heavily on commercial partnerships with industry. Additionally, I will address the challenges with operating aging transportation fleets and port infrastructure worldwide.

If confirmed, what management actions and time lines would you establish to address these problems?

If confirmed, I will continue the focus on preserving readiness and aligning resources for mission success and to further enhance USTRANSCOM's operational resiliency. USTRANSCOM has made great strides in improving economies and efficiencies. I will continue this work by managing readiness, cost, and time variables to deliver effective and efficient deployment and distribution solutions commensurate with assigned authorities and available resources. While the near future poses many challenges, we must balance costs and benefits, matching our actions to available resources in the near term and adapting our efforts for greater economies and efficiencies in the long term.

Experience in Managing Logistics Operations

You have served as the Commander of the Air Mobility Command.

What steps do you believe you need to take to achieve a more complete understating of the logistics operations of the other component commands of the U. S. Transportation Command?

As the current AMC Commander, I am aware of the missions, roles and responsibilities of the elements of the USTRANSCOM team. If confirmed, I will make it a priority to better understand the capabilities and challenges of the component commands. I will engage with the Component Commanders, DOD agencies, and commercial partners to address the issues they face, work together to resolve logistics challenges, and to better accomplish USTRANSCOM's vital worldwide mission.

Civil Reserve Air Fleet

The military services rely heavily on the Civil Reserve Air Fleet (CRAF) to supplement its organic airlift in order to meet its wartime and peacetime transportation requirements.

What is your assessment of the CRAF's ability to meet requirements to transport any equipment, materials, or commodities for the use of U.S. military operations and respond to a humanitarian disaster?

Our commercial partners are an integral part of providing global air mobility assets to support military operations and response to humanitarian disasters. The combined capability of military and commercial lift gives us the ability to transport any equipment, materials, personnel, or commodities the warfighter will need to execute their mission to any point on the globe. If confirmed, I will continue to work with our CRAF partners to ensure the business relationships remain solid and the contracts continue to support DOD requirements.

Do the changes in the commercial airline industry, characterized by bankruptcies and a move toward smaller and shorter-range aircraft, impact the future viability of the CRAF?

The commercial airline industry is a dynamic market and always has been. We have adapted to carriers' fleet changes and benefited by having a commercial augmentation capability ready to answer the call when needed. It is an accurate assessment that there are fewer carriers now in the CRAF program than there have been in the last decade. I have met with several airline executives over the past 15 months, and they have all said they will continue to support the DOD and CRAF program because it is the right thing to do for our Nation. As we drew down forces from Afghanistan, carriers made expected adjustments to capacity to right size their fleets for the new business environment. Through Air Mobility Command's sponsored research, conducted as part of an extensive CRAF Study, we foresaw these changes and have adapted the program. Based on these efforts, we are confident the CRAF program will remain viable and capable to meet operational requirements in the future.

Do you think it is important to maintain an adequate industrial base for CRAF carriers?

Yes. CRAF provides a capability no other nation can replicate and ensures we can meet national requirements that our organic assets alone cannot provide in times of crisis or conflict. It is critical we maintain both an organic airlift capability and commercial augmentation capability that is "ready" to answer the call when the next crisis arises. It is important that our CRAF partners sustain necessary capacity to provide the support we foresee to support the National Defense Strategy.

How much should we be relying on CRAF to meet our peacetime and wartime airlift requirements?

The CRAF program is a critical component in this Nation's ability to rapidly deploy forces and equipment in times of crisis and peace. Because of the CRAF program, we can deploy forces more rapidly and more efficiently than any other nation in the world. In peacetime, this workload changes from year-to-year due to dynamic customer requirements. Our forecast requirements are expected to be much lower starting in FY16 compared to the past 13 years, which will impact both military and commercial capacity. We will continue to strive for the balance between military and commercial capacity while trying to garner more business into

the Defense Transportation System through such recent changes as competitive rates for Foreign Military Sales and non-DOD U.S. Government organizations.

What changes, if any, do you think need to be made to CRAF – authorities, requirements, composition?

AMC, in coordination with USTRANSCOM, chartered a study of the CRAF program to look at these specific issues. Throughout the study, we engaged industry experts for their advice on where the airline industry is headed and what to expect. The study team provided recommendations to senior leadership and industry executives, which we expect to implement in Fiscal Year 2016. Additionally, USTRANSCOM has begun an Integrated Airlift Management (IAM) approach to balance commercial and organic workload and associated risks. This approach ensures active and reserve component readiness through execution of the flying hour program, provides appropriate commercial airlift augmentation opportunities to retain necessary commercial airlift capacity, reduces the long-term cost of sustaining the organic airlift fleet by placing the minimum time on airframes necessary and supports "global agility" by creating a buffer capacity for adaptable military response to priority, short-notice missions. I am confident that these changes will help to maintain the program's viability despite the decrease in available business.

According to the Comptroller General, “DOD does not use its process for monitoring flying hours to determine when it will exceed required training hours and allocate eligible airlift missions to CRAF participants. Therefore, it cannot determine whether it is using CRAF to the maximum extent practicable. As a result, DOD may be using its military fleet more than necessary—which officials say is less economical—while risking reduced CRAF participation.”¹

Do you agree with GAO’s conclusion with regard to flying hours for CRAF?

There is a balance between ensuring sufficient training for crews, much of which comes from operational missions, meeting the needs of the combatant commander and balancing the use of organic versus CRAF-provided airlift.

I agree with the need to maintain readiness of all assets required to support national security, including all military and commercial airlift capabilities.

If so, what steps would you take to better manage these training hours?

AMC recently created a process that surveys the number of crew members per flying unit and applies seasoning model criteria that ensure aging rates and specific flying currency requirements are met. The output of that model is then put into our commanders’ apportionment and allocation process which balances readiness against actual combatant commander and mission requirements directing the excess to our commercial partners. This Total Force effort

¹ GAO Report 13-564, “DOD Needs to Take Steps to Manage Workload Distributed to the Civil Reserve Air Fleet,” Page 9, Government Accountability Office, June 2013, <http://www.gao.gov/assets/660/655338.pdf>.

has proven successful in responding to the readiness needs of all assets used to support the defense transportation system.

In addition, TRANSCOM has created a readiness and distribution allocation process that looks across all transportation modes to balance readiness needs. One outcome of this process has been an effort to begin buying commercial airlift using forecasts.

Also, according to GAO, the number of carriers and aircraft for cargo in CRAF appear to be dropping from 175 in 2011 to 162 aircraft in 2013 – this is in Table 1 on page 16.² More recent documents show this may be as low as 144 as of late last year.

Why is the number of aircraft participating in CRAF dropping? At what level does CRAF become at risk for being too small to meet the military’s airlift needs.

We do not measure the capability of the CRAF fleet based on number of aircraft, but rather the capacity those aircraft provide. Under the new Defense Strategy, the Wide Body Equivalent (WBE) requirement for cargo aircraft in the long range international segment of CRAF is 144 and for passenger aircraft it is 104 WBE. At these levels, the CRAF program is not at risk for meeting our military airlift needs.

Cybersecurity

U.S. Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM) must communicate over the unclassified Internet with many private-sector entities that are central to DOD’s force generation and deployment operations – in the transportation and shipping industries in particular. Much of the rest of the critical communications and operations of the Defense Department can be conducted over the classified DOD internet service, which is not connected to the public Internet and is therefore much more protected against eavesdropping, espionage, and/or disruption by computer network attacks.

The Senate Armed Services Committee’s inquiry into U.S. Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM) determined that it was subjected to many cyber intrusions that were not reported. USTRANSCOM also suffered from a lack of awareness by other law enforcement and national security agencies regarding cyber intrusions on USTRANSCOM contractors as well as misunderstandings by USTRANSCOM personnel on the rules and processes for sharing cyber intrusion-related information with necessary officials.

Have you reviewed this report?

Yes, I have reviewed the report and from my experience as the AMC Commander I understand the importance of Cyber security related to our ability to project forces in support of global requirements.

² GAO Report 13-564, “DOD Needs to Take Steps to Manage Workload Distributed to the Civil Reserve Air Fleet,” Page 16, Government Accountability Office, June 2013, <http://www.gao.gov/assets/660/655338.pdf>.

Are you concerned about the level of reporting of cyber events by command contractors or other U.S. Government agencies to USTRANSCOM?

I am concerned, and if confirmed, I will continue to build upon the plan of action resulting from the Senate Armed Services Committee report and the resulting Cyber Mission Analysis Task Force held 14-15 April 2015 at Scott Air Force Base. Information sharing across the inter-agency process is key for USTRANSCOM to continuously assess risk to our operational missions. Communicating our need to be informed about cyber intrusions with our commercial contractors is essential. We will continue to address our concerns through contract language and forums such as the Defense Industrial Base and the National Defense Transportation Association's cyber security group.

Do you feel that the Department of Defense is responding appropriately given recent events such as the threat nation intrusions into databases on US personnel, including DOD employees?

I believe the Department's response has been holistic in nature, continuing our focus on strengthening cyber readiness, enforcing cyber discipline among our users, and providing emphasis and education regarding protection of personal information. The recently published DOD cyber strategy provides an appropriately broad approach for protecting the Department's information within our systems and networks, as well as defending the U.S. homeland and national interests, and providing the President with cyber options necessary to support potential military operations. As we learn more with concerning these intrusions, we must continue to inform our people with regard to prudent mitigation actions.

What actions do you plan to take, if confirmed, as Commander, USTRANSCOM, to ensure that DOD reduces the risk of cyber intrusions?

If confirmed, I will strongly support efforts to implement the Department's Cyber Strategy, support movement of our critical information towards swift realization of the Joint Information Environment, and continue our efforts across the inter-agency process to address the need to share information concerning commercial provider cyber intrusions, enabling us to address mission assurance on multiple fronts from a cyber-perspective.

Do you believe that the current posture of USTRANSCOM and the Department of Defense is sufficient to deter adversaries in cyber space?

As in any domain, and especially in cyber, we must continuously assess our ability to maneuver, as an enabler to successful operations. In cyberspace, the cost of entry for an adversary is relatively low when compared with the domains of air, land, sea, and space. In addition, the ability of an adversary (state or non-state), to acquire ever-evolving and sophisticated technical capabilities increases almost daily, and our ability to attribute an adverse cyber action is very difficult. As a result, the ever-increasing cyber threat becomes potentially more complex and potentially dangerous on a daily basis. Therefore, we must continue to press forward with our ability to detect, deter, protect, and when necessary, respond with appropriate authority in this domain.

What do you believe are the critical needs of USTRANSCOM for cyber security?

USTRANSCOM relies upon the integrity of the information exchanged between military and commercial partners in its role as the distribution process owner for the Department. Our ability to command and control is highly dependent upon getting the right information to the right people at the right time, while protecting it from our adversaries. If confirmed, I will continue the important efforts to protect the command's information equities by working closely with our agency and commercial providers to further define roles, responsibilities, relationships and authorities for cyber security and to build trust and enhance information sharing.

How important is it that USTRANSCOM be aware of cyber intrusions by advanced persistent threat (APT) actors into the networks of airlines, shippers, and other defense contractors that enable TRANSCOM operations?

Compromise of a commercial partners' networks by an APT, is a potential cyber security issue that provides insight into USTRANSCOM operations. Awareness of these intrusions is paramount so that we can mitigate their operational impacts. Commercial partners are integral to our mission and ability to provide volume, velocity and efficiency of operations. Vulnerabilities within any organization's infrastructure, including cyber vulnerabilities, are a risk for all mission partners.

When USTRANSCOM becomes aware of an APT intrusion into an operationally critical contractor, what steps should the command take to determine whether operational plans should be adjusted to mitigate the risk of the intrusion affecting military operations?

As a result of the report and the Cyber Mission Analysis Task Force, USTRANSCOM has developed a mission risk assessment process that will enable us to consider appropriate operational and technical mitigation actions when we are made aware of such intrusions. The level of reporting continues to be a concern and is key to our ability to assess potential operational impact. USTRANSCOM has overcome some of these challenges with its cyber contract language and partnering efforts. If confirmed, I will continue to work with all stakeholders, government, military, and commercial partners to continuously assess our ability to adjust to cyber-attacks, including APT intrusions.

Personally-Owned Vehicle Transportation Issues

Last year, USTRANSCOM awarded a contract to ship privately-owned vehicles for servicemembers, the Global Privately Owned Vehicle Contract III, to a company without prior experience in this area. This award was followed by a protest from the incumbent contractor. During the summer peak moving season, the new contractor was late in delivering several hundred vehicles late and, in some cases, the vehicles of servicemembers were damaged. USTRANSCOM took an active role in increasing oversight and creating task forces to address the problems related to the change in contractors.

What lessons has USTRANSCOM learned from this experience to prevent the reoccurrence of these problems in the future?

USTRANSCOM originally planned for a contract transition during the non-peak season. Due to multiple protests the contract transitioned with no overlap and at the beginning of the 2014 peak season. This experience confirmed that the ideal transition time is in the winter months. In the future USTRANSCOM will consider the impact of unexpected extensions of the transition timeline when determining the contract transition period.

Under the current contract, Global Privately Owned Vehicle Contract III, how is USTRANSCOM able to hold contractors accountable for poor performance? What changes, if any, would you implement to improve accountability?

The contract contains several performance objectives, with the primary performance measure being on-time delivery. If the contractor does not deliver a vehicle within the required delivery date, they will incur a monetary reduction ranging from as low as \$30/day per vehicle up to the entire transportation cost of a vehicle if it is delivered 60 or more days late. In addition, the contractor must also pay inconvenience claims directly to the customer for rental cars, lodging, etc. required as a result of a late delivery. USTRANSCOM continues to seek ways to improve accountability, such as increasing the number of Contracting Officer Representatives (COR)s and supplementing COR training.

Given the fact that servicemembers today are more likely to be married with dependents, what else should USTRANSCOM do to reduce the impact of a lost vehicles or delayed deliveries on military families?

USTRANSCOM will continue to partner with the Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command (SDDC), the business process owner for the Global Privately Owned Vehicle Contract III. SDDC maintains a continuous dialogue with the Service Headquarters in order to ensure visibility of their Service member concerns and remediation of those concerns. Since Service member entitlements for inconvenience have not been adjusted for many years, it is time to evaluate and consider entitlement changes due to financial impact to the Service members.

Support of Troops in Afghanistan

Earlier this year the President stated his intention to keep 9,800 U.S. servicemembers in Afghanistan instead of the originally planned force level of 5,500.

What do you see as the major challenges to USTRANSCOM and the services for maintaining this higher troop level?

The capacity of the Afghanistan distribution network has diminished since our peak in 2010-11 when we supported a force of approximately 100,000. The current transportation network of air and surface lines of communication remains robust and more than capable of supporting the 9,800 U.S. Force structure in Afghanistan.

USTRANSCOM, as the Department of Defense distribution process owner, is compelled daily by the nature of our customer base, to view requirements through the joint lens. As active members of the Joint Team, Service requirements are communicated and met through a healthy variety of Joint efforts. Although Service challenges exist, none have proven too difficult for the Joint Team, through healthy communications and cross-seam coordination, to resolve.

How will you ensure that our deployed troops in Afghanistan receive the support they require as the Department's attention turns towards other national security situations elsewhere in the world?

USTRANSCOM is the world-wide distribution process owner, and delivers passengers and cargo daily to U.S. force locations regardless of the size of force or the remoteness of their location. USTRANSCOM delivers everywhere, to everyone, all the time. With this in mind, globally integrated operations between the Department of Defense, Department of State and other federal agencies will be required to maintain complex political and military relationships. These relationships, as well as those of partner nations, support the lines of communication which provide USTRANSCOM the flexibility and agility to meet ongoing and emergent requirements.

Peacetime-Wartime Logistics Management

Our transportation and logistics systems have been significantly altered over time to reduce organic military air and sealift capacity and rely on commercial aircraft and sealift as well as commercial supply chains to deliver spare parts to deployed forces. This was done to reduce costs as well as increase buying power and flexibility for the military.

How does TRANSCOM plan for the risk that this change in providing equipment and logistics to deployed forces thousands of miles away in potential combat zones?

Commercial providers help mitigate risk of access to challenging theaters such as Afghanistan through their ability to leverage intermodal networks – the Northern Distribution Network (NDN), which is primarily commercial, is a good example of mitigating risk to access Afghanistan by surface means in case the Pakistan ground lines of communication (PAK GLOC) is not available.

When deploying and sustaining forces in a combat zone, where the threat level prevents commercial assets from delivering to those locations, in general, commercial providers would move requirements to enroute locations, and military assets would move those requirements into the theater of operations in order to mitigate the risk to commercial providers while leveraging their capabilities.

How does TRANSCOM utilize commercial partners for logistics in a wartime environment? How do you plan to balance logistics capacity between commercial and military logistics systems?

When operating in a non-permissive (wartime) environment, USTRANSCOM has an outstanding track record of balancing commercial and organic logistics systems. In general, commercial providers move requirements to enroute locations outside of the threat environment, and military assets move those requirements into the theater. This practice has proven to be cost effective while meeting Combatant Commander needs and also ensures commercial providers assume minimal risk in transporting military cargo and personnel.

The military relies on an extensive network of logistics facilities overseas to support our deployed forces. These overseas depots enable our deployed forces to remain on station longer without having to be supported directly from CONUS. These depots are in host nations, which are U.S. friends and allies.

What is the resiliency of these overseas depots, particularly in places near ongoing political instability?

USTRANSCOM does not own or operate overseas depots. However, as the Distribution Process Owner and Global Distribution Synchronizer, USTRANSCOM does collaborate closely with Geographic Combatant Commands, Military Services, Defense Logistics Agency, and other strategic partners to develop and maintain an agile, secure and resilient distribution network to support and sustain overseas depots. We constantly monitor the operational environment and respond to challenges, as appropriate, with the use of alternate distribution routes and logistics nodes to ensure the continued viability of those depots.

Congressional Oversight

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

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

Yes.

Do you agree, when asked, to give your personal views, even if those views differ from the Administration in power?

Yes.

Do you agree, if confirmed, to appear before this Committee, or designated members of this Committee, and provide information, subject to appropriate and necessary security protection, with respect to your responsibilities as the Commander, U. S. Transportation Command?

Yes.

Do you agree to ensure that testimony, briefings and other communications of information are provided to this Committee and its staff and other appropriate Committees?

Yes.

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

Yes.