

**Senate Armed Services Committee**  
**Advance Policy Questions for James Caggy**  
**Nominee to be Assistant Secretary of Defense for Mission Capabilities**

**Duties and Qualifications**

**1. What is your understanding of the duties and functions of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Mission Capabilities, or ASD(MC)?**

The primary mission of the Assistant Secretary of War for Mission Capabilities (ASW(MC)) is to accelerate the development and integration of new technologies to maintain U.S. technological superiority. The ASW(MC) serves as the principal staff advisor to the Under Secretary of War for Research and Engineering (USW(R&E)) for identifying, incubating, and transitioning technologies, systems, and system-of-systems to close time-critical gaps in high-priority missions. If confirmed, I will work tirelessly to ensure that the Department of War (DoW) can develop, test, and field the tools our warfighters need faster and more effectively than our adversaries.

**2. What background and experience do you possess that qualify you to perform these duties?**

I have spent my career at the intersection of technology and national defense. I served for over a decade as a U.S. Army infantry officer, including combat deployments in Afghanistan and the Middle East, and those experiences impressed upon me the importance of giving our warfighters every possible advantage. After my military service, I held executive leadership roles in the technology sector, delivering cloud computing, advanced analytics, and artificial intelligence capabilities to warfighters. Most recently, I served as a technical advisor in the Office of the Secretary of Defense Strategic Capabilities Office, where I focused on rapidly prototyping new capabilities for the Joint Force. This blend of frontline military experience and technology leadership over two decades has prepared me for the potential opportunity to lead the Mission Capabilities Office.

**3. Do you believe that there are actions you need to take, if confirmed, to enhance your ability to perform the duties of the ASD(MC)?**

If confirmed, I will focus on three priorities. First, accelerating prototyping and delivering new capabilities to our warfighters at speed. We must shorten the cycle from idea to impact. Success in this area means we won't just innovate in a lab; we will get technology into the field where it can make a difference for the men and women on the front lines. Second, we must strengthen our development pipelines and test infrastructure to drive innovation at scale. It's not enough to invent or procure a single new gadget; we need a secure and sustainable system that continually transitions good ideas into fielded capabilities. Finally, we must strengthen DoW's engagements with the emerging defense-tech sector. Startups and nontraditional

defense contractors could very likely have transformative ideas but get stuck in our processes. We need to improve the Department's engagements to get the warfighters what they need and when they need it. We must be clear, fast, and predictable so that a promising technology becomes a funded pilot in months, not years.

**4. If confirmed, what additional duties and functions would you recommend the Undersecretary of Defense for Research and Engineering prescribe for you?**

Before being fully briefed on the important work already occurring in the OUSW(R&E) portfolio, including classified efforts, I am reluctant to name additional duties and functions that could be added to the MC portfolio. That said, the current duties and functions assigned to the MC office provide great opportunities to accelerate transition efforts and ensure America is maintaining its technological edge. If confirmed, I look forward to supporting the efforts of the Secretary of War and the USW(R&E) by executing all duties and functions that fall under my authority and that are prescribed to me by the Secretary of War and the USW(R&E).

**Conflicts of Interest**

**Federal ethics laws, to include 18 U.S.C. §208, prohibit government employees from participating in matters where they, or certain family members or organizations with which they have certain relationships, have a financial interest. [SOCO]**

**5. Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to disclose any potential conflicts of interest, including investments, business ties, family relationships, or other connections that could be perceived as influencing your decision making?**

I agree to comply with all conflicts of interest disclosure requirements set forth in the Ethics in Government Act and implementing regulations.

**6. Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, that if a conflict of interest arises, you will recuse yourself from participating in any relevant decisions regarding that specific matter?**

I agree to comply with all recusal requirements under 18 U.S.C. § 208 and implementing regulations.

**7. Do you commit, without qualification, if confirmed, to decision-making on the merits and exclusively in the public interest, without regard to private gain or personal benefit?**

I commit to deciding matters on the merits based on the public interest, without regard to any private gain or personal benefit.

**Major Challenges and Priorities**

**The Office of the (ASD(MC)) is a new position and was established in July 2023, pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 138, and a memorandum from the then Deputy Secretary of Defense. The role was borne out of an imperative to improve the technology development to manage joint missions.**

**8. What are the major challenges that confront the next ASD(MC), in your view?**

We are at a pivotal moment. The United States faces the most complex and challenging security environment since World War II. Advanced technologies are emerging at a breakneck pace, and our competitors, especially China, are investing aggressively to outpace us. As a soldier in combat, I learned firsthand that having superior capabilities can be a matter of life or death for the troops on the ground. As a technologist, I see how cutting-edge innovation, such as artificial intelligence, directed energy weapons, hypersonics and advanced space systems, can transform our military if we can get those innovations out of the lab and into the field quickly. It's about ensuring the DoW can develop, test, and field the tools our warfighters need faster and more effectively than our adversaries.

**9. If confirmed, what would you do to address each of these challenges?**

If confirmed, I will focus on three priorities. First, accelerating prototyping and delivering new capabilities to our warfighters at speed. We must shorten the cycle from idea to impact. Success in this area means we won't just innovate in a lab; we will get technology into the field where it can make a difference for the men and women on the front lines. I will work with DoW Components, experts, and offices across the Department to remove bureaucratic roadblocks that slow down transitioning proven technologies to the Joint Force, so that warfighters receive state-of-the-art capabilities on timelines measured by the need, such as in months, not years.

Second, we must strengthen our development pipelines and test infrastructure to drive innovation at scale. It's not enough to invent or procure a single new gadget; we need a secure and sustainable system that continually transitions good ideas into fielded capabilities. I intend to work with the Military Services and the Combatant Commands to increase the number of joint prototyping and experimentation exercises over the next year, so we identify and fix problems early and get capabilities into warfighters' hands faster. The metric I care about is speed with credibility: how quickly we can prove that a technology works and field it at scale. If confirmed, I'll work to implement policy how we measure and how we can shorten both timelines, without compromising safety or effectiveness.

Finally, we must strengthen DoW's engagements with the emerging defense-tech sector. Startups and nontraditional defense contractors could very likely have transformative ideas but get stuck in our processes. We need to improve the Department's engagements to get the warfighters what they need and when they need

it. We must be clear, fast, and efficient so a promising technology becomes a funded pilot in months, not years.

**10. If confirmed, what broad priorities would you establish that you believe should be addressed by the ASD(MC)? What recommendations would you make regarding those priorities?**

The Mission Capabilities office is all about making sure that when our troops go into harm's way, they are the best-equipped and best-prepared fighting force on the planet. If confirmed, I will work tirelessly to maintain America's technological edge.

**11. What emerging scientific and technical fields do you consider the most important and relevant for future warfighting and defense missions?**

The USW(R&E), along with the Assistant Secretary of War for Critical Technologies, will define the priority technology development areas. The responsibility of the ASW(MC) is to ensure that our prototyping efforts integrate technologies across the priority technology areas in our mission-focused campaigns of demonstrations and experimentation and advance the maturity of systems aligned with each priority technology area. There is an obvious need to continue the development of artificial intelligence-informed weapons, software, and networks, along with autonomy and collaborative systems, directed energy, and space-based systems.

**12. What do you see as the most important technical or operational skill sets that you would need within the workforce for the office of the ASD(MC)?**

Diverse skill sets, including program management, private sector, and small or non-traditional business backgrounds, multiple types of engineering, developmental test expertise, systems integration, mission analysis, and modeling and simulation, all must come together within the OASW(MC) workforce to ensure that the Department focuses its prototyping efforts on the most impactful missions that address operational needs of the warfighter.

**13. What is your understanding of how the office of the ASD(MC) will integrate operations research skill sets for analysis into its activities?**

One of the key outputs of a successful campaign of prototyping and experimentation is insight into the development of concepts of operations for new systems across missions. If confirmed, I will assess whether the OASW(MC) is adequately pursuing operations research skill sets into its activities.

**14. In your view, how should the office of the ASD(MC) leverage technical advice from across the Department, including the Office of Net Assessment, the Defense Science Board and the Analytic Working Group under Cost Analysis and Program Evaluation (CAPE)?**

The OASW(MC) can leverage diverse perspectives and technical advice in the selection of prototypes to comprise mission constructs for prototyping, exercises, and demonstrations. The OASW(MC) can also prioritize missions and scenarios based on these sources of technical insight. If confirmed, I will ensure that my organization considers and integrates all appropriate technical feedback across the Department.

### **Experimentation and Prototyping**

**15. In your view, what is the fundamental difference between a mission-oriented experiment and a technology prototype?**

A fundamental difference is that a technology prototype is a promising system looking for a customer or a use case, while a mission-oriented experiment knows that the customer is the joint force in a critical warfighting scenario, where the systems together form a product that must address a gap in our current capabilities, and be deployable in a joint warfighting situation.

**16. With significant funding flowing to experimentation, what governance mechanisms will you, if confirmed, put in place to keep campaigns of experimentation focused and fiscally responsible while preserving speed?**

There are multiple new approaches that are data centric, or that involve modeling and simulation that can assist as governance mechanisms to ensure that we appropriately balance outcomes against speed and cost. If confirmed, I will assess whether additional mechanisms beyond the traditional method of tracking Technology Readiness Levels (TRL) should be implemented to ensure our campaigns of experimentation remain focused in light of fiscal and time pressures.

**17. What is your understanding of the steps being taken to ensure that joint experimentation efforts are adequately resourced in a budget-constrained environment?**

If confirmed, I would be responsible for executing substantial resources for prototyping and experimentation. Obviously, the mission and the value of joint experimentation must be understood and supported at all levels at the Department, particularly by those groups involved in planning and budget formulation, like CAPE and the Office of the Under Secretary of War (Comptroller). Support for the mission must be present within the Office of Management and Budget and Congress as well; therefore, my role, if confirmed, would be to champion our successes to each critical audience.

**18. If confirmed, how will you ensure that the organization conducting an experiment does not “grade its own homework,” but instead subjects results to**

**an independent, objective, operator-centric evaluation before any acquisition decisions is made?**

I understand that each technology included in an experimentation campaign produces a “body of evidence” to capture all data, performance, and other measurable results from each exercise and event, such that an objective and operator-centric evaluation criteria are applied. If confirmed, I would seek to strengthen the independent analysis and continue the body of evidence approach to inform transition and procurement decisions.

**19. If confirmed, how will you structure experimentation campaigns to maximize the participation of non-traditional vendors and small businesses?**

My experience in the private sector, as well as my time working with the Strategic Capabilities Office, has elevated my awareness of the agility, technical approaches, and innovation derived from nontraditional defense contractors and small business vendors. Fully integrating these sources of innovation in our experimentation campaigns will be a key focus, if confirmed. The Department can provide authentic scenarios for aspiring defense contractors to test their technology or applications and, in providing this service, the Department would also gain insight and access to novel technologies and approaches from industry.

**20. If confirmed, what policies would you propose to support the use of virtual environments, such as Live, Virtual, and Constructive (LVC) environments, and advanced modeling and simulation tools, as outlined in the Mission Engineering Guide, to accelerate rapid prototyping, testing, and mission architecture development?**

I have not been fully briefed on the capabilities and functions of the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of War for Mission Engineering and Integration, which can conduct analysis of warfighter scenarios and technologies using advanced modeling and simulation tools at every level of classification. However, I support the use of LVC environments as a tool alongside physical test and evaluation, and, if confirmed, I would seek to ensure the maximal use of LVC environments to optimize mission insight and achieve cost savings.

**21. What is your understanding of the policies being developed to integrate advanced modeling and simulation tools into joint experimentation?**

I have not been fully briefed on the capabilities and functions of the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of War for Mission Engineering and Integration, which can conduct analysis of warfighter scenarios and technologies using advanced modeling and simulation tools at every level of classification. However, if confirmed, I would seek to understand the current Mission Engineering Guide and determine what policies or legislative recommendations may be required to implement the guide

and what updates may be required for subsequent versions of the Mission Engineering Guide as the state of practice in modeling and simulation matures.

**22. If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure Accelerate the Procurement and Fielding of Innovative Technologies (APFIT) funded projects align with joint mission requirements and avoid duplication with service-specific efforts?**

The APFIT program was designed to address the gap between typical budget cycles and innovation cycles. Often, aspiring companies with technology solutions the Department needs cannot wait two years for the Military Services' planned budget to become appropriated funds available for contracts. The APFIT program continues to successfully enable innovative companies to bridge funding timelines and get technology into production up to two years sooner than otherwise possible. If confirmed, I will work to adequately understand Military Service-specific efforts to avoid duplication of APFIT projects.

**23. How will you utilize the Foreign Comparative Testing (FCT) program to identify and integrate proven foreign technologies into joint mission capabilities, particularly for urgent operational needs?**

The FCT program has done an excellent job at determining procurement alternatives for current and emerging requirements, capitalizing on partner and ally investments and expertise in many warfighting capability areas. FCT authorities that allow follow-on procurement without additional competition could be applied to current defense innovation acceleration efforts to enable similar benefits domestically. If confirmed, I look forward to considering the comparative testing program described in the question.

**24. What strategies are being developed to ensure that joint experimentation efforts remain agile in the face of rapid technological change?**

Joint experimentation campaigns must follow relevant timelines and must be informed by intelligence and threats to ensure our campaigns remain agile in the face of rapid technological change, both by our forces and by our adversaries.

**25. What mechanisms will you put in place, if confirmed, to capture real-time operational feedback during an experiment and make it visible to stakeholders and acquisition executives?**

I understand that the OASW(MC) currently uses a "body of evidence" approach as the artefact that is created as the capstone for any technology or system undergoing experimentation. If confirmed, I would seek to ensure that this "body of evidence" is made available to decision makers during compilation, to inform budget, transition, and operations decisions for the appropriate communities.

## **Experimentation and Adoption**

**26. How would you propose improving coordination of joint experimentation events and venues to ensure that joint experimentation efforts, such as the Rapid Defense Experimentation Reserve (RDER), avoid duplicating service-specific demonstration activities?**

I support the President's Budget, which I understand did not include a funding request for the RDER program. However, for any effort that seeks to conduct mission-level and allied partner system-of-system prototype demonstration and experimentation, seeking input from the Joint Staff and the Military Services is a critical phase of campaign planning. If confirmed, I would ensure that before any multi-service joint experimentation supported by the President's Budget request, that we avoid duplication by understanding service-specific efforts.

**27. How would you propose addressing the challenge of aligning joint experimentation outcomes with the services' budgeting and programming processes?**

The challenge of successful joint experimentation is that it demonstrates technologies are mature and ready for adoption or transition up to two years earlier, which means the Military Service budgets have not accounted for the speed and cannot immediately integrate them or keep contractors solvent. The APFIT program was designed to address this gap. The program serves the secondary purpose of increasing the size of the defense industrial base while also providing procurement funding for innovative projects, often to first-time suppliers, whose technologies have reached fieldable TRLs and are ready to transition to operational use. The APFIT program continues to successfully enable innovative companies to bridge funding timelines and get technology into production up to two years sooner than otherwise possible. If confirmed, I look forward to learning more about how the OASW(MC) can align joint experimentation outcomes with the service's budgeting and programming process.

**28. In your view, what is the best process for identifying suitable operational problems for experimentation events?**

Experimentation events must be focused on addressing critical gaps in our joint capabilities. I believe the best process to identify these gaps is through mission analysis that is threat informed, capability-informed, warfighter-informed, and forward looking to our most challenging scenarios and adversaries.

**29. If confirmed, what criteria will you use to choose which operational problems merit a Department-level experimentation campaign, and how will you guard against dispersing efforts across too many topics?**

I believe the best process to identify operational problems that merit a Department-level experimentation campaign is through mission analysis that is threat informed, existing capability-informed, warfighter informed, and forward looking to our most challenging scenarios and adversaries. This type of focused mission analysis will ensure that our prototyping and experimentation efforts do not become diluted across too many problem statements.

**30. What strategies are in place to ensure that joint experimentation results in actionable evidence that might support service adoption of new capabilities?**

Technology prototypes cannot be selected and experimented in a vacuum. Transition planning and early identification of a Military Service transition partner is an important strategy to support Military Service adoption of proven capabilities. Additionally, the establishment of a body of evidence, which is available to technology leaders and decision makers, throughout the experimentation process, will further enable service adoption of new capabilities.

**31. What mechanisms are in place to ensure that combatant commanders' operational priorities drive the direction of joint experimentation efforts?**

I have not been fully briefed on the existing mechanisms to gather input from combatant commanders in the design of future joint experiments, but I would seek to ensure the relationships between the staffs across the ASW(MC), and the Joint Staff and the Military Services, remain constructive and collaborative, and ensure open pathways of communication exist. Experimentation efforts cannot be planned in a vacuum.

**32. If confirmed, how would you plan to scale successful joint experimentation outcomes across multiple combatant commands?**

The capabilities we would demonstrate through joint experimentation will by their design be critical technologies that address identified mission gaps, and there will therefore be an extremely strong case in the body of evidence that drives adoption of these capabilities and products by the warfighters in the applicable combatant commands.

**33. How do you propose ensuring that joint experimentation efforts address the specific needs of contested environments, such as logistics or forward base defense?**

Experimentation campaign planning and design should be focused on our most challenging problems, to include contested logistics and forward base defense.

**34. How do you propose addressing the challenge of aligning joint experimentation timelines with the urgent operational needs of combatant commanders?**

Joint experimentation can be scaled in venue and scope to address urgent operational needs of combatant commanders. For example, the Technology Readiness Experimentation effort (T-REX) can provide an opportunity to validate the technical maturity and military utility of multiple vendors' technologies for a given problem set. If confirmed, I would strive to ensure that experimentation campaigns can be scaled to the mission.

**35. How do you propose ensuring that joint experimentation efforts incorporate operator feedback early in the development process?**

I understand that there is a staff liaison from the OASW(MC) embedded in each of the Combatant Commands, which is one mechanism to ensure operator feedback is included in experiment development. If confirmed, I would review the adequacy of this liaison function and seek to improve other channels of operator feedback during the planning process.

**36. How do you propose addressing the challenge of coordinating joint experimentation across geographically dispersed combatant commands?**

I understand that past campaigns of joint experimentation have simultaneously incorporated capabilities across disparate geographical locations and combatant commands, most notably with certain data-processing capabilities occurring at continental United States (CONUS) nodes, for outside CONUS experiments. The nature of our capabilities make experimentation a requirement.

**37. What policies are in place to support the rapid scaling of successful joint capabilities to address emerging threats?**

If confirmed, I look forward to learning more about the policies in place to support the rapid scaling of successful joint capabilities to address emerging threats. We must strengthen our development pipelines and test infrastructure to drive innovation at scale. It's not enough to invent or procure a single new gadget; we need a secure and sustainable system that continually transitions good ideas into fielded capabilities. I intend to work with the Military Services and the Combatant Commands to increase the number of joint prototyping and experimentation exercises over the next year, so we identify and fix problems early and get capabilities into warfighters' hands faster. The metric I care about is speed with credibility: how quickly we can prove that a technology works and field it at scale. If confirmed, I'll work to implement policy on how we measure and how we can shorten both timelines, without compromising safety or effectiveness.

**38. How do you propose addressing the challenge of aligning joint experimentation with the Department of Defense's (DoD) long-term strategic goals?**

If confirmed, my role would be to ensure that our joint experimentation efforts align to the Secretary's vision and the President's direction for the DoD. Mission-focused

joint experimentation will necessarily be aligned to the Secretary's priority missions and must not occur in isolation from mission needs.

## **Transition**

**39. If confirmed, how will you leverage the authorities under Section 806 of the Fiscal Year 2024 National Defense Authorization Act to help improve technology transition across the Department and the military services?**

I understand that Section 806 directs the Service secretaries to designate a principal technology transition advisor. If confirmed, these transition advisors would serve as a critical community to advise me on technology decisions, as well as providing my organization with a focused entry point for transition discussions with each military department. Due to the fact that budget cycles lag behind technology development timelines, I would leverage these transition advisors to ensure budgets are prepared to continue development or initiate fielding of mature systems.

**40. What do you see as the different pathways of transition within the DoD, and how do those align or conflict with the various innovation and acquisition pathways for the Department?**

I understand that the new Adaptive Acquisition Framework issued by the Under Secretary of War for Acquisition and Sustainment, alongside the rapid acquisition and rapid fielding pathways, ensures that an appropriate transition pathway will be available when a technology solution is proven mature and ready for fielding. This relies on a motivated transition partner with funding in place – underscoring the importance of transition planning early in the prototyping process and taking advantage of bridge funding like via the APFIT program, when necessary, to keep vendors solvent and production lines active.

**41. What decision rules, qualitative or quantitative, will you apply to guide investment and, when necessary, shut down, pivot, or double-down on prototypes or capabilities that are part of an experiment that are not demonstrating war-fighting value?**

Before being read into each capability portfolio at classified levels, it is difficult to provide a firm framework for future decision making. However, in general, making threat-informed investments and adjusting to changing adversary capabilities may create inflection points for doubling down or divesting. Defining our most critical missions and choosing technology investments to win in those scenarios will be informed by modeling and simulation, performance data, and engineering rigor as a broad category. We must ensure we invest in what is technically possible. If this analysis demonstrates no warfighting value, fiscal responsibility requires that we stop projects that do not deliver.

**42. If confirmed, how do you see your office collaborating with the Defense Innovation Unit (DIU) or the Office of Strategic Capital to incorporate commercial innovations into joint experimentation?**

We must utilize the strength and innovation of the U.S. commercial sector, particularly dual-use technology, to bolster DoW and improve Warfighter lethality. The close collaboration between the OUSW(R&E) and DIU on key technological advancements have built off initial USW(R&E) investments, such as in quantum sensing, that DIU is now prototyping and fielding technologies with commercial companies for critical defense missions in close partnership with USW(R&E) and the Services. There are programs within the OASW(MC), such as T-REX, that inform DIU's initial fielding of commercial technologies for the Warfighter. If confirmed, I look forward to continuing this collaboration.

**43. If confirmed, how do you plan to balance the need for rapid capability deployment with the long-term sustainability of joint systems?**

Modular open system architecture (MOSA) approaches enable the rapid development and integration of new capabilities with our legacy systems. If confirmed, I would seek to ensure that MOSA approaches are being leveraged to ensure interoperability between what we are sustaining as long-term capabilities with new, rapidly deployable capabilities.

**44. What steps are being taken to ensure that experimentation efforts like RDER effectively bridge the gap between research and development and operational deployment?**

I understand that the President's Budget request did not include a funding request for the RDER program. However, this will not impact future T-REX events. T-REX was developed to enable technical evaluation and obtain user feedback on capabilities under development in order to ensure they are ready for more advanced and integrated operational evaluations. If confirmed, I will evaluate current Department experimentation efforts to ensure they are bridging the gap between research and development and operational deployment.

**45. What steps are being taken to foster collaboration between traditional defense contractors and non-traditional commercial technology companies in joint experimentation?**

If confirmed, I look forward to strengthening DoW's engagements with the emerging defense-tech sector. Startups and nontraditional defense contractors could very likely have transformative ideas but get stuck in the Department's processes. I understand that the OASW(MC) established the T-REX event series to allow new entrants to demonstrate their capabilities in a smaller venue with real world data. If confirmed, I

look forward to using events such as T-REX to foster collaboration in joint experimentation.

**46. If confirmed, how would your office work to improve the quality of concept ideation, as well as the time to go from concept to fielding for joint capabilities, particularly in high-priority theaters like US Indo-Pacific Command (INDOPACOM)?**

The OASW(MC) has a successful and collaborative relationship with the senior officials and technology leaders in the USINDOPACOM area of responsibility, and if confirmed, I would strive to continue this strong history of partnership and to improve on the many prior successes. USINDOPACOM represents a high-priority theater and capability gaps applicable to the USINDOPACOM theater remain among our most pressing challenges to address. Bringing more private sector approaches and nontraditional defense contractors to the capability development process is one of my goals that may improve the quality of concepts and shorten the time to go from concept to delivery.

**47. If confirmed, what role would your office play in coordinating with the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Integration, and Interoperability to align acquisition strategies with joint integration goals?**

If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Deputy Assistant Secretary of War for Acquisition, Integration, and Interoperability to align acquisition strategies with joint integration goals. Programs such as APFIT have proven to be successful at bridging gaps, but the DoW must also endeavor to make faster decisions and communicate more clearly to ensure that these factors are improved and do not impact aspiring vendors.

**Joint Integration**

**48. How do you propose addressing the challenge of cultural resistance within the services to adopting joint integration approaches over service-specific priorities?**

Cultural resistance can be overcome by the power of the technology solutions themselves. By working seamlessly across Military Service platforms, there should not be service-centric heartburn regarding fielding a joint project over a Military Service-custom solution. Conducting collaborative joint experimentation will also build the use cases and the appetite for joint solutions between the Military Services and the warfighters.

**49. What is your understanding of the policies being developed to support continuous integration and delivery pipelines for software-enabled joint systems?**

I noted with great interest that earlier this year Secretary Hegseth signed a memorandum recognizing that today's reality is "software-defined warfare" and directing all DoW Components to broadly modernize their approach to software acquisition. If confirmed, I look forward to supporting the Secretary in driving software modernization across the research and engineering portfolio.

**50. How do you propose addressing the organizational challenges of integrating systems across services with differing data architectures and standards?**

Within the OASW(MC), is the Systems Engineering and Architecture office, under which is the Defense Standardization Program. As a policy and oversight organization, the OUSW(R&E) can help address the core challenge, which is aligning data architectures and standards under a unified policy which will enable interoperability. If confirmed, I would seek to ensure that my office helps unify architectures and standards across the Department.

**51. If confirmed, what role would your office play in advocating for policy changes to overcome cultural and organizational barriers to joint integration?**

The OSW is a policy-forming organization, and the ASW(MC) can help advocate for changes to ensure joint approaches across the Department and the Military Services. If confirmed, I will evaluate the areas that suffer from cultural and organization barriers and will work to determine the appropriate policy changes.

**Networks, Data, and Cybersecurity**

**52. What metrics or integration readiness levels are being developed to assess the interoperability of systems in a federated approach?**

As the nominee, I have not been briefed on metrics under development to assess interoperability. If confirmed, I will evaluate the existing metrics uses by OUSW(R&E) already uses and evaluate whether or not they effectively capture the qualities of systems we are concerned with.

**53. How is your office collaborating with the Chief Digital and Artificial Intelligence Officer (CDAO) and the DOD Chief Information Officer to enhance data-centric joint integration, including addressing the challenge of differing data architectures and standards?**

The DoW CIO and the DoW CTO must work closely together. The CIO ensures that the department has a solid information technology foundation upon which the CTO can build, while the CTO's insights help the CIO anticipate future challenges and strategic opportunities. While the two offices focus on seemingly separate efforts, their collaboration is key as they are essential for ensuring that DoW can effectively leverage the power of information technology and maintain its technological edge

given the increasing value of data and of systems that can interoperate. With the realignment of the Office of the Chief Digital and Artificial Intelligence Officer (CDAO) under the USW(R&E), the Department is unifying its AI strategy and implementation, tightening the integration between AI research, engineering, and operational deployment, and streamlining management and oversight of these key technologies.

**54. If confirmed, what role would your office play in defining and managing interfaces between systems to enable modular and scalable joint capabilities?**

It is my understanding that the OASW(MC) leads and supports programs like Joint All-Domain Command and Control (JADC2) and the Joint Fires Network (JFN) to electronically stitch together historically stove-piped platforms and give commanders and troops on the ground a full picture of the battlespace across all domains, enabling accelerated and resource efficient kill chains. If confirmed, I will dedicate myself to bringing programs like JADC2 and JFN to full fruition while ensuring these joint solutions are built in a modular design to support upgrades as software and systems improve.

**55. If confirmed, how would you leverage commercial technologies, such as 5G or software-defined architectures, to support joint mission needs while also addressing security concerns?**

Commercial software holds tremendous promise for our armed forces because it is often widely available, modular, and has extensive performance records derived from consumer usage. If confirmed, I intend to fully leverage the benefits of commercial software and IT while rigorously testing candidate solutions for cybersecurity and electronic warfare vulnerabilities. Furthermore, I would work with my OUSW(R&E) colleagues, the service acquisition executives and all other relevant Department leaders, and industry to ensure the systems we procure are not built around one kind of software. Instead, I would continually stress the importance of software modular platforms, enabling our hardware to evolve as quickly as our software.

**56. If confirmed, how would your office work to integrate artificial intelligence and data analytics into joint experimentation to enhance decision-making?**

As the nominee, I am uncertain of the extent to which AI is already implemented into the OUSW(R&E) joint experimentation processes. If confirmed, I would fully educate myself on this matter while evaluating additional opportunities for AI to streamline joint experimentation such as potentially using AI to analyze large, complex datasets.

**57. If confirmed, how would your office work to integrate cybersecurity considerations into the DevSecOps pipelines for joint systems?**

We must manage cyber and other risks throughout the technology maturation process including throughout prototyping and experimentation. The Development Test and Evaluation activity, which is under the OASW(MC), is focused on testing new systems early and often to identify and mitigate vulnerabilities. Additionally, the System Security Engineering activity under the OUSW(R&E) is focused on policy, guidance, and implementation of program protection planning to manage technical risk and supply chain risk management. If confirmed I would seek to understand these organizations' contributions to cybersecurity and learn other measures to improve and ensure our joint system cybersecurity, particularly in our prototyping and experimentation context.

### **Testing and Evaluation**

**58. What role will your office play in overseeing Developmental Test and Evaluation to ensure joint capabilities meet mission requirements before transitioning to operational use?**

Per section 133a of title 10, U.S. Code, the USW(R&E) is responsible for establishing policies on and supervising developmental testing activities and programs across the Department. If confirmed, I will work with the USW(R&E) to review the existing organizational structure and staffing and from that advise the USW(R&E) to determine what, if any, changes are needed to maintain an effective developmental test and evaluation role across the Department.

**59. What policies, if confirmed, would you implement to streamline testing and evaluation processes for federated systems under a mission-focused approach?**

As the nominee to be the senior official to which the Developmental Test and Evaluation organization reports, I would assert that there must be alignment across the various testing agencies and field activities, to include the Director of Operational Test and Evaluation, as well as the Director of the Test Resource Management Center, to ensure we streamline and remove duplication where possible. I have not been fully briefed on the effort, but treating testing as a continuum will provide the agility to tailor testing to mission needs, will enable developmental testing to be more responsive and iterative, and will improve system performance in final operational tests.

**60. What changes, if any, do you believe are needed in Developmental Test and Evaluation to address autonomous and artificial intelligence enabled systems?**

Thorough testing in an operationally realistic environment is critical for informing acquisition decision making, identifying programmatic opportunities to apply additional engineering and risk mitigation resources, and ensuring operational readiness. I believe that DoW still has work to do to align its test activities with the Adaptive Acquisition Framework and to ensure that test and evaluation processes are properly structured to assess software-intensive systems, new capabilities such as

artificial intelligence-enabled autonomous systems, and to leverage new systems engineering approaches such as digital engineering.

**61. In your view, how does Developmental Test and Evaluation support the verification of cyber survivability and operational resilience in cyberspace?**

I have not been fully briefed on the extent to which the Developmental Test and Evaluation organization verifies cyber survivability, and operational resilience in cyberspace. However, I am aware that the Test and Evaluation Procedures issued by the Developmental Test and Evaluation organization do require systems testing to include evaluating appropriate defensive cyberspace operations, in accordance with the “Cybersecurity Activities Support Procedures” issued by the DoW Chief Information Officer. If confirmed, I look forward to supporting the cyber survivability of our systems, through architecture oversight and developmental test policy

**62. How do you see experimentation supporting the continuum of testing across developmental and operational test and evaluation requirements?**

The development of advanced prototypes, coupled with rigorous experimentation in representative environments, has rapidly fielded warfighting capability. When coupled with appropriate, timely resource planning, prototyping and experimentation has enabled the Department to bring operational capabilities to the force two to five years faster than traditional acquisition pathways. If confirmed as the ASW(MC), I will seek to exploit the full potential of this approach with the Military Services and acquisition leaders.

**63. What do you see as the data artifacts from developmental test and evaluation, both from government and industry sources, that might be necessary to support operational test and evaluation activities?**

As a nominee, I have not had the opportunity to review the full scope of data artifacts in the OUSW(R&E)’s possession that have been derived from Government and industry sources. If confirmed, I look forward to learning about the available data artifacts, their potential usefulness to operational test and evaluation, and any obstacles against interdepartmental data sharing that could be mitigated.

**Interoperability**

**64. If confirmed, how would you propose integrating interoperability assessments, including metrics or interoperability goals, into experimentation events?**

As a nominee, I am unfamiliar with the interoperability assessments used in OUSW(R&E) experimentation events already conducted. However, I believe that any

interoperability metrics used should consider issues like latency, seamlessness of use, mission effectiveness, and the presence of single points of failure within an integrated system.

**65. If confirmed, how would your office plan to incentivize industry partners to develop modular, interoperable solutions that align with joint mission requirements?**

If confirmed as the ASW(MC), I would ensure that interoperability and modularity factor heavily into the decisions made by the programs under the OASW(MC)'s purview, such as APFIT, that award funds to industry for innovative solutions. I would make it clear to our industry partners that modularity and interoperability are two of the core criteria they are being evaluated on.

**66. If confirmed, how would you address the challenge of integrating legacy systems with modern platforms to achieve on-demand interoperability?**

As I understand the JADC2 program, the aim is to connect every sensor to every shooter, regardless of when those platforms were first deployed. As the ASW(MC), if confirmed I would ensure modularity and interoperability are continuously prioritized to ensure hardware and software can be altered as much as is needed to electronically link dissimilar platforms and upgrade without compromising interoperability.

**67. In your view, what policies are being developed to support the use of toolchains like STITCHES for on-demand interoperability in joint operations?**

As the nominee, I have not been read in on policies to support toolchains. However, I think toolchains like STITCHES in particular have shown tremendous promise in enhancing the lethality of our electronic warfare capabilities, and, if confirmed as the ASW(MC), I would support the creation of policies that are conducive to toolchains' success.

## **Systems Engineering**

**68. If confirmed, how will you leverage systems engineering and digital engineering practices to ensure joint capabilities are designed with mission-focused architectures?**

Engineering serves as the foundation for technology development, technology transition, acquisition, and sustainment. Studies of DoW acquisition outcomes have shown that implementing rigorous foundational engineering activities early in the capability life cycle leads to improved cost, schedule, and performance results. To achieve this, the Department must prioritize MOSA, digital engineering, and workforce training to deliver capabilities to the warfighter. The ASW(MC) is the head of the systems engineering policy-setting organization, and if confirmed, I would

strive to fully leverage digital engineering and foster the professionalization of the systems engineering practice to deliver scalable results for capability development.

**69. If confirmed, what steps will you take to integrate systems engineering processes across geographically dispersed service programs to ensure consistent joint mission outcomes?**

If confirmed, I would certainly strive to understand how systems engineering organizations across the Department and engineering practices could be optimized and integrated to deliver on the critical technology area roadmaps. Studies of DoW acquisition outcomes have shown that implementing rigorous foundational engineering activities early in the capability life cycle leads to improved cost, schedule, and performance results.

**Lessons from Conflict**

**70. If confirmed, how would your office work to integrate lessons learned from ongoing conflicts, such as Ukraine, into joint experimentation priorities?**

As we are seeing in Ukraine, retrofitting legacy systems can be effective. Often, retrofitting existing systems with software solutions is also the most cost-effective option.

Battlefield learning, iteration and deployment timelines are now weeks or days instead of years or months. We must enable our warfighters to take battlefield lessons and feed them into a development pipeline. It's critical that we build and test new hardware and software in shorter timeframes to maintain tactical advantage or defend against emerging threats.

If confirmed, I look forward to learning more about the programs within the OUSW(R&E) to drive faster development cycles and to retrofit existing systems.

**Public Private Partnerships**

**71. If confirmed, what role would your office play in fostering public-private partnerships to accelerate the development of joint capabilities?**

We must strengthen DoW's engagements with the emerging defense-tech sector. Startups and nontraditional defense contractors could very likely have transformative ideas but get stuck in our processes. We need to improve the Department's engagements to get the warfighters what they need and when they need it. We must be clear, fast, and efficient so a promising technology becomes a funded pilot in months, not years.

**72. If confirmed, how would you address the classification challenges that limit non-traditional companies' participation in joint experimentation?**

I believe the Department has done a tremendous amount of work to reduce overclassification and ensure that information is properly classified and declassified in accordance with Executive Order 13526.

Despite these past efforts, it is my understanding that overclassification persists at the Department, though the exact extent of overclassification is not well understood at this time. If confirmed, I will work with the USW(I&S) to support investment in tools to assist in accurate classification – like machine learning and AI, which have shown promise in reducing human error and should be further employed to improve the classification, marking, and declassification of the Department's sensitive information.

**73. What role do you see for partnership intermediary agreements to help support transition activities across the Department?**

I believe partnership intermediary agreements are one of several valuable tools the OUSW(R&E) has to engage industry and academia and deepen our valuable relationships with these and other non-governmental stakeholders. As the nominee, I am not familiar with the full extent of the use of partnership intermediary agreements across the Department, however, I fully encourage their use to the extent that is most practical and efficient.

**Joint Warfighting Concept**

**74. If confirmed, how will you ensure that joint experimentation activities are aligned with the Joint Warfighting Concept (JWC)?**

As I understand it, the JWC provides an overarching framework for future warfighting, emphasizing aspects that include integration, logistics, resilience, and command and control. As the ASW(MC), my role would be to help field the vision of the JWC through appropriate capabilities. Therefore, I would ensure that the JWC's major points of emphasis, like those mentioned above, are central criteria for evaluating new capabilities and develop prototyping and experimentation campaigns to address our capability gaps.

**75. In your view, what elements of the JWC do you want to see better integrated into joint experimentation activities?**

As the nominee, I am not yet fully familiar with the extent to which each element of the JWC is already integrated into the OUSW(R&E)'s joint experimentation activities. However, given the OASW(MC)'s efforts like JADC2 and JFN that are centered around electronically stitching together DoW systems from across the

Military Services, I would view it as my role as the ASW(MC) to include ensuring that interoperability remains a central focus for joint experimentation programs.

### **Support to Joint Initiatives**

**76. If confirmed, what role do you foresee for the office of the ASD(MC) to have in supporting key joint initiatives like the JFN, where a lead service acts as the executive agent for a joint program of record?**

While I have not been fully briefed, I understand that the JFN initiative successfully pioneered a governance model that enables senior leaders and key stakeholders to rapidly decide on major development decisions and hold people accountable through a results-driven approach with clear accountability for short-term objectives. If confirmed, I look forward to evaluating other areas where this model can be applied to develop cooperation across the Department and rapidly deliver capabilities to the warfighter.

**77. What role do you foresee for the office of the ASD(MC) to have in addressing operational gaps from such initiatives?**

The ASW(MC) should be a leader in fostering cooperation across the Department and bridging the gaps between prototyping, experimentation, and acquisition. As demonstrated with JFN, the OASW(MC) can take initiative to sponsor prototypes that address critical operational gaps.

**78. How will you, if confirmed, address the challenge of integrating uncrewed systems into joint kill chains across multiple services?**

I understand that the OUSW(R&E) has been a leader in the development of advanced autonomous capabilities. If confirmed, I anticipate this will remain a Department priority. Accelerating these capabilities requires partnerships across the DoW, engagement with academia and industry, and engagement with partner nations to identify emerging solutions and conduct advanced prototype experimentation. Joint experimentation serves to demonstrate technical feasibility, determine utility for the warfighter, and help develop combined and joint concepts of operation for autonomous platforms and joint command and control across multiple domains. OUSW(R&E) industry engagement forums and partners like the DIU serve to connect, prototype, and field emerging solutions to DoW challenges. For example, the APFIT program, has successfully accelerated autonomous capabilities from nontraditional defense contractors for Combatant Commanders.

**79. If confirmed, what role do you foresee the office of the ASD(MC) having in the JADC2 initiative?**

I understand that the prototype effort initiated by the ASW(MC) known as the JFN became an early instance of a capability to field a limited JADC2 system. As the nominee, I am unfamiliar with the degree to which the ASW(MC) remains a contributor or overseer on the JADC2 effort. If confirmed, I look forward to supporting any ongoing collaboration between my office, the CDAO, and the Military Services.

### **Contested Logistics**

**80. If confirmed, how will you ensure that joint experimentation efforts incorporate realistic scenarios for contested logistics, including supply chain disruptions and degraded communication environments, to validate capabilities for sustaining forward operations?**

It is my understanding that the development of advanced prototypes, coupled with rigorous experimentation in representative environments, has rapidly fielded warfighting capability. When coupled with appropriate, timely resource planning, prototyping and experimentation has enabled the Department to bring operational capabilities to the force two to five years faster than traditional acquisition pathways. If confirmed as the ASW(MC), I will convene with the Military Services and acquisition leaders to ensure our joint experimentation programs incorporate plausible wartime conditions such as degraded communications, navigation, and logistics.

**81. If confirmed, what strategies will you implement to integrate mission engineering practices with joint experimentation to enhance the sustainability of forward operations, particularly by designing resilient architectures that address fuel, maintenance, and resupply challenges in contested environments?**

It is critical to employ strategies that integrate mission engineering practices with joint experimentation to enhance the sustainability of forward operations and design resilient architectures that address fuel, maintenance, and resupply of critical materials in contested environments. If confirmed, I will convene with my colleagues to ensure we have plans in place to ensure our troops remain fully capable in contested environments.

### **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.**

**82. Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, and on request, to appear and testify before this committee, its subcommittees, and other appropriate committees of Congress? Please answer with a simple yes or no.**

Yes.

- 83. Do you agree, without qualification, 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? Please answer with a simple yes or no.**

Yes.

- 84. Do you agree, without qualification, 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? Please answer with a simple yes or no.**

Yes.

- 85. Do you agree, without qualification, 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? Please answer with a simple yes or no.**

Yes.

- 86. Do you agree, without qualification, 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? Please answer with a simple yes or no.**

Yes.

- 87. Do you agree, without qualification, 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? Please answer with a simple yes or no.**

Yes.

- 88. Do you agree, without qualification, 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? Please answer with a simple yes or no.**

Yes.