

Senate Armed Services Committee
Advance Policy Questions for Daniel P. Driscoll
Nominee to be Secretary of the Army

Duties and Responsibilities as Secretary of the Army

What is your understanding of the duties and functions of the Secretary of the Army?

The Secretary of the Army is the senior official and head of the Department of the Army, with authority and responsibility for conducting all affairs of the Department of the Army, subject to the authority, direction, and control of the Secretary of Defense (10 U.S.C. §7013). The Secretary of the Army is solely responsible for the functions of Acquisition, Audit, Comptroller, Information Management, Inspector General, Legislative Affairs, Public Affairs and Research and Development (10 U.S.C. §7014). The Secretary of the Army is also responsible for the supervision and control of Army intelligence activities as well as any other activities as may be prescribed by law, the President, or the Secretary of Defense.

What background and experience do you possess that render you highly qualified to perform these duties and responsibilities?

I was honored to first experience the Department of the Army through the lens of a young Armor officer, deploying to Iraq from 2009-2010, which was an ideal way to understand the needs and perspectives of the Army's Soldiers, the sacrifices required of them and their families, and the institutional culture that makes our Army the finest in the world. After being honorably discharged from the Army, I attended Yale Law School on the Post-9/11 GI Bill and graduated in 2014. I then began a career in finance working at an investment bank and then co-founded a venture studio where we partnered to launch and grow small and medium businesses in my home state of North Carolina. I began working as a Chief Operations Officer at a venture capital fund and worked as a Chief Strategy Officer at a healthcare business. My experience working with innovators in the private sector has given me a crucial lens to apply to the current challenges facing the Army.

If confirmed, I would serve as the soldier's Secretary of the Army, as opposed to that the bureaucrats. I would spend every day focused on our soldiers and their families knowing the immense sacrifices they and their families make to uphold the freedoms we hold dear. If confirmed, my duty would be to ensure our soldiers have the world's finest training, equipment, and leadership to accomplish any mission, and to make the Army the most lethal force possible.

In particular, what management and leadership experience do you possess that you would apply to your service as Secretary of the Army, if confirmed?

My background as an Army Armor officer was invaluable in preparing me to lead the Army. From leading soldiers in garrison at Fort Drum, NY to the training fields of Yuma, Arizona to the battlefield in Baghdad, Iraq, I have learned that every decision requires putting the soldier first. I know from first-hand experience the challenges soldiers face every day. My time serving as a cavalry scout with the 10th Mountain Division is the most formative leadership experience that I have had. If confirmed, I will always remember that it is the soldiers on the ground that will feel the consequences of their leaders' decisions. I intend to be the soldiers' Secretary of the Army.

Since leaving the Army, I have led teams in private sector roles across several industries. In each role, it was critical to have a team of experts who could bring their own experiences and leadership styles to the roles and, if confirmed, I would build a similar team of experts for the Army.

If confirmed, I look forward to leading from the front, working closely with Army senior leaders and staff to lead an Army focused on mission effectiveness that takes care of its people, Soldiers, civilians, and their families.

To the extent that the functions of the Army overlap with those of other DOD entities, what would be your approach, if confirmed, to consolidating and reducing unnecessary duplication?

If confirmed, I will eagerly coordinate with the Department in identifying and eliminating unnecessary duplication. I will prioritize ensuring that the right element is in the lead on each task rather than focusing on territoriality. Our resources are finite, and the tasks and the responsibilities of the Department and the Army are large, so there is no room for waste.

If confirmed, what duties and responsibilities would you assign to the Under Secretary of the Army?

The Under Secretary of the Army performs such duties and exercises such powers as prescribed by the Secretary of the Army, and Army General Order No. 2024-01 specifies that the Under Secretary is the Secretary's senior civilian assistant and principal adviser on matters related to the management and operation of the Army. Accordingly, the Under Secretary is entrusted with the task of communicating and advocating for Army policies, plans, and programs to external audiences, including Congress, the American people, and foreign governments. The Under Secretary is also designated as the position of Chief Management Officer of the Army, serving as the Secretary's principal adviser on the

effective and efficient organization of the Army's business operations and initiatives for the business transformation of the Army. If confirmed, I would continue to assign the Under Secretary of the Army those duties and responsibilities and would rely on them as a key member of the team.

If confirmed, over which members and organizations of the Army would you direct the Chief of Staff of the Army to exercise supervision and what would be the scope of such supervision? What other duties would you assign to the Chief of Staff of the Army?

The Chief of Staff of the Army (CSA) is the senior military advisor to the Secretary of the Army and the senior Army military officer. The CSA presides over the Army Staff, communicates Army Staff plans and recommendations to the Secretary of the Army, and advises the Secretary of the Army on those plans and recommendations. In addition to the advisor role, the CSA is responsible for ensuring the effective and efficient functioning of Army organizations and commands in executing their statutory missions and assisting the Secretary of the Army in performing acquisition-related functions. The CSA also performs the duties prescribed for him as a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (10 U.S.C. § 151). Additionally, multiple units report directly to the CSA, including the U.S. Army Test and Evaluation Command, the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, the U.S. Army Military District of Washington, and the U.S. Army War College.

If confirmed, I would assign the above responsibilities and supervisory roles to the CSA.

If confirmed, what innovative ideas would you consider providing to the Secretary of Defense regarding the organization and operations of the Department of the Army?

If confirmed, I would consider providing recommendations to the Secretary of Defense concerning accelerating promotions for exceptionally meritorious individuals and broadening opportunities for non-traditional career pathways to ensure the Army attracts and retains the best talent. I would base any such recommendations on a thorough review of the Army's current policies and procedures.

Conflicts of Interest

Federal ethics laws, like 10 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.

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?

Yes, I agree.

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?

Yes, I agree.

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?

Yes, I do.

Civilian Control of the Military

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

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

I am fully committed to the requirements in the U.S. Constitution and other laws enshrining civilian control of America’s Armed Forces. If confirmed, I would bring that commitment to my role as Secretary of the Army, fulfilling my legal obligations to control and oversee all affairs of the Army.

Budget

If confirmed, by what standards would you measure the adequacy of funding for the Army?

If confirmed, I will measure the adequacy of funding for the Army by the Army’s ability to meet the requirements laid out in the NDS and the priorities of the Secretary of Defense. As a critical part of the Joint Force, the Army must be capable of defeating military aggression that threatens U.S. vital interests.

How will you ensure the Army is appropriately resourced to simultaneously modernize, grow readiness, and take care of its people?

If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary of Defense to ensure that the Army has

sufficient resources to address each of its priorities and will ensure that any resource constraints are communicated clearly and early to Congress.

Section 222a of title 10, U.S. Code, provides that not later than 10 days after the President's submission of the defense budget to Congress, each Service Chief must submit to the congressional defense committees a report that lists, in order of priority, the unfunded priorities of his or her armed force.

If confirmed, do you agree to support the Chief of Staff of the Army in providing his/her unfunded priorities list to Congress in a timely manner?

Yes, if confirmed, I will support the Army Chief of Staff in meeting the statutory requirement by providing an Unfunded Requirements (UFR) list to Congress within 10 days of the submission of the President's defense budget to Congress.

Major Challenges and Priorities

What would you see as your highest priorities for the near-term and long-term future of the Army?

If confirmed, I will initially focus on advancing the Army's current priorities: Warfighting, Delivering Combat-Ready Formations, Continuous Transformation and Strengthening the Profession. I will also carefully review and validate those priorities and consider any necessary changes.

What do you consider to be the most significant challenges you would face, if confirmed as Secretary of the Army?

If confirmed, I expect that one of my most significant challenges would be ensuring the Army recruits qualified candidates in sufficient numbers. As the Army's end-strength and veteran population declines, fewer young people are closely connected to a Soldier or veteran, meaning becoming a Soldier may seem foreign to them.

A second significant challenge I would anticipate is continuing the substantial task of modernizing the force to maintain overmatch against near-peer adversaries.

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

If confirmed, I will strive to ensure that the Army presents a compelling message concerning the benefit of service both to our nation and to those that serve, and that the message is presented across every region and eligible demographic. Young people want to understand the value proposition of what is presented to them, and it would be my job

to ensure that the Army offers them a strong value.

To continue the modernization of the Army while maintaining a high level of readiness, I would communicate frequently and transparently with all stakeholders, including the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Assistant Secretary of the Army Acquisition, Logistics and Technology, and Army Futures Command, ensuring that operational demands do not overwhelm the Army's ability to prepare for the future fight. I will also prioritize ensuring that Army modernization programs remain on time and on budget.

National Defense Strategy

The 2022 NDS outlines that the United States faces a rising China, an aggressive Russia, and the continued threat from rogue regimes and global terrorism. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the NDS Commission testified in July 2024 that China, Russia, Iran, and North Korea have formed an “axis of aggressors”, supporting each other’s military aggression and illegal wars.

What is your assessment of the military threat posed by the People’s Republic of China?

The 2018 and 2022 National Defense Strategies each identified China as the Department of Defense’s pacing threat, and I share that assessment. Xi Jinping has openly expressed his intention to annex Taiwan to mainland China, told his armed forces to be prepared to use force to achieve such an outcome by 2027, and invested heavily in military capabilities required for such a campaign. If he were to succeed in achieving that goal, that would profoundly negatively impact future U.S. trade, military alliances, and influence around the world.

What is your assessment of the military threat posed by Russia?

The 2018 and 2022 National Defense Strategies each found that Russia presents a significant conventional, gray zone, and strategic threat to the United States and Europe and acts as a destabilizing force in several other regions globally. Even constrained by the international sanction’s regime in place since 2014, Russia has successfully fielded and maintained capable military forces, delivered novel strategic capabilities, and increased production of key platforms and materiel.

Outside the constraints of the New START Treaty, Russia has substantially built up its tactical nuclear arsenal, threatening its neighbors in Europe and Asia. Russia’s ability to operate extra-regionally using mercenaries and proxies has been strained but is not insignificant.

What is your assessment of the military threat posed by collusion among Russia, China, Iran, and North Korea?

Recent actions taken by China, Russia, Iran, and North Korea in Ukraine and elsewhere

suggest a cooperative approach to undermine U.S. influence and its alliances around the world. Near peer competitors may view rogue states as distractions that they can use to draw the attention and resources of the United States and its allies away from their own military buildup or coercive activities.

Technology transfer and materiel sales have allowed these countries to circumvent or alleviate the costs imposed upon them by sanctions. And there is the potential that military conflict spurred by any one of these actors could be used as an opportunity for another actor to engage in aggression if they believe U.S. forces are tied down. It is a foundational principle of strategy that one's adversaries should be divided.

Are there significant opportunities that, in your view, the Army has been unable to leverage, or has leveraged only in part, since the NDS was published in 2022? If so, how would you correct this situation, if confirmed?

With the 2022 National Defense Strategy identifying China as the Department of Defense's pacing threat and finding that Russia presents a significant conventional, gray zone, and strategic threat to the United States, I would approach my evaluation of any additional needed capabilities, if confirmed, with this in mind. Following this evaluation, I would make recommendations to the Secretary of Defense on any potential additional resources or authorities the Department of the Army might need.

What do you perceive to be the Army's role in competing with and countering China?

The Army remains an essential force for asserting American power in the Indo-Pacific. The vast majority of Chiefs of Defense in the Indo-Pacific have an army background, and many of them have attended professional military education courses in the USA. The Army regularly participates in exercises across the region, continually strengthening our bonds with Indo-Pacific allies and partners.

The Army's communications, logistics, security, air defense, cyber, and sensing and strike capabilities will be extremely important in any Pacific conflict. Moreover, the ground combat capabilities that the Army maintains may be important as well. We all have a vision of what warfare in the Indo-Pacific looks like, but our pre-conceived notions of future war are rarely accurate.

Do you believe the Army must maintain the ability to conduct large-scale ground combat operations, to deter major-power competitors such as Russia?

Yes, the Army must always have the ability to conduct large-scale ground combat operations, and all operations across the continuum of conflict.

Is the Army adequately sized, structured, and resourced to implement the current

strategy and the associated operational plans? Please explain your answer.

If confirmed, I will work with the Army, Joint Staff, and OSD to evaluate the Army's current strategy and determine if the force is sized, structured, and resourced to satisfy operational plans.

What are your primary lessons learned from observing operations in Ukraine and the Middle East that the Army must consider in its modernization efforts?

Small-unmanned aerial systems, counter-unmanned aerial system technologies, and the revitalization of electronic warfare are reshaping modern battlefields. Access to air power at scale is changing tactics, techniques, and procedures. The Army must adopt this technology, and the techniques developed in the Russo-Ukraine conflict quickly.

Does the Army have the requisite analytic capabilities and tools to support you, if confirmed, in evaluating the Army's force structure and sizing strategies to ensure that it can and will generate forces that are manned, trained, and equipped to execute current plans and strategies? Please explain your answer.

If confirmed, I will evaluate our current processes and capabilities for shaping army structure and size and modify them accordingly to ensure that the Army can generate forces to execute our current plans and strategies.

If confirmed, how will you address any gaps or shortfalls in the Army's ability to meet the demands placed on it by the operational plans that implement the current strategy?

I will work with the Army Staff to identify potential mitigations to any revealed gaps or shortfalls in the Army's ability to enact operational plans, while we account for long-term deficiencies that these mitigations create.

If confirmed, what changes or adjustments would you make in the Army's implementation of the current strategy?

If confirmed, one of my first acts as Secretary of the Army will be to conduct a complete review of the Army's current strategy and revise it accordingly.

How would you characterize your familiarity with the civilian leaders of the Armies of other nations and multi-national and international land power-focused consultative forums? If confirmed, on which leaders and forums would you focus your engagement with a view to advancing the interests of the Army?

Relationships with foreign military leaders are essential to maintain interoperability with our allies and partners. The timing and frequency of my engagements with foreign leaders and at land-power forums will be driven by priorities identified in our national military strategy.

The Army is the lead Service for overseeing the development of the components that compromise the Integrated Air and Missile Defense of Guam system. However, rather than

embrace this effort so critical to U.S. operations in a contingency in the Western Pacific, the Army has assumed a much lesser role than that required by a Joint Program Executive Office who should manage the timing and integration of the multi-service air and missile defense weapons systems, contributing to continued delays in the overall effort.

If confirmed as Secretary, what steps will you take to ensure the Army better executes its responsibilities for the defense of Guam and expedites the fielding of air and missile defense capabilities on the island?

If confirmed, I will evaluate current Army resource contributions against the integrated air and missile defense plan and work with my counterparts in the other services to ensure we work together to provide for the defense of Guam.

End strength

Is the Army's current end strength sufficient to meet national security objectives and execute the associated operational plans? If not, what end strength do you believe is necessary? Please explain your answer.

I think that the decline in Army end strength in recent years is due to recruiting challenges rather than a conclusion that the Army required fewer Soldiers to meet its national security objectives. This has occurred during an era of increasing security challenges. Therefore, it is likely that the Army's current end strength is insufficient to accomplish its mission. I will need additional data, including wargame outputs, analysis, and opinions from senior leaders, before I can verify that conclusion or make recommendations on the total Army end strength that is required.

If confirmed, I will assess end strength levels in concert with the OSD staff, the Joint Staff and the Army Staff against appropriate defense planning scenarios. Any growth in the Army's end strength should have the full support of Congress. I would only ask for that support after reviewing service plans for force structure, modernization, training, and logistical requirements in line with an updated National Defense Strategy.

Recruiting/Retention

The 2024 National Defense Strategy Commission stated that "The DoD workforce and the all-volunteer force provide an unmatched advantage. However, recruiting failures have shrunk the force and raise serious questions about the all-volunteer force in peacetime, let alone in major combat." In addition, DOD studies indicate that only about 23% of today's youth population is eligible for military service, and only a fraction of those who meet military accession standards are interested in serving.

If confirmed, how would you ensure the Army maintains sufficiently high recruitment and retention standards?

Maintaining appropriate standards is a critical component of Army readiness. If confirmed, I will review the Army's current recruitment and retention standards and solicit input from all levels of the Army to ensure that the right standards are in place. I will also empower Army leaders to hold recruits and Soldiers to those standards, ensuring that the Army does not enlist Soldiers unprepared to succeed and does not reenlist Soldiers who have not maintained standards.

If required to choose between maintaining high recruitment and retention standards and achieving authorized end strength levels, which would be more important, in your view?

Standards are important. If confirmed, I would not support lowering recruitment or retention standards to meet end strength goals. Unprepared or unqualified Soldiers hinder the mission, and accessing or retaining the wrong people is not an effective method of achieving metrics.

What impact do current medical and other qualifications for enlistment in the Army have on the number of individuals eligible for military service? If confirmed, what changes to such qualifications, if any, would you recommend to increase the number of individuals eligible for service without degrading the quality of recruits?

The low percentage of American eligible and interested in serving in the Army is greatly concerning. If confirmed, I will review the Army's current enlistment qualifications to ensure they are the right standards and not unnecessarily eliminating qualified individuals from consideration. If we are enforcing standards irrelevant to an individual's ability to serve effectively, I would recommend changing those standards.

Rather than relying solely on ever-higher compensation for a shrinking pool of volunteers, what creative steps would you take, if confirmed, to expand the pool of eligible recruits and improve Army recruiting?

If confirmed, I will consider all non-monetary options of expanding the pool of eligible recruits and improving Army recruiting, including alternative career routes, sabbaticals, desired duty station assignment, increased direct commissions for certain specialties, and others. I will also review the Army recruiting strategy to ensure it effectively conveys a strong value proposition to young people across the nation.

What do you consider to be key to the Army's future success in retaining the best qualified personnel for continued service in positions of greater responsibility and leadership in the Army?

The best qualified Soldiers are likely to have strong alternative employment options, including monetarily, so the Army must compete in other areas to retain them. I believe

that Soldiers are inclined to remain in the Army when they and their families have been treated well, when they have been given chances to develop and succeed, and when they feel like they are using their abilities to make meaningful contributions to high-performing teams. Providing our Soldiers with strong quality of life, maximizing dwell time and predictability of assignments, providing them with new challenges, and ensuring capable and responsive chains of command will best position the Army to compete for talent.

What steps, if any, should be taken to ensure that current operational requirements and tempo do not adversely impact the overall recruiting, retention, readiness, and morale of soldiers?

Every time that the Army sends a unit on a training exercise, overseas rotation, or deployment, it must assess the holistic impact on the readiness of that unit and other units. Operational requirements must be balanced against the long-term health and readiness of the force.

In your view, do current recruiting standards—particularly DOD-wide criteria for tier-one recruits—accurately predict recruit attrition and/or future success in the Army?

If confirmed, I will review the data concerning the level to which current recruiting standards accurately predict recruitment attrition and/or future success in the Army. If I determine that the current standards are not an accurate predictor, I will advocate for appropriate changes.

Do you believe that current military entrance testing methods unnecessarily restrict the pool of eligible recruits, for example, by penalizing prospective recruits for whom English is not their native language?

If confirmed, I will review current military entrance testing methods. I will conduct that review before determining whether current entrance testing methods unnecessarily restrict the pool of eligible recruits. If I conclude that any current entrance testing methods are unfair, I will advocate appropriate changes.

Reserve Components

In a historic shift since 9/11, reserve components of the Army continue to serve more routinely as a part-time workforce for the Department of the Army in support of ongoing training and operational requirements. This requires continuous review of how the Army funds, develops, equips and compensates members of the Army Reserve and Army National Guard.

In your view, what is the appropriate relationship between the Active Army and the

Army Reserve and Army National Guard?

The Active Army, Army Reserve, and Army National Guard are all critical components of the Total Force. The roles that each component plays in an operation are dictated by circumstances, capabilities, and the timing of events. The Reserve Components provide the active force with supplemental and unique capabilities and can provide relief to stressed formations in the Active Component. However, the Army must always be cautious about overstressing Reserve Components units in turn.

What is your vision for the roles and missions of the Army Reserve Components? If confirmed, what new objectives would you seek to achieve with respect to the Army Reserve Components' organization, force structure, end strength, and readiness?

Reserve Components provide depth and expertise and skillsets that are often unavailable in the Active Army. If confirmed, I will evaluate how the Army employs, schedules, alerts, and mobilizes the Reserve Components to support operations across the globe. Additionally, I will review the balance of capabilities between Reserve Components and the Active Army during the annual Total Army Analysis Process.

Are you concerned that continued reliance on Army Reserve Components to execute operational missions—both at home and around the globe—is adversely affecting the ability to meet their recruiting and retention missions? Why or why not?

Excessive operational tempo can harm recruiting and retention. I would need to view additional data before I can assess if or how the current operational tempo of the Reserve Components is affecting their recruitment or retention.

As both an operational reserve and a part-time workforce, members of the Army Reserve Components are subject to many requirements by both the active force and the reserves. In many cases, reservists are required to do more work than they have time for, given the part-time nature of their service, Army limits on compensation, and competing personal and professional priorities.

In this world of limited resources, what are the most important activities for members of the Army Reserve Component to engage in?

The primary task of all Army Reserve units and individuals is to maintain readiness. Army Reserve units should strive to gain and maintain proficiency in their mission essential tasks and individuals should strive to be proficient in their assigned duties and mission-occupational specialty.

In what areas should the Army take acceptable risks in the training and readiness of reserve forces?

The Army should evaluate the quantity of mandatory training not required by law that Reserve Component forces are required to complete annually.

In your view, does the Army offer adequate career management to members of the Reserve Components?

The Army offers career development models to Reserve Component Soldiers. However, they receive less formal guidance than many of their active-duty peers. At present, Reserve and Active career models are very similar. If confirmed, I will ask the Chief of the Army Reserve and the Chief of the Army National Guard to evaluate if we should make changes to Reserve Component career models and professional military education requirements.

In your view, are any legislative reforms necessary to facilitate easier transitions for members of all components between active and reserve status?

If confirmed, I would support making transitions between active and reserve status in the Army more seamless. I will need to study the issue more to determine if legislative reforms are necessary to ease transitions between components.

Non-Deployable Issues

Do you agree that soldiers who are non-deployable for more than 12 consecutive months should be subject either to separation from the Army or referral into the Disability Evaluation System?

If confirmed, I will ensure that Soldiers who are non-deployable for more than 12 consecutive months will receive an individualized review that weighs whether their continued service is in the nation's best interest. If not, they should be considered for separation from service or referral into the Disability Evaluation System as appropriate.

In your view, under what circumstances might the retention of a soldier who has been non-deployable for more than 12 months be "in the best interest of the Army"?

The determination of whether retaining a Soldier who has been non-deployable for more than 12 months is in the best interest of the Army is an individualized review that should consider factors including the likelihood of the Soldier swiftly returning to deployable status and the Soldier's unique skills and qualifications.

Army Talent Management

In your judgment, how effective is the Army at identifying, promoting, and rewarding top performers?

I believe that the Army generally does a good job identifying and promoting top talent in our enlisted and junior officer ranks, particularly during tactical assignments. However, the current promotion system does not necessarily select senior officers for their institutional knowledge or strategic acumen, which are increasingly desirable as officers progress.

I believe that the Army struggles to reward talent and retain talent, in part, because of the inflexible nature of its time-based compensation and promotion system. Exemplary leaders can only expect to be promoted one to two years more quickly than a peer of average performance. That's a very different dynamic than the private sector.

Similarly, how effective is the Army at identifying and removing underperforming or counterproductive servicemembers?

I believe that the Army's current evaluation system is generally effective at identifying underperforming or counterproductive Soldiers. The Army's ability to remove or exclude underperforming servicemembers is significantly constrained by the health and size of an officer's or non-commissioned officer's career field and rank. When the Army has a surplus of Soldiers of a specific rank, promotion rates are lower. When recruiting and retention are challenging, promotion rates are higher. For example, in 2005, during the surge in Iraq, 97% of eligible Army Captains were promoted to Major. Historically, that percentage was closer to 80%.

In your view, what should be done to improve Army talent management, both in the Active and Reserve Components?

The Army should work with the Department of Defense and Congress to continue to refine elements of the Defense Officer Personnel Management Act to make promotion schedules more flexible. It should also make better use of its direct commissioning programs to introduce different perspectives into the force.

I also believe that the Army should ease the process for Soldiers to transfer between reserve and active service. Permitting Soldiers to more easily transition between active duty and reserve components will improve access to talent across the breadth of the total force and introduce flexibility in military service in a manner that improves retention.

As the Army fights for talent, it must continue to improve its efforts to place the right person in the right place to maximize the contributions of each Soldier to the mission of restoring lethality and deterrence to the Army and our country.

Suicide Prevention

If confirmed, what actions would you take to prevent suicides in the Active Army,

the Army Reserve, and the Army National Guard, and in the families of soldiers across all Components?

Even one suicide among the force is too many. If confirmed, I will make suicide prevention a high priority, striving to ensure that all Soldiers and their families have access to the resources necessary to foster their physical, mental and spiritual well-being, and that their leaders encourage them to take advantage of those resources.

Sexual Harassment and Assault Prevention and Response Programs

Do you believe the policies, programs, resources, and training that DOD and the Military Services have put in place to prevent and respond to sexual assault, and to protect service members who report sexual assault from retaliation, are working? If not, what else must be done?

There is no place in the Military for sexual assault or sexual harassment. Sexual assault is a crime within and outside of the Army. It destroys unit cohesion and readiness and deters both men and women from serving. Congress, the Department of Defense, and the Army have taken a series of helpful actions to reduce the incidence of sexual assault in the military, but more must be done.

If confirmed, I will continue to refine policies and programs implemented over the last four years to reduce the incidence of sexual assault and improve support to victims. I anticipate ensuring high-level focus on this issue; including appointing a high-level position dedicated to ensuring a focus on ending sexual assault in the military. Every Soldier deserves the opportunity to serve their nation without fear of harassment or assault. If the worst happens, the process of justice must be fair and swift, perpetrators must be brought to justice, and victims must have access to the services they need and are ensured the ability to continue their service without sanction or setback to themselves or their careers.

If confirmed, what would you do to increase focus on the prevention of sexual assaults?

If confirmed, I will review the Army's existing efforts to prevent sexual assault. I will personally express the importance of focusing on that prevention and instruct Army leaders at all levels to do the same with their Soldiers.

What is your view of the necessity of affording a victim both restricted and unrestricted options to report sexual harassment?

Offering restricted and unrestricted reporting options to victims of sexual harassment increases the likelihood that victims will feel comfortable and safe enough to report that

harassment. Reporting sexual harassment is a necessary step to effectively address that wrongful conduct. If confirmed, I would support offering both types of reporting options.

Domestic Violence and Child Abuse in Army Families

What is your understanding of the extent of domestic violence and child abuse in the Army, and, if confirmed, what actions would you take to address these issues?

Any domestic violence and child abuse in the Army is unacceptable. If confirmed, I will review the current rates of both domestic violence and child abuse in the Army, ensure that the Army holds perpetrators accountable and assists victims, and that victims are familiar with and have access to a range of reporting options and resources. I will also ensure that Army leaders at all levels prioritize that effort.

Services Provided to Service Members and their Families

If confirmed, how would you support increased employment opportunities for military spouses and other family members?

Army families make many sacrifices, and they deserve the nation's support. Army spouses' careers are frequently disrupted by their spouse's training exercises, reassignments, and deployments. If confirmed, I will review existing Army programs and policies in place to support employment opportunities for spouses and other family members and work with the Secretary of Defense, Congress, and state and local governments to ensure that Army programs and policies continue to grow meaningful employment opportunities for Army family members.

If confirmed, what specifically would you do to establish accountability in the Army for sustaining the high-quality housing that soldier and their families deserve?

Army families and servicemembers deserve high-quality housing. If confirmed, I will evaluate the current performance of housing providers and empower garrison commanders to hold these providers accountable.

If confirmed, what specifically would you do to establish accountability in Military Housing Privatization Initiative (MHPI) "contractors," particularly given that, in most cases, they have public-private partnership agreements with the Army that extend for as long as 50 years?

I will work with the Army Installation Management Command to evaluate the performance of each MHPI contractor, and to determine what authorities the Department can leverage to improve performance. If necessary, I will request additional authorities from Congress.

Army Readiness

How would you assess the current readiness of the Army—across the domains of materiel and equipment, personnel, and training—to execute the National Defense Strategy and Combatant Commanders’ associated operational plans?

The U.S. Army continues to be the most professional land force in the world. However, I worry about the ability of the country’s industrial base to provide sufficient military stocks to fully support our warfighters.

Additionally, our technological edge is shrinking. The Army needs to accelerate its modernization and better prepare our forces for the advances in drone and autonomous warfare the world has witnessed in Ukraine.

In your view, what are the priority missions for which current and future Army forces should be trained and ready in the context of day-to-day activities, as well as for contingencies?

Prioritization for training and readiness will be driven by the National Defense Strategy and National Military Strategy. If confirmed, I will work with the Army Staff to align our training and readiness against defense planning scenarios identified by the Department.

If confirmed, how would you oversee compliance by the Army with readiness goals and timelines?

If confirmed, I would work with my staff to evaluate and revise the existing governance structure within the Army to ensure that the organization establishes metrics and regularly reviews progress towards our readiness goals.

If confirmed, how would you prioritize maintaining readiness in the near term, with modernizing the Army to ensure future readiness?

Prior to supporting a deployment or rotation, I will require the Army Staff to holistically assess the impact of that deployment on the readiness of the impacted unit or stock, future readiness, and impact on the career field of Soldiers impacted by that deployment. In the case of transferring arms or military stocks to another country, I will require the Army Staff to provide information on the capacity of our industrial base to replace the item, and the time and money required.

Munitions

If confirmed, what steps would you take to ensure the Army has sufficient inventories of munitions to meet combatant commanders' needs?

Maintaining a sufficient inventory of critical munitions is essential to keeping the Army ready for conflict, supporting allies and partners, and deterring adversaries from hostile action. If confirmed, I will direct the Army Staff to work with OSD Policy, the Joint staff, and OSD A&S, to verify munitions requirements, and suggest mitigations to overcome shortfalls in the short-, medium-, and long-term.

Is the ammunition industrial base, including the Army's organic ammunition plants, capable of supporting current and future munitions requirements, in your view?

While I have not received briefings from the Army on its organic industrial base modernization plan, I suspect that there will be more to do to meet current and future munitions requirements. If confirmed, implementing and revising this modernization plan will be a top priority for my office and the ASA (ATL).

If confirmed, what actions would you take to reduce single points of failure and foreign material supplier dependencies in the ammunition industrial base?

The Army needs to be able to quickly scale production of critical munitions while protecting its supply base. It is increasingly important to reduce single points of failure and foreign dependencies in our ammunition industrial base. If confirmed, I will work to make sure that plans to reduce foreign dependencies and single points of failure are included in OIB modernization plans.

Based on your experience, what are some of the lessons from the past 4 years of increasing 155mm artillery shell production that we should ensure get institutionalized in the Army to improve future industrial mobilization efforts (for munitions or other areas)?

The U.S. Military must question many of the assumptions it made during the "peace dividend" era about the need for flexibility in defense production. From what I have observed, the Army has learned that it needs to regularly invest in its organic industrial base, nurture component suppliers domestically, and understand the time required to procure long-lead items necessary to scale manufacturing.

Based on your experience, how should the Army be factoring in the needs of foreign partners and allies into over munitions forecasting in order to improve the long-term production stability of the industrial base?

Forecasting future needs for the U.S. military is extremely challenging, and adding in foreign partners and allies adds another layer of friction. I am skeptical that the Department can successfully forecast these requirements in a dynamic, geopolitical environment. Accordingly, it must make acquisition strategies and industrial base investments in equipment and munitions that allow for expansion and contraction in demand based on a range of demand that can be expected from allies and partners. The Department needs modular production facilities, and a cold and warm capacity that can be turned on and off to meet need.

The FY24 NDAA required the Department of Defense to establish a pilot program to incorporate the explosive CL-20 into existing munitions. Is the Army considering executing any activities under this pilot in order to improve the explosive yield or operational envelope of any of its munitions?

I have not had the opportunity to receive a brief on this pilot program but will request one if confirmed.

Regardless of whether the Army is doing anything under this pilot program, how is the Army considering incorporation of new energetic materials, like CL-20, or new manufacturing processes for energetics, like biomanufacturing, into existing munitions to increase explosive effects or operational envelope of its weapons?

If confirmed, I will investigate Army exploration of new energetic materials and manufacturing processes. I have not had the appropriate briefs to respond adequately to this question.

Special Operations

What is your assessment of the role and importance of Army Special Operations Forces in supporting the Joint Force and the objectives of the National Defense Strategy?

Army Special Operations Forces (ARSOF) play a critical role in supporting the Joint Force and accomplishing the objectives of the National Defense Strategy. The Joint Force has heavily relied on ARSOF for many years, particularly in the role of building partner capacity, and I anticipate that trend to continue in the future.

Operational Energy

If confirmed, how would you lead the Army in harnessing innovations in operational energy and linking them with emerging joint operational concepts in order to reduce contested logistics vulnerabilities for warfighters?

Reducing the footprint of the Joint Force in expeditionary operations is vital to increasing the survivability of forward-deployed forces and reducing strain on sustainers. If confirmed, I plan to continue to support investments in technologies that reduce energy waste and provide accessible energy to the warfighter.

In what specific areas, if any, do you believe the Army needs to improve the incorporation of energy considerations and alternative energy resources into the strategic planning processes?

Not just the Army, but the Joint Force needs to consider energy consumption and utilization in all operational plans, supplied by a variety of sources, to include alternative sources not used today. Unlike conflicts of the past thirty years, adversaries have an increased capability to interdict our lines of supply. Units must prepare to self-sustain during interruptions in shipments of fuel.

How can Army acquisition systems better address requirements related to the use of energy in military platforms to decrease risks to warfighters? In your view, how can energy supportability that reduces contested logistics vulnerabilities become a key performance parameter in the requirements process?

To better address energy demands in system requirements, the Army should consider both its capacity to transport and receive energy in expeditionary environments, and overall energy requirements of units by echelon. These can then form a baseline to develop individual energy-based requirements for the development of different weapons and equipment sets.

If confirmed, how would you prioritize energy resilience, including acquiring and deploying sustainable and renewable energy assets, to support mission critical functions, and address known vulnerabilities?

Energy resilience is installation resilience. Army installations, both CONUS and OCONUS must be increasingly prepared to provide for their energy needs without outside support. If confirmed, I will require the ASA (IE&E) to evaluate our current plans to increase installation energy resilience and continue the Army's progress in making our installations more resilient.

Given that the Army has been charged with Contested Logistics for the Joint Force, how do you believe operational energy can and should be used to support this effort?

Developing new concepts for generating energy in a deployed and contested environment will greatly enable the Joint Force to reduce the quantity of tankers required to sustain it and increase the survivability of expeditionary formations.

Environment

If confirmed, how would you further efforts to address PFAS contamination at Army installations?

If confirmed, I will fully support the Army's efforts to address PFAS contamination at Army installations and will review the sufficiency of those efforts. The health of our Soldiers and their families, Army civilians, and the communities surrounding our installations must remain an Army priority.

Readiness and Resource Impacts from Extreme Weather

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

If confirmed, I will review the readiness and resource impacts on the Army from recent extreme weather events, prioritize resources needed to address those impacts, and seek to mitigate the risks of future such events.

Based on these readiness and resource impacts, do you believe it necessary to use more resilient designs in Army infrastructure? How can the Army better use existing authorities on extreme weather mitigation granted by Congress in the last few NDAAs?

Army infrastructure design should contemplate the full range of potential weather events to ensure resiliency. If confirmed, I will review the Army's existing use of authorities on extreme weather mitigation and explore the benefits of greater use of those authorities.

Audit

If confirmed, what specific actions will you take or direct to enable the Army to achieve a clean financial audit in the most expedited fashion?

I understand that the Army has continued to make progress on achieving a clean financial audit, but that there is more to do. I have been informed that the Army is investing in tools and revising processes, but I do not know the implementation status of these efforts. If confirmed, I commit to using my authority as the Secretary of the Army to continue to push towards achieving a clean audit, reforming business processes, and implementing technological systems to ensure the Army's fiscal health and transparency.

What are the benefits to Army missions and effectiveness of achieving and maintaining a clean audit?

In my opinion, a clean audit will provide the awareness necessary to ensure that every dollar appropriated to the U.S. Army goes to its best use. We can only make the greatest strides in reducing waste and improving allocation of funds without full financial transparency and accountability.

How will you hold Army leaders and organizations responsible and accountable for making the necessary investments and changes to correct findings and material weaknesses identified in the audit process?

A successful audit will showcase options to make Army funding, equipping, and sustainment practices more efficient and productive. If confirmed, I will hold Army Leaders accountable for making progress towards a clean audit. I will expect results from the ASA (FM&C) and Senior Army Leaders. I will require them to create metrics for progress towards financial accountability and hold those responsible who fail to meet them.

Based on your experience, how do you see improved data from Army financial management IT systems that support audit help Army decision-making and readiness?

In general, improvements in financial management IT systems offer opportunities to reduce manual inputs and clerical errors, automate accounting of equipment and funding expenditures, and ease burdens that deter individuals across the Army from correctly following accounting procedures.

As the Army continues down the path to a clean audit, there are still lessons that can be gleaned beyond the end goal of a clean audit opinion. Based on your experience, how do you anticipate operationalizing any intermediate lessons from audit into the Army's overall management reform objectives?

If confirmed, I will evaluate the Army's current process for disseminating lessons learned and circulating them through the force. If these processes and procedures are insufficient, I will task the ASA (F&MC) and other Army Leaders to revise them to ensure we are operationalizing lessons learned as we unveil them.

Army-related Defense Industrial Base

What is your assessment of the systems and processes for identifying, evaluating, and managing risk in the Army's organic, commercial, and defense industrial base, including the munitions industrial base?

While I suspect these systems and processes have matured because of U.S. support to Ukraine since 2022, I have not received a brief on their maturation. If confirmed, I will receive the appropriate briefs to make an assessment.

What do you see as the levers to motivate the defense industrial base, to include munitions manufacturers, to make additional capital investment (for facilities and tooling), as well as research and development investments to increase the capacity of the defense industrial base?

First, we need to create a long-term “demand signal” that justifies capital expenditures in production lines. Part of this demand signal must come from allies and partners and we must streamline foreign military sales processes to facilitate this outcome. Second, the Department of the Army should work with industry to incentivize the design of modular factories, capable of rapid prototyping and short-run production without large losses in efficiency. Advances in automation, artificial intelligence, and mechatronics have made this increasingly possible, and the Department of the Army should lead in its development.

How should Army acquisition leaders consider impacts on the industrial base when addressing requirements for recapitalization or modernization of major defense weapons systems and munitions, and life cycle costs of such systems?

Acquisition leaders must consider both immediate and potential demand for major weapon systems and munitions as they formulate acquisition plans. An ability to scale capacity, or at least calculations concerning cost and time to scale that capacity should accompany acquisition strategies.

How would you seek to ensure the Army engages with the broadest industrial base possible, including traditional contractors, nontraditional contractors, and small businesses?

If confirmed, I would work with the Army’s acquisition workforce and leaders to remove as many barriers as possible to doing business with the U.S. Army. The U.S. Army needs to be a better customer. Many of the actions that the U.S. Government took in the 1980s to ensure fair competition have now become barriers to entry.

If confirmed, what changes, if any, would you pursue in systems and processes to ensure that risk in the Army-relevant sectors of the defense industrial base is adequately managed to enable the development, production, and sustainment of technically superior, reliable, and affordable weapons systems and munitions?

I will need to review existing processes before I can make informed changes to the way

the Army manages its portion of the defense industrial base. If confirmed, the status and management of the defense industrial base will be one of the first issues that I engage on.

Equipping/Modernization

What is your assessment of the Army's past modernization record and current efforts?

I am aware that the Army has had difficulties in the past modernizing in a timely and efficient way, and getting that process is key for the Army's future success. Rapid technological development by our adversaries highlights the need for the Army to innovate quickly based on lessons learned from current battlefields.

The establishment of Army Futures Command has helped streamline and focus the Army's modernization efforts. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Under Secretary, the Assistant Secretaries, and other stakeholders to ensure that the Army stays on time and on budget in executing its current modernization priorities.

Based on your experience, how would you structure the Army to conduct better tradeoff analysis so that programmatic investments are not stove-piped and can be assessed against the impact of various alternatives?

If confirmed, I will work with the Army leadership team to evaluate current and projected investments across the department to better understand these priorities. The review process will allow me an opportunity to evaluate all priority programs and identify any adjustments that need to be made to increase their effectiveness.

What is your assessment of the sufficiency of the Army acquisition workforce across both civilian and military personnel, both in the number and the level of experience of those personnel? What do you see as the pros and cons of civilian versus military acquisition professionals?

The Army acquisition workforce consists of over 30,000 professionals of various professional specialties charged with ensuring the delivery of critical warfighting capabilities to our service members in uniform. This workforce consists of a blend of civilians, officers, and non-commissioned officers which provides it with a unique blend of critical institutional knowledge with the career civilian cadre and the soldier specific knowledge to deliver the best capabilities to our formations. If confirmed, I will evaluate the effectiveness and size of our acquisition workforce to ensure we are properly postured to deliver world-class capabilities to our Soldiers.

How has Army Futures Command (AFC) contributed to improving Army modernization programs over previous Army efforts? What role do you expect the

Command to play going forward? In your view, how has the establishment of AFC modified Army Secretariat roles in Army modernization efforts?

Army Futures Command (AFC) plays a key role in Army modernization. I am aware that prior to AFC's establishment, program proponents developed requirements not always fully aligned with the Army's modernization needs. Today, AFC's process includes inputs from a variety of stakeholders, including Soldiers, to ensure the Army will get the capability it needs.

Going forward, I expect AFC to continue to lead in implementing the Army's modernization strategy and defining the future operating environment. AFC's role will be key in ensuring that the Army is equipped to fight and win on future battlefields.

If modernization is fundamental to future readiness, how you would frame future readiness requirements, if confirmed? What key capabilities must the Army possess for multi-domain operations?

The Army must modernize to ensure its future readiness, and building toward a multi-domain operations-ready force by 2035 is an important part of Army modernization efforts. At the same time, the Army must maintain a state of readiness sufficiently to meet current and emerging missions. If confirmed, I will work closely with AFC, the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology, and other stakeholders to clearly define the Army's future readiness requirements and work closely with Congress to ensure the Army invests in support of those priorities.

If confirmed, I will review the Army's current plan for conducting Multi-Domain Operations (MDO), including relevant capabilities currently available and those in development, as well as those of our near peer competitors, to determine what, if any, additional capabilities are required.

Do you believe the Army's modernization priorities should be modified? If so, and if confirmed, how would you propose to modify them?

If confirmed, I will assess the Army's current modernization priorities of long-range precision fires, next generation combat vehicles, future vertical lift, the network, air and missile defense, and Soldier lethality, to confirm that they are in line the National Defense Strategy and the priorities established by the President and the Secretary of Defense. If I determine that they must be modified, I will work closely with all stakeholders and Congress to do so.

Do you see utility in the Army conducting more joint program development? In what systems or categories of systems do you perceive the most potential and benefit in joint development?

If confirmed, I would support joint program development wherever doing so would save time or money, increase effectiveness or interoperability, or accomplish a combination of those factors.

Acquisition

Civilian oversight of the acquisition system has been a cornerstone of the post-World War II acquisition system.

What are your personal views on the principle of civilian control of the defense acquisition system?

I believe that civilian control of defense acquisition is required by U.S. Code, but that does not preclude military leaders from playing a very substantial role in the process.

Congress has expanded and refined the acquisition-related functions of the Chief of Staff of the Army and the other Service Chiefs.

If confirmed, how would you synchronize your acquisition responsibilities with those of the Chief of Staff of the Army and the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics, and Technology?

If confirmed, I will clearly lay out responsibilities for acquisition in a revised general order for the Headquarters, Department of the Army.

If confirmed, what role would you assign to the Chief of Staff of Army for improving the prioritization of requirements and program funding?

The Chief of Staff of the Army serves as the senior military advisor to the Secretary of the Army. His or her advice will play a crucial role in shaping Army requirements and programmatic objectives as the overseer of the Army Staff.

Congress has authorized a range of authorities, including the Middle Tier of Acquisition, rapid acquisition authority, and the software acquisition pathway, to tailor the acquisition process to enable the rapid delivery of new capabilities.

In your view, what benefit has the Department of the Army derived from its utilization of Middle Tier of Acquisition?

Middle Tier Acquisition authority offers a pathway for the Army to rapidly prototype or rapidly field capabilities in under five years. Use of this pathway can save the Department time and money as it develops and fields new technology, particularly when

requirements are not fully mature.

The Army has used this authority to accelerate programs like the XM30 combat vehicle, the Maneuver-Short Range Air Defense Increment 3 (M-SHORAD Inc 3), and Indirect Fire Protection Capability Increment 2 (IFPC Inc 2) among others.

In your view, what benefit has the Department of the Army derived from its utilization of the rapid acquisition authority?

Rapid acquisition authority provides the Department of Army a pathway to quickly meet operational needs through material solutions. The Army used this authority to rapidly acquire coyote interceptors for counter-unmanned aerial systems missions and protect U.S. forces overseas.

How will you ensure that rapid acquisition pathways are not inundated with bureaucratic processes?

If confirmed, I will instruct the ASA (ALT) to create an incentive structure that rewards outcomes and calculated risk-taking, not compliance with procedures. Success is the creation of a capability, not completion of a checklist.

How will you seek to balance the need to rapidly acquire and field innovative systems while ensuring acquisition programs stay on budget and schedule?

If confirmed, I will hold program offices accountable for their failures to stay on budget and on schedule. Secondly, I will require requirements developers and acquisition officials to more carefully evaluate when the Army can purchase a fully developed, commercial or non-commercial and satisfy requirements with minimal acquisition risk, and when we must mature technology and develop an organic capability. Purchasing a fully developed system lowers development costs and delivery time. Some capabilities must be bespoke, but the Army can save time and money by buying as many non-commercial and commercial products as possible that meet warfighter needs.

This Committee has been a strong supporter of Army Futures Command and its focus on future readiness for competition with near-peers.

What is your view on Army Futures Command use of directed requirements?

Army Futures Command has played a critical role in shaping the current Army modernization. Without AFC, and its cross-functional team approach, the Army would be much further behind in its six modernization priorities.

Directed requirements provide the Army with an expedited means to acquire operationally critical capabilities. They are necessary to allow the Army to adapt to the

stunning changes in warfare that we are witnessing in Russo-Ukraine, and the leaps in capability showcased by America's competitors.

What is your view on the Cross-Functional Teams and how they are coordinating Army Futures Command and the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics?

Cross-functional teams provide acquisition programs with diverse talent sets that help the teams avoid pitfalls and siloed perspectives. From what I have been told, coordination between ASA (ALT) and AFC is going well.

Requirements

The Fiscal Year 2024 National Defense Authorization Act required the Joint Staff to take a clean-sheet approach to the requirements process and the Fiscal Year 2025 National Defense Authorization Act required the Secretary of Defense to establish an advisory panel on reforming the requirements process.

What recommendations would you make to the requirements process to make it more adaptive to changes in threats and technologies?

The current process of constructing requirements has many faults. It takes too long to develop requirements, requirements are often developed without sufficient interaction with warfighters or acquisition professionals, and in many cases, requirements are overly difficult to achieve for industry or from a technological maturation perspective.

Any revision to the requirements process needs to make it faster, more iterative, and less rigid. In many situations, requirements take so long to build, that they fall behind the current state of technology before they reach production. In others, requirements are so exacting that industry can only meet them at great costs, which are then passed onto the Army.

Any new requirements process must provide requirements developers, warfighters, and acquisition officials near constant opportunities for interaction, and be more agile in nature.

What role do you see for the Joint Staff versus the military services in the requirements process?

The Joint Staff oversees the development of requirements that span the military services. Services oversee the development of requirements that fall within their Title 10 responsibilities.

Test and Evaluation

Are you satisfied with Army test and evaluation capabilities? In which areas, if any, do you believe the Army should be developing new test and evaluation capabilities?

I need additional information on current Army test and evaluation capabilities before I can assess them. If confirmed, I will gather the necessary perspectives and information to assess Army Test and Evaluation Command.

Do you believe that current Army test and evaluation facilities, personnel and technical test apparatuses are up to par for what is needed for the modernization challenges of the Army now and in the near future?

I require additional information before I can answer this question.

Do you believe the Army should exploit non-developmental or commercial off-the-shelf solutions to meet Army requirements? Would this put capabilities into the hands of soldier more quickly, in your view?

Yes. Wherever possible, and as required by Federal Acquisition Regulations, the Army should purchase non-development and COTS solutions to meet requirements. Some capabilities require the Army to undertake independent development, but many of the Army's most pressing needs: small-unmanned aerial systems, counter-unmanned aerial systems, electronic warfare systems, and communications gear have already been developed.

What do you see as the operational test and evaluation needs for such non-developmental or commercial items to ensure they can still meet the technical requirements and human factors needs of environments often more complex and demanding than commercial settings?

It depends on the operational need. Some commercial products and non-development items should move immediately into the field without testing or with minimal testing because the Army currently has no existing capability. In other situations, the Army can thoroughly test non-developmental and commercial items because the operational need is less dire.

How should Army test and evaluation capabilities support software and other efforts that require rapid iteration between developments?

If confirmed, I will evaluate the Army's ability to test and evaluate software and other efforts that require rapid iteration.

The Army is responsible for the maintenance and operation of the garrison supporting U.S. assets on the Kwajalein Atoll, including the Ronald Reagan Ballistic Missile Defense Test Site – a capability essential to the modernization of the nation’s nuclear deterrent and many other weapon systems. However, the Army has not adequately budgeted for these facilities resulting in the poor maintenance of the garrison which supports a critical test range utilized on a daily basis by the Department.

If confirmed, what steps will you take as Secretary to revitalize this facility and improve the welfare of those stationed there?

If confirmed, I will review the current Army budgeting and plans for revitalization of the Ronald Reagan Ballistic Missile Defense Test Site and will prioritize improving the welfare of all Soldiers stationed on Kwajalein Atoll.

Innovation

If confirmed, what steps would you take to support the Army’s in-house innovation enterprise at its labs and engineering centers?

In-house innovation by Army labs and engineering centers can bring great capabilities and cutting-edge technology to the force, but support for any innovation center or lab must be conditional on the outputs of that organization. If confirmed, I commit to reinforcing success across the Army’s innovation enterprise, and reforming aspects of that enterprise that need modification to meet the Army’s needs.

If confirmed, how would you make use of the Small Business Innovation Research program to fund cutting edge research, diversify the Army’s industrial base, and transition capabilities to Program Executive Offices?

The Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program allows the Army to offer opportunities to non-traditional contractors to work with the Department; while simultaneously helping it access developing technologies. One of the criticisms of SBIRs is the poor record of transitioning promising pilots and prototypes developed under a SBIR into a full program of record or capability. If confirmed, I will work with a consortium of small businesses and our acquisition community to identify ways that we can improve SBIR outcomes.

If confirmed, how would you ensure that Army labs and test ranges have sufficient military construction and equipment funding to maintain world class research and testing infrastructure to maintain our military technology advantage, which is making significant investments in this type of infrastructure?

I have not been briefed on current military construction and equipment funding deficits for our labs and test ranges. If confirmed, I will work with the ASA (IE&E) to confirm that the Army is allocating sufficient capital to these investments.

If confirmed, how would you assess whether the Army has sufficient investment in science and technology programs, especially those that are creating new capabilities and possibilities for new concepts of operations beyond current requirements?

If confirmed, I will work through Army Futures Command to ensure that the Army not only has enough investment in science and technology programs, but that these investments are going to the most impactful capabilities. Technology enables tactics. One of the surest ways to develop a warfighting advantage is to harness new technology and adopt tactics that suit it in a coherent manner faster than an adversary.

Based on your experience, are there enduring technology areas that might not be considered emerging (for example, energetic materials, or corrosion control) that Army should remain focused on as categories outside of the modernization priorities? How should the Army make investment decisions to balance the needs between these emerging and enduring technology areas?

The Army should continuously reexamine its prioritization of technology areas to invest its resources in the areas with the largest payoff for the organization. If confirmed, I will continually evaluate these choices as part of the POM and look to organizations like AFC to make sure that we are balancing our investments between “today” and “tomorrow.”

If confirmed, how would you facilitate and accelerate the transition across the so-called Valley of Death from development to production and from the lab into the Soldier’s hands.

The Army cannot afford to invest capital in the research and development of capabilities, only to repeatedly abandon them because they lack a champion. As a service, the Army should attempt to reduce the number of programs that fall into the “valley of death,” by linking warfighters, acquisition officials, requirements developers, and researchers with a program in its infancy. Research and development projects should discontinue because they lack maturity or usefulness, not because of programmatic or a poor hand-off between champions of different phases of development.

In your view, where does the Army struggle most with technology transition and why?

I think this issue is worthy of further study before response. I will require additional briefs about the causes of failure and rates of failure of various programs before answering.

What is your view of programs such as the Army Technology Maturation Initiative (TMI)? Do “6.4” efforts such as TMI serve important objectives related to transition?

Programs like the Army Technology Maturation Initiative provide opportunities to continue developing technologies that are close, but not quite ripe for transition into an acquisition program. If confirmed, I would evaluate the outcomes that the TMI has achieved and determine how the program should be modified or reinforced going forward.

Cyber

In September 2023, DOD released its 2023 Cyber Strategy. The strategy charges DOD to persistently engage malicious cyber actors and other malign threats to U.S. interests in cyberspace.

In your view, how well postured is the Army to meet the goals outlined in the 2023 DOD Cyber Strategy? What actions do you think need to be taken in the Army to address any gaps with the 2023 DOD Cyber Strategy?

The Army’s role in defending the nation from cyberspace attacks continues to evolve. If confirmed, I will review the Army’s current cyber posture and ability to meet the goals outlined in the 2023 DOD Cyber Strategy as well as the Army’s coordination efforts with the Department of Defense and federal, state and local law enforcement agencies to address cyber threats.

If confirmed, what would you do to improve military and civilian cybersecurity career paths?

The Army needs cyber warriors. If confirmed, I will review the current career pathways and professional development opportunities for our cyber warriors, both in and out of uniform, and seek to ensure that we are giving them the right training and growth opportunities to address current and future cyber threats.

In what ways could Army cyber forces be better leveraged to address tactical cyber effects at a theater warfighting level? Are there things that Army could do to ensure that cyber is better integrated at a tactical level with other kinetic and non-kinetic capabilities?

I expect cyber integration at every level of warfighting to continue to increase going forward, and the Army must address that need. If confirmed, I will assess the Army’s current use of cyber effects at every level of warfighting and work to ensure that we

provide the right capabilities to our Soldiers.

Section 1657 of the FY 2020 NDAA directed each Military Department to appoint an independent Principal Cyber Advisor (PCA) to act as the principal advisor to the Secretary concerned on all cyber matters affecting that Department.

What do you see as the role of this position? If confirmed, how would you personally plan to utilize the Army PCA within your leadership structure?

Cyber considerations are critically important to the Army. If confirmed, I would gladly rely on the Principal Cyber Advisor (PCA) to inform me and other Army senior leaders of all cyber matters affecting the Army and rely heavily on their judgment. The PCA should be in a lead role in conducting periodic reviews of the Army cyber posture and analyzing the risks and benefits of cyber-related decisions.

If confirmed as Secretary of the Army, how would you best utilize the PCA to improve cybersecurity and otherwise ensure that the Army maintains decisive advantage in the Cyber domain?

If confirmed, I will use the PCA as the focal point for all synchronization and coordination of cybersecurity matters and the Army's liaison to the DOD and the interagency on such matters.

Technical Workforce

A significant challenge facing the Army today is a shortage of highly skilled data scientists, computer programmers, cyber, and other scientific, technical and engineering talent, especially those needed to work at Army institutions outside of the defense laboratories and technical centers (which currently benefit from specific workforce authorities available to Army labs).

If confirmed, what actions would you take to increase the recruiting and retention of scientists, engineers, software coders, and in other technical positions across the Army's enterprise?

Recruiting, developing and retaining talented personnel in the science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) fields is critical to the success of the Army. If confirmed, I will review the Army's current efforts in that area, reprioritize as needed, and work with Congress for any legislative support that may be needed to ensure the Army has a deep reservoir of STEM talent.

If confirmed, what specifically would you do to provide Army organizations with the civilian workforce management tools they need to shape their science,

technology, data, cyber, and engineering workforces, especially for those organizations that need this kind of technical expertise but are not inherently scientific or research organizations?

If confirmed, I will be fully committed to ensuring that Army organizations have the right civilian workforce management tools to leverage their technology, data, cyber, and engineering personnel. I will solicit input from those organizations directly concerning their needs and allocate resources appropriately to support their missions.

Army Intelligence, Counterintelligence, and Sensitive Activities

If confirmed, what role would you establish for yourself in the decisions on and oversight of Army intelligence, counterintelligence, and sensitive activities?

I am aware that the current Army policy places the Secretary of the Army as the head of oversight of the Army intelligence, counterintelligence, and sensitive activities, and, if confirmed, I intend to maintain that policy.

Army Cemeteries

What is your understanding of the role of the Secretary of the Army in the management and oversight of Arlington National Cemetery (ANC)?

The Secretary of the Army oversees Arlington National Cemetery through the Office of Army cemeteries.

What factors would you consider in granting or denying a request for exception to established ANC interment or inurnment policies?

As Secretary, I would examine applicable law, federal regulations, and past precedent before evaluating a request for an exception to policy.

What progress has the Army made in executing plans and programs for the expansion of ANC?

I have not been briefed on Arlington Cemetery's Southern Expansion Project. If confirmed, I will request a briefing on ANC, to include current capacity challenges and the expansion.

If confirmed, how will you ensure that the progress the Army has made in re-establishing an enduring caisson capability at Arlington National Cemetery and in support of state funeral requirements, to include ongoing consultation from world-class equestrian experts, persists?

I understand that the Army has had difficulty maintaining the health of horses in the caisson platoon within the Old Guard. If confirmed, I will assess the reforms that the Military District of Washington and the Old Guard have made over the past two years and determine if additional measures are required.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)

What do you perceive to be the appropriate role for the Secretary of the Army in the management and oversight of USACE?

I believe the Secretary of the Army has the responsibility to fully oversee both the military and Civil Works programs of the USACE. On the military side of the USACE the Secretary under his or her authority to man, train and equip the Army has the responsibility to ensure that all facilities constructed by the USACE are built to the highest standards and the lowest cost to the taxpayer. As the statutory authority for all Civil Works projects the Secretary has the responsibility to ensure that these projects are constructed in accordance with the project authorization enhances the public interest and is constructed in the most cost-efficient manner.

Based on your experience, how can the Army better leverage the unique public works authorities of USACE?

In my view the Army can leverage the extraordinary experience and expertise of the USACE's public works program to enhance national goals such as border security, assist in disaster relief and enhance the overall safety and quality of life of all Americans while providing valuable experience to the Army's Engineer Corps that will help us win on the battlefield as well.

District of Columbia National Guard (DCNG)

What is your understanding of the role and authority of the Secretary of the Army with respect to the DCNG?

I understand that the President, by executive order, authorized and directed the Secretary of Defense to supervise, administer, and control the District of Columbia National Guard (DCNG) while it is in a militia status. The Secretary of Defense directed the Secretary of the Army to perform the supervision, administration, and control of the DCNG.

What is the role of the Secretary of the Army with respect to National Guard from other States in a Title 32 status who are called in to augment the DCNG?

The Secretary of the Army is responsible for supervising, administering and controlling

the DCNG while it is in a militia status. With respect to State National Guard members augmenting the DCNG, I understand that they take directions from the federal entity that requested their support, and not from the Secretary of the Army. While the President or the Secretary of Defense may request that a Governor order National Guard personnel member to perform training or other duties, there is no role for the Secretary of the Army unless the Secretary of Defense delegates the authority to coordinate tasks. Pre-established Memorandums of Agreement or Understanding between the States and the District of Columbia guide how personnel and units may augment the DCNG. If the Guardsmen perform duties within their home State for their State, they remain under the command and control of their respective Governors.

In your view, should the role of the Secretary of the Army with respect to the DCNG be changed? If so, what changes would you advocate, if confirmed?

If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of the Air Force, the Chief of the National Guard Bureau, and other stakeholders to review existing authorities to determine what changes, if any, should be made to the role of the Secretary of the Army with respect to the DCNG.

The Army Civilian Workforce

In your judgment, what is the biggest challenge facing the Army in effectively and efficiently managing its civilian workforce?

Effectively and efficiently managing a civilian workforce is inherently challenging. If confirmed, I will review the Army's current civilian workforce best practices, including recruiting hiring, training, promotion, and compensation, to ensure that the Army attracts, develops and retains skilled civilian professionals across the workforce.

Would there be value, in your view, to establishing a unified DOD civilian workforce, as opposed to separate civilian workforces segregated by DOD Component? Please explain your answer.

If confirmed, I will review the advantages and disadvantages of establishing a unified DOD civilian workforce, and work in concert with the Secretary of Defense, my counterparts, and other stakeholders to determine the feasibility and desirability of pursuing such a course of action.

Congressional Oversight

In order to exercise legislative and oversight responsibilities, it is important that this committee, its subcommittees, and other appropriate committees of Congress receive timely testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic

communications, and other information from the executive branch.

Do you agree, 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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.