

Senate Armed Services Committee
Advance Policy Questions for Michael Payne
Nominee to be Director, Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation

Responsibilities and Qualifications

1. What is your understanding of the duties and functions of the Director of Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation (CAPE)?

As a former Air Force officer and career civil servant, I have worked both within CAPE and as an Air Force leader working with CAPE. I recognize that CAPE has often been viewed as operating beyond the scope of its prescribed mission. If confirmed, my top priority would be to focus CAPE on its core responsibilities set forth in Section 139a of Title 10, U.S. Code, including conducting independent cost-estimating and program evaluation analyses and providing advice to senior Department officials.

Section 139a of title 10, U.S. Code, establishes the responsibility of the Director of Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation (DCAPE) to provide “independent analysis and advice” to the Secretary of Defense and other senior officials of the Department of Defense (DOD) on a number of matters.

2. Having served as the acting DCAPE for several months, which of the duties and functions enumerated in section 139a do you perceive to be most critical to the effective operation of the Department?

I believe all of the duties and functions enumerated in Section 139a are critical to effectively provide the independent cost and program advice needed to inform the complex decisions senior Department leaders will face as they work to achieve President Trump’s vision to secure peace through unmistakable American power.

3. While serving as the acting DCAPE, which of the matters enumerated in section 139a required the greatest investment of your time and effort? Are there functions that you believe should have had more significant investment of time and effort than they currently do?

As acting DCAPE since January, my largest time commitment has been fulfilling the planning, programming, budgeting, and execution (PPBE) duties given CAPE’s role in supporting the transition to new leaders and investment priorities, the integration of reconciliation funding, execution of the Defense Comprehensive Review, and development of two five-year program plans. In the past, CAPE has focused the majority of its effort on evaluations of warfighting programs and, I believe, needs to increase focus on enabling activities. For example, the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 directs CAPE to perform independent cost estimates for certain military construction projects—an area CAPE has not traditionally focused on but now needs to do more. If confirmed, I am committed to focusing my time on all of CAPE’s mandated functions.

4. What background and experience do you have that you believe qualify you for this position?

I believe that my background and experience make me uniquely qualified to become the DCAPE, if confirmed. I served over 10 years on active duty as an officer in the U.S. Air Force and have a deep commitment to delivering war-winning capability to our warfighters. I also served for four years in industry as an engineer and have a solid understanding of the challenges companies face in developing and transitioning military capabilities. Additionally, I am a trained analyst with experience evaluating joint capabilities. I served over 10 years as an executive leader in multiple Department organizations. And finally, I have been a member of CAPE for 12 years of my career. If confirmed, I will apply my broad background and deep expertise to fulfilling CAPE's core mission and shaping the next generation of analysts.

5. Specifically, what background and experience do you have in the acquisition and sustainment of major weapons systems?

As acting DCAPE, the Deputy Director for Program Evaluation, a Division Director covering Tactical Air Forces, and as a CAPE intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance analyst, I directly supported acquisition and sustainment decisions in every Military Service. As acting DCAPE, I have collaborated closely with the Under Secretary of War for Acquisition and Sustainment to analyze acquisition tradeoffs in cost, schedule, and performance for major weapons systems. In each program review I have supported throughout my career, I have worked closely with programming and acquisition stakeholders to consider development, procurement, and sustainment costs and options for major platforms.

6. What shortfalls do you see in the Department's ability to estimate the full lifecycle costs for DOD programs?

Congress directed the Department to improve the ability to estimate operations and sustainment costs and military construction costs. CAPE's expertise in these areas, particularly the latter, is nascent and needs further development. In addition to these areas, I believe we also have work to do to improve software program cost estimates. If confirmed, I am committed to improving CAPE capabilities in all areas of lifecycle cost estimating.

7. What background and experience do you have that qualify you for this position of senior leadership in the DOD?

I have performed for 10 years as a Senior Executive in the U.S. Air Force and CAPE. For the first ten months of the current Trump Administration, I have led CAPE through transition and in the execution of multiple cost estimates and major program evaluations in support of Department senior leaders.

8. Given your experience as acting DCAPE, as well as your years as Principal Deputy Director, do you believe that the DCAPE has the authorities and resources necessary to execute the responsibilities assigned in law? Please explain your

answer.

At present, I believe DCAPE has sufficient authorities and personnel resources to perform its assigned responsibilities. As a relatively small organization, new responsibilities would require reprioritization of efforts or additional personnel resources. CAPE information technology (IT) systems and tools, however, are antiquated. If confirmed, I would initiate an effort to modernize CAPE data collection and analysis tools to increase productivity and improve recruiting and retention.

9. If confirmed, and based on observations gleaned while serving as acting DCAPE, what innovative ideas would you consider providing to the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of Defense regarding the structure, organization, methodologies, and reporting relationships applicable to the Office of Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation?

If confirmed, I would seek to implement the changes in CAPE's organization resulting from the Defense Comprehensive Review and to modernize the modeling and data environment available to Department analysts. Furthermore, I would evolve the program review process to support the needs of Department leaders and adapt the analysis of alternatives approach to better align with legislative acquisition and requirements reform bills once passed.

Major Challenges and Priorities

10. If confirmed, what broad priorities would you establish?

If confirmed as the Director of CAPE, I will focus on three core priorities. First, during my time as a career civil servant in the Pentagon, I have worked both within CAPE and in other organizations working with CAPE. I recognize that CAPE has often been viewed as operating beyond its mission responsibilities and has consequently been under heavy scrutiny. That is why, if confirmed, my first priority will be focusing CAPE on its statutory mission, including providing independent cost estimating and program evaluation analyses to the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, and other Department leaders. Objective, fact-based analysis is the cornerstone of sound defense decision-making that puts the most advanced capabilities in the hands of our warfighters.

Second, I will pursue modernization of CAPE processes and systems to ensure CAPE can apply cutting-edge tools to more quickly identify the most relevant solutions. My third priority, if confirmed, would be to invest in the next generation of analysts and leaders to ensure the Department has advantage not only in technology, but also in people who will work diligently to ensure our warfighters have the most advanced capabilities in the world.

11. In your view, what are the major challenges you would face if confirmed as Director of CAPE?

If confirmed, I would face the challenges described above in refocusing CAPE to its core mission. Critical and challenging components of that will include reforming cost estimating and

program evaluation processes to better align with Department-wide requirements and acquisition reform.

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

If confirmed, I would address the program evaluation process by reforming the analysis of alternatives approach to better align with the reformed requirements and acquisition processes, including early engagement with industry. For cost estimating, I would, if confirmed, focus on ensuring cost reporting requirements for industry are less burdensome in order to better facilitate the entry of non-traditional vendors into the acquisition process.

13. In your view, what should CAPE's primary areas of effort be?

CAPE needs to focus on improving cost estimation and program evaluation to support the new requirements and acquisition processes, thereby contributing to Department efforts to accelerate warfighting capability delivery at scale.

14. Do you believe the CAPE office would benefit from periodic outside expert reviews of CAPE's capabilities, workforce, and processes? Please explain your answer.

I support independent, robust analysis on any topic, including the CAPE organization and methods. All good science and analysis benefits from peer-review. I would recommend using existing government entities to conduct such reviews, that the reviews be targeted with specific objectives, and that DCAPE be given an opportunity to address the findings directly in order to implement improvements.

15. If confirmed, how do you plan to balance the Director of CAPE's competing roles of representing independent and realistic analyses and supporting the President's Budget priorities at the same time?

CAPE is an advising organization, not a policy- or decision-making organization. As such, I recognize that analysis is one component of a senior leader's decision-making calculus. If confirmed, I would plan to continue to produce independent analysis and advise Department senior leaders and support the President's Budget as I have for my entire career, understanding that they make risk-based tradeoffs based on a wide variety of factors. I will ensure that CAPE focuses on its mission, produces fact-based independent analyses, and incorporates viewpoints and analyses from all stakeholders within the Department. Importantly, I also, if confirmed, would be committed to transparency in sharing CAPE analysis with Congress on the President's Budget priorities.

16. To what extent should CAPE be involved in policy or political judgments, in your view?

CAPE is an advising organization, not a policy- or decision-making organization. CAPE's core responsibility is to provide objective, independent analysis to support decision-making. I believe

that CAPE's products are valuable in many areas, including policy decisions. If confirmed, I would build a strong relationship with my peers to ensure CAPE can provide decision support consistent with its core mission.

17. In your view, how should CAPE be integrated into the Department's decision-making processes?

CAPE is an advising organization, not a policy- or decision-making organization. In its advising role, CAPE leads cost estimating and program evaluation analysis to support the Deputy Secretary and Secretary's programmatic investment decisions. This role must be integrated closely with Comptroller work on the development of the Department's annual contribution to the President's Budget submission. These CAPE analyses should also inform strategy, requirements, and acquisition decisions, when appropriate.

DCAPE's Role in Implementing the National Defense Strategy

18. What is the appropriate role of the DCAPE with respect to evaluating investments in the capabilities and capacities required to support new operational concepts of the Joint Force? How does that role compare and contrast with the roles of the Military Services, the Joint Staff, and the Combatant Commands, in your view? What unique expertise or analytical capabilities does the Office of Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation possess in this area in relation to other elements of the DOD?

DCAPE has a responsibility to evaluate the effectiveness of the overall defense program projections, which requires assessment of concepts, capabilities, and capacities. Often, DCAPE draws upon Military Service analysis, adding in cost and comparisons to other joint solutions. CAPE often leverages Joint Staff and Combatant Command near-term operationally-focused assessments and capability assessments. Through the Analysis Working Group and Program Review Teams, CAPE both shares its analysis and integrates insights developed by others. In general, CAPE is one of the only Department organizations that integrates cost into capability evaluations. Additionally, CAPE is one of a handful of organizations that performs classified, joint campaign-level assessments across the Department, one of two organizations with force flow analytic capability, and the only organization that produces a projection of the long-term cost of the defense program. Finally, CAPE's civilian personnel provide continuity on analytic results and resourcing options and decisions that cannot be found in other organizations.

19. If confirmed, how would you structure your relationship with the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, particularly as regards the review, analysis, and evaluation of programs for executing approved strategies and policies? On what types of projects would you expect to collaborate with the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy?

CAPE's core responsibility is to provide objective, independent analysis—and, if confirmed, I am committed to ensuring CAPE analysis is independent regardless of the organization

supported. This would include providing analysis in support of the Under Secretary of War for Policy. If confirmed, I would seek regular touchpoints with Policy leaders and anticipate collaboration in setting priorities for the program review, providing support to National Defense strategy assessments, providing analysis that can support specific policy decisions under review, and guiding the analytic community across the Department.

In its July 2024 report, the Commission on the National Defense Strategy recommended that Congress provide real growth for defense spending, at an annual average rate of three to five percent above inflation.

20. Do you agree that sustained real growth in the defense budget is necessary to achieve the aims of the President's defense strategy without incurring significant additional risk?

I believe that for too long, our military has been asked to defend our nation with systems that are outdated, over-budget, and delayed. Our adversaries have modernized in a focused way while the United States balanced multiple competing priorities. Under President Trump and Secretary Hegseth's leadership, we have been given a clear vision and priorities. I believe resource needs warrant a year-by-year re-evaluation and, in some cases, such as Golden Dome, larger infusions are necessary to modernize U.S. capabilities with speed and purpose. If confirmed, I would be committed to providing independent analysis of the resources needed to remain the strongest military in the world, consistent with President Trump's direction to achieve peace through strength.

21. Looking forward, what types of resource shortfalls are likely to hamper DOD's execution of the President's defense strategy and other national defense priorities, in your view? How would you address or mitigate these shortfalls, if confirmed?

In my view, it is a reality that the unpredictability of funding impacts programmatic progress. Beyond a lack of appropriations, the Department often changes quantity projections because of resource limitations. Solutions need to balance allowing flexibility for legitimate changes in military requirements and creating funding stability that supports delivery of capability. In addition to Golden Dome, I believe munitions production and the defense industrial base are areas that need targeted funding to achieve strategic goals.

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

If confirmed, I would seek to use quantitative effectiveness assessments as a means of measuring the sufficiency of the Department's funding approach. This would be a dynamic assessment that accounts for changes in the threat and policy priorities.

Section 902 of the FY2024 NDAA

Section 902 of the Fiscal Year 2024 National Defense Authorization Act modifies the responsibilities of CAPE. Key changes include establishing an analytical team, referred to as the “Program Evaluation Competitive Analysis Cell,” to critically review CAPE’s methodologies, assumptions, and data, used in CAPE’s strategic and operational analyses. Section 902 also mandates a pilot program on alternative analysis be created by May 1, 2024, to explore new approaches to programmatic evaluation. Section 902 also mandates the establishment of an Analysis Working Group, which would coordinate with CAPE, the Joint Staff, and other DoD components to improve analytic standards across the Department and align analytical efforts with strategic priorities. As of September 2025, there has been limited visible implementation progress.

23. The Program Evaluation Competitive Analysis Cell was mandated to scrutinize CAPE’s methodologies and data for strategic and operational analyses, yet as of September 2025, Congress has not received any notifications regarding its establishment. How do you propose meeting this legislative requirement in a way to best benefit the Department of Defense? Please elaborate on your answer.

If confirmed, I commit to engaging within the Department to address the requirement in section 139a(e) of title 10, U.S. Code, for the Secretary of War to establish a Cell independent of the DCAPE to evaluate CAPE analyses and assumptions.

24. The Competitive Analysis Cell is tasked with challenging CAPE’s assumptions and methodologies, but without clear implementation, there is a risk of unchecked biases in cost estimates or operational analyses. How would you ensure the Cell operates as a rigorous, independent check rather than a performative exercise, and what specific past CAPE analyses would you task the Cell with re-evaluating to test its effectiveness in identifying methodological flaws?

The Competitive Analysis Cell should not report to the DCAPE in order to retain complete independence over the long-term. Its staff should include personnel with strong technical backgrounds and military experience, like CAPE. I strongly believe that there is value in multiple analytic perspectives and strive to check biases through frequent collaboration and exploration of variables rather than setting rigid assumptions. I also believe that CAPE must continue to evolve methodologies and leverage the best analysis available – whether its CAPE analysis or another organization’s work. From my perspective, any strategic portfolio review or independent cost assessment done in the past two years could be good initial candidates for the Cell to tackle. If confirmed, I would ensure that CAPE’s work is fully transparent for this independent review.

25. Section 902 required the DCAPE to launch a pilot program by May 1, 2024, to test innovative approaches to programmatic evaluation, such as predictive analytics for acquisition risks. What is the status of this pilot program?

One of my priorities, if confirmed, is to modernize CAPE processes and systems. I support the integration of innovative methods, as well as the need to examine programming choices across multiple timeframes. If confirmed, I commit to engaging with Congress to ensure CAPE is

meeting the requirements set forth in Section 902.

26. The Analysis Working Group is intended to foster collaboration between CAPE, the Joint Staff, and other DoD components to improve analytic standards across the Department and align analytical efforts with strategic priorities. Given the apparent lack of progress in establishing this group, how would you work to advance its establishment and activities?

Since Congress established it in Section 902, the Analytic Working Group (AWG) has met weekly to collaborate on analytic products and initiated a number of efforts to improve capabilities for all analytic organizations. The AWG summarized its progress in a January 2025 report to Congress. Currently, most AWG activities are paused as many analytic organizations are furloughed. The next key AWG activity is to finish reviewing FY 2026 analytic plans from across the Department and deliver an assessment of how well those plans cover strategic priorities and meet AWG standards. If confirmed, I will redouble efforts to ensure Congress is aware of AWG activities and progress.

27. Section 902 implicitly requires CAPE to provide updates to Congress on implementation progress, yet no such reports have been received. How would you establish a transparent reporting framework—potentially including quarterly milestones on the Competitive Analysis Cell’s outputs or the pilot program’s findings—to rebuild congressional confidence in CAPE’s commitment to these reforms?

Pursuant to Section 902, CAPE provided a summary of key analytic work in a February 2024 Report to Congress, a summary of AWG progress in January 2025, and has provided consistent quarterly briefings on specific analytic topics. If confirmed, I am committed to improving CAPE transparency through engagements with Congress.

DOD Readiness

28. How would you assess the current readiness of the DOD—across the domains of materiel and equipment, personnel, and training—to accomplish the broad range of potential missions U.S. forces could be required to execute?

I assess that the Department of War (DoW) is ready to meet all current global mission requirements. I also believe there is significant work needed to replace outdated systems and improve timeliness of delivery of new technology and platforms needed to be ready for future conflicts. Readiness assessments require frequent refresh given the dynamic and urgent challenge that China poses. If confirmed, I will work with leaders across the Department and in Congress to ensure our force is ready and that our warriors receive the rigorous, advanced training needed to remain dominant into the future.

29. What is your assessment of the risk the Military Departments and Services have accepted in regard to the readiness of their forces to execute Combatant

Commanders' operational plans associated with the Interim National Defense Strategic Guidance?

As acting DCAPE, I have worked with leaders across the Department to consider options to address policy guidance and readiness risks identified by operational commanders. In these discussions, CAPE has a responsibility to highlight risk across multiple timeframes and to balance investment between modernization, procurement, and current readiness. If confirmed, I will continue to provide independent analysis informed by all stakeholders and ensure that resourcing debates benefit from the perspective of Military Departments, Service leaders, and Combatant Commanders.

30. If confirmed to be the DCAPE, what would be your role in evaluating and reporting on the readiness of DoD Components? In mitigating readiness gaps and shortfalls, including in assessing and communicating the tradeoffs between different capability types?

If confirmed, my role would be to evaluate the effectiveness of planned readiness resource allocation and develop resourcing options to address areas of concern. CAPE has a unique ability to look across platforms, Services, and domains to assess enterprise solutions and efficiencies and use the PPBE process to outline tradeoffs that impact readiness.

31. Presuming sustained, predictable, and suitably increased funding going forward, how long would it take, in your view, to repair readiness fully and ensure that U.S. forces are ready to fight, when and where needed?

President Trump and Secretary Hegseth set a clear vision for the Department to restore U.S. military strength. With the funding assumptions above, I believe the Department has a plan to urgently improve future readiness over the next several years. This plan needs to be updated routinely to keep pace with adversary threat projections.

32. Assuming readiness shortfalls can be remediated, do you believe there is a steady-state investment goal DOD should maintain over time to ensure we are consistently addressing readiness rather than allowing shortfalls to grow again over time?

Stable, predictable funding is the most critical goal the Department should prioritize to address readiness. As the Department modernizes the Joint Force, the Department will need to continually evaluate readiness funding levels across the domains with that in mind. Equally important in the readiness equation are operational factors and ensuring rigorous, advanced training opportunities. If confirmed, I will work across the Department and with the Congress to evaluate funding and programs that will support Joint Force readiness.

Key Relationships

33. If confirmed, how would you structure your relationship with the Secretary of Defense and the Deputy Secretary of Defense, particularly in view of the DCAPE's independence and direct reporting relationships prescribed in law?

If confirmed, it would be my goal to be a trusted advisor to the Secretary and Deputy Secretary. I am committed to providing my independent view on any issue for which CAPE could support their decisions with analytic underpinning.

For years, CAPE made available its independent analyses, recommendations, and analysts to Congressional members and staff to help Congress understand the choices and tradeoffs being made by the DOD.

34. What are your views on the state of the relationship between the Director of CAPE and the Senate Armed Services Committee in particular, and with the Congress in general?

I do not believe CAPE has done enough to foster a productive relationship with either the Senate Armed Services Committee or Congress in general. If confirmed, I will be committed to transparency and developing a collaborative and responsive relationship with Congress. I would have a significant amount of work to do to rebuild relationships, and I am committed to doing so.

35. Should the Director of CAPE be authorized to have more direct and independent communication with the Congress?

I do not believe there is a need for a change to CAPE authorities. If confirmed, I am committed to working with Congress to resolve any specific concerns related to communications.

36. If confirmed, what actions would you take to sustain a productive and collaborative relationship with the Congress?

If confirmed, I am committed to making CAPE's quarterly briefing a more dynamic and broader exchange. I am also committed to responding in a timely manner to all specific requests for information. I would welcome feedback on how CAPE can support Congressional oversight needs.

The Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Execution (PPBE) Process

37. If confirmed, how would you structure your relationship with the Under Secretary of Defense for Comptroller, particularly with respect to the preparation of materials and guidance for the Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Execution system? On what other projects would you expect to collaborate with the Under Secretary of Defense for Comptroller?

If confirmed, I would seek a close working relationship with routine engagements with the Comptroller where we collaboratively develop guidance and decision support products that assist

the Secretary and Deputy Secretary to understand how the Department is spending taxpayer dollars and the available strategic resourcing options. Additional areas of collaboration would include modernization of the resource management business system, expanding data analysis tools, and improving the Department's data related to operations and sustainment.

38. Informed by your service performing the duties of the DCAPE, what do you perceive to be the duties and functions of the DCAPE with regard to the management of DOD planning and programming processes across the FYDP?

DCAPE supports the planning phase by providing strategic, cost-informed program analysis that will be used in later phases and providing critical inputs to strategic guidance based on these products. In the programming phase, CAPE produces and collects additional analysis from across the Department and performs a management and integrative function through the collection and evaluation of strategic issues, facilitation of discussion around strategic options, and recording final programmatic decisions by the Secretary and the Deputy Secretary for the five-year program plan.

39. Informed by your service performing the duties of the DCAPE, what do you perceive to be the duties and functions of the DCAPE with regard to the program review phase of the PPBE process?

Specific to program review, DCAPE is responsible for independently advising the Secretary and Deputy Secretary on the integration of Service Program Objective Memorandum submissions, engaging with peers and leaders to understand the priority issues for the review, conducting independent analysis of programmatic options, and advising the Secretary and Deputy Secretary in final balancing decisions. The DCAPE also maintains strong communication with the Office of Management and Budget to ensure programmatic status and options are clear and to successfully address changes directed by the White House. Throughout program review, DCAPE works closely with the Comptroller to ensure consistency between budget and program decisions.

40. In your view, are the programs and resources required to generate the capabilities necessary to implement the Interim National Defense Strategic Guidance properly prioritized in the PPBE process? If confirmed, how would you realign or refocus DOD programs and funding, if at all?

I believe the current PPBE process is the most strategically aligned that I have seen in my career. Each issue evaluated in the program review process is assessed for alignment with guidance and actively discussed by senior leaders and stakeholders at all levels prior to decisions. In areas where options do not yet exist to align with strategic priorities, CAPE advises on potential lead organizations to develop options for the following cycle. With respect to realigning DoW programs and funding, I strongly believe that CAPE is an advising organization, not a policy- or decision-making organization. As such, I would not make such decisions. I would, however, provide independent advice to the Secretary and Deputy Secretary consistent with the CAPE mission. In this respect, independent CAPE analysis is consistent with other analyses throughout the Department, showing that continued emphasis is needed in key areas like munitions and

emerging domains like space and cyber. Finally, I believe significantly more emphasis is needed in delivering programs sooner, at lower cost, and at scale—consistent with the Secretary’s priorities of rebuilding the military and reestablishing deterrence to achieve peace through strength.

Section 1004 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2022 created the Commission on Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Execution Reform.

41. Do you believe the PPBE process needs to be reformed? If so, how?

Yes. The Commission on PPBE Reform provided a thorough assessment of weaknesses and reforms the Department could pursue. I support the majority of those recommendations. In particular, additional fiscal flexibility authorities will be needed to support the changes sought in acquisition reforms, like the draft SPEED and FORGeD Acts.

42. What changes would you recommend, if any, to the PPBE process with a view to improving resourcing decisions within DOD to help the Department take advantage of emerging technologies or address emerging threats?

I would like to provide time for PPBE Reform Commission-related changes and the requirements reform efforts initiated by Congress, the Secretary, and the Deputy Secretary to develop before initiating further changes. CAPE is an active participant in implementing these changes, and I believe the changes will help the Department to integrate emerging technologies more quickly.

43. In your view, is the PPBE process flexible enough to enable DOD to make programmatic changes within the annual budget cycle?

Yes. Over my two decades in the Air Force and at CAPE, I have witnessed a tremendous amount of flexibility within the PPBE process itself. With the reforms being proposed, it can be even more flexible. As with many processes, full use of flexibility differs by individual organizations, programs, and people.

44. The Commission proposed several initiatives to leverage data sharing systems to increase transparency between Congress and DOD related to budget submissions. How would you recommend increasing transparency related to cost assessment and program evaluation analyses?

If confirmed, I will be committed to transparency. I would recommend a review of CAPE reporting requirements to ensure that the frequency and content is aligned to support Congressional oversight needs. Together we could identify additional steps that could increase transparency. CAPE uses multiple types of data, including the budget data assessed by the Commission, proprietary vendor information, and other sensitive data, each of which can have unique management requirements.

Cost Assessment Practices

45. In your opinion, what factors cause differences in the cost estimates calculated by CAPE and the non-advocate cost assessment reflected in the service cost positions?

Though there are examples of large differences between CAPE's independent cost estimates and service cost positions, the median difference between CAPE and Service estimates has decreased to approximately 2.0% since the implementation of the Weapon Systems Acquisition Reform Act of 2009. Differences can be driven by numerous factors, but most often differences are related to assumptions on technical maturity, production efficiency, schedule, and application of historical cost data. Over the last decade, the Department has increased collection of actual cost data from industry contractors, which has improved the realism and accuracy of all DoW cost estimates. If confirmed, I am committed to ensuring robust collection of actual program cost and that Department decisions are informed by to further reduce the differences in the cost estimates.

46. Some assert that the accuracy of cost estimates could be improved by estimating the range of costs, rather than a set cost estimate? What is your view of such proposals?

Providing program cost estimates as a range of likely cost outcomes is appropriate in some cases, such as earlier phases of the acquisitions process or due to evolving technical maturation. CAPE's independent cost estimates support informed decision-making by supplementing point estimates with discussions of risks and opportunities, sensitivity analyses, and excursions to describe the likely cost outcomes under different estimating assumptions. As programs mature through successive milestones, CAPE estimates need to become more refined to support acquisition and contracting activities.

47. How would you propose enforcing rigor and standardization in the development of cost avoidance and cost savings estimates across the Department for better comparison across programs?

I believe that the greatest opportunities for delivering cost savings or achieving cost avoidance exist at the earliest stages of a program, when tradespace surrounding required capabilities and the acquisition strategies to deliver them are most flexible. While the Department often selects options that appear to be most cost effective at face value, these decisions are often underpinned by assumptions that turn out to be incorrect, which leads to an inability to deliver the promised savings. If confirmed, I would support cost and acquisition policy reform that emphasizes the need to use research, analysis, and piloting to convert key assumptions into facts prior to major acquisition decisions. Where analysis falls short of this goal, the Department should document and track the potential impacts to lifecycle costs and build flexibility into acquisition strategies to adjust when major cost-driving assumptions turn out to be incorrect.

48. If confirmed, what actions would you take to increase the fidelity and accuracy of independent cost estimates for major defense acquisition programs?

If confirmed, I would support CAPE's ongoing efforts to account for emerging technologies when estimating program costs through early and frequent technical and data interchanges with industry and to estimate cross-program effects of capacity constraints within the industrial base. Additionally, I would ensure that CAPE continues its efforts to improve cost data collection systems and historical cost reporting systems used across the Department.

49. In your view, what additional strategic data planning and collection is required across the Department to provide better independent cost estimates?

CAPE has invested significant time with industry over the last five years to modernize the statutory cost data collection efforts that underpin the Department's independent cost estimates. With rapidly changing data manipulation and analysis technology, the Department must ensure that it is maximizing the usage of the latest tools and minimizing the effort associated with data collection. The Department also must ensure that it tailors its requirements to provide the data essential for good decision making while not driving significant industry effort – especially for non-traditional vendors. If confirmed, I am committed to ensuring that our data collection efforts continue to evolve in a manner that leverages the latest technologies while not being a burden on industry or the acquisition community.

50. If confirmed, how would you resource and champion the CAPE and cost community workforce and the Cost Assessment Data Enterprise to ensure sufficient capacity and capability, continued partnership, unity of effort, and sharing of data across the cost and acquisition communities?

CAPE has a strong track record over the last decade of successfully resourcing the Cost Assessment Data Enterprise and collaborating across the Department on statutory cost data collection. If confirmed, I am committed to continue that success in working with the Military Department cost estimators, the acquisition community, and industry to ensure the appropriate data is efficiently collected and shared to inform quality cost estimates for Department leadership.

51. CAPE often relies on the cost estimating workforce in the military services to support program cost estimates. In your view, does CAPE have sufficient a workforce in its organization to carry out DCAPE responsibilities? How would you assess the workforce in the military services to support their, and CAPE's, cost estimating and assessment needs?

CAPE's cost assessment workforce, while stretched, can meet existing statutory requirements by strategically delegating work to the Services when appropriate. The recent addition of statutory requirements for military construction and sustainment review cost estimating has necessitated increased delegation to the Services. For CAPE and the Department, I believe the workforce is sufficient, though strained in certain areas as it adapts to broader national workforce demographic and skill shifts. If confirmed, I am committed to ensuring that the Department uses new technologies and approaches to maximize the efficiency of our cost estimating workforce and to providing transparent assessments as the Department's cost community needs evolve.

52. What major shortfalls do you perceive in the Department's ability to estimate program development, procurement, and life-cycle costs? What steps would you take to address these shortfalls, if confirmed?

The Department faces several challenges in accurately estimating program development, procurement, and life-cycle costs. First, there are shortfalls in the Department's ability to validate critical cost estimate framing assumptions on the accelerated timelines of today's acquisition programs. If confirmed, I am committed to ensuring transparent communication of all cost risks associated with technical or programmatic uncertainty to Department leadership. Second, the Department has not fully integrated new acquisition approaches and tools into our cost estimates. If confirmed, I will ensure the cost estimating workforce invests in the understanding and incorporation of the latest industry tools and trends. Finally, there are shortfalls in the collection and curation of military construction, operating and support, and middle-tier acquisition program cost data. If confirmed, I will prioritize addressing these gaps by supporting the continued development and expansion of the Enterprise Visibility and Management and Oversight of Operating and Support Cost system to improve capture and analysis of operating and support costs, investigating adding a military construction cost data capability to the Cost Assessment Data Enterprise, and improving cost data collection processes for middle-tier acquisition programs.

53. How will CAPE processes for making long-term cost estimates need to be changed in order to factor in such things as private equity investments or supplemental loans and loan guarantees?

As new financing mechanisms shape the defense industrial base, CAPE must adapt models to reflect how private capital affects cost structures, production scalability, and long-term affordability. If confirmed, I will ensure CAPE's cost estimates capture how private investment influences industry cost behavior – particularly in areas like dual-use technology development, supply chain resilience, and manufacturing capacity. To do this, CAPE will need to strengthen engagement with the broader defense industrial and financial communities.

54. If confirmed, to what extent would you ensure CAPE uses improved metrics and cost estimation assumptions to improve adaptability and responsiveness of programs to meet warfighter and DOD institutional needs?

If confirmed, I would ensure CAPE continues to refine and improve its metrics and cost estimation methodologies to make our analyses more responsive to both warfighter needs and the Department's priorities. This begins with improving our cost data collection and estimating approaches to reflect the pace of the modern acquisition environment, particularly in areas where traditional cost models can lag operational realities such as software development, model-based systems engineering, digital engineering, and rapid prototyping.

Nunn-McCurdy breaches are often used as a tool for DOD to indicate when the cost of a program is exceeding the initial cost baseline. As a tripwire, such reporting is only as good as the initial cost baseline that is established, which often is a result of CAPE analysis.

But that often calls for better means for factoring in risks of inflation, supply chain, and potential workforce shortages.

55. How would you recommend CAPE improve its processes and methodologies to account for such volatility and ensure more accurate cost estimate baselines, as well as making the use of Nunn-McCurdy breaches a more useful tool for DOD and congressional oversight?

CAPE continually seeks to improve both the analytical rigor and agility of its cost estimating processes. CAPE made significant investments to improve methods to explicitly quantify the impacts of inflation, supply chain disruption, and industrial base fragility on program cost and schedule, but more improvement is needed. If confirmed, I will further evolve processes and methods to account for volatility in collaboration with defense industry. With respect to Nunn-McCurdy breach process improvements, I would emphasize lessons-learned analysis and root-cause identification as part of the certification process, so that the Department treats Nunn-McCurdy breaches as structured opportunities to recalibrate assumptions, validate estimating methods, and strengthen acquisition governance.

Program Evaluation

The Director of CAPE is responsible for the review, analysis, and evaluation of programs for executing approved strategies and policies, and for assessments of alternative plans, programs, and policies with respect to the acquisition programs of the Department of Defense.

56. What is your view of the significance of independent review, analysis, and evaluation of programs, and assessments of alternative programs, to the effective management of the Department of Defense?

Effectively managing the Department requires its leadership to make difficult decisions to address complex, multi-faceted challenges, ensuring programs align with strategy and are cost-effective. If confirmed, I will fervently advocate for, and defend, CAPE's independent role to ensure Department leadership has comprehensive assessments of costs, benefits, and risks associated with potential courses of action.

57. In your view, how should the Director of CAPE interact with service acquisition executives, program executive officers, program managers, and other program officials in preparing independent evaluations of major defense acquisition programs?

If confirmed, I will collaborate closely with Service Acquisition Executives and their staffs to ensure maximum transparency in CAPE's work. Collaboration and transparency are both vital to ensuring that CAPE's independent analyses are based on common data and objectively characterize the perspectives of key stakeholders.

58. What role should the Director of CAPE play in assessing and evaluating management, business, and organizational functions, initiatives, and activities within the Defense Department?

As an independent, objective analytic organization, CAPE has the expertise to analyze reform initiatives across the Department. If confirmed, I am committed to working with the Secretary, the Deputy Secretary, and other Department leaders to provide independent evaluations of reform options and ensure each taxpayer dollar provides the most capability for our warfighters.

59. Are there areas of capability or workforce where you need to maintain some capacity that might be considered low-demand, but high consequence, if you don't have it readily available?

There are certainly capabilities or workforce demands where the Department maintains investments devoted to high-consequence but lower probability demands. You could even say that our nuclear investments fall into this category. Choices on how ready to make certain forces or force structure to retain for low-demand categories are usually driven by strategy and policy objectives and informed by rigorous analysis and debate. If confirmed, I am committed to facilitating these types of debates in the PPBE process.

60. If confirmed, what safeguards will you put in place to ensure CAPE does not advocate policy or pre-judge a policy decision more properly in the purview of other DoD officials?

I strongly believe that CAPE is an advising organization, not a policy- or decision-making organization. As such, I view CAPE independent and objective analyses as important contributions to decision support. If confirmed, I am committed to focusing the CAPE organization on non-advocate, fact-based analysis and to a high standard for transparency with stakeholders.

61. The Administration has recently started pursuing equity in specific companies, and has stated an intention to potentially pursue this option with defense industrial base companies. How might you see this complicating the ability of CAPE to make unbiased and independent assessments related to program evaluations in instances when government decisions could negatively affect such equity investments?

I do not foresee any complications associated with CAPE's ability to make unbiased and independent assessments on Government-held equity in the industrial base or any other company. If confirmed, I am committed to an independent CAPE.

CAPE Analysis in Program Decisions

Over the past several years, the Department of Defense has continually delayed and desopped the deployment of missile defense capabilities to Guam, despite clearly and consistently highlighting both the critical importance of the island in facilitating U.S.

presence in the Western Pacific and the rapidly growing threat from Chinese and North Korean missiles. In questioning the policy decisions to scale back DOD efforts, this committee has been frequently informed that CAPE analyses and advocacy often played a determinative role.

62. If confirmed, will you commit to ensuring CAPE as an organization and CAPE staff will avoid advocating for specific policy decisions and provide only objective, fact-based assessments to DOD leadership?

Yes, if confirmed, I am absolutely committed to ensuring CAPE as an organization and CAPE staff avoid advocating for specific policy decisions and provide objective, fact-based assessments to Department leaders.

The Deputy Secretary of Defense has, over the past several months, created multiple Direct Reporting Program Manager positions to oversee a number of large, complex acquisition programs of critical importance, including the Golden Dome missile defense system, the Sentinel intercontinental ballistic missile, and the Columbia- and Virginia-class submarines.

63. What is your understanding of the relationship of the DCAPE with regard to these DRPMs?

The DRPMs are tasked with delivering some of the Department's highest priority weapon systems. If confirmed, I would be committed to working closely with the DRPMs to estimate the costs of, and evaluate, programs.

64. Do you believe the creation of these positions will alter the traditional role of CAPE with regard to ACAT I MDAPs? If so, how?

No, I do not believe the creation of DRPM positions will alter the traditional role of CAPE with regard to ACAT I programs. CAPE's role for these programs is to provide independent cost estimation and program analysis, provide guidance and sufficiency review for analyses of alternatives, and provide other analytic support as required by the Department. The DRPM positions do not change that.

65. What is your understanding of CAPE's role, if any, in conducting any independent cost estimate or programmatic evaluation of the secure enclave program before the decision was made to fund that program?

CAPE did not prepare an independent programmatic evaluation or cost estimate for the secure enclave prior to the decision to fund the program via the FY 2024 appropriation. After the funding decision and CHiPS-adherent contracting process, CAPE evaluated the Intel proposal and determined the vendor's estimates to be sufficiently backed by appropriate cost methodologies and supporting data.

Acquisition Process

66. What is your understanding of the role of the Director of CAPE in the acquisition process, including for sustainment activities?

DCAPE's role is to inform the Department's acquisition process with cost analysis, authoritative cost data, and analysis of alternatives that allow decision makers to consider trade-offs among effectiveness, suitability, and life-cycle costs (or total ownership costs, if applicable).

67. What is your view of the significance of sound, unbiased cost estimating throughout the acquisition process, including for sustainment activities?

Sound, unbiased cost estimating is critical throughout the acquisition process, including sustainment activities, as it provides the foundation for effective program management and decision-making. Accurate and realistic cost estimates ensure that programs are adequately resourced, enabling them to deliver on their objectives within the planned schedule and budget. Furthermore, unbiased cost estimates are essential for maintaining program credibility, fostering trust among stakeholders, and ensuring the long-term sustainability of acquisition programs. By establishing a clear understanding of costs across the entire lifecycle, including development, procurement, and sustainment, the Department can better anticipate challenges, allocate resources effectively, and achieve predictable outcomes that meet mission requirements.

68. What is your understanding of the role of the Director of CAPE in the requirements development and resource-allocation processes?

The Department is proactively reforming the requirements process to accelerate fielding of warfighter capabilities by establishing a Requirements and Resourcing Alignment Board with DCAPE playing a key role in providing cost and program analysis to focus on the most pressing gaps. If confirmed, I will actively work with the Joint Staff on this new opportunity to streamline and accelerate the identification of the top priority Joint Force needs and solutions, within the bounds of CAPE's core mission.

69. Do you see the need for any additional processes or mechanisms to ensure coordination between the budget, acquisition, and requirements systems of the Department of Defense and to ensure that appropriate trade-offs are made between cost, schedule, and performance requirements early in the acquisition process?

Yes. The Department is committed to reforming defense acquisition to prioritize speed, flexibility, and rigorous execution. With the recent changes to the Department's requirements processes and focus on empowering acquisition leadership at all levels to make these tradeoffs, I believe that coordination will naturally improve as responsibility for strategy, resourcing, and execution of the programs falls within single organizations. However, I also believe that early and frequent engagement with industry will be essential to ensuring program objectives are feasible. If confirm, I will collaborate with civilian oversight organizations, the Joint Staff, and the Services to ensure trade-offs are considered.

70. If confirmed, how would you ensure that CAPE provides analytical options for decision makers so that they can make informed, data driven choices on acquisition programs, including the ability to make tradeoffs between portfolios of programs or across capability types?

Supporting the Department's decision makers with data-driven analyses and options is the core business of CAPE. As President Trump and Secretary Hegseth seek to reform the acquisition system, CAPE will need to adjust its products and processes to align with adjustments to decision frequency and scope. CAPE's roles in acquisition cost estimating and leadership of the Department's annual program review process support its unique role in ensuring consideration of cross-portfolio trades, which will continue and likely see an expanded role under the new acquisition process. If confirmed, I will ensure that CAPE continues to provide expert analytical support to decision makers in performance of these roles and responsibilities.

71. What role do you see for the Director of CAPE in controlling cost growth on the Department's major defense acquisition programs?

DCAPE has a large role in controlling cost growth on major acquisition programs, by ensuring quality CAPE independent cost estimates and providing leadership to the entire Department's cost estimating community. If confirmed, I am committed to ensuring, internal to CAPE and broadly across the Department, that the cost estimating community receives the resources needed to deliver unbiased data-driven analysis and that the analysis is available to the Department's decision-making processes in a timely manner.

Financial Management and Auditability

72. What is your understanding and assessment of the Department of Defense's efforts to achieve a clean financial statement audit?

The Department's audit effort is led by the Under Secretary of War (Comptroller)/Chief Financial Officer. My understanding is that the Department has made considerable progress towards a clean audit.

73. Especially for the purposes of cost control and program evaluation, how would the Department of Defense benefit during the process of undertaking full financial statement audits, and what further benefits would accrue once the Department is able to achieve and maintain a clean financial statement audit?

In many cases, decisions can only be as good as the data used to inform them. Ensuring the Department has a single authoritative source of truth for financial data will benefit CAPE and the entire Department's analytic community by ensuring timely, accurate, and consistent data is used to inform major decisions.

74. If the Department of Defense improves its internal controls and achieves a clean audit, do you expect the Department would also improve its ability to control

acquisition costs and estimate costs of development, procurement, and sustainment of systems and services? Why or why not?

Though there is not always a direct link between the financial data required for a clean audit and the cost, engineering, and programmatic data used to estimate the cost of systems, having a clean audit will be extremely beneficial in many areas. Better data on actual incurred costs will enable better management of programs in real time. There are also many cases where having the financial data quality and visibility inherent in a clean audit will improve the quality of the Department's cost estimates.

75. In your view, how can CAPE's efforts to improve data collection and analysis contribute to broader efforts to improve financial management in the Department of Defense?

CAPE's efforts to enhance data collection and analysis, including initiatives like the Cost Assessment Data Enterprise and the development of the Enterprise Visibility Management and Oversight of Operating and Support Costs system, play a critical role in improving financial management across the Department of War. These systems provide centralized, reliable, and standardized data that enable robust financial analysis, accurate cost estimates, and better resource allocation. By leveraging advanced analytics and authoritative sustainment data, CAPE supports greater transparency, accountability, and informed decision-making, helping the Department optimize financial practices, reduce inefficiencies, and ensure taxpayer dollars are spent effectively to support mission success.

Data

76. What is your assessment of the Defense Department's ability to efficiently collect data on its systems and processes to inform analysis and decision making?

During the past few years, I have witnessed the Department make significant strides in improving data collection in support of analysis and decision making. For example, the AWG actively facilitates analytic data sharing. Similarly, the cost community continues to make progress in system data collection. The Department has not accomplished all that is needed, but we are on a good path and this administration is focused on even greater improvement. If confirmed, I will maintain a focus on leveraging new technology and finding efficient way to collect and share data.

77. If confirmed, what initiatives will you undertake to improve the Department's use of data in its processes?

CAPE collects and uses data to support its core mission of producing independent cost, program, and strategic analyses. If confirmed, I will reinforce efforts in the AWG and cost communities that seek Department-wide solutions, and partner with the other components to implement the Department's data strategy and improve financial data, respectively.

78. What are the barriers that prevent the Department from collecting the data it needs to analyze and improve its processes and programs? If confirmed, what steps would you take to help the Department overcome these barriers?

The Department's data collection and analysis faces technical, policy, structural, and cultural barriers. Examples include limitations of legacy IT systems, collection of data from across multiple organizations' IT systems, complications due to classification and need-to-know requirements, and cultural resistance to change. If confirmed, I would work closely with the other stakeholders to prioritize data reform efforts, leverage CAPE's role in providing enterprise data for the analytic and cost communities to identify effective data initiatives.

79. In your view, what areas of DOD operations and management would benefit from improvements in the use of data, with a view to improving the Department's mission execution or management processes?

Use of data to support operational and management decisions is beneficial in nearly every management area. Significant efforts to improve the use of data are ongoing, while new technology such as artificial intelligence (AI) offer major opportunities. Particular areas that could benefit from data improvements include budget transparency, personnel management, strategic analysis, force management, and acquisition management.

Improved data and software infrastructure for better decision making and analyses and warfighting is a major priority for Congress. The Director of CAPE is the leader of the Department's cost and program analysis community.

80. If confirmed, how would you prioritize improved strategic data collection and improved software infrastructure in both the cost and program analysis communities, and in the conduct of strategic reviews of the Services' investments?

If confirmed, improving the tools available for analysts is one of my three priorities. Within CAPE, I am already pursuing a pilot to identify a path to better leverage CAPE-generated data. Additionally, I want to build upon existing efforts in the strategic analysis and cost communities targeting expanded data collection and sharing technologies. I also would want to partner with the Under Secretary of War for Acquisition & Sustainment on acquisition transformation data initiatives and with the Comptroller to improve operations and maintenance data collection.

Department of Defense Information Technology (IT) Programs

81. If confirmed, what steps would you take to promote changes in Department of Defense efforts to improve the development and deployment of major IT systems and IT service acquisition programs?

IT reform is a current focus within the Department. Leveraging commercial capabilities is a goal wherever possible, as is improving contracting approaches. If confirmed, I will work closely with the DoW Chief Information Officer to leverage CAPE analysis and to support reform

efforts through the programming process.

82. What are your views on the Department's prioritization of remediating technical debt across the Services and the Fourth Estate? If confirmed, how will you work with these entities to correctly prioritize programming for these investments?

The Department has accumulated significant technical debt, which inhibits our ability to fully embrace the power of the digital environment. This is especially prohibitive as the Department seeks to harness the power of AI. CAPE's IT environment is no exception. If confirmed, I would work with the DoW Chief Information Officer and the Services to estimate costs to remediate this technical debt and enable digital transformation.

83. Section 1533 of FY25 NDAA included language to include planning for the costs of data acquisition and servicing for future artificial intelligence programs. How do you propose approaching this challenge for future efforts in the DOD?

AI has the potential to be a transformative technology within the Department. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Under Secretary of War for Research & Engineering, who is developing the Department's AI strategy, and within acquisition and contracting processes to plan for and provide cost estimates for AI programs.

84. If confirmed, how would you endeavor to shape DOD efforts to undertake business process reengineering before initiating new business systems, and IT program development and deployment?

Business process reengineering is a critical foundation of any new business and IT system. The Department's Chief Information Officer is the Chair of the Defense Business System Council and business process engineering is a required component of the approval process for acquisition of any business system. The execution of these efforts relies on a firm understanding of business requirements, creative thinking, and a willingness to embrace change. If confirmed, I would work with the Office of the DoW Chief Information Officer, Under Secretary of War for Acquisition & Sustainment, and other Department leaders to ensure robust business process reengineering is conducted when assessing any new business system.

85. Will you commit that, if confirmed, you will assess the development and deployment of defense business IT systems and report back to this Committee on the findings and recommendations resulting from your assessment?

If confirmed, I commit to examining the status of development and deployment of defense business IT systems and reporting any findings and recommendations. I would want to be transparent within the Department, as well as with Congress.

86. If confirmed, what steps would you take to ensure that business IT systems developed or deployed by DOD are sufficiently aligned with best commercial business practices?

Leveraging commercial capabilities as much as possible is a goal for current reforms. If confirmed, I would work to increase awareness within the Department of best commercial practices and seek consideration of critical tradeoffs between commercially available solutions within decisions involving DCAPE. While some best practices are most effectively enforced through contract language, CAPE can be a strong voice in the evaluation of IT programmatic options and effective program oversight.

Industrial Base

87. In your view, how should CAPE factor the health and viability of the industrial base when developing cost estimates?

CAPE should carefully consider the health and viability of the defense industrial base when developing cost estimates, as a robust industrial base is critical to U.S. national security. Accurate cost estimates require CAPE analysts to have a comprehensive understanding of the industrial base, including its capacities, constraints, and the forecasted demand for resources across programs from multiple services, international partners, and foreign military sales. By factoring in the industrial base's ability to meet production and sustainment requirements, CAPE can account for potential risks, such as supply chain limitations or workforce shortages, that may impact costs. This approach ensures that cost estimates are realistic, reflect the true state of the industrial base, and support informed decision-making to maintain a healthy and resilient defense industrial base.

Science and Technology

88. What is your understanding and assessment of the role that Department of Defense science and technology programs and organizations have played and will play in developing capabilities for current and future defense systems?

The Department's science and technology programs and organizations have and will continue to play an important role in developing current and future defense capabilities. Nearly every revolutionary advance in U.S. military capability has origins in Department-funded research at federal, academic, and industrial laboratories. That said, in many areas, the private sector can move faster than the Department, so the Department should ruthlessly adopt technologies developed for civilian markets and focus our science and technology programs on high priority, defense-specific technology areas.

89. If confirmed, what metrics would you use to judge the value of the DoD level of investment in science and technology programs?

If confirmed, I would assess the adequacy of science and technology investment against mid- and long-term strategic goals, and the balance between basic research program, applied research, and advanced technology development. CAPE assessment metrics include cost effectiveness, technological risk, potential operational benefit, transition rate, impact on the science,

technology, engineering, and mathematics workforce, and potential redundancy with industry research and development investments.

90. What role can research and technology programs that develop new methodologies or capabilities in areas like cost analysis, data analytics, and operations research play in developing new tools, techniques, and processes for use by the Director of CAPE? Are there any specific programs on which DoD should focus in this regard?

Programs that develop new and more effective ways of conducting cost assessments and operations research play the role of key enablers for CAPE's mission to provide timely, insightful, and impartial analysis. Recent improvements in AI hold particular promise in improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the analytic work that CAPE does. If confirmed, it is a priority for me to provide CAPE analysts access to the latest analytical tools and techniques to help Department leadership make smarter, more timely decisions in an increasingly complex national security environment.

91. The Acquisition Innovation Research Center (AIRC) was established to provide broad support to DOD in areas related to acquisition, including financial management, cost analysis, and data to support acquisition decision making. In your view, how should CAPE be leveraging the research capabilities of AIRC to support its mission?

CAPE should strategically leverage the research capabilities of the AIRC to advance its mission by fostering partnerships with academic institutions and enabling controlled access to critical data for innovative research. The AIRC has already demonstrated its potential through projects focused on developing tools and training for cost estimators, as well as analyzing contracting policies and outcomes. However, some efforts have been hindered by the Department's reluctance to share contracting data with academic partners. Robust data-sharing agreements and infrastructure are needed to allow the DoW to collaborate with leading researchers in business, economics, and policy, similar to its successful partnerships in fields like engineering and chemistry.

92. Should the Office of Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation dedicate greater resources to assessing future enabling capabilities (e.g., cyber forces and capabilities, artificial intelligence warfighting applications, biotechnology)? Please explain your answer.

I can confirm that CAPE already has prioritized additional personnel and analytic time toward assessing future enabling capability programs over the last several years. These topics are growth areas where few established models exist and CAPE has struggled to perform data-driven evaluations. If confirmed, I will maintain a priority toward evolving analytic methods, data, and insights that can help evaluate the impact of enabling capabilities on warfighting effectiveness and strategic flexibility.

93. Do extant Office of Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation operations

research capabilities and methods lend themselves to these kinds of analyses?

I believe operations research methods and expertise apply, but the extant models and tools need adaptation, particularly for cyber capability evaluations. There are ongoing efforts for CAPE to leverage. CAPE has an extremely flexible, skilled, and innovative staff that routinely analyzes emerging capabilities. If confirmed, my priority for tool innovation would extend improving analytic tools for enabling capabilities.

94. If confirmed, how would you plan to build and maintain a team of experts and the methodological toolkits to effectively assess the rapidly evolving emerging technologies that will be critical to the future warfighter?

The priorities I outlined include a focus on developing the CAPE staff to be effective at our core mission and duties. CAPE has a rigorous, merit-based civilian hiring process and we routinely attract highly skilled and flexible thinkers across a range of STEM backgrounds. Additionally, CAPE is fortunate that the Services send top officers with recent operational experience to infuse operational views into our analysis. If confirmed, I would sustain these approaches while also prioritizing strong collaboration with experts across the Department, Federal Government, academia, and private sector to expand CAPE's understanding of emerging technologies.

95. How can advanced commercial- and government-developed data collection, management, and analytics techniques and systems be used to support the activities of the Director of CAPE?

If confirmed, it is a priority to ensure CAPE can apply cutting-edge data collection, management, and analytic techniques and systems. This will allow CAPE analysts to more quickly identify the most relevant solutions to complex problems. I believe it will make PPBE process tasks more efficient, allowing additional time to prepare technical analyses and evaluate additional tradespace and allow for expanded analytic support to strategy, requirements, and programming decisions.

Cyber

Offensive cyber operations offer the potential to disrupt adversary command and control, deter adversary senior leadership, and nullify adversary kinetic operations; our own cybersecurity vulnerabilities could allow adversary cyber forces to achieve the same effects. Thus, investments in both offensive and defensive capabilities are needed under a full-spectrum cyber strategy.

96. What role do you see cyber operations playing in defending the nation and in the Department of Defense? How does the National Security Agency support this role? How does United States Cyber Command support this role?

Over the past few years, I have seen the role of cyber operations expand. Both the National Security Agency (NSA) and United States Cyber Command (USCYBERCOM) bring unique

skills, options, and challenges that will be a major component of any future war. If confirmed, I foresee the need for continued investment in cyber offensive and defensive capabilities and would anticipate working very closely with NSA and USCYBERCOM.

97. How does the Office of Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation assess whether broad mission areas like cyber demand more or less investment? If confirmed, how would you consider tradeoffs between capabilities (like cyber and kinetic capabilities) when offering options to DOD decision-makers?

There are many factors that go into assessments of how to invest in broad mission areas. CAPE conducts analysis at the program level, portfolio level, mission level, and campaign level to understand program effectiveness and compare different approaches. Cyber modeling is nascent, especially at the mission and campaign level, with continued maturity in each successive review. Working with USCYBERCOM and the Assistant Secretary of War for Cyber Policy/Principal Cyber Advisor will help strengthen those assessments for CAPE. Ultimately, CAPE seeks to assess cost-effective operational impact when comparing capabilities, including cyber.

98. If confirmed, how do you intend to integrate investments of other federal agencies in cyber capabilities into consideration of programming for the Department's offensive cyber capabilities?

The Department must consider the whole of government cyber capabilities needed to meet our Interim National Defense Strategy. If confirmed, I will work with the Assistant Secretary of War for Cyber Policy/Principal Cyber Advisor and across the cyber community to ensure all capabilities are considered and programmed appropriately.

99. Does the Office of Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation have a role in assessing the costs and benefits of major policy and regulatory measures—for example, the Cybersecurity Model Maturity Certification program? If the office does not currently have a role in these types of assessments, should it? In your view, does the office have the relevant expertise and technical capability to execute such assessments?

Yes, where such measures impact program costs and performance, CAPE can have a role to play. CAPE personnel have a broad range of expertise and deep technical ability, to include cyber expertise. However, with a small staff, I would prioritize CAPE's core cost, analysis, and program evaluation functions but work with Department of War Chief Information Officer and Assistant Secretary of War for Cyber Policy to help support our analysis.

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.

100. 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.

101. 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.

102. 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.

103. 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.

104. 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.

105. 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.

106. 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.