

Senate Armed Services Committee
Advance Policy Questions for Michael Obadal
Nominee to be Under Secretary of the Army

Duties and Responsibilities of the Under Secretary of the Army

Section 7015 of title 10, United States Code, states the Under Secretary of the Army shall perform such duties and exercise such powers as the Secretary of the Army may prescribe.

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

Response: The Under Secretary of the Army serves as the principal civilian deputy to the Secretary of the Army and fulfills a broad range of responsibilities critical to the effective management and oversight of the United States Army. As the Army's Chief Management Officer, the Under Secretary is primarily responsible for ensuring that the force is appropriately manned, trained, and equipped to meet both current and future operational requirements in support of combatant commanders. In addition to these core responsibilities, the Under Secretary provides strategic advice to the Secretary of the Army and works in close coordination with the Chief of Staff and Vice Chief of Staff of the Army on the development and implementation of Army-wide policies, budget formulation and execution, resource management, and organizational structure. The Under Secretary also plays a key leadership role in shaping Army priorities, ensuring readiness, and supporting modernization efforts to enhance operational effectiveness.

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

Response: Over the course of a 30-year military and civilian professional career, I have developed a unique combination of leadership, operational, and strategic skills well-aligned with the responsibilities of the Under Secretary. I have led large organizations comprising thousands of personnel across multiple countries, managing substantial budgets and acquisition authorities. In addition to years of combat deployments, my experience includes extensive collaboration with allied nations and deep engagement in interagency coordination and synchronization. In the private sector, I have led initiatives spanning several technology firms, advancing U.S. Army capabilities in data-centric command and control, artificial intelligence, and machine learning.

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

Response: Throughout my military and commercial career, I have led programs, budgets, and workforces of increasing scale and strategic importance. Much of my military career was spent planning, coordinating and executing campaigns and programs at the highest level of Joint Special Operations. This includes managing Operations & Maintenance (O&M), Research, Development, Test & Evaluation (RDT&E), and procurement funding, exercising acquisition authorities, and overseeing both civilian and uniformed personnel across all military branches in operational and combat environments. As the commander of a joint, multinational task force, I served as the executive manager of an

enterprise involving over 25 partner nations, 15 U.S. law enforcement and intelligence agencies, and hundreds of personnel operating across multiple countries. In this role, I coordinated closely with senior officials from the Departments of Defense and State, the Intelligence Community, and federal law enforcement, as well as Members of Congress and PSMs from both the appropriations and authorizing committees.

If confirmed, I would focus this experience and my attention on the *business* of the Army – budget, manpower, civil works, acquisition and installations, as these areas are direct contributors to both readiness and Army transformation.

4. What recommendations, if any, do you have for changes in the duties and functions of the Under Secretary of the Army, as prescribed by the Secretary of the Army or as set forth in Department of Defense and Department of the Army regulations?

Response: At this time, I do not recommend statutory changes to the duties of the Under Secretary of the Army. Army General Order No 2024-01 specifies that the Under Secretary is the senior civilian assistant and principal advisor on matters relating to the management and operation of the army. In today's rapidly-changing threat and fiscal environment, as the Army transforms the force, it is possible there are opportunities to optimize the role's execution in alignment with current and emerging strategic priorities. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Secretary to assess these areas.

5. What additional duties, if any, do you expect the Secretary of the Army will prescribe for you, if confirmed?

Response: Secretary Driscoll and I have not discussed additional prescribed duties, however there are areas that may benefit from direct executive accountability and oversight. Any additional responsibilities should be assessed based on emerging needs or areas in need of improvement, coordinated across the Army and OSD Staffs, and be clear in purpose and measurable outputs.

Conflicts of Interest

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

6. 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?

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

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

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

8. Do you commit, without qualification, if confirmed, to decide matters on the merits, and exclusively in the public interest, without regard to private gain or personal benefit?

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

Duties and Responsibilities as Army Chief Management Officer (CMO)

9. What is your understanding of the duties and responsibilities of the Under Secretary in their capacity as CMO of the Department of the Army?

Response: As the Army's Chief Management Officer, the Under Secretary holds primary responsibility for ensuring the force is properly manned, trained, and equipped to meet the operational requirements of today and the evolving demands of tomorrow—supporting Combatant Commanders worldwide. This includes direct oversight and integration of the five Assistant Secretary portfolios, as well as several key direct-report organizations.

I believe strongly that senior leaders must be fully accountable to both the executive and legislative branches for the performance and stewardship of these critical responsibilities. If confirmed, I will fully embrace that accountability and ensure transparency, responsiveness, and disciplined execution across all areas under my purview.

10. Please provide an example of a situation in which you took action to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the business operations of a large organization.

Response: To increase the tangible outcome effectiveness of command, I led the establishment of an operational data science team—an effort that required significant cross-functional coordination and strategic alignment. I worked closely with my internal staff to define mission requirements, align budget requests, and secure necessary resources. Simultaneously, I engaged with leaders across several partner nations to gain their commitment and successfully negotiated the contribution of highly-skilled allied personnel to the effort. This initiative also required careful navigation of intelligence community equities, including policy sensitivities and data-sharing restrictions. Once operational, the data science capability dramatically improved the efficiency of intelligence analysts, increasing their throughput and analytic productivity by an estimated 50 to 80 percent.

11. Do you believe that the Under Secretary/CMO has the resources and authority needed to carry out the business transformation of the Department of the Army?

Response: I believe that under statute and Army General Order No 2024-01, the role of the Under Secretary is provided the appropriate authority to carry out the duties assigned. I do not have enough information to assess the appropriate level of resourcing. If confirmed, appropriate scaling of resources against existing and emerging duties will be an area of continuous assessment in conjunction with the Army Staff and the Secretary.

12. If confirmed, on which specific business operations would you focus in your role

as Army CMO, and why?

Response: If confirmed, as the Chief Management Officer, I would prioritize two critical areas of business operations: technology reform and financial management, as both are foundational to the Army's ability to modernize, maintain readiness, and remain competitive in an evolving strategic environment.

Budget

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

Response: If confirmed, I would assess this through a combination of strategic, operational, and fiscal standards aligned with both national defense objectives and internal performance metrics.

In coordination with the Army Staff, I would evaluate whether funding enables the Army to meet its primary responsibilities under the coming National Defense Strategy and to respond to Combatant Commanders' operational requirements. Further assessment includes whether funding is sufficient to sustain the Army's end strength, training standards, equipment modernization programs, and infrastructure needs, while maintaining a balance across near-term readiness and long-term transformation.

Finally, I would look to expand current efforts to measure adequacy through performance outcomes, including audit readiness and program execution rates. The Army must demonstrate that appropriated funds are not only sufficient, but also used efficiently, with accountability and transparency.

National Defense Strategy

The 2022 NDS advances a strategy focused on the People Republic of China (PRC) to prevent the PRC's dominance of key regions while protecting the U.S. homeland.

Do you believe that the 2022 NDS accurately assesses the current strategic environment, including the most critical and enduring threats to the national security of the United States and its allies?

Response: Both the 2018 and 2022 National Defense Strategies reflect a broad consensus on the strategic environment and the critical threats to the United States and our allies and partners. Both of the 2018 and 2022 NSD are centered on a defense strategy prioritizing the challenge posed by China followed by a range of other threats, including Russia, Iran, North Korea, and terrorists.

In your view, is the Army adequately sized, structured, and resourced to implement the current NDS and the associated operational plans? Please explain your answer.

Response: If confirmed, I will collaborate with the Army, Joint Staff, and OSD to assess the Army's current strategy and evaluate whether the force is appropriately sized, structured, and resourced to meet operational requirements.

Does the Army have the requisite analytic capabilities and tools to support you, if

confirmed as the Under Secretary of the Army, in evaluating the Army's force structure and sizing strategies? Please explain your answer.

Response: If confirmed, I will work closely with the Army Staff to assess the force's analytic capabilities to determine force structure and size, to account for emerging threats and changes in warfare.

If confirmed, how would you advise the Secretary of the Army to address any gaps or shortfalls in the Army's ability to meet the requirements of the operational plans that implement the current strategy?

Response: If confirmed, I will work closely with Army Staff elements and the Joint Staff to address any assessed gaps or shortfalls, including an evaluation of the long-term modernization trade space required for near term solutions.

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 Under 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?

Response: If confirmed, I will assess the Army contributions to integrated air and missile defense with my counterparts in the other services, ensuring we closely collaborate to provide the defense of Guam.

Major Challenges and Priorities

14. What would you see as your highest priorities for the near-term and long-term future of the Army, if confirmed as Under Secretary of the Army?

Response: If confirmed, I will support the Secretary's priorities of lethality and readiness, modernization, revitalizing the DIB, and streamlining bureaucracy. I will consider their effectiveness and provide advice and counsel to the Secretary.

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

Response: If confirmed, I anticipate two primary challenges. First, as the Army invests in advanced technologies to drive transformation, it will be essential to balance those efforts with the immediate readiness needs of the current force—we cannot sacrifice one to fund the other. Second, staying on track with the Army's audit timeline will be critical to achieving a clean audit by December 2028.

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

Response: If confirmed, I will make the Army's transformation a top priority by dedicating consistent and focused engagement with key internal stakeholders—including

Army Geographic Combatant Command Component Commands, ASA(ALT), and Army Futures Command—as well as external partners in OSD and critical congressional committees. I will work to ensure the Secretary’s guidance is clearly understood across Army senior leadership and translated into tangible actions with measurable results. To meet the audit challenge, I will closely monitor progress along the Audit Roadmap, maintain regular engagement with accountable officials, and take prompt action to address any areas falling behind key milestones.

End strength

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

Response: Determining the optimal end strength for the U.S. Army requires a careful assessment of multiple interdependent factors. Chief among these are the strategic requirements outlined in the NSS, guidance from the NDS, and the force demands levied by Combatant Commands across multiple theaters. While the Army’s end strength has declined over recent years, I believe this is due to the downward trend in recruiting.

If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary to assess end strength levels based on the above inputs, while working closely with the OSD, Joint and Army Staffs.

Recruiting and 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.

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

Response: If confirmed, I will continue to focus on expanding recruiting markets to ensure we are reaching the talent and skills necessary to deliver the Army’s missions. I will also continue to support the Army’s successful Future Soldier Prep Course, which helps potential recruits overcome academic and physical fitness barriers to service, while not sacrificing quality for quantity. Further, I will prioritize ensuring soldiers feel supported, valued, and motivated to stay in service.

19. 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?

Response: If confirmed, my focus will be on filling the Army’s combat formations

with the most qualified Soldiers. To achieve that end state, a highly capable force is required. The Army continues to focus on its recruiting and retention efforts on “Quality over Quantity” and strives to recruit and retain qualified individuals who possess the merit to serve. I believe that the Army will continue to recruit and retain high quality personnel, tactically and technically trained and ready to operate, maintain, and deploy our modernized systems and capabilities.

20. 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?

Response: If confirmed, I will assess the current state of our recruitment and work with the Secretary of the Army to continue to recruit and retain qualified Soldiers. I will also continue to support the efforts to recruit from expanded markets while still allowing opportunities for those that benefit from additional math, reading and physical training in our Future Soldier Prep Course. Finally, I will continue to emphasize improving recruiter training and incentives, such as merit-based and productivity promotions, the use of supporting technologies, and innovative approaches to changing our business processes.

21. 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?

Response: If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary of the Army to ensure that the Army adequately meets its recruiting goals by assessing the lessons learned, continuing initiatives that are effective, and supporting the Army’s Recruiting Enterprise Transformation. Further, I will continue to equip our recruiters with the best marketing and technology support available, and focus on reengineering business processes to improve effectiveness, discarding dated and restrictive policies to seek the best talent in the right markets.

22. 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?

Response: If confirmed, I will focus on career flexibility by allowing Soldiers to explore different roles, which increases satisfaction and engagement. I believe that the Army must retain the right skills to stay competitive in the global landscape, especially for warfighting. This means ongoing investment in professional development to equip Soldiers with the skills needed for modern warfare.

23. 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?

Response: The Army highly values balancing operational requirements and tempo to preserve the health of the force, readiness, and modernization efforts. The Army is acutely aware of high demand organizations, such as missile defense capabilities. In

my opinion, it is important for the Army to emphasize the strategic discipline required to not overutilize capabilities. If confirmed, I will work to maintain a trained and ready Army while promoting quality of life and high morale.

24. 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?

Response: Yes, but there is always room for expansion on the traditional definitions of quality in order to allow highly-qualified applicants the opportunity to serve.

Reserve Components

25. In your view, what is the appropriate relationship between the Active Army and the Army Reserve and Army National Guard?

Response: In my view, the relationship between Active Army, Army Reserve, and Army National Guard is indispensable. The Reserve Components are integral to the Total Force and resourced to provide strategic depth and operational capability to meet U.S. defense requirements that support the Interim National Defense Guidance (INDG).

26. 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's reserve component organization, force structure, and end strength?

Response: In my view, the Reserve Components' roles and missions should focus on building strategic depth, which includes supporting large scale combat operations. If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary of the Army to enhance the Active Component and the Reserve Components' interoperability and strengthen mobilization infrastructure to ensure seamless Total Force integration and readiness for contested, partial, full, and total mobilization in support of vital U.S. national interests.

27. 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?

Response: I believe that the continued reliance on the Army Reserve for operational missions is a risk to its long-term viability. Without addressing the underlying issues of operational tempo and work-life balance, the Army Reserve will continue to struggle to meet its recruiting and retention goals, potentially impacting the Army's overall readiness. It's a complex problem with no easy solutions, but one that demands urgent attention.

28. In your view, is the Army's current active and reserve component balanced appropriately to meet current national security objectives and execute the associated operational plans? If not, what structure do you believe is necessary to be examined for realignment? Please explain your answer.

Response: If confirmed, I will review and assess the current Active and Reserve

Component structures and work with the Secretary of the Army to ensure the components are effectively balanced to deliver critical warfighting capabilities, optimize force structure, and eliminate waste and obsolete programs.

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.

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

Response: In my view, the Army's prioritization of Reserve Components activities is a multi-layered process, driven by national security objectives, the Army's overall strategy, and resource constraints. It's not a single, static list, but a dynamic system that adapts to changing conditions. The Army prioritizes to utilize the Reserve Component in preparing for challenges from China and defending the Homeland. I believe that the Reserve Component should maintain unit readiness for immediate deployments and critical support roles, and build the Force for the future through training and recruiting.

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

Response: In my view, the Army must accept some calculated risks to maintain a ready Reserve Component in the world of limited resources. This might mean fewer large-scale exercises, prioritizing certain units for training and equipment, and relying more on simulations and distance learning. Some units might experience delayed modernization. While these trade-offs impact readiness, they are deemed necessary to maintain a capable Force within existing constraints. The key is balancing these risks against the need for a responsive and effective Reserve Component. It's essential to remember that accepting these risks is not a permanent solution. I believe that the Army must continuously assess the impact of resource limitations on Reserve Component's readiness to effectively support the Total Army's mission.

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

Response: If confirmed, I will review the policy and ensure that the members of the Reserve Components are provided with adequate career management to maximize management of both full-time civilian and military careers.

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

Response: I am aware that the process for transitioning between the Active and Reserve Components can be lengthy and cumbersome, often leading to talent gaps across formations and an inability to efficiently manage the force. As we move toward a more integrated Total Force, it is essential that policies, administrative processes, and

statutory frameworks support fluidity across components in a way that aligns with both the Army's operational requirements and the individual service member's career trajectory. If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary of the Army and Congress to identify and implement reforms to address these issues, in particular those that hinder the timely transition between the Components.

Mental and Behavioral Health Care

Although the Department has made great strides in reducing the stigma associated with help-seeking behaviors, many soldiers remain concerned that their military careers will be adversely affected should their chain of command become aware that they are seeking mental or behavioral health care. At the same time, the military chain of command has a legitimate need to be aware of physical and mental health conditions that may affect the readiness of the service members under their command.

33. Regarding the provision of mental and behavioral health care, how does the Army bridge the gap between a soldier's desire for confidentiality and the chain of command's legitimate need to know about matters that may affect the readiness of the soldier and the unit?

Response: I am aware that the current DoD Instruction 6490.08, Command Notification Requirements to Dispel Stigmas in Providing Mental Health Care to Service Members, provides guidance on the reduction of stigma associated with mental health care for Service Members (SMs), as well as guidance on balancing patient confidentiality with the commander's need to know. If confirmed, I will review the Army's current policy and ensure adherence to the DoD Instruction to successfully balance patient confidentiality and the chain of command's need to know for maximized readiness.

34. In your view, do non-medical counseling services provided by DOD Military Family Life Counselors have a role in promoting the readiness and resilience in soldiers and their families?

Response: I am aware that the Military and Family Life Counseling (MFLC) program provides confidential, short-term non-medical counseling addressing common emotional and interpersonal concerns that may detract from military and family readiness. I believe this tool serves as an integral part of the comprehensive community-based support services and programs that support the Army community, Soldiers, and Families.

Services Provided to Service Members and their Families

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

Response: If confirmed, I will support increasing employment opportunities for military spouses and their family members by monitoring and enhancing the Army's current efforts. For example, I am aware that the Army Community Service provides Employment Readiness assistance by providing classes, hosting job fairs and seminars, and holding individual sessions to empower all job seekers within the military community. I am also aware that spouses of Soldiers of any rank who moved across state

lines due to a PCS under accompanied orders and who wish to pursue the same licensure or certification in their new location are eligible for reimbursement.

36. 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?

Response: I understand that the Army has made great strides in addressing housing issues over the last several years. If confirmed, I look forward to continuing prioritizing housing investments and ensuring the Army continues to strengthen its oversight to ensure Soldiers and families have quality, safe, livable homes.

37. 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?

Response: I understand the Army has implemented several oversight reforms to better hold privatized housing providers accountable for maintaining the high-quality privatized housing our soldiers deserve. If confirmed, I will continue these efforts to strengthen and clarify enforcement language in ground leases, conduct house-by-house inspections, implement quality assurance of construction and renovations, and develop a standardized quality assurance maintenance program that will be applicable to all privatized housing companies doing business with the Army. I look forward to improving the housing that our Soldiers and Families live in.

Non-Deployable Service Members

38. 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?

Response: I agree that soldiers who are non-deployable for more than 12 consecutive months should be subject to review for separation or referral to the Disability Evaluation System. Sustained non-deployability impacts overall readiness and places additional strain on deployable units. Maintaining a deployable force is essential to meeting the Army’s operational requirements and global commitments.

39. 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”?

Response: In general, the ability to deploy is essential to readiness, and prolonged non-deployable status should be carefully reviewed. However, there are circumstances where retention beyond 12 months may be in the best interest of the Army. These may include cases where a soldier possesses highly specialized, mission-critical skills—such as cyber operations, advanced technical expertise, or language proficiency—that can be effectively employed in a non-deployable setting. Any such decisions must be grounded in sound personnel policy, reviewed on a case-by-case basis, and aligned with Army readiness and talent management objectives.

Suicide Prevention

40. 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?

Response: If confirmed, I will ensure that the Army continues to support programs that build resilience and readiness in Soldiers and the Army community to ensure mission success, and use a comprehensive community-based approach to promote resilience and readiness of the force. In addition, I will ensure that the Army continues implementing the DoD Suicide Prevention and Response Independent Review Committee (SPRIRC) recommendations to foster supportive environments, reduce stigma and improve access to clinical and non-clinical care resources.

Sexual Harassment and Assault Prevention and Response Programs

41. 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?

Response: Yes, I believe the DoD and the Army, with the support of Congress, have taken a series of helpful actions to prevent the occurrence of sexual assault. Indications are that these are starting to have an impact: prevalence of sexual assault and sexual harassment decreased in 2023 in the Armed Forces for the first time in several years. However, more must be done to sustain these changes. If confirmed, I will continue to refine policies and programs to reduce the occurrence of sexual assault and improve support to victims.

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

Response: If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary of the Army to review the Army's current efforts to prevent sexual assault and will emphasize the importance of a proactive prevention-focused approach. I will also support expanding the use of data-driven risk identification tools, evidence-based prevention strategies, and early intervention efforts to address harmful behaviors before they escalate.

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

Response: I believe that offering both formal and informal options to report sexual harassment increases the likelihood of the victim coming forward. If confirmed, I will support the continued availability of both reporting options to ensure timely intervention and promote a safer environment.

Army Senior Executives

If confirmed as Under Secretary of the Army, you would be responsible for supervising and directing the Civilian Senior Leader Management Office.

44. Given that competent and caring leadership is one of the most significant and relevant levers available to shape a high-performing DOD civilian workforce, if confirmed, what factors and characteristics would be most important to you in selecting a candidate for appointment to the Senior Executive Service (SES) in the Army?

Response: As the Army transforms to enhance lethality, I believe that the senior executives are the architects in progress, shaping our most critical programs, optimizing resource management, and ensuring the Army's mission is executed with precision and effectiveness. If confirmed, I will work with the Civilian Senior Leader Management Office to attract the most talented, forward-thinking leaders to confront current and emerging challenges head-on for future success.

45. If confirmed, how would you go about ensuring that SES personnel under your authority are held accountable for both organizational performance and the rigorous performance management of their subordinate employees?

Response: The Army's SES performance planning process and the resulting performance plans are required to include clear linkage and performance metrics that are directly aligned to organizational goals. If confirmed, I will ensure subordinate employees also have a vital role in organizational performance. By leading people, an executive must connect the organization horizontally and vertically, and foster high standards and a sense of responsibility and satisfaction among their employee in meeting the organization's vision, mission, and goals.

46. What would be your approach to recruiting, placing, developing, counseling, and managing the performance of Army SESs writ large?

Response: Army leaders must drive change to ensure we remain lethal, ready, and committed to building cohesive teams that take care of our Soldiers and families. A critical component of that effort is our approach to Civilian Senior Executive Service management. As an organization, we must remain steadfast in recruiting, developing, and retaining the best talent, ensuring we are equipped to meet the challenges of rapidly advancing technologies.

47. What role does mobility play in the Army SES program?

Response: As with General Officers, SES must be a mobile workforce willing to move to meet Army's mission critical needs. If confirmed, I will work with the Civilian Senior Leader Management Office to deliberately assesses the ability and potential of our executives against current and future leadership requirements and actively builds an executive corps to address those requirements. The willingness of the SES corps to be mobile allows the Army to leverage the skills of each executive for greater mission accomplishment.

Domestic Violence and Child Abuse in Military Families

48. 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?

Response: Domestic violence and child abuse have negative impacts on mission-readiness. The Army has made great strides in identifying and addressing these issues, and, if confirmed, I will work with the Secretary of the Army to assess and take a comprehensive approach to enhance early identification, train leaders and providers, and strengthen collaborative efforts across the enterprise and support services. Additionally, I would increase transparency and accountability without compromising Soldier and Family safety or well-being.

49. In your view, what more can the Army do to prevent child abuse and domestic and intimate partner violence?

Response: In my view, the Army can increase prevention strategies by further providing accessibility for Family support programs, reduce stigma around seeking mental health and counseling services, and promote healthy relationships for Soldiers and Families. Leadership at all levels should be equipped to identify risk factors and respond effectively without fear of reprisal. If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary of the Army to ensure that the Army's Family Advocacy Program continues its critical work to prevent domestic violence and child abuse.

50. In your view, does the Army Family Advocacy Program strike the right balance between healing families and holding individuals accountable for acts of domestic violence and child abuse?

Response: Yes. In my view, the Family Advocacy Program (FAP) has made tremendous efforts in addressing both prevention and intervention. FAP collaborates with senior leaders, law enforcement and community partners to provide critical advocacy and intervention services to ensure offender accountability and the well-being of those affected.

Training/Readiness

51. 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?

Response: In my assessment, the Army is generally well postured to support the National Defense Strategy, possessing key capabilities for deterring aggression and defending national interests. If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary of the Army to ensure that the Soldiers are adequately prepared for multi-domain warfare through realistic training scenarios.

52. 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?

Response: In my view, long range fires, electromagnetic and air-littoral dominance, counter-UAS, and AI driven command and control at units are the priority missions for which current and future Army forces should be trained and ready. I further believe that

we must also work at echelon to extend advanced manufacturing to operational units. Lastly, we must remain trained and ready to fight and endure in difficult environments, particularly in the Indo-Pacific.

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

Response: If confirmed, I will ensure that the Army complies with statutory and regulatory requirements for readiness goals and timelines through a system of rigorous oversight and data-driven accountability. A clear readiness framework with quantifiable and reliable metrics enables routine and transparent reporting to the Department of Defense and Congress.

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

Response: If confirmed, I would initially leverage the Army's Regionally Aligned Readiness and Modernization Model, or ReARMM, to meet potential future requirements. Further, I will assess the efficiency of this model, and if necessary, propose and implement revisions to ensure the Army meets near term and future readiness requirements in line with national policy directives and guidance.

Munitions

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

Response: If confirmed, I will work closely with combatant commanders to address their operational requirements and increase joint munitions readiness. I believe Congress providing the authorities for multi-year procurement of certain munitions has been critical to addressing warfighter needs. Further, I will continue Army efforts to work with OUSD(Policy), the Joint Staff, OUSD(A&S), and industry to increase production and procurement for critical munitions.

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

Response: Yes, I believe that based on current analysis, the Army can meet today's munitions requirements. The Army will need to continue to modernize and invest in the organic industrial base to ensure facilities can manufacture future artillery and advanced propellants. If confirmed, I will work with OUSD(A&S) to assess the organic industrial base and determine where investments are needed to meet Army requirements.

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

Response: I agree that is critical to manage risk within our supply chains by mitigating single points of failure and malign foreign sources. If confirmed, I would ensure we

assess the risk within our supply chains, prioritize those risks, and execute actions that mitigate the threats within our supply chains.

58. 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)?

Response: The ongoing effort to increase capacity and resiliency in 155mm artillery shell production highlights the continued need for an agile industrial base that can adapt to changing global conditions and incorporate new technology in both manufacturing and in munitions.

59. 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?

Response: If confirmed, I look forward to gaining a better understanding of the Army's role in defense exports and foreign cooperation. The defense industrial base is a crucial asset to the security of the nation and if there are agreements with our foreign partners and allies that can strengthen our nation's industrial base. I believe that its worth exploring.

60. 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?

Response: Yes, I am aware that the Army is considering executing several activities in conjunction with our Air Force, Navy and Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Research and Engineering) partners. If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary of the Army to ensure that the Army is improving explosive yield or operational envelope of our munitions through respective pilot programs.

61. Considering China's use of CL-20 in its weapons and its production of the energetic material at scale, how should the Army be thinking about the risk of Chinese asymmetric advantages in a potential conflict?

Response: China's mass, interior lines, and magazine depth pose a significant threat to U.S. bases and naval assets in the region. If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary of the Army to continue to invest in layered air and missile defense systems, develop strategies for dispersing its forces, and explore countermeasures like long-range precision fires. We must also increase our rotational presence across the theater to increase our forward operational capacity while building trust with partners and allies. Lastly, we must work now to increase production and build the ammunition stores to provide the warfighting endurance we will need in large scale combat operations.

62. 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?

Response: I am aware that the Army is planning to evaluate new energetic materials, including CL-20, as well as advanced processing methods for implementation into the production of new and existing munitions. If confirmed, I will continue the Army's efforts to explore incorporation of new energetic materials and manufacturing processes for maximized effects.

Operational Energy

63. 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?

Response: Battlefield capabilities and complexities are adapting at a pace faster than ever before. I believe the Army has to accelerate the rate at which it develops and adopts new capabilities, and I am encouraged by the Army's focus on transformation and the integration of capabilities in all domains as part of the Joint Force. If confirmed, I will work with Army leaders and Congress to ensure we remain focused on maintaining battlefield dominance.

64. 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?

Response: At the strategic level, planning for energy in operations begins with the National Industrial Base. Whether that is the availability of fuel in contested areas, or the availability of advanced batteries, I believe the Army recognizes the risks associated with a secure and resilient supply of energy. If confirmed, I will support the Army's and the DoD's efforts to secure those supply chains and grow the domestic industrial base for batteries and other critical minerals and components.

65. 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?

Response: If confirmed, I will ensure the Army continues to seek improvements in energy efficiency to reduce operational costs and the overall logistics tail. Army acquisition systems offer a variety of tools to ensure energy issues are addressed in military platforms. For new platforms, I believe the Army can benefit by a lesser logistics trail and additional on and off-board power for its platforms that can be offered by items such as advanced batteries.

66. 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?

Response: Operational Energy enables the ability to train, project power, and sustain forces with over-the-horizon capabilities from Army installations. Ensuring the energy security and resilience of installations directly supports the readiness and lethality of warfighters. If confirmed, I will follow a policy of the best source of energy for that

location – whether that is conventional, renewable, or nuclear – and use whichever acquisition authority that provides the best value.

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

Response: The Joint Force across the Combatant Commands is dependent upon Army logistics to conduct operations in contested environments. As such, I believe that the operational energy is critical for training, moving, and sustaining these forces and systems for military operations across all warfighting domains. Operational Energy provides advantages in the form of extended range and endurance, flexibility and resilience, enhanced mobility and freedom of action.

Environment

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

Response: I would reinforce a multi-pronged approach by leveraging recent initiatives, emerging technologies, and collaborative frameworks. This approach would ensure we maximize the effectiveness of available resources by emphasizing strategic prioritization based on risk and public health impact. I believe that the Army needs to further strengthen collaboration with federal, state, and local partners, and advocate for shared resourcing to accelerate PFAS cleanup efforts. If confirmed, I will prioritize the health and safety of service members, their families, and surrounding communities, while upholding the Army's commitment to environmental stewardship.

Readiness and Resource Impacts from Extreme Weather

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

Response: The Army's support to recent weather-related (e.g., hurricane and wildfire) relief efforts has not decreased the general readiness of the Army. Severe weather may degrade individual units, but the Army maintains redundant and distributed capabilities, providing resilience.

70. 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 National Defense Authorization Acts?

Response: Army infrastructure needs to be resilient and reliable regardless of potential disruptions—whether natural or man-made. After Hurricane Helene affected numerous Army installations on the East Coast, some installations reported preliminary estimates of damages totaling over \$100 million. I believe that the Army's resilience programs support unit readiness by reducing the risks of impacts to facilities posed by all hazards, both severe weather as well as non-naturally occurring events. I also believe that the Army can better use existing authorities on extreme weather risk reduction by advancing

streamlined data collection, data analytics, and continued focus on modernization efforts.

Audit

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

Response: If confirmed, I will look to leverage existing resources to their fullest extent and instruct commanders and leaders to prioritize audit tasks and functions within their footprints. Further, as the Chair of the Army's Audit Committee, I will hold Army leaders accountable to expediting audit progress, and will address risks and issues to said progress, as they arise.

72. What are the benefits to Army missions and operational readiness of achieving and maintaining a clean audit?

Response: Audit is not a stand-alone mission. While the primary goal is to achieve a clean audit opinion, a successful audit documents the Army's mission readiness and our ability to respond effectively to world events. Additionally, a successful audit demonstrates responsible stewardship of taxpayer money, builds public trust, and ensures funds are allocated to the areas of greatest importance.

73. How will you hold Department of the 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?

Response: If confirmed, I will initiate a focused assessment to optimize our approach to audit remediation. This assessment will identify the most effective mechanisms for both enforcing accountability and incentivizing proactive participation across the force in downgrading these weaknesses. Addressing the challenges revealed by the audit is paramount to achieving a more lean, efficient, and lethal fighting force. I am confident that through diligent execution of the Audit Roadmap, the Army will emerge from this process with a strengthened competitive advantage on the battlefield.

74. In your view, how would improving the data from Army financial management IT systems that support the audit process help Army decision-making and readiness?

Response: Accurate and timely data supports readiness to ensure Army units have the right budgets for maintenance, supply, and programs that reduce downtime and increase combat readiness. Improved data accuracy within our inventory and logistics environments will aid in the collaboration between DoD components, especially those with shared inventory or comingled logistics (i.e., DLA, DHA).

75. As the Army continues down the path toward 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 the audit process into the Army's overall management reform objectives?

Response: In my view, the audit functions as a force multiplier by driving significant improvements in financial transparency and cost efficiency. If confirmed, I will ensure the lessons learned from the audit process in the Army is effectively operationalized for successful management reforms.

Army-related Defense Industrial Base

76. 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?

Response: It is my understanding that the Army has the necessary systems and processes in place to identify, evaluate and manage risk in the Defense Industrial Base (DIB).

Monitoring the DIB is a continuous process of refinement to identify new and emerging risks. The organic industrial base is monitored for capability, throughput and supplier risk assessments as part of comprehensive reviews. To gain further insight into the DIB, I understand that the Army is conducting reviews to identify fragility and criticality concerns to include the ammunition industrial base.

77. 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?

Response: I believe that projecting a predictable and steady demand for the items that the Army is requesting is a crucial means of communicating with the defense industrial base. I further believe that requirement predictability would facilitate industry and government partnerships, and potentially encourage various investments to the defense industrial base.

78. 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?

Response: Sustaining a strong industrial base is critical for both the modernization and the sustainment of our weapon systems. The commercial industrial base and the organic industrial base are complementary capabilities. I believe that the commercial industrial base, with its flexibility and innovation, needs to be ready to develop and modernize our systems. We rely on the organic industrial base to provide the core sustainment of our critical systems so that they are ready and available to the warfighter on demand, and this requires our commitment to the organic industrial base modernization effort.

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

Response: I believe that continuous engagement with industry partners across the spectrum, both traditional and nontraditional, is foundational to understanding industry concerns. Additionally, requests for information and industry days as well as deepening our partnership with the Defense Innovation Unit would allow the Army to open the aperture in identifying potential sources of new and potentially overmatch capabilities.

80. 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?

Response: If confirmed, I intend to evaluate the processes that the Army has in place to assess and manage supply chain risk in the Army Industrial Base. It is critical for the defense industrial base to establish resilient supply chains ready to support the Army. It is my understanding that the Army has a comprehensive approach to addressing supply chain risk management in close coordination with the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment, the other military services, and federal agencies.

Equipping/Modernization

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

Response: I am aware of the recent directive issued by the Secretary of Defense to implement a comprehensive transformation strategy, also known as the Army Transformation Initiative (ATI). As I currently understand, these initiatives are designed to further Army modernization. It remains critical for the Army to maintain its superiority on the rapidly evolving battlefield. We do this by optimizing our ability to deliver critical warfighting capabilities to our Soldiers. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Secretary of the Army, Chief of Staff of the Army, and other relevant personnel to appropriately, adequately, and successfully implement the ATI.

82. 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?

Response: I believe it is imperative that tradeoff analysis must keep pace with both the speed of the threat and the speed of technology. Further, trade-off analysis must be holistic, thoroughly examining both material and non-material solutions not only across the Army, but also in the context of joint force capabilities. Responsive modelling and simulation will also enhance trade space analysis, supporting senior leader decision-making.

83. 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?

Response: If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary of the Army to assess and maintain sufficient and effective acquisition workforce in the Army. I believe that the civilians acquisition workforce brings continuity and an increased level of experience throughout the workforce. The military brings extensive leadership and operational experience, based on multiple rotations through various assignments. Together, acquisition professionals work to deliver critical capabilities to the warfighter.

84. 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?

Response: I am aware of the recent directive issued by the Secretary of Defense to implement the Army Transformation Initiative (ATI), which includes the merging of Army Futures Command (AFC) with TRADOC. Regardless of this transition, it does not release the Army's obligation to continually invest in future warfighting capabilities to maintain superiority on the rapidly evolving battlefield. My current understanding is that these initiatives are designed to further Army modernization, which is done through continual optimization. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Secretary of the Army to ensure AFC's mission transitions smoothly into this developing command.

85. 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?

Response: I am aware of the recent directive issued by the Secretary of Defense to implement a comprehensive transformation strategy, also known as the Army Transformation Initiative (ATI). As I currently understand, these initiatives are designed to further Army modernization. It remains critical for the Army to maintain its superiority on the rapidly evolving battlefield. We do this by optimizing our ability to deliver critical warfighting capabilities to our Soldiers. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Secretary of the Army, Chief of Staff of the Army, and other relevant personnel to appropriately, adequately, and successfully implement the ATI.

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

Response: I am aware of the recent directive issued by the Secretary of Defense to implement a comprehensive transformation strategy, also known as the Army Transformation Initiative (ATI). As I currently understand, these initiatives are designed to further Army modernization. It remains critical for the Army to maintain its superiority on the rapidly evolving battlefield. We do this by optimizing our ability to deliver critical warfighting capabilities to our Soldiers. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Secretary of the Army, Chief of Staff of the Army, and other relevant personnel to appropriately, adequately, and successfully implement the ATI.

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

Response: Yes, I believe that the Army and DoD can benefit from joint program development. Joint program development is particularly beneficial when the Army is acquiring a capability that addresses common or similar requirements across the Services by lowering unit procurement costs and ensuring interoperability. Categories of systems with potential for joint development may include certain counter-unmanned aerial system capabilities, small arms, and ammunition.

Acquisition

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

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

Response: I am aware that civilian oversight of the defense acquisition system is required by law and improves accountability by ensuring modernization efforts are aligned with administration priorities. Modernization efforts require contributions and input from many stakeholders and disciplines. Civilian oversight helps ensure competing inputs are appropriately balanced while adhering to cost, schedule, and performance goals for the capability being acquired.

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

89. 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?

Response: If confirmed, I would assist the Secretary of the Army and the Chief of Staff of the Army as needed in their role as customers in the acquisition system. This includes balancing priorities to ensure appropriate trade-offs are made for cost, schedule, technical feasibility, and performance trade-offs. I would also work with the Assistant Secretary of the Army of Acquisition, Logistics, and Technology to ensure capabilities are developed and delivered within cost, schedule, and performance parameters.

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

Response: If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary of the Army and the Chief of Staff of the Army to continue aggressively eliminating waste in programs to ensure the right equipment gets to the warfighter in time. Innovation cycles on the modern battlefield are faster and more dynamic than any previous time in our history, and our requirement process must adapt to this speed. Transformation in Contact is an excellent example of doing this correctly.

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.

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

Response: The Middle Tier of Acquisition provides a streamlined process to develop prototypes of promising new technologies or rapidly field innovative equipment to soldiers. This enables the Army to develop and field technology more rapidly and enables the Army to test new warfighting concepts early. I believe such flexible authority enables the Army to do business with more non-traditional contractors and it helps better inform long term modernization decisions.

The Army has been the largest user of Other Transactions Authority to speed up acquisitions, but it often applies standard Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) clauses, reducing OTA's flexibility.

92. What will you do to ensure OTAs remain an innovative tool for prototyping and fielding cutting-edge technologies?

Response: To further enhance the utilization of OTAs, if confirmed. I will encourage the Army to continue to collaborate with the Defense Innovation Unit and industry to refine OTA processes and attract nontraditional defense companies to participate in Army modernization efforts. Additionally, I believe that the Army should disseminate lessons learned and best practices gleaned from market research to ensure OTAs remain an innovative tool for prototyping and fielding cutting-edge technologies.

Portfolio budgeting could allow the Army to fund capability areas like electronic warfare (EW) and counter-UAS holistically, rather than stovepiped programs, but adoption has been slow.

93. Why do you believe this approach is critical to Army modernization, and how will you advocate for its implementation to Congress?

Response: In my view, existing program-centric procurement processes may have been effective, especially in the context of the 1980s industrial age processes when the Army adopted the "Big Five" (M1 Abrams, Bradley Fighting Vehicle, AH64 Apache, UH60 Blackhawk, Patriot Missile). However, the rapidly-changing nature of the contemporary battlefield and the urgency of the threat that the Army must counter demands a level of programmatic agility that legacy practices do not support. If confirmed, I will pursue an agile, portfolio-centric budget practice that would optimize procurement and result in better equipment for the warfighter and savings for the American taxpayer.

94. How would you structure portfolio budgets to expedite moving funds between efforts within a budget line item?

Response: If confirmed, I would utilize a streamlined budget structure that accelerates innovation, response, and fielding of capabilities where technology is volatile. Consolidating individual programs into fewer budget line items in both Research,

Development, Test and Evaluation and Procurement accounts augment the Army's flexibility to quickly transition from development to prototyping, and rapidly adjust investments based on program performance and operational imperatives. This approach can address relevant threats in real-time by leveraging the latest technological advancements.

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

Response: I am aware of the recent directive issued by the Secretary of Defense to implement the Army Transformation Initiative (ATI), which includes the merging of Army Futures Command (AFC) with TRADOC. Regardless of this transition, it does not release the Army's obligation to continually invest in future warfighting capabilities to maintain superiority on the rapidly evolving battlefield. My current understanding is that these initiatives are designed to further Army modernization, which is done through continual optimization. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Secretary of the Army to ensure AFC's mission transitions smoothly into this developing command.

96. 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?

Response: I am aware of the recent directive issued by the Secretary of Defense to implement the Army Transformation Initiative (ATI), which includes the merging of Army Futures Command (AFC) with TRADOC. Regardless of this transition, it does not release the Army's obligation to continually invest in future warfighting capabilities to maintain superiority on the rapidly evolving battlefield. My current understanding is that these initiatives are designed to further Army modernization, which is done through continual optimization. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Secretary of the Army to ensure AFC's mission transitions smoothly into this developing command.

97. How do you assess AFC's efforts to reform directive requirements and characteristics of need, and what changes would you recommend to ensure requirements are innovative yet realistic?

Response: I am aware of the recent directive issued by the Secretary of Defense to implement the Army Transformation Initiative (ATI), which includes the merging of Army Futures Command (AFC) with TRADOC. Regardless of this transition, it does not release the Army's obligation to continually invest in future warfighting capabilities to maintain superiority on the rapidly evolving battlefield. My current understanding is that these initiatives are designed to further Army modernization, which is done through continual optimization. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Secretary of the Army to ensure AFC's mission transitions smoothly into this developing command.

Transformation in Contact (TiC) aims to modernize the Army by testing new technologies directly with operational units. Soldiers involved in TiC have demonstrated bottom-up innovation, such as using low-cost drones as decoys, yet logistical and bureaucratic hurdles can limit its agility.

98. How do you evaluate the progress of TiC, and what additional resources or policy changes do you believe are necessary to expand its impact across larger formations?

Response: In my view, TiC shows promise in rapidly fielding new technologies, demonstrably improving unit capabilities. However, expanding TiC's impact may require increased funding for scaling and training, streamlined acquisition processes, and policy adjustments enabling greater flexibility in operational experimentation and deployment. If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary of the Army and the Chief of Staff of the Army to assess policies supporting more agile funding and fielding for these crucial initiatives.

99. If confirmed, what steps will you take to remove barriers and enhance soldier-driven innovation within TiC?

Response: If confirmed, I will prioritize empowering Soldier-led innovation within TiC by establishing clear communication channels for Soldier feedback, streamlining the process for incorporating that feedback into capability development, and ensuring resources are adequately allocated to rapidly prototype and field Soldier-driven solutions. I believe that TiC is a Soldier-driven opportunity to experiment, innovate, and inform programming organizational changes and materiel procurement.

Test and Evaluation

100. 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?

Response: I have not had the opportunity to assess the current state of Army test and evaluation capabilities. I understand that these capabilities are vital to the successful development and fielding of new warfighting capabilities. If confirmed, I would work with the Secretary of the Army to assess the state of current test facilities and capabilities to identify any areas in need of development.

101. 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?

Response: I have not had the opportunity to assess the current state of Army test and evaluation infrastructure. I am committed to ensuring required infrastructure and expertise are in place to evaluate new technologies at the accelerated pace needed to support the Secretary's acquisition and modernization efficiency goals.

102. Do you believe the Army can better 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?

Response: Where appropriate, the Army should certainly leverage commercial innovation and incorporate non-developmental solutions in fielding needed warfighting capabilities.

Given the rapid pace of evolving technology, leveraging commercial innovation supports the Army's objective to place the best available capabilities in Soldier's hands.

103. 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 factor needs of environments often more complex and demanding than commercial settings?

Response: In my opinion, realistic test scenarios, completed by end-users, should be used to assess the item's effectiveness and determine limitations in a dynamic environment. If confirmed, I would work with the Secretary of the Army to ensure operational testing is properly scoped and provides meaningful information to Soldiers and Commanders.

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

Response: I believe that Army test and evaluation capabilities must be agile and adaptive to support rapid integration of both hardware and software. While I am not familiar with how Army test and evaluation is organized yet, I do value collaboration across stakeholders to ensure rapid and efficient testing to keep up with technology development.

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.

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

Response: I believe that the Reagan Test Site on Kwajalein Atoll is a unique and important facility which has a strategic role. I am aware of the Congressional interest in this strategic location in support of the National Defense Strategy. If confirmed, I commit to prioritize restoring, modernizing and constructing enduring facilities to provide a safe, healthy, living and working environment for our Soldiers, Families, Civilians, and contractors residing on Kwajalein Atoll.

Innovation

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

Response: If confirmed, I would advocate for robust and effective resourcing to the Army's technology centers and research laboratory to expedite delivering capability to address priority transformation, gaps, and prototyping. Further, I will ensure that the Army effectively leverages congressional authorities, STEM recruitment and training,

and internal innovation capabilities and research to maintain technological superiority, counter emerging threats, and deliver capabilities across near-, mid- and far-term horizons.

107. 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?

Response: If confirmed, I will ensure the Army is leveraging all statutory authorities to increase the return-on-investment from the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program. Equally important is a more business-friendly SBIR approach, streamlining proposal requirements, reducing time to capital, and incentivizing rapid contracting; sending a clear message to the American innovation community that commercial success and technology partnership with the Army are not mutually exclusive.

108. 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?

Response: If confirmed, I will commit to prioritize research and engineering innovation infrastructure by developing an innovation investment strategy for our laboratories that focuses on not just critical gaps, but also the Army's overall transformation path forward. Where appropriate, I will support military construction, equipment and infrastructure sustainment to ensure the Army's technological advantage and warfighter overmatch now and into the future.

109. 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?

Response: If confirmed, I intend to assess the Army's Science and Technology (S&T) enterprise to ensure that S&T enterprise is focused by our understanding of the future battlefield and properly aligned to meet the rapid pace of technological innovation.

110. 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?

Response: I believe that the Army should continue to invest in areas such as counter command and control, cross-domain fires, protection capabilities, and c-UAS. If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary of the Army to balance the needs of emerging and enduring technology with continuous assessment of how these technologies integrate with existing systems.

111. 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.

Response: If confirmed, I would ensure that our modernization strategy is cohesive, adaptable, and aligned with the Army's long-term goals. Enhanced collaboration across all levels of the research, development, acquisition and operational enterprise; streamlined processes; effective resource allocation; and continuous improvement are critical to bridge the "Valley of Death" and ensure that cutting-edge technologies are rapidly transitioned from development to production and into the hands of our Soldiers.

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

Response: In my view, one of the most critical factors is ensuring the alignment of resources, requirements and the acquisition process. Too often we see promising technologies developed in our labs not make it to our Soldiers due to a misalignment of planning and resources across the development and acquisition process.

113. 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?

Response: I believe that efforts such as the Technology Maturation Initiative (TMI) provide important pathways to help rapidly transition cutting-edge technologies into prototypes, delivering technological superiority and enhancing multi-domain capabilities. By maturing high-risk technologies, adapting commercial and government solutions, and incorporating continuous soldier feedback to counter emerging threats, TMI accelerates the delivery of critical innovations directly into the hands of our Soldiers.

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.

114. 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?

Response: I believe that the Army is well postured to meet the goals outlined in the 2023 DoD Cyber Strategy. If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary of the Army to prioritize improving the training and retention of our most talented personnel to sustain and improve our cyber capabilities.

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

Response: I believe experience gained in private industry would be extremely valuable

for military and civilian cybersecurity career enhancement. If confirmed, I would capitalize on DoD programs permitting career military and civilian employees to spend time with industry. Furthermore, I would break down barriers to more easily enable employees to move between public and private sector work roles, to include opportunities for military.

116. 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?

Response: If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary of the Army to assess ways to increase lethality of the Army cyber forces at the tactical level with other kinetic and non-kinetic capabilities.

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.

117. 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?

Response: I view the PCA as having a distinct role to provide independent counsel to the Secretary of the Army, the Chief and Vice Chief of Staff of the Army, and the Under Secretary of the Army. If confirmed, I would utilize the Army PCA to generate outcomes that improve the Army's cyber posture ensuring the security of critical warfighting capabilities.

118. If confirmed as the Under 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?

Response: If confirmed, I would utilize the PCA to inform and advise how the Army generates the combat power and sustained readiness in cyberspace necessary to protect Army interests from current and future threats. I would further utilize the PCA as a critical enabler for sharpening the tip of the cyber spear by generating increased mastery of the cyber operations forces.

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.

119. 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.

Response: Yes

120. 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.

Response: Yes

121. 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.

Response: Yes

122. 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.

Response: Yes

123. 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.

Response: Yes

124. 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.

Response: Yes

125. 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.

Response: Yes