

**Answers to Advance Questions for Mr. Thomas W. O'Connell
Nominee for Assistant Secretary of Defense for
Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict (ASD (SO/LIC))**

1. Defense Reforms

More than a decade has passed since the enactment of the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 and the Special Operations reforms.

A. Do you support full implementation of these defense reforms?

I support full implementation of Goldwater-Nichols and the subsequent special operations reforms. Those important reforms have had impressive success in the years since they were enacted. I believe the increase in readiness levels and the attendant demonstrations of true joint warfighting capabilities of our Armed Forces validate the wisdom of the Defense Reorganization Act of 1986.

B. What is your view of the extent to which these defense reforms have been implemented?

These reforms have fundamentally changed the way the Department of Defense works by strengthening the role of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the combatant commanders, and significantly improving the ability of the Department to carry out its fundamental mission -- protecting America's security and furthering its vital interests. It has made the chain of command clearer, focused clear lines of responsibility and commensurate authority on the combatant commanders and provided more effective civilian control of the military, thus making our armed forces more effective. It has helped us greatly improve the interaction among each of the Services in conducting military operations -- fully joint operations are now the norm.

C. What do you consider to be the most important aspects of these defense reforms?

In my view, the unambiguous responsibility and authority assigned to combatant commanders for mission accomplishment and the increased attention to strategy formulation and contingency planning are the most important aspects. Further, the Act promotes jointness in our military forces. Our ability to integrate forces into joint operations provides another exponential increase in military effectiveness.

“Jointness” is no longer a buzz word. It is the driving force of daily military operations. I remember the results of the Holloway and Long Commissions that contributed heavily to the creation of this important reform legislation. I believe that the central findings of both reports are embodied in the Goldwater-Nichols Act and subsequent implementation.

The goals of the Congress in enacting these defense reforms, as reflected in section 3 of the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act, can be summarized as strengthening civilian control over the military; improving military advice; placing clear responsibility on the combatant commanders for the accomplishment of their missions; ensuring the authority of the combatant commanders is commensurate with their responsibility; increasing attention to the formulation of strategy and to contingency planning; providing for more efficient use of defense resources; enhancing the effectiveness of military operations; and improving the management and administration of the Department of Defense.

D. Do you agree with these goals?

Yes, absolutely. If fortunate enough to be confirmed, I will work to continue implementation.

E. Do you believe that legislative proposals to amend Goldwater-Nichols may be appropriate? If so, what areas do you believe it might be appropriate to address in these proposals?

I am not aware of any pending legislation relative to amendments to Goldwater-Nichols. The Secretary of Defense is leading the transformation of the Department to improve our national defense. As part of that effort, the US military is pursuing a host of transformations. Questions of responsibility, authority, and organization are matters of specific interest and continuous review. If any of these reviews recommend refinements to Goldwater-Nichols, the Department will certainly consult closely with the Congress, and especially this committee. As SO/LIC and SOCOM continue to evolve and assess lessons from our most recent conflicts and the global war on terrorism, it may be necessary to review relationships. If confirmed, I would review and assess new proposals, and will consult closely with the Congress.

2. Relationships

If confirmed, what will be your relationship with:

The Secretary of Defense

The Deputy Secretary of Defense
The Under Secretary of Defense for Policy
The Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs
The Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Policy
The Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense
The Joint Chiefs of Staff
Commander, United States Special Operations Command
Commander, United States Joint Forces Command
The regional combatant commanders
The commanders of the service special operations commands
Officials in the Department of Homeland Security with intelligence and counter-terrorism responsibilities?

If confirmed, I will report to the Secretary of Defense and Deputy Secretary of Defense through the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy. I expect to maintain a close working relationship with the other Assistant Secretaries in the Office of the Under Secretary for Policy, the offices of the Under Secretaries for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics, Personnel and Readiness, Comptroller, and Intelligence, the Chairman, Vice Chairman and the Director of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and with Combatant Commanders, especially the Commander of the U.S. Special Operations Command and its component commands. I will also, if confirmed, work closely with the National Security Council Staff and with officials in the Departments of State, Justice, Homeland Security, the intelligence community and other agencies and departments.

3. Duties

Section 138(b)(4) of Title 10, United States Code, describes the duties and roles of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict.

A. What is your understanding of the duties and functions of the ASD (SO/LIC)?

The Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict has oversight of special operations and low intensity conflict activities. Those activities include direct action, strategic reconnaissance, unconventional warfare, foreign internal defense, civil affairs, psychological operations, peace operations, post-conflict reconstruction, detainee policy, counterterrorism, humanitarian assistance, theater search and rescue, domestic and international counterdrug efforts and such other activities specified by the President and Secretary of Defense. ASD (SO/LIC) is the principal civilian advisor to the Secretary of Defense on special operations and low intensity conflict matters.

After the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of Defense, ASD (SO/LIC) is the principal special operations and low intensity conflict official within senior management of the Department of Defense.

B. Assuming you are confirmed, what changes, if any, in the duties and functions of ASD (SO/LIC) do you expect that the Secretary of Defense would prescribe for you?

At this time, I do not see the duties and functions of ASD (SO/LIC) changing from those prescribed in law and current directives.

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

I completed twenty-seven years of military service as an infantry and intelligence officer, holding positions of significant responsibility in the special operations community. I participated in Vietnam, Grenada, Panama, and the Persian Gulf War. In an assignment as an exchange officer in the British Army, I observed how our close ally operates. I have extensive joint and combined service that includes planning and execution of clandestine special operations activities. I commanded at the battalion and brigade level, and served at CIA for three years. For the past seven years, I have held management positions in the civilian defense industry.

D. In your view, are the duties set forth in section 138(b)(4) of Title 10, United States Code, up to date, or should changes be considered?

Section 138(b)(4) of Title 10 United States Code cites the ASD (SO/LIC)'s principal duty as the overall supervision (including oversight of policy and resources) of special operations activities (as defined in section 167(j) of Title 10) and low intensity conflict activities of the Department of Defense. At this time, I do not see the need for statutory changes to the functions of ASD (SO/LIC), although I look forward to making a more formal assessment.

E. What changes, if any, would you recommend?

Again, I believe it is too soon for me to recommend changes to existing law. If confirmed, my daily execution of duties under section 138(b)(4) of Title 10 would, over time, perhaps provide me with sufficient expertise to consider changes.

F. What Department of Defense activities are currently encompassed by the Department's definition of special operations and low intensity conflict?

Special operations and low intensity conflict activities include direct action, strategic reconnaissance, unconventional warfare, foreign internal defense, counterinsurgency, contingency operations, civil affairs, psychological operations, peace operations, post-conflict reconstruction, detainee policy, counterterrorism in the United States and abroad, humanitarian assistance, theater search and rescue, domestic and international counterdrug efforts, and such other activities specified by the President and Secretary of Defense.

G. If confirmed, would you exercise overall supervision of all special operations and low intensity conflict activities of the Department of Defense?

Yes.

H. In cases in which other Assistant Secretaries within the Office of the Secretary of Defense exercise supervision over some special operations and low intensity conflict activities, what is the relationship between your office and those other offices?

I am not aware of other Assistant Secretaries who exercise supervision over special operations and low intensity conflict activities. I believe Title 10, Section 138(b) (4) is clear. If an activity pertains to special operations and low intensity conflict, then ASD (SO/LIC) supervises and provides policy and oversight, and is the principal advisor to the Secretary of Defense on these matters. After the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of Defense and under the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, ASD (SO/LIC) is the principal official within senior management of the Department of Defense responsible for special operations and low intensity conflict. I recognize the need to work closely with the regional and other functional offices in the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

4. SO/LIC Organization

The position of Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict has been vacant for over two years.

A. What changes, if any, have taken place during this time in the SO/LIC organization and in the responsibilities of the ASD (SO/LIC)?

I understand that there have been three major changes in the responsibilities of the ASD (SO/LIC): addition of policy oversight and guidance for the global war on

terrorism; addition of policy oversight and guidance for detainee activities in the aftermath of operations in Afghanistan and the global war on terrorism; and divestiture of domestic consequence management, installation preparedness and homeland defense activities to the office of the ASD for Homeland Defense.

B. If confirmed, how would you fulfill your responsibilities related to counter-narcotics?

C. If confirmed, how would you fulfill your responsibilities related to combating terrorism?

D. If confirmed, how would you fulfill your responsibilities related to peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance?

If confirmed, I will assume oversight and management of the varied and complex portfolios in SO/LIC through oversight of the Deputy Assistant Secretaries for Counternarcotics, Special Operations and Combating Terrorism, and Stability Operations.

E. How would you coordinate these responsibilities with the ASD for Homeland Defense, who has responsibilities for combating terrorism in the United States?

A very close relationship between SO/LIC and Homeland Defense is already developing. If confirmed, I expect to maintain that relationship with the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense as he enhances the Department's integration into the nation's homeland security efforts. He will have a number of responsibilities for combating terrorism in the United States; SO/LIC retains lead responsibility for special operations, including all contingencies in which SOF might be employed. In fact, I had a very useful meeting with Assistant Secretary Paul McHale to discuss his new responsibilities and his interaction with SO/LIC. I believe he is off to a great start, and I noted that SO/LIC provided some exceptional personnel to his staff.

5. Major Challenges and Problems

A. In your view, what are the major challenges that will confront the ASD (SO/LIC)?

B. Assuming you are confirmed, what plans do you have for addressing these challenges?

C. What do you anticipate will be the most serious problems in the performance of the functions of the ASD (SO/LIC)?

D. If confirmed, what management action and timelines would you establish to address these problems?

If confirmed, the primary challenge that I will face as the ASD for SO/LIC is the successful prosecution of the global war on terrorism. SOF are at the forefront of the war, and SO/LIC will be crucial to ensuring that they are ultimately successful. I realize the magnitude of this task, and that it is much easier said than done. However, I believe my past experience on active duty within the SOF community has prepared me for this task. A critical component of this effort will be close and continual coordination with the Under Secretary for Intelligence, the CIA and other major participants. I believe it would be prudent to withhold judgment on specific management action and timelines until, if confirmed, I have the opportunity to function as the ASD (SO/LIC) for a period of time.

6. Priorities

If confirmed, what broad priorities would you establish in terms of issues which must be addressed by the ASD (SO/LIC)?

If confirmed, I believe there are three general areas or issues that require special attention and commitment on my part. These areas are not comprehensive or exclusive of each other or other issues not specifically mentioned, but are a snapshot of the broad priorities as I see them.

The first is perhaps the most obvious and of immediate importance: continued execution of the global war on terrorism. As we have discussed earlier, SOF's unique capability to meet the complex new challenges of this war has increased their importance as a primary tool in the nation's defense – as opposed to merely a tool for leveraging conventional forces or for smaller, specialized missions. Perhaps the most important manifestation of this change is in the designation of USSOCOM to be the supported (or "lead") command in the war on terrorism (whereas before it generally had assumed only a supporting role for the regional combatant commands).

The second is transformation of SOF. We must continue to transform SOF to better position them to confront and defeat the threats of the 21st Century, especially in the global war on terrorism. The President's Budget request contains a number of significant, transformational efforts.

The third is continued development and execution of the concept of stability operations. As in Afghanistan and Iraq, we have seen that the transition of the theater from one of military action, to one of stabilization and low-intensity conflict, and then eventually on to local civilian control, is difficult and benefits from the specific skills and capabilities of SOF, especially Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations forces.

7. Transformation

Secretary Rumsfeld has established transformation of the Armed Forces to meet 21st Century threats as one of his highest priorities.

A. What is the role of special operations forces in the overall transformation vision?

As I understand it, the Department of Defense has begun a significant “retooling” of USSOCOM to enable the Command to lead the war against terrorism in an even more effective manner. Perhaps the most profound change is a shift in policy by the Department that USSOCOM will no longer serve primarily as a supporting command, but rather will plan and execute key missions as a supported combatant command. USSOCOM is expanding to plan combat missions directly against terrorist organizations around the world and execute those missions as the supported Command, while maintaining the role of force provider and supporter to the geographic combatant commanders. Additionally, the assignment of this transformational responsibility to Joint Forces Command will help SOCOM navigate this increasingly complex environment. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with both Admiral Giambastiani and the Department’s Director for Force Transformation, Vice Admiral (ret) Cebrowski, to further transformation efforts.

B. Specifically, what do you believe transformation should mean for the special operations community in terms of missions, training, equipment, or in any other aspect?

Transformation is an approach to produce advances in the individual, the organization, and in technology to build the right capability at the right time to defeat any threat.

USSOCOM is transforming SOF capabilities to meet the formidable challenges associated with waging war against terrorist cells scattered across the globe. The Command is transforming by building the capability to maintain sustained operations in areas where terrorist networks are operating. It is investing in critical “low-density/high-demand” aviation assets that provide SOF with the

mobility necessary to deploy quickly and to execute their missions quickly. It is investing in key command, control, and communications to support the war on terrorism more effectively. The Command has added personnel to better sustain worldwide deployments and 24-hour-a-day operations. In conjunction with these expanding roles, USSOCOM will also look to move certain ongoing collateral activities not requiring unique SOF capabilities to general purpose forces in order to free up special operators for their primary mission – to wage war against terrorists.

C. What, if any, special role can SOCOM's development and acquisition capability play in Service and DoD efforts?

USSOCOM's unique acquisition authority among combatant commanders has allowed the command consistently to accelerate emerging technologies into deployable SOF systems. These technologies routinely find their way to conventional forces as the Military Departments and other government agencies integrate SOF-developed products into their equipment arsenals. The Department's increased investment in science and technology initiatives will continue that trend.

8. Civilian Oversight of the United States Special Operations Command

The 1986 Special Operations legislation assigned extraordinary authority to the Commander, United States Special Operations Command, to conduct some of the functions of both a military service and a unified combat command.

A. Which civilian officials in the Department of Defense exercise civilian oversight of the "service-like" authorities of the Commander, United States Special Operations Command?

ASD (SO/LIC), reporting through the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, is the principal civilian official, below the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of Defense, that exercises civilian oversight of the "Service-like" authorities of the Command. Federal law assigns ASD (SO/LIC) the responsibility for providing overall supervision (including oversight of policy and resources) of special operations and low-intensity conflict activities of the Department of Defense. Although the ASD (SO/LIC) is the primary overseer of special operations and low-intensity conflict activities, we work closely with regional and other functional offices. Under this arrangement, the ASD (SO/LIC) coordinates with regional and functional offices, and executes full oversight of USSOCOM. I fully understand this arrangement and plan to work closely with the regional and other

functional offices as well as the Commander, USSOCOM to ensure that oversight of the Command is efficient and effective.

B. What organizational relationship should exist between the ASD (SO/LIC) and the Commander, United States Special Operations Command?

I believe the organizational relationship between Commander, USSOCOM and the ASD (SO/LIC) is a complex one because of the unique authority and responsibilities granted USSOCOM on administrative and resource matters. In my view, the organizational relationship should be a close partnership. Today numerous aspects of SO/LIC and USSOCOM are closely intertwined, ranging from the Technical Support Working Group (TSWG) program to collaborative studies on SOF forward presence and transformation. I intend to continue to foster this relationship between the two organizations. Through our cooperative efforts, I believe we can continue to be effective in wisely allocating the limited resources entrusted to the Command.

C. What should be the role of the ASD (SO/LIC) in preparation and review of Major Force Program 11 and the Command's Program Objective Memorandum?

The ASD (SO/LIC) provides overall supervision of the preparation and justification of Special Operations Forces programs and budget. Past Assistant Secretaries for SO/LIC have served, along with Commander, USSOCOM, as co-chair of the Command's Board of Directors, as does the current PDASD (SO/LIC), Marshall Billingslea. In this manner, the ASD (SO/LIC) and the Commander participate in every budgetary and programmatic decision involving special operations forces. Representatives from SO/LIC regularly spend a significant amount of time at USSOCOM headquarters in a joint effort to develop the SOF program. This joint effort produces a program that stresses force readiness and sustainability, provides sufficient force structure to meet the demands of the geographic warfighting commanders and Commander, USSOCOM in his role as a supported commander. This effort also seeks technology programs to ensure SOF capability remains at the cutting edge of technology. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Commander, USSOCOM to ensure that the annual funding can effectively maintain a ready force to meet the challenges of the new security environment while simultaneously replacing aging and obsolete equipment with systems that will meet the threat well into the next decade.

D. What is the appropriate role of the ASD (SO/LIC) in the research and development and procurement functions of the Special Operations Command?

The appropriate role of ASD (SO/LIC) in the acquisition functions of the Special Operations Command is to advise and assist Commander, USSOCOM in resolving acquisition issues. As the lead OSD official for SOF acquisition matters for the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics, ASD (SO/LIC) represents SOF interests within DoD and before Congress. The responsibilities and relationships between ASD (SO/LIC) and Commander, USSOCOM are clearly defined and described in a joint Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) that addresses acquisition oversight, including recommendations, advice, and assistance provided to program managers and senior decision makers. SO/LIC representatives participate in working groups, integrated product/process teams, boards, and committees to address issues, make recommendations, and approve programs.

In addition, the ASD (SO/LIC) has considerable responsibility to direct technology development programs that address several mission areas in support of other Departmental, interagency, and international requirements as well as SOF. For example, the ASD (SO/LIC) exercises management and technical oversight of the Combating Terrorism Technology Support program. The Combating Terrorism Technology Support program conducts rapid prototyping to meet requirements of the Technical Support Working Group. The Special Operations Command is an active participant and chairs the Tactical Operations subgroup.

E. What is the appropriate role of the ASD (SO/LIC) in the operational planning of missions that involve special operations forces, whether the supported command is SOCOM or a geographic command?

According to section 138(b)(4) of Title 10, United States Code, the ASD (SO/LIC) shall have as his principal duty the overall supervision (including oversight of policy and resources) of special operations activities (as defined in section 167(j) of Title 10) and low intensity conflict activities of the Department of Defense. The Assistant Secretary is the principal civilian advisor to the Secretary of Defense on special operations and low intensity conflict matters and (after the Secretary and Deputy Secretary) is the principal special operations and low intensity conflict official within the senior management of the Department of Defense.

9. Expanded Roles of United States SOCOM

The Secretary of Defense recently announced that U.S. SOCOM would take on additional, expanded responsibilities in the global war on terrorism, as a supported combatant commander, in addition to its more traditional role as a supporting combatant commander.

A. What role will ASD, SO/LIC play in the oversight and planning of such missions?

B. In your view, what types of missions should SOCOM conduct as a supported combatant commander?

C. What role will ASD (SO/LIC) play in preparing SOCOM for its new role?

The change from supporting to supported command is a fundamental change in many aspects of the mission of USSOCOM. The oversight, planning and policy role for ASD (SO/LIC) is especially important in that change. The role of SO/LIC and its relationship to the Command in that process will remain largely unchanged. If confirmed as ASD (SO/LIC), I will continue to provide advocacy and oversight for the Command as it develops the capabilities required to implement these fundamental changes. What is different, however, is the magnitude of the changes and immediate implications for our national security.

The changes in the relationships among the relevant commands that will, in some cases, switch from supported to supporting and vice versa, is likely to require some specific policy changes and guidelines. Additionally, changes within USSOCOM will have to be pursued as well, simply because of the nature of the new responsibilities. As ASD (SO/LIC), I will continue the process of working with SOCOM to evolve its capabilities to meet the responsibilities it has been assigned by the Secretary. Much has been accomplished in the past two years, but there is much more to be done.

10. Special Operations Missions

When announcing additional responsibilities for SOCOM, Secretary Rumsfeld indicated that SOCOM may divest itself of some traditional missions, such as foreign military training, that can be conducted by conventional forces.

A. What current missions, if any, do you believe can and should be divested by SOCOM, and why?

USSOCOM missions and tasks must evolve to meet the future needs in light of their expanding role in the war on terrorism. USSOCOM's new role as a supported Combatant Commander for the war on terrorism, including both planning and execution, drives a refocusing of their primary responsibilities and the constraints under which SOF are employed. The Department and USSOCOM are conducting a review of the SOF principal missions and collateral activities to identify those missions and activities that do not require the special skill sets inherent to SOF and could be transitioned to or shared with general purpose forces.

B. Are there any additional missions that you believe SOCOM should assume, and, if so, why?

USSOCOM is expanding its role in the war on terrorism. USSOCOM requirements to plan, synchronize, and execute operations on a global scale necessitate a more globally capable SOF through the use of full spectrum integrated SOF. USSOCOM is expanding to directly planning combat missions against terrorist organizations around the world and executing those missions as the supported Command, while maintaining the role of force provider and supporter to the Geographic Combatant Commanders. To meet this challenge, USSOCOM is establishing command and control infrastructures that augment the Geographic Combatant Commanders and investing in programs and systems to improve SOF's speed, precision, lethality, stealth, survivability, and sustainability.

11. Future of Special Operations

Many believe that the principal threats of the 21st Century will be asymmetric, unconventional ones, often emanating from non-state actors.

A. Since asymmetric, unconventional threats must now be confronted by our conventional forces, what is the future role of special operations? What special threats must SOCOM be focused on for the future?

As we increasingly face unconventional enemies, we will have to continue to adapt to meet these threats. This is the very type of threat that SOF has for decades been geared to confront, and continues to confront on a daily basis in the war on terrorism.

SOF were called upon to lead Operation Enduring Freedom. In Afghanistan, that effort was waged by less than 500 SOF personnel. They mounted an interagency and combined unconventional warfare effort, tied closely to indigenous forces and linked with the United States Air Force, in a way that provided for a rapid defeat

of the Taliban's conventional forces. The operation in Afghanistan was prosecuted by small units that operated with autonomy in a highly fluid environment. It was won by people who could meld with friendly Afghan forces, able to:

- operate without a safety net;
- develop such a rapport that they could trust their security to their Afghan allies;
- live without a huge logistics train to provide equipment and supplies;
- distinguish between combatants and non-combatants in an environment where civilians and fighters, Taliban and non-Taliban, and ex-Taliban, were found together; and
- engineer combined arms operations between U.S. B-52s and the Northern Alliance's Soviet era tanks.

The SOF operator is distinguished from other military personnel by specific skills, extensive overseas experience, ability to work closely with indigenous forces and to train them, ability to blend into the fabric of the society in which he operates, independence and maturity, and an unparalleled degree of training. These Americans truly are one of a kind – each one. That is why there are so few of them. They are one of this nation's most scarce and precious resources, and they should always be employed with careful consideration.

12. Lessons Learned

In your view, what have been the most significant lessons learned by special operations forces in recent military operations, and what are the future operational, research and development, and procurement implications of these lessons?

I understand that a formal military "lessons learned" process for both Afghanistan and Iraq is being conducted by the Joint Staff and will go through Joint Forces Command. That process is not yet complete. From that process and those findings, SO/LIC will develop policy advice and guidance to facilitate or enable new operational constructs for current and future conflicts.

In addition to that formal process, we learned a great deal about the importance of SOF and the best use of their specialized skills. In both Iraq and Afghanistan, SOF demonstrated its utility as both a component of a larger joint and combined force and as a stand-alone force. In particular, SOF's unique expertise in unconventional warfare proved invaluable in Afghanistan and in northern Iraq in bringing local forces to bear against the enemy. As I mentioned earlier, that capability was able to leverage the nationwide situation to our decisive advantage with fewer than 500 U.S. personnel. In both Operation Enduring Freedom and

Operation Iraqi Freedom, SOF again demonstrated flexibility, innovation on the fly, improved methods to enhance the effectiveness of extremely sophisticated, long-range weapons – all with a very small footprint. These types of experiences and lessons are what have made SOF into a critical incubator or tester for methods, techniques and equipment that will make its way into conventional use and enhance combat effectiveness across the Services. The most important investment we make in special operations forces is in the people who comprise SOF – our soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines and civilians.

13. Size of Special Operations Forces

The recent successes of special operations forces in Afghanistan and Iraq have led many to advocate a significant increase in the size of special operations forces.

A. Do you believe that we should increase the number of special operations personnel?

Yes. The Department of Defense directed the USSOCOM to assume an expanded role in the war on terrorism, which necessitates an increase in personnel in specific areas. The President's Budget for Fiscal Year 2004 supported an increase of 2,563 personnel that increases the total end strength in FY 2004 to 49,848 personnel. Over the next five years, the Department's recognition that there was a need for more SOF and the Services' cross-walking personnel will grow the force by almost 4,000. This growth primarily supports the manning requirements to wage the global war on terrorism. The increases focus on fixed and rotary-wing aviation, SEAL Teams, Civil Affairs, Psychological Operations, Theater Special Operations Commands, and support to USSOCOM as the supported combatant commander in the war on terrorism.

B. In your view, can the size of special operations forces be increased significantly if the rigorous admissions standards for these organizations are to be maintained?

People are the most important component of SOF capability. The SOF operator is one of a kind and cannot be mass-produced. USSOCOM continues to work with the Services to improve recruiting, retention and inventory levels of special operations forces. Special operations personnel levels remain strong, but new and innovative means must be found to sustain and grow current projected inventories. World events significantly increased public awareness of what Special Operations is all about, consequently raising interest in joining.

Recruiting, training and retaining SOF will not be without challenges. Several initiatives were implemented over the past year to improve the effectiveness of these efforts. Analysis to date indicates that the Command will have the right numbers to sustain the forces the nation needs. Training instructors and the number of training slots available have increased for Army Special Forces, Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations. A recruiting initiative was launched in which new Army recruits can sign up for Special Forces directly, rather than awaiting selection from a conventional unit. This is an option that has not been possible since 1988. In addition, special pay and bonuses were implemented to improve retention in highly specialized areas and units.

14. SOCOM/USMC

In November 2001, the Commandant of the Marine Corps and Commander, USSOCOM signed a memorandum of agreement aimed at increasing Marine Corps support and cooperation with SOCOM.

What do you believe should be the appropriate relationship between the Marine Corps and SOCOM?

I believe that the relationship between the Marine Corps and SOF continues to evolve in a very healthy direction. As you noted, for the first time in history, the Command and the Marine Corps have established a construct for joint warfighting. A Marine detachment is in a one-year proof of concept phase that began last fall. On October 1 of this year, we expect this detachment will be fully integrated into a Naval Special Warfare Squadron and serve there on a rotating basis. Additionally, last year, SOF and the Marines began joint wargaming exercises called "Expeditionary Warrior," which focus on cooperation (with naval support) in combating terrorism and counter-proliferation contingencies.

As USSOCOM assumes its role as a supported command in the war on terrorism, and can draw on all Services' assets in a theater of operation, the joint capability being established between the Marines and SOF will undoubtedly grow. We can expect that we will realize ways in which such cooperation is possible or even essential. Moreover, I note that events in the field continue to drive the creation of close working relationships between SOF and the Marine Corps, and other conventional units.

15. Counterdrug/Counterterrorism Missions

Special operations forces have been deeply involved in training forces in Colombia to conduct unified counterdrug - counterterrorism missions.

A. In your view, what has been the success of training missions in Colombia?

The success of the training effort is best measured in terms of the unprecedented level of progress being made by President Uribe and the Colombian military in destroying the FARC and ELN terrorist organizations, in eradicating drug cultivation, and in reclaiming Colombia for the people of that great nation. DoD-managed training missions have and continue to provide an excellent opportunity to train the Colombian military as it becomes a professional force that can improve the security of the Colombian people and the respect for the rule of law and human rights. As a result, the Colombian military units that the Department has trained are more effective and respectful of human rights.

B. Are these appropriate missions for U.S. special operations forces?

Absolutely. The Department believes that these missions are appropriate for Special Operations Forces. We also execute training missions using non-SOF forces, such as those of the United States Army and Marine Corps. The Department reviews training requests to ensure that, where appropriate, we employ the right mix of SOF and conventional forces.

C. What, if any, benefit do unified counterdrug-counterterrorist training missions in Colombia and counterdrug training missions worldwide provide to special operations forces?

I understand that the training missions in Colombia and, indeed, worldwide, provide excellent opportunities for SOF to work with police and military forces of our friends and allies. As a result, SOF hone their language and cultural skills and their "train the trainer" skills, and take advantage of opportunities to work in countries where the United States seeks to enhance relationships.

16. Counternarcotics Policy

The Department of Defense has been extensively involved in counternarcotics missions for many years, involving both active and reserve component forces.

In your view, what is the appropriate role of the Department of Defense in interdicting illegal drugs bound for the U.S., in reducing drug cultivation, and in reducing demand?

International, Federal, state and local law enforcement agencies are responsible for interdiction activities. DoD supports those efforts. For example, the Department

provides detection and monitoring support, command, control, communications and intelligence support and training. I believe that the Department should continue to use its unique military skills and assets to support agencies that execute interdiction missions.

Similarly, the Department of Defense does not reduce foreign or domestic drug cultivation. The Department of State, in partnership with our friends and allies, manages drug cultivation programs outside the United States. Federal, state and local law enforcement agencies manage domestic counter-cultivation programs. DoD, again, provides detection and monitoring support, command, communications, control and intelligence support and training.

As part of the President's National Drug Control Strategy, the Department executes significant demand reduction programs designed to prevent the use of and treatment for drugs by Service members, civilian employees and our families. The Department continues to review these programs to ensure the efficient use of taxpayer dollars.

17. Stability Operations

The office of ASD (SO/LIC) is responsible for policy and activities concerning stability operations such as peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance.

A. What has been the involvement of the office of the ASD (SO/LIC) in the planning and conduct of stability operations in Afghanistan and Iraq?

I understand that the Stability Operations office within SO/LIC has played a leading role in defining policy with respect to humanitarian assistance, peace operations, reconstruction, and war crimes issues in both Afghanistan and Iraq. From the early phases of both conflicts, the Stability Operations office, in close partnership with Central Command, coordinated the inter-theater delivery of humanitarian daily rations, bottled water, and relief supplies for refugees and other civilians.

In the case of Afghanistan, the Stability Operations office participated in planning for and resourcing the International Security Assistance Force for Kabul, drove formation of the interagency Provincial Reconstruction Teams, and has been the DoD lead office for the fielding of the new Afghan National Army and Afghan Police.

In the case of Iraq, the Stability Operations office has participated in planning and force generation initiatives for the multinational force that will eventually assume security responsibilities throughout the country. The Stability Operations office

has also served as a planner and coordinator for humanitarian and reconstruction initiatives under the supervision of the Coalition Provisional Authority in Iraq. In both the Afghanistan and Iraq crises, Stability Operations has worked closely with regional experts in DoD, as well as various offices at the Department of State and the NSC.

B. Who has had principal responsibility within the Pentagon for the planning and conduct of stability operations in these nations?

The Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy closely supervises the planning and conduct of stability operations in both Afghanistan and Iraq, providing policy-level oversight and coordination. The Joint Staff, in particular the Directorate for Strategic Plans and Policies (J-5), also plays a critical role in developing plans and operational guidance for the relevant combatant commands. The Stability Operations office has led or assisted other offices in Policy such as the Assistant Secretaries of Defense for International Security Affairs and International Security Policy and the Office of the Coalition Provisional Authority, depending upon the specific plan or issue for action. On every issue, the hallmark of SO/LIC work is comprehensive coordination, both within and outside of the Pentagon.

18. Psychological Operations and Civil Affairs

Psychological operations (PSYOPS) and civil affairs have played prominent roles in recent military operations, from the Balkans to Afghanistan to Iraq. Most U.S. PSYOPS and Civil Affairs units and capabilities are in our reserve components.

A. In your view, do the Armed Forces have sufficient personnel and other assets to conduct the range of PSYOPS and civil affairs missions being asked of them?

Since the start of the global war on terrorism, PSYOP and CA forces have made extraordinary contributions to the security of the United States, and to the reconstruction of Afghanistan and Iraq.

There is a well-documented and urgent need to enhance PSYOP capabilities to penetrate denied areas and to win the “war of ideas.” This vital requirement will be accomplished by transformation of PSYOP both in personnel and equipment. Planned increases in PSYOP active component forces include the addition of 2 regional and 1 tactical PSYOP companies. The reserve components will receive an additional 4 regional PSYOP companies.

Modernization and transformation of PSYOP equipment is at a critical juncture. Significant investment has already been made to modernize production, distribution, and dissemination means. More importantly, additional investments are concentrating on developing transformational dissemination capabilities that will allow us to get our messages to previously inaccessible areas. While much has already been done, I envision additional PSYOP transformational programs will be developed, especially in the areas of satellite and UAV technologies.

Army Civil Affairs forces have sustained a high operations tempo for several years now, and personnel strength is a concern. Long before the events of 9/11, a plan was introduced to address the expanded utilization of Army Civil Affairs forces.

The most important parts of that plan include the addition of 4 reserve component battalions, and 84 positions to the lone active duty CA battalion – the 96th – in the U.S. Army. During the 2-½ years since the plan was developed, the 96th Civil Affairs Battalion has received the authorization for its additional staff. From the reserve component, one of the four CA battalions has come on line, with the second to follow shortly. The two remaining new battalions are scheduled to be activated in calendar years 2004 and 2005, respectively.

If confirmed by the Senate, I would support the continued implementation of this plan. Given the unprecedented pace of deployment in support of the global war on terrorism, it may also be necessary to increase the force size and structure of the active component civil affairs units to provide a greater capability to respond to emerging, near-term requirements without requiring mobilizing reserve CA forces.

B. In your view, is the planned mix of active and reserve components adequate in these areas?

With regard to Psychological Operations, the mix of active and reserve components must be reviewed frequently to ensure that the force structure can respond to national requirements. Additionally, annual assessments must be completed to match national strategies from a regional perspective.

Approximately 97% of the Civil Affairs forces are drawn from the reserve component. There is no “correct” proportion between active and reserve components, but the overwhelming majority of the Civil Affairs personnel should continue to come from the reserve component. This fact will enable the combatant commander to take advantage of the reservist’s civilian expertise in areas such as civil administration, public safety, and economics and commerce.

19. Training Capability

The ability of special forces personnel to train realistically is of vital importance.

A. What capabilities do you consider most important for effective training of special forces personnel?

Much of what makes SOF personnel special or unique is the training. Most of it is very intense and very specialized. The skills, however, are perishable over time and with attrition and must constantly be pursued. I believe four elements contribute to the critical training necessary to maintain SOF.

First, SOF needs realistic combat training environs. This includes ranges that support realistic, live-fire training. It also requires the integration of modern weapons and techniques on a large scale, including ground, sea, and air assets. Realistic urban combat training facilities are of increasing and obvious importance. Less obvious but essential is training access in real (actual) critical infrastructure facilities, be it a nuclear plant or a major port. Ranges and simulated facilities cannot replicate the complexities found in actual structures.

Second, SOF requires adequate mission planning and rehearsal systems. Systems that afford the operator the ability to integrate real-time information into operations planning and rehearsal provide virtual “eyes on target” to enhance mission success. For aviators, mission rehearsal systems must provide the ability to fly the route, evade the threat and hit the target before actual mission execution.

Third, SOF must have worldwide access and exposure. This includes Joint Combined Exchange Training (JCETs), humanitarian de-mining programs, and counter-drug cooperation. Language training is an essential part of this effort. These programs are essential to maintain the unique SOF skills and knowledge that proved so decisive in Afghanistan and elsewhere.

Finally, SOF must maintain a robust capability for selection and training of SOF personnel. Selection criteria, faculty and curricula must be maintained to the highest standards in order to find and produce SOF personnel cut from the right cloth. The skills that set SOF apart and that make them so important to the national defense are perishable and must be continually reinforced and maintained at the highest possible levels. Standards must not be reduced.

Training and experience have the greatest long-term effect on SOF capabilities. In order to maintain strategic flexibility and maximize the likelihood of operational

success, SOF will continue to “train for certainty, educate for uncertainty.” There is no substitute for tough, realistic training.

B. What improvements are necessary, in your view, to enhance training for special operations personnel?

In my opinion, critical improvements include access and support for infrastructure facilities (ranges) to conduct realistic training. Additionally, language training is essential for the SOF operator. Identifying new and innovative methodologies for maintaining language proficiency continue to be a challenge.

C. What, if any, training benefits accrue to U.S. special operations forces from training foreign military personnel?

Depending upon the nature of the training mission, there can be substantial benefit. The Joint Combined Exchange Training (JCET) program is one of the most valuable tools the DoD has to train SOF overseas and to maintain SOF readiness at the highest possible level. JCETs ensure critical SOF readiness regarding regional language, culture, combat operations, combat support operations, and instructor skills. JCETs also sharpen critical SOF skills to support coalition operations, peacekeeping training, and non-combatant evacuation. When we deploy joint special operations task forces they must possess the strategic adaptability to operate globally and the tactical precision required for sensitive operations with far-reaching political consequences. This can be accomplished only by having intelligent, experienced, mature, and resourceful personnel – armed with cross-cultural communications skills – to interact successfully with U.S. country teams, other government agencies, non-government organizations and foreign indigenous military organizations. JCET activities are a principal means of developing and sustaining these skills.

20. Congressional Oversight

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

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

Yes.

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

Yes.

C. Do you agree, if confirmed, to appear before this Committee, or designated members of this Committee, and provide information, subject to appropriate and necessary security protection, with respect to your responsibilities as the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict?

Yes.

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

Yes.