

**Advance Questions for Buddie J. Penn**  
**Nominee for Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Installations and Environment**

**Defense Reforms**

**Almost two decades have passed since the enactment of the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 and the Special Operations reforms.**

**Do you support full implementation of these defense reforms?**

Yes. The establishment of the combatant commands, the definition of responsibilities, and most importantly, the focus on “jointness” has enhanced the readiness and warfighting capabilities of the U.S. Armed Forces.

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

I believe these defense reforms have been fully implemented and, judging from the performance of our joint forces in recent conflicts, is very effective.

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

I consider the most significant value of these reforms to be the focus on joint operations. A central tenant of these defense reforms is to promote forces working jointly in combat operations. Current joint efforts in Afghanistan and Iraq validate the success of these reforms.

**The goals of the Congress in enacting the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 and the Special Operations reforms 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.**

**Do you agree with these goals?**

Yes.

**Do you anticipate 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 unaware of any specific proposals to amend Goldwater Nichols. If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary of the Navy on any proposed changes that pertain to naval installations, environmental or safety concerns.

### **Duties**

**What is your understanding of the duties and functions of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Installations and Environment?**

The role of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Installations and Environment is to formulate policy and procedures for the effective management of Navy and Marine Corps real property, housing, and other facilities; environmental protection ashore and afloat; and occupational health for both military and civilian personnel; and timely completion of closures and realignments of installations under base closure laws. If confirmed, I will be responsible for these duties within the overall priorities of the Secretary of the Navy and pursue any other duties he may assign.

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

As a career naval officer, I bring a significant depth of understanding and appreciation of the naval culture and heritage to the position. Serving as both the commanding officer of an aviation squadron as well as the commanding officer of a major naval air station, I understand how installations and facilities serve fleet readiness needs. I understand the value safety plays as a critical enabler of that readiness. My time in the civilian sector both inside and outside of government gives me a unique perspective from which to view current Navy and Marine Corps programs. My acquisition experience and joint program experience will undoubtedly assist me in working with other Service contemporaries in developing effective joint initiatives.

**Do you believe that there are actions you need to take to enhance your ability to perform the duties of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Installations and Environment?**

If confirmed, I plan to seek and listen to the concerns and needs of the Navy and Marine Corps, as well as those who would appear to have alternative views. I have found that successful leaders devise practicable solutions that maximize successful outcomes for all parties.

**Assuming you are confirmed, what duties and functions do you expect that the Secretary of the Navy would prescribe for you?**

I am not aware of any additional duties at this time beyond those outlined above that have traditionally been the province of this position.

### **Relationships**

**In carrying out your duties, how will you work with the following?**

#### **The Secretary of the Navy**

If confirmed, I will seek to carry out the goals and priorities of the Secretary of the Navy.

#### **The Under Secretary of the Navy**

If confirmed, I will seek the counsel and guidance of the Under Secretary of the Navy and support his efforts to carry out the goals and priorities of the Secretary of the Navy.

#### **The Chief of Naval Operations**

If confirmed, I will provide the support that the CNO requires to execute his duties and responsibilities and achieve the mission of the Navy.

#### **The Commandant of the Marine Corps**

If confirmed I will provide the support that the Commandant requires to execute his duties and responsibilities and achieve the mission of the Marine Corps.

#### **The Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Installations and Environment**

If confirmed, I will work with the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Installations and Environment to develop and execute policies and initiatives of the President, The Secretary of Defense, and the Secretary of the Navy.

#### **The other Assistant Secretaries of the Navy**

If confirmed, I will work as part of a team to ensure that we present the best efforts to support the Secretary of the Navy's goals and priorities.

#### **The Assistant Secretaries of the Army and Air Force for Installations and Environment**

If confirmed, I will work closely with the Assistant Secretaries of the Army and Air Force for Installations and Environment to strengthen the cooperation between the Services. I will work to foster a cordial and productive working relationship with these colleagues.

### **The General Counsel of the Navy**

If confirmed, I will work closely with the General Counsel of the Navy on areas of mutual interest.

### **The Judge Advocate General of the Navy**

If confirmed, I will work closely with the Judge Advocate General of the Navy on areas of mutual interest.

### **The Commander, Naval Facilities Engineering Command**

If confirmed, I will work with the Commander, Naval Facilities Engineering Command to identify and implement policies and practices that best support the needs of the Department of the Navy.

### **The Commander, Navy Installations**

If confirmed, I will work with the Commander, Navy Installations to identify and implement policies and practices that best support the needs of the Department of the Navy.

### **Major Challenges and Problems**

**In your view, what are the major challenges that you would confront if confirmed as Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Installations and Environment?**

One major challenge will certainly be implementing the Base Realignment and Closure 2005 recommendations in a timely and fiscally responsible manner that benefits the Navy while working with environmental regulators and local communities to expedite environmental cleanup and disposal of the property. Another challenge will be to continue the Department's environmental stewardship that will ensure future access to the seas and land areas requirements to maintain military readiness needs. A third will be to foster greater awareness for safety while seeking to avoid personal injuries and property damage while maintaining fleet readiness.

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

If confirmed, I plan to work closely with Congress, the Secretary of the Navy, the Chief of Naval Operations, the Commandant of the Marine Corps, the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Installations and Environment), as well as other governmental and non-governmental organizations where appropriate.

**What do you consider to be the most serious problems in the performance of the functions of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Installations and Environment?**

I am unaware of any serious problems in the performance of the functions of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Installations and Environment.

**If confirmed, what management actions and time lines would you establish to address these problems?**

If confirmed, I will work closely with the Secretary of the Navy to evaluate the present situation and develop a strategic plan to address areas requiring attention.

**Priorities**

**What broad priorities would you establish, if confirmed, in terms of issues which must be addressed by the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Installations and Environment?**

If confirmed, I will establish priorities consistent with those of the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of the Navy.

**Housing and Barracks Privatization**

**Congress has repeatedly expressed its support for improving military family and unaccompanied housing through a variety of methods. One option that has frequently been used to accelerate the improvement of family housing is for a military service to enter into an agreement with a private entity for the improvement, maintenance, and management of family housing inventories at military installations. To date this alternate method for the acquisition and improvement of family housing has produced very encouraging results, but no projects to privatize unaccompanied housing have been accomplished. If confirmed for the position of Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Installations and Environment you would have a key role in any decisions regarding military family and unaccompanied housing.**

**What are your views regarding the privatization of military housing?**

As a career naval officer, I am well aware of the importance of military housing to the morale and welfare of Sailors, Marines, and their families. The ability to leverage government resources through partnership with the private sector helps the Navy and Marine Corps to obtain better housing faster.

**What is your view of the structure, pace, and general goals of the Navy's current housing privatization program? Do you think the program should be**

**continued, and if so do you believe the program should be modified in any way?**

I am generally aware of the Navy and Marine Corps housing privatization programs and schedules. If confirmed, I will seek to ensure the continued success of this effort.

**The Department of Defense has established 2008 as a goal to improve the standards of military family housing.**

**Do you believe this goal is realistic and achievable for the Department of the Navy?**

I understand that both the Navy and Marine Corps have budgeted programs to eliminate inadequate homes. If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary of the Navy, the Chief of Naval Operations, and the Commandant of the Marine Corps to attain this goal.

**What are your views regarding the feasibility of privatizing unaccompanied housing?**

I believe the core benefits of privatization, i.e., use of private sector capital to acquire new units or rehabilitate existing ones and use of seasoned property management corporations to operate and maintain homes, has the potential to greatly benefit housing for unaccompanied military members just as it has done for military family housing.

**What do you believe must be done to make the privatization of unaccompanied housing a viable program?**

If confirmed, I will pursue implementation of the demonstration projects authorized by the Congress to validate this innovative concept.

### **Bachelor Enlisted Quarters**

**In recent years the Department of Defense has pursued the so-called "1+1" standard for unaccompanied housing. While building to this standard increases costs, many believe the greater privacy the "1+1" standard offers our enlisted personnel is important to recruiting and retaining quality personnel. Others argue that the "1+1" standard could reduce unit cohesion and slow the integration of new personnel into the military culture. The Marine Corps, and more recently the Navy, have sought and received waivers to build to a "2+0" standard that affords less privacy but allows them to build new unaccompanied housing faster.**

**What is your view of the "1+1" standard?**

I recognize that the "1 + 1" standard represents an effort to improve living conditions and privacy for enlisted personnel. If confirmed, I will work with the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense Installations and Environment, the Chief of Naval Operations, the

Commandant of the Marine Corps, and my counterparts in the Army and Air Force to ensure that we have the flexibility to apply the best solution, including the option to build to private sector standards, to further improve living conditions.

**Do you believe the Navy and Marine Corps should build to the same standards as the Army and the Air Force or continue their recent waivers of the "1+1" standard?**

I have not yet been fully briefed on the waivers to the 1+1 standard. If confirmed, I will work to ensure Sailors and Marines have a quality place to live and that we establish adequate housing in a timely manner.

**The Navy recently embarked on an investment program to construct unaccompanied housing for sailors currently living aboard ships while docked in homeports.**

**What goals and priorities has the Navy established for this program? Do you believe the goals are realistic?**

I understand that the Navy has established the goal to budget by FY-2008 housing ashore for unaccompanied sailors currently living aboard ships while the ship is in homeport. As a career naval officer, I applaud this initiative. If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary of the Navy and the Chief of Naval Operations to bring this goal to reality.

**Do opportunities exist for the Navy to use the unaccompanied housing privatization program to provide sailors adequate barracks while in homeport?**

I understand that the Navy has a solicitation underway for proposals from developers to provide privatized unaccompanied housing for Sailors in San Diego, California, including those currently living aboard ship. It is also seeking approval from the Administration to proceed with a second project in Hampton Roads, Virginia. If confirmed, I will work to bring these demonstration projects to fruition.

### **Base Realignment and Closure**

**The Department of Defense is currently authorized to conduct one round of Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) in 2005.**

**What changes to the Navy's locations around the world do you foresee as a result of the Department of Defense's global basing strategy review and what impact will these changes have on base realignment and closure decisions?**

I have not participated in the Navy's BRAC analytical process and thus I am not in a position to offer an opinion as to what impact DOD's global basing strategy review will have on the Navy's base realignment and closure decisions. If confirmed, I will look into this question and advise the Secretary of the Navy accordingly.

**The Secretary of Defense has stated that “through base realignment and closure we will reconfigure our current infrastructure into one in which operational capacity maximizes both war-fighting capability and efficiency.”**

**If confirmed for the position of Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Installations and Environment, what role will you have in making recommendations to the Secretary of the Navy regarding the realignment and/or closure of Navy installations?**

I have not discussed with the Secretary of the Navy what role I will play in the BRAC 2005 process. If confirmed, I will provide whatever support the Secretary requires to prepare the Department’s recommendations for closure and/or realignment of Navy and Marine Corps installations.

**The DOD installation closure process resulting from BRAC decisions has historically included close cooperation with the affected local community in order to allow these communities an active and decisive role in the reuse of property.**

**Do you support the current BRAC property disposal process and specifically the role of local communities in that process?**

Yes. I have reviewed the base closure law and find that it sets forth a clearly defined role for local communities to prepare a redevelopment plan for the property. It would seem to provide sufficient flexibility for the military department to use a variety of property disposal methods based upon individual circumstances.

### **Investment in Infrastructure**

**Witnesses appearing before the Committee in recent years have testified that the military services under-invest in both the maintenance and recapitalization of facilities and infrastructure compared to private industry standards. Decades of under-investment in our installations have led to substantial backlogs of facility maintenance activities, created substandard living and working conditions, and made it harder to take advantage of new technologies that could increase productivity.**

**If confirmed, what recommendations would you propose to restore and preserve the quality of our infrastructure?**

Earlier in my career I was fortunate to serve in the Navy as a pilot in A-3 squadron, the commanding officer of a VAQ squadron, and the commanding officer of Naval Air Station North Island, CA. If confirmed, I believe I would bring to the position a unique blend of experience in how high quality infrastructure can best serve our warfighters and their families.

## **Encroachment Problems**

**How should the Navy and Marine Corps address encroachment problems associated with increased population growth and development near Navy and Marine Corps installations and ranges?**

I believe we need to work closely with local communities as they develop land use management plans and zoning restrictions. We need to explain how local land use planning can affect our ability to meet military training and readiness needs.

**What are the biggest challenges to military readiness caused by population encroachment?**

The number of bases and ranges we use for training and readiness is unlikely to increase substantially, so it is critical that we maximize effective use of existing facilities. Being qualified to fly numerous different military and civilian aircraft, I recognize the competing needs for air space and the pressures brought by residential and commercial development next to our bases, ranges, and below military flight paths. Population encroachment can also destroy habitat, driving wildlife, including endangered species, onto military bases, thereby increasing stewardship responsibilities and potentially affecting military missions performed on the base.

**To what extent should the Navy and Marine Corps turn to military buffers and easements to reduce population encroachment?**

Buffers and restrictive use easements around military bases and ranges can be effective tools and we should look for opportunities to use those tools where prudent. Buffers and easements alone, however, will not solve the problem. We need to work with state legislatures and local governments to ensure that land use plans consider military training requirements and seek to avoid future encroachment issues.

## **Sustainable Range Management Plan**

**The Department of Defense is developing a sustainable range management plan (SRMP) which helps develop a current and future inventory of range requirements and a plan to ensure such requirements can be maintained in the future.**

**Please describe how the Navy and Marine Corps are involved in developing the Department's SRMP and specifically how the SRMP will help maintain testing and training capabilities at Navy and Marine Corps ranges.**

As a former Naval aviator, I understand the vital role that our ranges serve to train our forces and test our platforms and weapons. I also understand that both the Navy and Marine Corps have range sustainability programs to develop site-specific range sustainment plans, analyses of mission capabilities, and assessments to determine if

contaminants from training activities will adversely affect human health and the environment. The range management plans will include actions to apply best range management. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that management plans are implemented to ensure the long-term viability of our ranges.

### **Unexploded Ordnance Cleanup**

**What is the status of the Department of the Navy's cleanup of unexploded ordnance at former Navy and Marine Corps ranges?**

While I do not know the status of programs to clean our closed ranges, I do know that we have a legal responsibility to do so and that both the Navy and Marine Corps have efforts underway for range cleanup. I plan to learn more about these programs if confirmed and ensure that the Department's cleanup obligations are fulfilled.

### **Competitive Sourcing**

**Over the past several years, DOD has increased its reliance on the private sector to perform activities that are commercial in nature, including many functions relating to running and maintaining our military installations.**

**What approach would you take, if confirmed, to balance the need to maintain necessary decision making functions and technical capabilities in the government's civilian workforce, including the knowledge necessary to be a "smart buyer," and skills such as civil engineering within the military, with the savings that may be available from outsourcing?**

I am aware that the Department has a process to evaluate functions to determine whether they are potential candidates for outsourcing, however I am unfamiliar with the details of that process. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that the Department obtains the optimum balance of private sector and in-house capability to best support the operations and maintenance of our military installations. I believe that the Department must maintain an objective and transparent process for establishing potential candidates for outsourcing.

**Do you support the principle of public-private competitions as the preferred means to make the "sourcing" decision for such function?**

If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary of the Navy and the Department of the Navy staff to evaluate the issue of public-private competition and whether it should be the preferred means to make the "sourcing" decision for such function. I support the underlying principle of competition to make sourcing decisions for functions that are commercial in nature. Competition requires all parties to be innovative and cost effective in the delivery of a product or service.

**Do you believe that public-private competition results in significant savings to the Department of Defense regardless of which side wins the competition?**

I am aware of data gathered from the Department's official tracking system that demonstrates an average 36% savings from the original cost to perform the competed effort, regardless of which side wins the competition. I also understand that the government workforce has won the preponderance of public/private competitions the Department has conducted.

### **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.**

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

Yes.

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

As a political appointee, I consider it my duty to be an advocate for the policies of the Administration. However, I will always be prepared to provide my best professional judgment when asked.

**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 the Navy for Installations and Environment?**

Yes.

**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.