

**Advance Policy Questions for Dennis M. McCarthy**  
**Nominee for Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs**

**Defense Reforms**

The Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 and the Special Operations reforms have strengthened the warfighting readiness of our Armed Forces. They have enhanced civilian control and clearly delineated the operational chain of command and the responsibilities and authorities of the combatant commanders, and the role of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. They have also clarified the responsibility of the Military Departments to recruit, organize, train, equip, and maintain forces for assignment to the combatant commanders.

**Do you see the need for modifications of any Goldwater-Nichols Act provisions?**

Yes. I believe the Act can be made even more valuable.

**If so, what areas do you believe might be appropriate to address in these modifications?**

Expand application of the Act to more Reserve Component personnel, and ensure that educational opportunities are available to enable RC personnel to meet applicable requirements.

**Duties**

**Section 138 of title 10, United States Code, provides that the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs shall have “as his principal duty the overall supervision of reserve component affairs of the Department of the Department of Defense.”**

**If confirmed, what duties do you expect that the Secretary of Defense will prescribe for you?**

(1) Travel widely to meet with Citizen Warriors, their families and employers to ensure I can provide an accurate assessment of the state of this important triad. (2) Be an advocate for the effective use and long-term sustainment of the Reserve Components. (3) Meet with combatant commanders and other gaining force commanders to ensure I understand their views of the effectiveness of reserve component policy and funding to meet their requirements.

**What background and experience do you have that you believe qualifies you for this position?**

41 years total Marine Corps service; command and staff assignments in both active and reserve units; service as a traditional reservist, balancing employment, family and military demands; service as a Reserve Component chief; service as the Marine Component commander of U. S. Northern Command; service on the Reserve Forces Policy Board; leadership of the Reserve Officers Association of the United States; a wealth of friendships and relationships with people both in and out of uniform who are interested in the success of the National Guard and Reserves.

**What actions will you take to enhance your ability to perform the duties of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs?**

(1) Ensure that I understand the intent of the Secretary of Defense; (2) keep the Deputy Secretary of Defense and the Undersecretary for Personnel and Readiness fully informed in whatever ways they require; (3) maintain close personal contact with both military and civilian stakeholders to keep up my situational awareness of the status and capabilities of the reserve components; (4) make every effort to ensure that the OSD (RA) team understands my intent and is empowered to take appropriate action.

**In carrying out these duties, what would be your relationship with the following officials:**

- **The Secretary of Defense**  
Since this position reports directly to the USD P&R, my relationship would be through the USD to the SECDEF. I'm sure there will be "other duties as assigned" and I will carry them out to the best of my ability.
- **The Deputy Secretary of Defense**  
The same will hold true for Deputy Secretary Lynn.
- **The Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness**  
I intend to work within whatever framework is established by the Under Secretary. I will encourage a transparent information flow both in and out.
- **The Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness**  
I intend to have a collegial relationship with the PDUSD and support his/her efforts to support the USD, even though this position is not in the reporting chain
- **The Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and Americas' Security Affairs**  
A key partner. Developing a collaborative relationship with Assistant Secretary Stockton will be an immediate priority if I am confirmed.
- **The General Counsel of the Department of Defense**

I intend to seek his advice, concurrence and counsel on matters that fall under the purview of that office.

- **The combatant commanders, particularly the Commander U.S. Northern Command**

I view them as “customers” whose principal interest regarding the reserve component is having capable RC forces when and where they are needed. I would seek to leverage my prior service with both U. S. Northern Command and U. S. Joint Forces Command to meet their needs.

- **The Assistant Secretaries in the military departments responsible for reserve matters**

As I understand it, the office has an open communication with the Assistant Secretaries at all levels. I would certainly continue to encourage that.

- **The Chief of the National Guard Bureau**

A key partner. OSD (RA) must provide service that enhances his ability to provide forces as required, and to sustain those forces. It is essential that I understand his needs and that I effectively communicate the Secretary of Defense’s intent to him.

- **The Chiefs of Reserves of each of the Services**

Same as Chief NGB.

- **The Assistants to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff for Guard and Reserve Matters**

Achieve an open and transparent relationship in order to leverage their insights into the Chairman’s thinking and the status of Joint Staff initiatives.

- **The Reserve Forces Policy Board**

Achieve a collaborative relationship that reinforces the Board’s ability to fulfill its role as an independent information resource for the Secretary on matters and issues assigned by him to the Board.

## **Major Challenges**

### **In your view, what are the major challenges confronting the next Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs?**

I believe that our country is in an era of persistent conflict that requires our military forces to fulfill a broad range of missions. Success in this struggle will continue to require the contributions of Reserve Component forces, which provide operational capabilities and strategic depth to meet U.S. defense requirements across the full

spectrum of conflict. A key challenge, from my perspective, is to sustain the Reserve Component as an integral part of the all-volunteer Total Force.

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

If confirmed, I intend to work with all interested and affected parties in working toward successful solutions. I anticipate focusing on maintaining a balance for service members among military service, families and employers. I expect to emphasize the continuum of service as a means to sustain the all-volunteer force with flexible service options that are attractive to a broad population. It is my perspective that the implementation of the Department's utilization rules that govern the frequency and duration of activations provides predictability for service members and effectively manage the expectations of our service members, their families and employers.

**What do you consider to be the most serious problems in the performance of the functions of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs?**

If confirmed, I would have to take the time to ascertain what if any problems there are. It would be presumptuous of me to make a judgment one way or the other. My predecessor, Tom Hall, is a great leader and probably left me an outstanding organization. It is, however, safe to say that effective communication up and down the chain of command is an on-going challenge for every organization. If confirmed, I will work hard on that issue.

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

I won't know until I get my marching orders from the Secretary, the Deputy and the Undersecretary, and until I've had some time to meet the people in OSD (RA.)

**Recruiting and Retention**

**Some have expressed concern that use of the Reserve Component as an operational force and the current mobilization of Reserve Component members for lengthy deployments will have an adverse effect on recruiting and retention in the Reserve Components.**

**If confirmed, what actions will you take to enhance recruiting and retention of experienced members of the Reserve Components?**

All of the recent figures I have seen indicate that overall recruiting and retention goals are being met. OSD (RA) should support effective implementation of currently successful efforts that enhance recruiting and promote retention. Supporting families and enhancing partnerships with employers are two of the most effective, albeit indirect, ways to influence retention because they can reduce home and job stress.

**Historically, the Reserve Components have successfully recruited prior service personnel as they leave active duty. With the increased retention of active duty forces, the pool of prior service personnel available to the Reserve Components is shrinking. Additionally, service members who have been deployed multiple times may be less interested in continuing service in the Reserve Components because of the potential for mobilization and additional deployment.**

**If confirmed, what actions will you take to assist the recruiting efforts of the Reserve Components?**

Primarily, I will listen to the Reserve Chiefs and their leaders to ensure I understand what they need to succeed in these areas. I also believe that OSD (RA) can be a “think-tank” for new ideas and approaches. For example, changes in the over-all mix of prior service and non-prior service personnel may indicate that new programs are required to provide NCOs, warrant officers and company grade officers in some components. OSD (RA) should support service experimentation efforts to address new challenges that emerge in this era of persistent conflict.

### **Medical Personnel Recruiting and Retention**

**Much of the medical infrastructure for the Department of Defense is in the Reserve Components. DOD has significant shortages in critically needed medical personnel in both the active and reserve components. The Committee is concerned that growing medical support requirements will compound the already serious challenges faced in recruitment and retention of medical, dental, nurse, and behavioral health personnel.**

**If confirmed, will you undertake a comprehensive review of the medical support requirements in the Reserve Components and the sufficiency of plans to meet recruiting and retention goals in these specialties?**

I will continue to support the joint, collaborative effort, known as the Medical Recruiting and Retention Working Group, co-led by Personnel and Readiness leaders from Reserve Affairs, Military Personnel Policy and Health Affairs. Their charter is to review and evaluate total force (active and reserve) health professions personnel recruitment and retention policies, programs and procedures with an eye toward optimizing tri-service, multi-component cooperation in meeting recruiting and retention requirements.

**What legislative and policy initiatives, including greater involvement personnel in recruiting and enhanced bonuses and special pays, do you think may be necessary to ensure that the Reserve Components can continue to meet medical support requirements?**

FY2008 NDAA included the consolidation of special and incentive pay authorities. The consolidation provides the Department with the increased flexibilities needed to better target

recruiting and retention dollars to specific skills, and enables the Department to more effectively and efficiently manage our personnel. At OSD (RA) they have begun the adaptive planning process for transitioning the bonuses and special pays that meet all the Reserve components' health professions long-term recruiting and retention needs.

### **Use of Guard and Reserves**

**Today's total force concept relies heavily on National Guard and Reserve forces for both day-to-day and contingency operations. The role of the reserves is so integral in the total force that military operations involving major, extended missions are required to include reserve participation. Members of the National Guard and Reserve forces are performing more and more duties that have been traditionally performed by active duty forces. The Commission on the National Guard and Reserves concluded that "for the foreseeable future, there is no reasonable alternative to the nation's continuing increased reliance on its reserve components for missions at home and abroad, as part of an operational force."**

**In your view, is such extensive use of National Guard and Reserve personnel for duties that have historically been performed by members of the active components the best use of reserve component personnel?**

Yes. My experience tells me that the vast majority of reserve component personnel will rise to meet any challenge, if they are provided the resources to succeed in the field and the supportive services to care for their families and provide employment security. Every member of the National Guard and Reserve serving today has made a conscious decision to do so, knowing full well the demands their service would entail.

**If confirmed, what actions will you take to enhance the support of civilian employers of members of the Guard and Reserves?**

- (1) Expand the Army Reserve's current employer partnership initiative to a joint service program; (2) support the National Committee for Employer Support of Guard and Reserves (ESGR) and Defense Advisory Board for Employer Support (DAB) in expanding their efforts to make themselves more relevant and responsive to both employers and employees; (3) use all means available to gauge the level of satisfaction and support for the operational reserve by private and public sector employers; (4) maintain close liaison with the Dept of Labor on issues pertaining to the Uniform Servicemembers Employment and Re-employment Rights Act (USERRA) and the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA); (5) review existing policies and programs in the areas of healthcare, family support and veterans assistance to streamline the transition of RC members between periods of military

service and employment; (6) strive to act as a channel of communications between DOD and employers regarding reserve component employment issues.

### **Homeland Defense and Homeland Security**

**What do you see as the appropriate role of the National Guard and Reserves in homeland defense and homeland security?**

I believe that Homeland Defense and Homeland Security is a Total Force responsibility. However, experience has shown that the nation needs to focus on better use of the extensive competencies and capabilities of the National Guard and Reserves in support of priority missions. If confirmed, I will update my understanding of the roles, missions and capabilities of the National Guard and the Reserves and will work to ensure that they have the equipment, training, and personnel to accomplish their missions, both at home and abroad. As stated earlier, I intend to work collaboratively with the Assistant Secretary for Homeland Defense and to support the Commander, U. S. Northern Command as directed by the Secretary of Defense.

### **Mobilization and Demobilization of National Guard and Reserves**

**In the aftermath of the attacks of September 11, 2001, the National Guard and Reserves have experienced their largest and most sustained employment since World War II. Numerous problems arose in the planning and procedures for mobilization and demobilization, e.g., inadequate health screening and medical readiness monitoring errors caused by antiquated pay systems, limited transition assistance programs upon demobilization, and lack of access to members of the Individual Ready Reserve. Reserve force management policies and systems have been characterized as “inefficient and rigid” and readiness levels have been adversely affected by equipment stay-behind, cross-leveling, and reset policies.**

**What is your assessment of advances made in improving reserve component mobilization and demobilization procedures, and in what areas do problems still exist?**

It is my understanding that advances have been made in increasing the alert and notification times prior to mobilization. This provides predictability to service members, their families and employers. Additionally, this allows the units identified for mobilization to receive increased funding for training and readiness. Service members receive Tricare medical benefits in advance of mobilization, increasing their fitness for duty and reducing the time to mobilize. The standardization of procedures at home station allows the mobilization station to certify deployment readiness. Pay systems and duty statuses still suffer from antiquated divisions between Active and Reserve Components and need improvement.

**What do you consider to be the most significant enduring changes to the administration of the reserve components aimed at ensuring their readiness for future mobilization requirements?**

It is my understanding that one of the most significant enduring changes is the implementation of Service force generation plans that enables units to train and deploy on a more predictable time line.

**Do you see a need to modify current statutory authorities for the mobilization of members of the National Guard and Reserves?**

I am not currently aware of any need for changes in these authorities. If confirmed, I intend to study this issue.

**Do you agree that National Guard and Reserve personnel should be mobilized to augment civilians deployed to Afghanistan?**

The Department currently has Reserve Component members deployed in Provincial Reconstruction Teams and Army National Guard volunteers in Agriculture Development Teams. It is my understanding that the Department of State and USAID have had contact with DoD in their efforts to fill requirements in Afghanistan. Should they require Department of Defense capacity, I have been told that the Secretary has directed the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness to identify civilian employees capable of deploying to Afghanistan in support of U.S. Government initiatives; and should available DoD civilian employees not meet immediate needs, we will work to identify members of the Reserve Components available for voluntary deployment, on military orders and in uniform, to fill the requirement.

**Do you believe that reserve personnel should be subject to involuntary call to active duty to respond to national or man-made disasters and other emergencies?**

Homeland Defense and Defense Support to Civil Authorities (DSCA) are Total Force missions. I believe a change to the law would have to occur to allow this. If I am confirmed I will look into all the ramifications involved.

**Lessons Learned**

**What do you believe are the major personnel lessons learned from Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) which you would seek to address if confirmed?**

(1) The advisability of adopting a “train-mobilize-deploy” strategy that increases the flexibility of reserve component forces, but puts greater emphasis on pre-mobilization readiness in all areas; (2) the importance of maintaining unit integrity wherever possible to permit reserve component units to mobilize, deploy and return as whole units with their own leaders; (3) the critical importance of permitting units to maintain their unit integrity and resume normal

activities (including training) as soon as possible after returning from combat; (4) the critical importance of fielding modern equipment to units to train with before mobilization. The services must find ways to “horizontally field” some amount of the most modern equipment to reserve component units for training prior to mobilization. A “train-mobilize-deploy” force cannot see modern equipment for the first time after mobilization.

## **Operational and Personnel Tempo**

**Current Department of Defense policy is that Reserve component members should have five years of dwell time for each year they are mobilized.**

**What is your view of the achievability of this goal? What measures must be taken to be able to achieve it in five years or less?**

I believe the 1 to 5 dwell time ratio is achievable and progress is being made toward that goal. We must ensure that continuing efforts to rebalance Active and Reserve Component units in High Demand / Low Supply capabilities are completed and set the conditions to comply with the Department’s one-year involuntary mobilization policy.

**In your view, how will shifting resources from Iraq to Afghanistan affect dwell-time ratios?**

I am not currently knowledgeable about specifics on this shift. My goal would be to continue policies that support the attainment of the 1 to 5 dwell goal for all Reserve Components.

**How will the end of the use of stop-loss affect dwell time ratios?**

I do not expect the end of stop loss to have an effect on dwell time ratios due to the small number of service members affected.

**What measures are being taken to respond to operational requirements for low density, high demand units and personnel whose skills are found primarily in the Reserve components, e.g., civil affairs, medical personnel, and truck drivers?**

I am told the services are expanding capacity in selected areas, continuing to rebalance the AC/RC mix where appropriate, and using joint solutions.

**In your judgment, what would be the impact on the current rates of operations and personnel tempo of assigning principal responsibility for support to civil authorities for consequence management of natural, domestic disasters to reserve component forces?**

I am not sufficiently well informed to express a judgment. However, I believe that we need to guard against “double – counting” units. Given the current operations tempo, a unit assigned principal responsibility for support to civil authorities could not be expected to respond to an overseas deployment mission within the same time-lines as a unit not so assigned.

### **Stress on Families**

**National Guard and Reserve families have been under great stress since 2001 as a result of multiple and lengthy deployments in OIF and OEF.**

**In your view, what are the key indicators of the stress on Reserve Component families at this time?**

Our Reserve Component families do have stress...this a part of life and certainly part of military service. More than ever before we are working to understand and manage these stresses. There are particular indicators of stress on our Reservist families that we must stay aware of and among others these include:

- 1) Readiness---how prepared are families to support their military member’s service?
- 2) Satisfaction...how satisfied is the family with being part of their particular service?
- 3) Stress...What is their reported level of stress?
- 4) Retention...What is the family’s attitude toward their member staying in the service?

\*These key indicators of the stress on our families and how they are coping are monitored every 6 months by excellent surveys by the Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC).

**If confirmed, what will you do to address these key indicators?**

OSD (RA) should emphasize two key essentials of support for our families:

1. Reasonable and predictable deployments and dwell time ratios
2. Effective means to deliver support information and resources

Additionally, enhancing employer-employee partnerships will mitigate a key source of stress – concern about employment security.

**What do you consider to be the most important family readiness issues in the National Guard and Reserves?**

(1) Providing as much predictability as possible; (2) effectively communication between the unit and all family members; (3) effectively educating family members about their benefits and about the predictable consequences of military service; (4) providing supportive services; (5) providing employment security; (6) ensuring that the Nation realizes that families are essential to military success.

**If confirmed, how would you ensure support for reserve component families, particularly those who do not reside near an active-duty military installation, related to mobilization, deployment, and family readiness?**

(1) Ensure I understand the RC Chiefs' requirements and support them as much as I can; (2) continue to support Military One Source; (3) continue to support the Yellow Ribbon program; (4) get as much personal feed-back as possible from reserve component families to enable me to assess the effectiveness of existing programs, and consider new ones.

**If confirmed, what additional steps would you take to ensure that family readiness needs, including child care, are addressed and adequately resourced?**

This is another area where we must not become "installation minded." Rather, we must continually reach out to community partners such as the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. Other resources are well developed and developing by the Department of Veterans Affairs and the State Directors of Veterans Affairs, as well as the governors and the resources they provide to their citizens.

I also believe we need to increasingly emphasize the one-stop approach to resources that has developed through Military OneSource. This clearinghouse of information and resources needs to become a household name to all reserve families. We will continue to increasingly encourage its use by reserve families in order to link them to the broad array of support services in the areas where they are located. And we must identify where there are service gaps in communities and build community capacity.

### **Stop-Loss**

**How will the Department of Defense implement the Secretary of Defense's recent direction to end the use of stop-loss without eroding unit manning and unit cohesion?**

I expect the Department to maintain our unit manning and unit cohesion through our existing assignment procedures and increasing use of incentive pay to stabilize units prior to deployment.

The U.S. Army is the only remaining component that utilizes Stop-Loss to meet manning shortfalls. In order to implement the Secretary of Defense's guidance to end the use of Stop-loss, U.S. Army has set deadlines for the termination of the program. Active Army units deploying on or after 1 January, 2010 will not be subject to stop-loss policies. Army Reserve units deploying on or after 1 August, 2009 and Army National Guard units deploying on or after 1 September, 2009 will not be subject to Stop-Loss policies.

Incentive programs such as Deployment Extension Incentive Pay (DEIP) for Soldiers assigned to deploying units that do not have sufficient obligated service remaining will be used to meet manning requirements.

**What is your understanding of the risk the Army must absorb to end reliance on stop-loss, and what criteria would you apply in creating financial incentives for soldiers to extend on active duty for deployments?**

I believe the Army can manage without Stop Loss through the use of incentives and other personnel management policies.

### **Individual Ready Reserve**

**The Department of Defense established a policy in 2005 mandating the discharge of officers in the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) who are beyond their military service obligations (MSO) unless the officer positively elects to remain in the IRR. Meanwhile, the Commission on the National Guard and Reserves has found that accessing the IRR as a viable source of manpower for the war has been problematic and that using the IRR as a solution for unit manning is a failed concept.**

**What are your views on the proper role of the IRR in force management planning?**

The IRR provides the military services with depth in force management planning in both operational and strategic roles. This pool of pre-trained individuals can, if actively managed, significantly enhance a Service's flexibility to surge as force requirements dictate.

**If confirmed, what changes, if any, do you foresee making to the IRR recall policy?**

IRR recall policy is a Service option, utilized as manpower requirements necessitate. I am not presently aware of a need for Department of Defense (DoD) to significantly affect the Services IRR recall policy or process.

**What are your views about policies affecting continued service by officer and enlisted personnel in the reserve components who have fulfilled their MSO?**

The established DoD policy is a necessary force management tool. Officers and enlisted who have fulfilled their MSO should be evaluated by their respective Services for mobilization potential. Officers shall be advised to resign, request transfer to the Standby Reserve, or actively participate in the Reserves. Enlisted shall also be required to participate or be denied reenlistment. Leveraged technology and enhanced training opportunities will improve readiness for those who remain active participants.

**What is your assessment of the adequacy of the system in place for members in the IRR receiving orders to active duty to request a delay or exemption for that activation, including the procedures in place for appealing the decision on that request?**

My understanding is the current system of delay/exemption has worked well. I do not anticipate making significant changes unless circumstances dramatically change.

Army IRR mobilizations were capped at 6500 in January 2004. Marine Corps IRR mobilizations were capped at 2500 in August 2006. No more than 6500 soldiers or 2500 Marines can be on orders at any one time.

**What is your assessment of the value of the IRR to the All Volunteer Force?**

The IRR is fundamental to the All Volunteer Force and an important manpower asset. The nation needs a strategic, as well as an operational, reserve. The IRR provides the primary source of pre-trained individual manpower for the strategic reserve.

### **Medical and Dental Readiness of National Guard and Reserve Personnel**

**Medical and dental readiness of reserve component personnel has been an issue of significant concern to the Committee, and shortfalls that have been identified have indicated a need for improved policy oversight and accountability.**

**If confirmed, how would you seek to clarify and coordinate reporting on the medical and dental readiness of the reserves?**

I would review the medical and dental readiness programs across the Services, to include command emphasis that is a cornerstone for success. Success of medical and dental readiness is based on three factors 1) accurate reporting of readiness statistics and 2) fixing minor medical and dental problems and 3) command emphasis to ensure timely evaluation of members. An electronic readiness record for the Reserve Component is vital to this process and linkages must be made with the Active Component systems for efficiency and continuity. Additionally, incentives should be in place to motivate members to maintain readiness, a challenge that cannot be accomplished without a commitment from the Services' leadership. To succeed in improving medical and dental readiness reporting, policies must include standardized reporting capabilities with emphasis placed on command accountability for unit readiness.

**How would you improve upon the ability to produce a healthy and fit reserve component?**

Recognizing the value of preventative health practices and providing individuals access and incentives to participate in such practices are the cornerstones for a healthy and fit reserve component. Encouraging members to maintain optimal health, implementing policies that

enable them to do so, and authorizing leadership to provide the means to enforce such policies is critical to a lifetime of fitness for our operational reserve forces.

### **Health Care for Reservists**

**Members of the Reserve and National Guard who are ordered to active duty for more than 30 days are eligible for the same health care and dental benefits under TRICARE as other active duty service members.**

#### **What are your views on the adequacy of reserve health care?**

Great strides have been made towards the improvement of health care across the reserve components. TRICARE Reserve Select is now available to the Selected Reserve and their families, the exception being those members who are eligible for the Federal Employee Health Benefits Plan (FEHBP). This, however, has not resolved all of the health problems our reserve and guard members face during their continuum of service. There are gaps in care for those members who have service-connected illness or injuries that are not diagnosed until their TRICARE eligibility has expired. There are also gaps in health care for Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) who are mobilized or volunteer for service. This group is not currently eligible for TRICARE plans other than dental when not on active duty orders, yet they are expected to maintain their medical and dental readiness in order to be eligible to participate.

#### **Do you have any suggestions for improving continuity of care for reserve members and their families?**

Since the inception of the Total Force and now an operational reserve, the fragmented health care system has impacted not only our members, but also their families. Many continuity of care gaps have been bridged through the expansion of TRS, but gaps still remain. Selected Reserve members and their families now have the option of a continuum of care through the TRICARE network as long as the member participates in the Selected Reserve. Members of the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) and their families do not have this option. We need to look at the feasibility of somehow filling this gap in coverage for the small group of IRR members who actively participate.

We must expedite in the development of an electronic health record to provide adequate care for our reserve component members. This record should follow the members from enlistment through retirement with a mechanism for transferring the information to the Veterans Administration for follow on care.

We must also look for ways to expand the number of health care providers who will accept TRICARE.

**TRICARE Reserve Select authorizes members of the Selected Reserve and their families to use TRICARE Standard military health care program at a subsidized rate when they are not on active duty.**

**What is your assessment of TRICARE Reserve Select?**

TRICARE Reserve Select, established in 2005, has been enhanced to provide nearly universal coverage to most members of the selected reserve. Yet studies have shown that the number of uninsured reservists has not significantly changed. Further, there is no evidence that the increase in health care coverage has improved medical readiness or had an effect on recruiting and retention. So far, very few reserve members have enrolled in TRS—less than 4 percent of those eligible.

At the beginning of January 2009, the monthly premiums for TRS were significantly reduced, dropping from \$81 to \$47.51 for single coverage and from \$253 to \$180.17 for family coverage. It remains to be seen whether this reduction in premiums will have a significant impact on the number of members electing to purchase TRS. However, I understand the enrollment in TRS continues to increase, so this change seems to be helping. We need to evaluate how to leverage this valuable program to improve the health and readiness status of our reserve component members. I believe we need to do a better job of educating leaders about TRS so they can better inform their troops.

**Will TRICARE Reserve Select enhance recruiting for the Reserve Components?**

What we have seen with TRICARE Reserve Select is that it has not been successfully used as either a recruiting or retention tool. I understand that the enrollment rate has been steadily increasing, especially since the premiums were reduced significantly in January. Rather than discount the value of TRS as a recruiting or retention tool, we need to re-evaluate TRS in the current economic light. With the high rates of unemployment and the increase in the number of uninsured in the general population, TRS may be regarded as a tangible incentive to a prospective recruit and may provide an affordable continuum of health for the member who might otherwise consider separating. We need to re-energize a communication plan to educate our members and potential members about the value of TRICARE Reserve Select for our members and their families. We should also explore the best ways to use TRS in connection with our efforts to collaborate more effectively with employers.

**National Guard Organization, Equipment, and Readiness**

**Legislative proposals introduced in recent years and recommendations of the Commission on the National Guard and Reserves have proposed numerous changes to the roles and responsibilities of the National Guard and Reserves. Several of the proposed changes have been implemented, and numerous others are under consideration.**

**How do you assess the changes in the roles, mission, and authorities of the Chief of the National Guard Bureau and the Army and Air National Guard?**

Positive. The 2008 Department of Defense directive codified the organization, management, responsibilities and function, relationships and authorities of the Chief, NGB. As this new relationship mature, I am sure this will enhance the effectiveness of the Department.

**In your view, do the current Army and Air Force processes for planning, programming, and budgeting sufficiently address the requirements of the Army and Air National Guard?**

I am not sufficiently well informed to answer this question.

**What is the appropriate role of the Chief of the National Guard Bureau in this regard?**

The role of the Chief, NGB is that of advisor to the Secretary of the Army and Secretary of the Air Force in addition to the combatant commanders. This should ensure that the Chief, NGB is well positioned to fully engage in the PPBS process to identify NGB and National Guard requirements.

### **Reserve Forces Policy Board**

**What is your view of the appropriate role, function, and membership of the Reserve Forces Policy Board?**

I believe the Secretary's recent report to Congress regarding the RFPB laid out an extremely effective proposal for organizing and utilizing the RFPB.

### **Employment of Full-Time Support Personnel**

**Active Guard and Reserve personnel providing full time support are not authorized to perform state active duty missions even in emergencies or disaster situations. On occasion, this can deny an important resource, e.g., aviation capability, to a state Governor in need of assistance.**

**Do you think that, as a matter of policy, AGR members should be prohibited in all cases from performing state active duty missions?**

If the law prohibits Active Guard and Reserve personnel providing full time support from performing state active duty missions even in emergencies or disaster situations, I would expect the Department of Defense to follow the law.

**Under what circumstances, if any, do you believe such use should be authorized?**

If confirmed, I would look forward to examining this issue more closely and, if appropriate, providing the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness and the Secretary of Defense with recommendations for change.

### **Quadrennial Review of Military Compensation**

**Last year, the Department completed work on the 10<sup>th</sup> Quadrennial Review of Military Compensation (QRMC), releasing Volume I of its report in February 2008 and Volume II in July 2008. Among other recommendations, the QRMC proposes a new defined benefit retirement plan that more resembles the benefits available under the Federal Employee Retirement System than the current military retirement benefit.**

**What is your assessment of the QRMC recommendations, particularly the proposed new defined retirement plan?**

While similar proposals were entertained by the Defense Advisory Committee on Military Compensation (DACMC), my concern is that any proposed retirement alternative replicates the experience mix of personnel in the current system and the desired career lengths determined by the RC force management plans.

**What recommendations, if any, would you propose that the Congress implement?**

If Congress chooses to consider the QRMC's recommendations for a defined benefit and contribution retirement plan, it should also agree to conduct the QRMC-proposed multiyear demonstration project prior to force-wide implementation, in order to reduce the uncertainties and risks associated with a transition to a new retirement system.

**Are the pay and benefits for reserve personnel appropriate for the types of service they provide?**

Although we have seen significant enhancements in military pay and benefits in the past seven years, I plan to continue ongoing efforts to achieve equity in Reserve compensation.

**If confirmed, would you recommend any changes to reserve personnel compensation policies and statutes?**

A few perceived inequities are still a matter of concern for certain Reserve components members. I will conduct a close review of certain basic allowances and reimbursements. The actions the Congress has taken with regard to Reserve retirement have been positive.

### **GI Bill Benefits**

**Last year, Congress passed the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act that created enhanced educational benefits for service members who have served at least 90**

**days on active duty since 9/11. The maximum benefit would roughly cover the cost of a college education at any public university in the country.**

**What is your assessment of the effect of this Act on recruiting and retention in the Reserve Components?**

I believe it is too early to assess the Post 9-11 effects on recruiting and retention, but I will be closely monitoring its implementation and corresponding RC enrollment.

**What is your understanding of the sufficiency of the implementation plan for the transferability provisions contained in the Act?**

I understand that the implementation of the transferability provisions of the Post-9/11 GI Bill have been coordinated within the DoD and are in the final stages of inter-agency coordination. Also, the proposed policies and procedures have been furnished to the field and fleet and DoD expect the final results to mirror those provisions. The Reserve Components have been integral in the development of these policies and are poised to implement.

**Montgomery G.I. Bill (MGIB) educational benefits for members of the Selected Reserve under chapter 1606 of Title 10, United States Code, are an important recruiting and retention incentive. However, the level of the monthly benefit has not risen proportionately over time with that of MGIB benefits payable to eligible veterans under chapter 30 of Title 38, United States Code.**

**What is your view of the adequacy of the current monthly benefit levels under the Selected Reserve MGIB?**

Educational assistance benefits under chapter 1606 – the MGIB-SR – have not kept pace with the rising cost of college education; in 2008 the monthly benefit level of \$317 covered only 22% of TFRB (tuition, fees, room and board)

**Would you recommend any changes to this program?**

I believe that an increase in the monthly benefit is necessary to maintain the attractiveness of the MGIB-SR as a force management tool.

### **STARBASE Program**

**The Department of Defense STARBASE program is an effective community outreach program that operates under the oversight of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs. The goal of the DOD STARBASE program is to raise the interest and improve the knowledge and skills of at-risk youth in math, science, and technology by exposing them to the technological environment and positive role models found at military bases and installations. It currently operates at 54 locations throughout the United States.**

### **What are your views about the STARBASE Program?**

The President has taken a position to make math and science education a national priority. The program supports this effort. I have had an opportunity to read the DoD STARBASE Program Annual Report and agree with my predecessor that “the strength of the program lies in the three-way partnership between the military, the local communities and the school districts....In the end, the success of the program depends on the student experience and the quality instruction delivered by DoD STARBASE Program staff and military volunteers.” General Renuart, Commander, North American Aerospace Defense Command and U.S. Northern Command stated “The partnership among local military installations, school districts and the surrounding communities created by participation in the DoD STARBASE Program ensures all are valued and equal stakeholders in the education of our children and that we are all accountable for the product: well educated, articulate young men and women who ready to on the environment they will see in their future.”

### **Do you believe that Guard and Reserve personnel should be involved in the STARBASE program?**

Yes because the students benefit by becoming exposed to our military culture which values knowledge, opportunity and diversity. In the report, General Renuart also stated that military personnel get the chance to act as a role model, to teach responsibility and leadership, and to shape the lives of these young students. In addition, exposing the students to our wonderful role models, they become embraced to core values like service, integrity, and pursuit of excellence.

### **Do you believe that it is appropriate to fund this Program through the Department of Defense budget?**

Yes, for the reasons stated in my answers to the previous questions. Furthermore, in the report General Chilton, Commander of U.S. Strategic Command, stated that DoD STARBASE is a DoD program that provides opportunities where young students can learn, pursue their dreams, and make them come true. Students get to see and do, experiencing first hand the wonders of learning, and get them interested in science, technology, math and engineering.

### **National Guard Youth Challenge Program**

**In 1993, the National Guard, as part of their community mission, established the Youth Challenge Program to help at-risk youth improve their life skills, education levels, and employment potential. In 1998, the federal share of funding for this program was reduced to 75%, with a subsequent annual decrease of five percent each year through 2001, so that the federal share is now 60%. Advocates for Youth Challenge have urged that the Federal Government fund 100% of the costs during the first two years of operation of a State program and restoration of the 75% federal and 25% state cost sharing after two**

**years in order to increase the number of youths who are able to participate and to facilitate more states offering programs.**

**What are your views about the National Guard Youth Challenge Program?**

The President has taken a position to address the high school dropout crisis. General McKinley, Chief of the National Guard Bureau, acknowledged that the National Guard Youth Challenge Program helps address this dropout crisis. It has been reported that over 84,700 students have successfully graduated from the program, with 80% earning their high school diploma or GED. On average, 26% go on to college, 25% enter the military, and the remainder join the work force in career jobs. A longitudinal study conducted by MDRC reported that the early results of their evaluation suggests that partway through the cadets Youth Challenge experience, they are better positioned to move forward in their transition to adulthood.

**Do you believe this Program should be funded through the Department of Defense budget, or through some other means?**

The National Guard Youth Challenge Program should be funded and managed by the Department of Defense and the National Guard Bureau because of the strong military linkage which is a key element to the program's success.

**What is your recommendation regarding the appropriate level of federal (versus state) funding of this program?**

The change to the federal share is appropriate and similar to other cost share requirements. In addition, reducing the state cost share burden would make the continued viability of the National Guard Youth Challenge Program more likely during these economic conditions.

**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, I agree.

**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 Reserve Affairs?**

Yes, I agree.

**Do you agree to ensure that testimony, briefings, and other communications of information are provided in a timely manner to this Committee and its staff and other appropriate Committees?**

Yes, I agree

**Do you agree to provide documents, including copies of electronic forms of communication, in a timely manner when requested by a duly constituted Committee, or to consult with the Committee regarding the basis for any good faith delay or denial in providing such documents?**

Yes, I agree.