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Before the

Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities

COMMITTEE ON  
ARMED SERVICES

## **UNITED STATES SENATE**

DEFENDING THE HOMELAND: DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE'S  
ROLE IN COUNTERING WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION

Wednesday, February 7, 2018

Washington, D.C.

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HEARING TO RECEIVE TESTIMONY ON  
DEFENDING THE HOMELAND: DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE'S  
ROLE IN COUNTERING WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION

Wednesday, February 7, 2018

U.S. Senate  
Subcommittee on Emerging  
Threats and Capabilities  
Committee on Armed Services  
Washington, D.C.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:30 p.m.  
in Room SR-232A, Russell Senate Office Building, Hon. Joni  
Ernst, chairman of the subcommittee, presiding.

Members Present: Senators Ernst [presiding], Fischer,  
Sullivan, Heinrich, Shaheen, and Peters

1           OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JONI ERNST, U.S. SENATOR  
2 FROM IOWA

3           Senator Ernst: Good afternoon, everyone. I'd like to  
4 call this Subcommittee meeting on Emerging Threats and  
5 Capabilities to order.

6           And I'll start with an opening statement. And, Senator  
7 Heinrich, we'll have an opening statement from you. And  
8 then we'll move on to our witnesses. So, thank you,  
9 gentlemen, for being here.

10          The Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities  
11 meets today to receive testimony on the Department of  
12 Defense efforts to counter weapons of mass destruction. We  
13 welcome Kenneth Rapuano, Assistant Secretary for Defense of  
14 Homeland Defense and Global Security -- that's a very long  
15 title; you have long business cards, I'm sure -- and  
16 Lieutenant General Joseph Osterman, Deputy Commander of  
17 United States Special Operations Command, SOCOM, and thank  
18 them for appearing before us today.

19          This hearing comes at an important time. We are  
20 witnessing a troubling increase in the proliferation of WMDs  
21 by rogue states and terrorist organizations that pose a  
22 direct and growing threat to our national security. While  
23 we are familiar with, and concerned by, the growing size the  
24 capabilities of North Korea's nuclear program, we should  
25 also be mindful of its efforts to expand its chemical and

1 biological weapons capabilities.

2           The Washington Post reported in December that North  
3 Korea is moving steadily to acquire the essential machinery  
4 that could potentially be used for an advanced bioweapons  
5 programs, from factories, by the ton, to laboratories  
6 specializing in genetic modification. Similarly, ISIS has  
7 demonstrated its ability to develop and use chemical weapons  
8 like chlorine and mustard warfare agents in Iraq and Syria.  
9 As fighters flee the region after the fall of the physical  
10 caliphate, we must be aware of the potential for their  
11 technical knowledge to spread. Additionally, there are new  
12 reports of Syrian dictator Bashar al-Assad's continued use  
13 of chemical agents, like sarin, and attacks against his own  
14 people. All of these troubling developments vividly show  
15 the global nature of the WMD threat and, in turn, underscore  
16 the need for a global strategy to combat the threat.

17           I note that the most recent DOD counter-WMD strategy  
18 was released in June of 2014. As I have just laid out, the  
19 scope and complexity of the problem has only increased since  
20 that time. This requires the DOD to reassess its strategy  
21 and ensure that we are postured appropriately, in terms of  
22 organization, authorities, and capabilities, to most  
23 effectively confront this threat, from preventing the  
24 development of new WMD threats and mitigating existing ones  
25 to responding in the event of a WMD incident. I look to our

1 witnesses to provide the subcommittee with their candid  
2 assessment of how they view the WMD threat, as well as  
3 provide recommendations on any changes to our current  
4 approach that may be warranted.

5         Additionally, while our preference will always be to  
6 deal with a threat before it reaches our shores, we must  
7 ensure that we are prepared to respond quickly and  
8 effectively to a WMD event in the homeland. I note that,  
9 while DOD is not necessarily the lead organization for the  
10 homeland response mission, it -- in particular, the National  
11 Guard -- plays a key role in providing unique support to  
12 civil authorities, like the Federal Emergency Management  
13 Agency, the Department of Homeland Security, and local  
14 authorities. We would appreciate an update on DOD planning  
15 and related efforts to fulfill its vital support mission in  
16 the event of a WMD attack on the homeland.

17         Lastly, it has been over 1 year since the unified  
18 campaign plan was updated to assign SOCOM with  
19 responsibility for synchronizing DOD's counter-WMD mission,  
20 which entails drafting a new global campaign plan,  
21 establishing intelligence priorities, and monitoring global  
22 counter-WMD operations.

23         General Osterman, we look to you to provide an update  
24 on how SOCOM is managing its new responsibilities, the steps  
25 they have been -- taken to date, and a description of any

1 issues that could challenge the ability of SOCOM to  
2 successfully execute this important mission.

3 Thank you for being here with us this afternoon. And  
4 we look forward to your testimony on this important topic.

5 I'll call on my Ranking Member to make his opening  
6 statement.

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1           STATEMENT OF HON. MARTIN HEINRICH, U.S. SENATOR FROM  
2 NEW MEXICO

3           Senator Heinrich: Let me -- when all else fails,  
4 improvise.

5           [Laughter.]

6           Senator Heinrich: How's that? Let me start over.

7           Let me begin by thanking Senator Ernst for holding this  
8 hearing on the Department of Defense's role in countering  
9 weapons of mass destruction. I certainly look forward to  
10 working with you again this year to examine key emerging  
11 threats and to craft the subcommittee's contribution to the  
12 Fiscal Year 2019 National Defense Authorization Act.

13           The Department of Defense has a wide array of measures  
14 to control the spread of WMD, ranging from nonproliferation  
15 programs that help set international norms and export  
16 controls to other efforts that are designed to stop the  
17 development of WMDs by noncooperative nations.

18           Assistant Secretary Rapuano, your portfolio includes  
19 policy oversight responsibilities for these efforts, and I  
20 look forward to better understanding how they are achieving  
21 their objectives and also what challenges they may be  
22 encountering.

23           U.S. Special Operations Command, or SOCOM, has played a  
24 key role in supporting DOD's role in countering the  
25 proliferation of weapons of mass destruction for more than

1 25 years now. As a force provider, SOCOM educates, trains,  
2 and equips special operators tasked with interdicting and  
3 rendering safe WMDs, should they fall into the wrong hands.  
4 As a combatant command, SOCOM has also been tasked with  
5 synchronizing DOD's global plans and operations for  
6 countering WMDs.

7 Today, I hope our witnesses will share their candid  
8 views on how SOCOM is fulfilling these critical  
9 responsibilities while also retaining its focus on  
10 countering violent extremist groups. As we all know,  
11 Special Operations Forces are a finite resource, and it is  
12 important that we maintain sufficient readiness to address  
13 any contingencies in these no-fail counter-WMD mission  
14 areas.

15 I look forward to hearing your testimony, both of you.

16 Senator Ernst: Okay. We'll go ahead and start with  
17 our witness testimony.

18 Secretary Rapuano, why don't we start with you, sir.

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1           STATEMENT OF HON. KENNETH P. RAPUANO, ASSISTANT  
2 SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR HOMELAND DEFENSE AND GLOBAL  
3 SECURITY

4           Mr. Rapuano: Thank you, Chairman Ernst, Ranking Member  
5 Heinrich, and members of the subcommittee. I'm pleased to  
6 be here today to testify about the Department of Defense's  
7 efforts to counter chemical, biological, radiological, and  
8 nuclear threats both at home and abroad.

9           The United States faces a range of complex and  
10 multidimensional CBRN challenges. Over the past year, the  
11 North Korean regime has increased its dangerous and  
12 provocative behavior and continued to test nuclear weapons  
13 and ballistic missiles, in clear violation of multiple  
14 United Nations Security Council resolutions. We've also  
15 seen the continued use of chemical weapons by both the  
16 Syrian regime and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria,  
17 further eroding the international norm against their use.

18           More broadly, rapid technological advancements and  
19 increased access to dual-use technologies, expertise, and  
20 materials that can be used for both peaceful and military  
21 purposes heighten the risk that adversaries can more easily  
22 seek or acquire WMD. It has never been more difficult to  
23 prevent adversaries from acquiring the materials or  
24 expertise necessary to develop WMD or use CBRN materials in  
25 intentional attacks.

1           Additionally, the speed, volume, and coverage of  
2 international travel means that naturally occurring  
3 pathogens of security concern can spread worldwide in days,  
4 potentially having the same catastrophic consequences of a  
5 deliberate biological attack.

6           These diverse threats require multifaceted approaches  
7 that keep up with and adapt to the current threats while  
8 looking ahead to mitigate further risks. The intelligence  
9 community, Department of State, DHS, DOE, and the Department  
10 of Justice all play critical roles in detecting threats,  
11 preventing attacks on the homeland, and working with foreign  
12 partners to stop and respond to incidents. DOD supports  
13 these efforts through both domestic and overseas activities,  
14 and works closely with allies and partners to counter the  
15 wide range of CBRN threats that exist today.

16           Close cooperation with the other U.S. departments and  
17 agencies and allies and partners is crucial, since DOD must  
18 prioritize capabilities and efforts that counter  
19 operationally significant WMD risks and activities that are  
20 best executed by the Department. We do this by ensuring we  
21 have a layered approach to detecting and mitigating CBRN  
22 threats at the source, preventing them from reaching the  
23 homeland, and, when necessary, responding militarily.

24           The Department's strategic approach to the CWMD mission  
25 focuses on three lines of effort: preventing acquisition of

1 WMD, containing and reducing WMD threats, and, when  
2 necessary, responding to and mitigating the consequences of  
3 their use.

4 For example, to prevent the transfer of CBRN or dual-  
5 use materials to and from North Korea, the Department works  
6 closely with interagency partners to encourage states to  
7 impede and stop illicit shipments, including through efforts  
8 to build partner capacity and spread an understanding of  
9 international norms and obligations through the  
10 Proliferation Security Initiative. We also engage with  
11 partners through the DOD Cooperative Threat Reduction, or  
12 CTR, program to detect, secure, or eliminate CBRN materials  
13 and pathogens of security concern. Despite our best efforts  
14 at prevention, we must be prepared to contain and reduce  
15 CBRN threats once they have developed. DOD is postured to  
16 isolate, identify, neutralize, and dispose of CBRN threats  
17 before they can reach our borders.

18 The Department also supports the government's efforts  
19 to deter adversaries and ensure that those actors that  
20 already possess WMD do not use them against the United  
21 States or our allies and partners.

22 For example, DOD continues to support State Department-  
23 led efforts to work with international allies and partners  
24 to hold the Assad regime accountable for using chemical  
25 weapons. We remain concerned about reports of ongoing use,

1 and will continue to ensure the President has all the  
2 options available to respond, as necessary. In addition, to  
3 contain and reduce the threat from ISIS, the U.S. and our  
4 coalition partners continue to exploit opportunities on the  
5 ground to better understand and disrupt their CW networks.

6       Ultimately, though, should deterrence or efforts to  
7 contain and reduce threats fail and an adversary attacks the  
8 United States or our allies, the Department of Defense's top  
9 military priority is to respond and prevent future attacks.  
10 This may require U.S. forces to operate in a contaminated  
11 environment, which makes it critical that we safeguard the  
12 force and ensure U.S. personnel can sustain effective  
13 operations in the event of war or other contingencies. This  
14 is why DOD works closely with allies and partners to ensure  
15 that we are prepared to respond to CBRN incidents overseas.

16

17       In Asia, for example, DOD is working with key regional  
18 allies, the Republic of Korea and Japan, to ensure that our  
19 forces remain prepared to respond to CBRN contingencies on,  
20 or emanating from, the Korean Peninsula.

21       Elsewhere, complementing those engagements, the CBRN  
22 Preparedness Program trains and equips partner nations to  
23 enhance their capabilities to respond to, and mitigate the  
24 effects of, a CBRN incident.

25       In addition to being prepared to respond to events

1 overseas, DOD must ensure we are ready to support the  
2 Federal response to a domestic CBRN incident at home. While  
3 most incidents begin and end locally, significant events,  
4 such as a WMD attack, will likely require additional support  
5 from neighboring jurisdictions, State governments, and, as  
6 necessary, the Federal Government. DOD's role to assist the  
7 Federal Government's support of the State and local  
8 response, when necessary, is an important one.

9 DOD has developed a wide range of domestic CBRN  
10 response elements, and continuously trains and exercises to  
11 employ these capabilities, which can be used to support  
12 civil authorities to help save and sustain lives in the  
13 aftermath of a CBRN incident. While a large-scale nuclear,  
14 chemical, or biological attack is something we hope will  
15 never occur, we cannot be complacent or wait until a threat  
16 is imminent to act.

17 As I said earlier, the complexity of this mission area  
18 requires a whole-of-government approach and strong unity of  
19 effort. I work closely with the Joint Staff and the  
20 combatant commanders and other DOD components to ensure the  
21 Department prioritizes its efforts and fully leverages DOD's  
22 unique authorities, resources, and capabilities to protect  
23 the Nation.

24 U.S. Special Operations Command, in its new role as  
25 coordinating authority for CWMD, has brought a renewed focus

1 and sense of enthusiasm to this mission, and is playing a  
2 critical role in ensuring that combatant commands are taking  
3 a transregional approach to countering these challenges and  
4 are developing the tactical capability, capacity, and plans  
5 to operationalize CWMD efforts.

6 In closing, we must anticipate that our adversaries  
7 will continue to evolve and develop increasingly  
8 sophisticated methods to pursue, develop, or deploy CBRN  
9 weapons. The diversity of these challenges makes it  
10 imperative that DOD be rigorous in prioritizing its efforts  
11 and work closely with other U.S. departments and agencies  
12 and international partners to continue and -- to confront  
13 the threats posed by WMD at home and abroad.

14 As CBRN-related challenges continue to emerge, your  
15 continued support for the Department and the efforts  
16 described today are critical to our ability to understand,  
17 anticipate, and mitigate these threats.

18 Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you  
19 today, and I look forward to your questions.

20 [The prepared statement of Mr. Rapuano follows:]

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1           Senator Ernst: Thank you very much, Secretary.  
2           General Osterman?  
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1           STATEMENT OF LIEUTENANT GENERAL JOSEPH L. OSTERMAN,  
2 USMC, DEPUTY COMMANDER, UNITED STATES SPECIAL OPERATIONS  
3 COMMAND

4           General Osterman: Chairwoman Ernst, Ranking Member  
5 Heinrich, distinguished members of the subcommittee, thanks  
6 for the opportunity to address you today.

7           It is an honor to testify with Assistant Secretary of  
8 Defense Rapuano, whose office is critical in providing the  
9 policy and strategic guidance for the Department of  
10 Defense's support to countering weapons of mass destruction,  
11 or WMD.

12           During his posture testimony to the full Senate Armed  
13 Services Committee last February, General Thomas outlined  
14 the U.S. Special Operation Command, or USSOCOM's, initial  
15 goals for our new role following the UCP change of January  
16 2017. We're proud to report significant strides in  
17 increasing communication, information-sharing, and  
18 operational coordination with other U.S. Government  
19 agencies, as well as allies and partners who are working in  
20 this mission space.

21           USSOCOM has decades of experience preparing and  
22 providing U.S. Special Operations Forces to execute counter-  
23 WMD tasks. The role of coordinating authority, as directed  
24 by the Unified Command Plan, broadens USSOCOM's scope of  
25 responsibility from traditional Special Operations Forces'



1 specific roles to the planning of Department of Defense  
2 counter-WMD efforts in support of other combatant commands,  
3 Department priorities, and, as directed, other U.S.  
4 Government agencies. As in other mission areas in which  
5 coordinating authority has been established, this enables a  
6 more strategic approach and enhanced integration of  
7 Department of Defense plans and intelligence priorities.

8         Since the transfer of Defense lead responsibility for  
9 this mission set for U.S. Strategic Command and the  
10 establishment of USSOCOM's coordinating authority, we've  
11 focused on three major areas of effort:

12         First, we're developing a functional campaign plan, in  
13 coordination with the geographic combatant commands. The  
14 campaign plan takes a transregional perspective and  
15 emphasizes preventing new WMD development in existing  
16 programs and precluding aspiring actors from obtaining a  
17 WMD.

18         Second, we've conducted a baseline assessment to  
19 determine geographic combatant command counter-WMD  
20 capabilities and capacities. The assessment has identified  
21 shortfalls and will inform recommendations of future  
22 capability development and resource allocation.

23         Third, we're increasing our understanding of the  
24 operating environment by enhancing integration of  
25 intelligence, planning, and assessments. To this end, we've

1 established a Counter-WMD Fusion Center dedicated to  
2 coordinating information flow and planning, fusing  
3 intelligence and operations, and providing the WMD community  
4 of action a single point of contact for DOD operational  
5 capability.

6       While much progress has been made in the past year, a  
7 tremendous amount of work remains to finalize and fully  
8 implement these efforts. We look forward to continuing to  
9 collaborate closely with the Office of the Secretary of  
10 Defense, the Joint Staff, Defense Threat Reduction Agency,  
11 other combatant commands, and the rest of the counter-WMD  
12 community.

13       Thank you for the subcommittee's continued support to  
14 the counter-WMD mission, to our servicemen, and to our  
15 families.

16       Thank you.

17       [The prepared statement of General Osterman follows:]

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1 Senator Ernst: Outstanding.

2 Thank you, gentlemen, very much.

3 And we will open with questions. And we will do those  
4 in 5-minute iterations. And, should we be joined by other  
5 members of the subcommittee, we'll allow their questions, as  
6 well.

7 I would like to start with you, Mr. Rapuano. Which WMD  
8 threat concerns you most at this stage, based on your work  
9 within the Department and your insights across our  
10 interagencies?

11 Mr. Rapuano: Thank you, Senator.

12 I think it depends on the filter that you look through.  
13 But, if we're looking at the near term, clearly North Korea  
14 is a primary concern and focus of the Department. A  
15 combination of destabilizing behaviors and very aggressive  
16 testing program for their ICBMs, aggressive statements about  
17 their nuclear weapons program and capabilities, give cause  
18 for great concern. And we've got a lot of efforts focused  
19 on that.

20 I think that we also put a lot of concern, in terms of  
21 that evolving capability, beyond the primary Russia-China  
22 focus, which you're well familiar with from the NPR and  
23 National Defense Strategy, is Iran, that they are developing  
24 missile and weapons capabilities, in contravention of U.N.  
25 security resolutions, and are a threat that we are

1 monitoring closely and looking to address in a variety of  
2 ways.

3 And then, finally, in terms of developments that create  
4 growing concern over time, is biotechnology, just the rapid  
5 advances and ubiquitous availability of biotechnology today.

6 Things that you can buy on the Web now, and essentially do  
7 a paint-by-numbers instruction, were the province of Nobel  
8 prize-winning scientists, only decades ago. And that really  
9 levels the playing field for any actor looking to develop  
10 biotechnology, biological agents, and novelty engineer  
11 agents that could present a real threat.

12 Senator Ernst: Certainly. And thank you. You  
13 mentioned North Korea, of course, the nuclear tests. And  
14 we've all followed that with great interest. But, something  
15 that we just don't talk about a lot, but was pointed out in  
16 a Washington Post -- and I mentioned it in my remarks -- is  
17 North Korea acquiring different mechanical pieces that  
18 potentially could allow them to develop chemical or  
19 biological weapons. Is -- has that been a focus, as well,  
20 of the agency?

21 Mr. Rapuano: Yes. We and the rest of the interagency  
22 community have significant concerns about North Korean  
23 chemical and biological programs that we believed are  
24 focused on developing weapons. So, we are tracking that  
25 very closely. There are a variety of export control,

1 Australia Group and other organizations, for which we look  
2 to limit the export, the further proliferation of agents of  
3 particular concern. But, we do have concerns about  
4 biotechnology and the ability to innovate agents and develop  
5 them without that kind of seed stock over the longer term.

6 Senator Ernst: Okay. And then, in regards to the  
7 biological and chemical weapons, as well, Secretary or  
8 General, when we talk about nation-states, we know that they  
9 have the capabilities out there. What are the assessments,  
10 when it comes to various terrorist organizations and/or  
11 including ISIS? Do they have the ability to deliver those  
12 types of weapons?

13 Mr. Rapuano: So, we understand that both al Qaeda and  
14 ISIS are interested in chemical, biological -- nuclear, they  
15 certainly would be if they have opportunity to acquire the  
16 materials and know-how. More details, in terms of  
17 understanding of those capacities, we'd need to go to closed  
18 session, Senator.

19 Senator Ernst: Yes, I'm sorry.

20 Do you have anything --

21 Mr. Rapuano: I'm sorry.

22 General Osterman?

23 Senator Ernst: -- to add?

24 General Osterman: The only thing I'd like to add,  
25 Senator, is the fact that part of our functional campaign

1 planning that we associate with this is to allow us, not  
2 only the state, but nonstate actors, to look at the threats,  
3 if you will, in vertical columns, and then as the functional  
4 campaign plan crosscuts those, so we can observe where the  
5 technology transfer may occur between state/nonstate actors,  
6 also where one nonstate actor perhaps is working with  
7 another nonstate actor in a different geographic location or  
8 in a functional capacity. So, we try to weave that in with  
9 the translation of our strategy and policy to actual  
10 tactical application of interdiction in order to, basically,  
11 reinforce the larger protocol efforts that are in place.

12 Senator Ernst: Okay. Thank you very much.

13 Senator Heinrich.

14 Senator Heinrich: Thank you, Madam Chair.

15 Secretary Rapuano, I want to go back to the issue you  
16 were talking about, in terms of rapid innovation with  
17 respect to biological resources, and with technologies like  
18 CRSPR and others, just changing that landscape at a rate  
19 that we could just -- has never occurred within the field  
20 before. Are there things that we should be thinking about  
21 now that can create some level of obstruction or raise  
22 barriers to entry to make sure that we're doing an adequate  
23 job of what we apply with respect to export controls and  
24 other tools in other fields? How can we make sure that, you  
25 know, we're not just missing some very big developments that

1 could be happening under our nose with off-the-shelf  
2 Internet-purchased items, for example?

3 Mr. Rapuano: So, Senator, that is something that we're  
4 very focused on with our interagency partners, in term --  
5 there are a number of norms, in terms of internationally,  
6 nationally, with regard to research being done in the bio  
7 area, where you look to not do certain things. But, well-  
8 established norms that get at --

9 Senator Heinrich: That works great for the folks who  
10 follow the norms. It's the --

11 Mr. Rapuano: That's exactly --

12 Senator Heinrich: I'm wondering if we shouldn't have  
13 some sort of track-and-trace technology that makes sure that  
14 people are following the standards in the research  
15 community.

16 Mr. Rapuano: So, there are efforts in that area. I  
17 didn't come prepared to speak in detail about them today.  
18 It's very difficult, though, because it's very widespread.  
19 The research is going on all over the world. It's not like  
20 more select research that's only being done in highly  
21 developed nations. It's proliferated to where it's being  
22 done, places that would have been unimaginable decades ago.

23 Senator Heinrich: Well, that wasn't the answer I was  
24 hoping for.

25 Mr. Rapuano: Me either.

1           Senator Heinrich: I think we really need to put some  
2 thought into this, because this is a situation that feels  
3 like it could get ahead of all of us very quickly.

4           I want to shift gears for a minute and ask you, General  
5 Osterman: With respect to Special Forces and how they have  
6 led the effort, in places like Syria and Iraq, in reining in  
7 development of chemical or biological weapons from groups  
8 like ISIS, you know, these are specialized missions.  
9 They're uniquely tailored for SOF capabilities. But, I  
10 wanted to ask, How would Special Forces perform this sort of  
11 a mission in a more conventional forces environment? Take a  
12 force environment like North Korea, where you have a very  
13 different battlespace than you would in Iraq or Syria, a lot  
14 of very heavily secured WMD sites. I'm just trying to get  
15 -- without a specific locational answer, I want to  
16 understand how you apply that same mission set in a more  
17 traditional battlespace environment.

18           General Osterman: Okay. Senator, I think I would  
19 probably answer that one from a standpoint of a reactive or  
20 proactive approach to it. Really, when you look at the  
21 proactive ways of being able to interdict things like that,  
22 it really is associated with a pathway approach. And I  
23 think you alluded to that in one of your opening statements  
24 about, you know, components of different types of WMD that  
25 are required as precursors, or even technology requirements



1 associated with, you know, missile or other type activity.

2 And so, understanding pathways is important.

3 And I guess, when I would look at that from a -- what  
4 we've done in Iraq and Syria, versus what we've actually --  
5 you know, would be looking at with a state actor, really the  
6 process is very similar. You look at that -- for example,  
7 we could easily translate the human capital that is  
8 associated with the knowledge for these things, and that  
9 becomes a -- an opportunity for targeting, whether it be  
10 kinetically or nonkinetically. So, I think there's a lot of  
11 similar things that way that can be done.

12 When it comes to secure facilities, all those, I'd  
13 probably have to get with you offline on that one. But, the  
14 -- as far as the details -- but, I would say that the  
15 approach is very, very similar, in the sense that there's  
16 always human capital, resourcing, and technology that's  
17 associated with these type things. And just really depends  
18 on what scope it's actually being applied. But, the  
19 fundamentals still apply from -- example, as I mentioned  
20 with our Fusion Center -- the opts-intel fusion, to  
21 understand what is that indication of warning that things  
22 may be coming along, and, you know, how do you matrix that  
23 with the different threats that are out there, versus  
24 viability of the threat?

25 If that answers the question.

1 Senator Heinrich: Thank you, General.

2 General Osterman: Sure.

3 Senator Ernst: Senator Shaheen.

4 Senator Shaheen: Thank you, Madam Chair.

5 Thank you both for your testimony. I'm sorry I wasn't  
6 here to hear it.

7 But, can you -- perhaps this is for you, Secretary  
8 Rapuano -- how do we describe "weapons of mass destruction"?

9 Mr. Rapuano: Senator, that's a great question. In  
10 different quarters, it's described in very different ways.  
11 If you look at domestic law, the Department of Justice  
12 defines "weapon of mass destruction" essentially from a  
13 firecracker to a thermonuclear bomb.

14 When we look at it in an international perspective, we  
15 have a much higher threshold. So, it is a weapon that  
16 causes significant effects. But, you still see a very wide  
17 range. Chlorine, for example, which is an industrial  
18 chemical, can be used, and has been used, as we know, by the  
19 Syrians and ISIS as a chemical weapon. It doesn't have near  
20 the level of effect of nerve gas and other agents.

21 So, it's a pretty wide spectrum, but it's essentially a  
22 chemical, biological agent, or nuclear device that creates  
23 significant consequence.

24 Senator Shaheen: So, do we consider cyberattacks as  
25 potential weapons of mass destruction?

1 Mr. Rapuano: So, we have not defined, to date, in  
2 terms of how we, in the U.S. Government, use the term "WMD"  
3 -- we have not defined that to include cyber.

4 Senator Shaheen: Should we? I notice that the Nuclear  
5 Posture Review contemplated that there might be situations  
6 in which the massive use of cyberattacks could result in,  
7 potentially, a nuclear response. So, should we be thinking  
8 about them in those terms? Cyberattacks?

9 Mr. Rapuano: So, Senator, my reading of the NPR, it  
10 doesn't define "cyber use," it defines --

11 Senator Shaheen: Boy, it leaves a pretty big hole --

12 Mr. Rapuano: It --

13 Senator Shaheen: -- there, though.

14 Mr. Rapuano: -- defines the effects --

15 Senator Shaheen: Right.

16 Mr. Rapuano: -- of any use of any technique that would  
17 be extreme and disastrous for the Nation, that could result  
18 in our response with nuclear weapons. So, it's not the  
19 means, it's the end.

20 Senator Shaheen: Right. But, anything that might  
21 produce that sort of end has to be pretty disruptive. And  
22 so, the question I'm raising is, Should we be thinking about  
23 cyber in the same way that we're thinking about these other  
24 weapons of mass destruction? Because certainly they have  
25 the potential to create the same amount of chaos and

1 potentially the same amount of fatalities, depending on how  
2 they're used.

3 Mr. Rapuano: Senator, I think the challenge with that  
4 is, cyber is a domain from which there is zero negative  
5 effect all the way to "could be very high" potential effect.

6 And with the WMD classification, one of the distinctions  
7 has been the threshold of even lower use is significant  
8 enough to characterize it as a class of weapon.

9 Senator Shaheen: Isn't part of the issue with cyber is  
10 that we don't really have a well-defined body of law and  
11 response, proactively -- "response" is the wrong term --  
12 that we don't have a proactive way to address the potential  
13 of cyberattacks, and that that's part of what makes it very  
14 difficult for us to figure out how to categorize those?

15 Mr. Rapuano: I believe the challenge with any means,  
16 whether it's cyber or other avenues of attack, is, What is a  
17 threshold that will warrant what level of response? It's a  
18 threshold of the consequence that I believe is a deciding  
19 factor to determine what level and what significant the  
20 response would be.

21 Senator Shaheen: I appreciate what you're saying. I  
22 don't think that really responds to the question that I'm  
23 raising, however.

24 I want to go to another issue around cyber, though,  
25 because I appreciated the Department's response to my

1 inquiry regarding the work that the Department does with IT  
2 companies and the issue around sharing sensitive source-code  
3 data with Russia and other hostile governments. And I  
4 wonder if you can tell me why DOD doesn't require companies  
5 to disclose information about whether they have released  
6 their source-code information to hostile governments, and  
7 whether we should be doing that.

8 Mr. Rapuano: Senator, I don't come here to today's  
9 hearing with details on that, but I can get those answers  
10 for you.

11 [The information referred to follows:]

12 [SUBCOMMITTEE INSERT]

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1 Senator Shaheen: I would appreciate that. Thank you.

2 Senator Ernst: Okay. We'll start our second round of  
3 questioning.

4 Secretary, in the Department's strategy for countering  
5 weapons of mass destruction, DOD states that it will  
6 dissuade pursuit and possession of WMD by demonstrating  
7 layered defenses based on active and passive capabilities.  
8 You had made those comments, as well, in your opening  
9 statement. Can you -- in this opening setting, can you  
10 describe what those capabilities are? What are those  
11 layered defenses?

12 Mr. Rapuano: So, Senator, that -- there's a range of  
13 defenses, depending on the type of weapon used and the  
14 consequences of the effect, starting with the passive --  
15 that's inclusive of resilience, to deny the adversary the  
16 intended benefit of the use; so the better defended or the  
17 more resilient the targets of their attacks, the less  
18 inclination on our -- their part to employ it; active  
19 military operations, or a range of other activities that are  
20 not necessarily kinetic military operations, from a whole-  
21 of-government perspective -- it's a well-known list, as you  
22 know: sanctions, there are diplomatic actions, there are  
23 financial penalties; and then, getting into the military  
24 space, there's a full range of what the total force brings,  
25 in terms of capabilities for response.

1           Senator Ernst: Okay. And as Secretary of Homeland  
2 Defense and Global Security, you coordinate the CWMD policy  
3 and oversee defense support to civilian authorities. And  
4 how is DOD postured to respond to a CBRN incident in the  
5 homeland? And can you give us an example and walk us  
6 through that?

7           Mr. Rapuano: Senator, we have what we call the CBRN  
8 Response Enterprise. It's almost 19,000 -- a combination of  
9 National Guard and Title 10 military who are formed into a  
10 variety of teams. We have the WMD CSTs, the Civil Support  
11 Teams. We have the Enhanced Response Teams. We have a  
12 range of teams with a different mix of capabilities that go  
13 from decontamination, detection, medical effects, medical  
14 treatment. There is air transportation, ground  
15 transportation -- the whole package that can be integrated,  
16 that can either be commanded by the State National Guards --  
17 and there's at least one team in every State -- or they can  
18 be authorized under Title 10 and under DOD command.

19           Senator Shaheen: I appreciate it. And thanks -- thank  
20 you for the shout-out for our CSTs. I'm intimately familiar  
21 with the CST existing in our Iowa National Guard; Air Guard,  
22 as well. We have both -- both Air Guard and National --  
23 Army National Guard that combine their forces as a joint  
24 force. They work very proactively.

25           But, just for the public's information, can you

1 describe their proactive stance and where they might be  
2 stationed during large events -- perhaps they were around  
3 the Super Bowl this past weekend -- just so people  
4 understand how we utilize those teams?

5 Mr. Rapuano: Yes. As you imply, Senator, we use them  
6 on a routine basis, starting with national special security  
7 events -- the Super Bowl, other large events, 4th of July.  
8 And these assets will be predeployed in the vicinity of  
9 activities for which there may be some concern that they  
10 would be the target of an attack that might include WMD.  
11 And they are prepared to respond, in concert with all the  
12 other assets that are typically deployed for those events,  
13 law enforcement and others.

14 Senator Ernst: I appreciate that. And just to make it  
15 clear for our public that we are not just reactive in  
16 certain situations, but we're also very proactive in making  
17 sure that our public is safe here on the homeland.

18 Mr. Rapuano: Absolutely.

19 Senator Ernst: So, thank you very much for that.

20 We'll go on to Senator Sullivan, if you would like to  
21 take an opportunity to ask some questions.

22 Senator Sullivan: Thank you, Madam Chair.

23 And, gentlemen, good to see you. General, Semper Fi.

24 I don't know if the Chair already asked it, so, if she  
25 did, I apologize for the repetition. But, how is the



1 transition going from STRATCOM? And are there assets that  
2 -- or authorities that you need right now from us that can  
3 help with this mission? I actually think, from a broader  
4 national-security mission, the counter-WMD mission is kind  
5 of the evergreen mission. We might be going after ISIS for  
6 a couple more years, or al Qaeda, but, as long as we're a  
7 republic, the counter-WMD mission is the evergreen mission  
8 -- in my view, the most important mission in the U.S.  
9 military. And we want to make sure it's resourced. And I  
10 actually think it made sense to transfer it over to SOCOM,  
11 but I'm sure the transition hasn't been flawless. And it's  
12 not like, General, you guys don't have other missions that  
13 you're currently focused on. So, I'm wondering how it's  
14 going.

15 General Osterman: Senator, thanks for the question.  
16 Actually, the transition and assumption of the duties went  
17 exceptionally well, very close and good relationship with  
18 USSTRATCOM. It was well coordinated, well defined. And,  
19 frankly, we -- everyone came to the table with an  
20 understanding -- a basic understanding of what the resource  
21 requirements were. And so, before -- actually before  
22 assumption of the mission, we actually worked through all  
23 that.

24 We're actually at a point right now where I'd -- the  
25 way the plan was set up and General Thomas approved the --

1 essentially, our transition plan -- was that at the 1-year  
2 mark, where we are right now, we would reevaluate, kind of,  
3 how things went over the last year: Do we have the right  
4 people in the right places and the right resources aligned  
5 to the mission set? And I think we're real close to what we  
6 need. We probably need to tweak it internally to optimize  
7 it. But, everyone was very, very supportive that way. So,  
8 right now, any additional resources we've put into the  
9 normal budgeting cycle, and I'm very confident they'll be  
10 represented in there.

11 The -- as far as the authorities, right now everything  
12 is moving along well, no problems with the geographic  
13 combatant commands and helping to work with them, nor with  
14 the interagency.

15 Senator Sullivan: Great.

16 Mr. Rapuano: Senator, if I could add that SOCOM really  
17 -- having been someone who's tilled in this field most of my  
18 career, that -- SOCOM brings a unique blend of experience,  
19 skills, capabilities, and relationships that make them  
20 uniquely well-equipped, particularly in terms of the  
21 relationship with the COCOM, the operational equipage of the  
22 capabilities necessary. They have a visceral appreciation  
23 of that from their experience. And then working the entire  
24 threat or kill chain associated with CB WMD, all the way  
25 from ideation to consequence management, and focusing the

1 Department and the COCOMs in those areas that we have the  
2 most impact on getting at WMD.

3 Senator Sullivan: Great. Thanks.

4 You know, both in my capacity here and in -- General,  
5 as you know, in my Reserve duties -- spent a lot of time  
6 focused on this issue. And just recently, within the last 6  
7 months, there's both been, kind of, exercises, kind of, at  
8 the very large scale, you know, the counter-WMD SINC  
9 conference, and then, more tactical in nature, the Bronze  
10 RAM exercise, are there -- do you have after-actions and,  
11 kind of, lessons learned from those operations, that are  
12 either classified or unclassified, that you could share with  
13 the committee, that, kind of -- again, so we're having good  
14 visibility on how things are developing, what you see as  
15 strengths and weaknesses?

16 General Osterman: Yes, Senator. We definitely have  
17 the after-actions. And we use those to feed, you know,  
18 successive iterations. In the case of the field exercises  
19 there, we obviously adjust those in stride, based on, you  
20 know, emerging threats that are out there. So, probably not  
21 best that I say those here. And I -- you know, in a closed  
22 session or --

23 Senator Sullivan: Yeah;.

24 General Osterman: -- afterwards, we could get the  
25 classified information to you.

1           Senator Sullivan: Great.

2           And then, I'll just -- and, Madam Chair, on the North  
3 Korean threat and the network that they've developed, you  
4 know, there's a lot of us who are, you know, very curious on  
5 how much -- and I've asked a lot of the intel community on  
6 this issue -- but, how much the North Korean proliferation  
7 network has helped with regard to not only what they're  
8 looking at, in terms of proliferation, but how -- the  
9 advances they've made, particularly with regard to  
10 intercontinental ballistic missile testing. You know, it's  
11 hard for some of us to believe that that's all organic  
12 advancements. Because they've clearly made a lot of  
13 advancements, not only on the nuclear side, but on the  
14 missile side. Do we have a sense -- and, again, maybe it's  
15 better for a classified session -- are they getting help on  
16 the outside with regard to how quickly they're advancing?  
17 And are we confident that our networks are able to battle  
18 their networks on a country that almost certainly --  
19 certainly has a record of proliferation, but I think we  
20 should -- we would be fools if we weren't assuming that  
21 they're going to try to continue to proliferate, even with  
22 this very strong, kind of, sanctions net around them.

23           Mr. Rapuano: Senator, I would simply say, in open  
24 session, that this is something that we and the rest of the  
25 intelligence community are intensely focused upon. And I --

1 and that's probably all I can say here.

2 Senator Sullivan: Okay. Well, I'm glad you're  
3 intensely focused on it.

4 Thank you.

5 Madam Chair.

6 Senator Ernst: Thank you.

7 Senator Heinrich.

8 Senator Heinrich: General Osterman, I wanted to ask  
9 you: Obviously, ISIS has lost, geographically been  
10 defeated, but would you still consider them a WMD threat,  
11 even in that scenario? Because, obviously, this is about  
12 talent as much as anything, and intellectual capacity.  
13 What's your analysis of that at this point?

14 General Osterman: Senator, I -- my analysis is, yes,  
15 they are still as threat, to put it simply. Really, when we  
16 look at pathways, we're looking at intent, infrastructure,  
17 and expertise, to your point, production, weaponization,  
18 delivery systems, and use. And they've demonstrated not  
19 only that capability over time, but, even though the -- as  
20 they lose the geographic caliphate, that those individuals  
21 that have the technical knowledge and, frankly, the level at  
22 which they were working, and have been working, is not one  
23 that, you know, would -- by loss of that geographic  
24 caliphate, that it would undermine their ability to continue  
25 to pursue weapons-of-mass-destruction --

1 Senator Heinrich: Yeah.

2 General Osterman: -- capability.

3 Senator Heinrich: Secretary Rapuano, one of our  
4 greatest challenges in countering, particularly, W- --  
5 biological WMD is being able to, at scale, develop vaccines  
6 and other potential specialized medicines and  
7 pharmaceuticals for our troops or for populations that are  
8 impacted by those. And, you know, a good example is, when  
9 Ebola began to emerge, there was a DOD vaccine that hadn't  
10 gone through the FDA full process, but there's not an  
11 obvious way to scale those up in a for-profit pharmaceutical  
12 company, in many cases, and we haven't found partners to do  
13 that. Have you thought about how to address this so that we  
14 don't get caught behind the eight ball, the way that we did  
15 with the Ebola crisis?

16 Mr. Rapuano: Yes, Senator. We work very closely with  
17 HHS -- BARDA, over at HHS -- DHS, to look at biothreats, in  
18 general, including naturally occurring, to sync our research  
19 with them to ensure that we're covering the full landscape  
20 of what's naturally occurring and what perhaps could be  
21 intensified or developed for malevolent use. So, we're  
22 looking at ways that we can get quick production, just in  
23 time. But, that's very difficult, because you need that  
24 base, in terms of that manufacturing base.

25 Senator Heinrich: Right.

1           Mr. Rapuano: We've done that in certain areas. In  
2 other areas, it's been more challenging. But, that's a  
3 priority. And that's a priority that's also reflected in  
4 the still draft, but almost complete, National Biodefense  
5 Strategy.

6           Senator Heinrich: I look forward to seeing that,  
7 because it seems to me that, you know, setting bioweapons  
8 aside for a moment, even with just zoonotic outbreaks, that  
9 we typically have not had the capacity to be able to  
10 manufacture things. We may know, through research, what  
11 would or might work, but getting that to scale in any sort  
12 of meaningful way, we just -- we don't have a mechanism to  
13 do that right now.

14          Mr. Rapuano: Absolutely.

15          Senator Heinrich: I've got a few seconds left, and  
16 then I'll turn it over to my colleagues. The -- can you  
17 talk just a little bit, from either of you, on -- talking  
18 about how communities collaborate and leverage relative  
19 strengths across the counter-WMD mission, in terms of: How  
20 do you bring all the different talents that different  
21 agencies and labs and et cetera have together? You  
22 mentioned the Fusion Center. Like, what has worked, when it  
23 comes to effectively leveraging the intellectual talent that  
24 is in different places?

25          Mr. Rapuano: So, I'll take a start at that, Senator,

1 and then hand it over to General Osterman.

2       When you look at that spectrum of activities, all the  
3 way from intent and desire for WMD through use and response  
4 to, it is a very wide spectrum. And, when we look at any  
5 one agency, including the Department of Defense -- roles  
6 responsibilities, authorities, capacity, scope -- there's no  
7 one that can do it all. In fact, if you start to specialize  
8 and say, "What tools, techniques, weapons can be applied to  
9 getting most return on investment, in terms of preventing,  
10 denying, responding" -- so, if you start all the way to the  
11 left on the pathways, that's primarily export-control-  
12 driven, intel community, understanding what those pathways  
13 are. So, that's very heavy Department of Commerce,  
14 Department of State. But, there are still opportunities.  
15 So, for example, COCOMs are operating with partner nations.  
16 The militaries of other nations do things very differently  
17 than they do here. Some of them manage export controls.  
18 Developing an understanding of the individuals, characters,  
19 leaders, and what their level of interest is, it all forms a  
20 composite, in terms of our understanding.

21       So, what SOCOM, for example, is doing with the Fusion  
22 Center is just improving that add mixture, that integration  
23 of intelligence, both from a national and a military  
24 intelligence perspective. As you go further right to a  
25 point of use or threatened use to response, our activities



1 get much more kinetic, both in terms of military operational  
2 kinetic as well as the dynamics of a response, which really  
3 needs then to be an integrated whole-of-government response.

4 We're very focused, in the past several years, on  
5 national-scale events, intentional events, nuclear events.  
6 So, that obviously is a major challenge, in terms of: How  
7 do we achieve the unity of effort in crisis from -- in real  
8 time? But, we are making progress in that area, as well.

9 Senator Ernst: Very good.

10 Senator Sullivan.

11 Senator Sullivan: Oh. Okay.

12 Senator Ernst: Yeah.

13 Senator Sullivan: Okay.

14 Senator Ernst: I think we're doing Democrat,  
15 Republican, Democrat.

16 Senator Sullivan: Okay.

17 Senator Ernst: Yeah.

18 Senator Sullivan: Thank you, Madam Chair.

19 I wanted to get back to -- and, again, if we've touched  
20 on this, I apologize -- but, in terms of countries -- so  
21 governments -- that you see as the biggest threats, from the  
22 perspective of counter-WMD threats, which ones would you put  
23 in the top category?

24 Mr. Rapuano: From a strategic perspective, we --

25 Senator Sullivan: Just a country that has capability

1 and has a history of proliferation.

2 Mr. Rapuano: So, I -- obviously, we need to start with  
3 the two countries who have existential WMD capability with  
4 regard to potential impact on the United States. And that's  
5 Russia and China.

6 Senator Sullivan: But, I mean, is there a history of  
7 China, with regard to proliferation, to bad actors; or  
8 Russia, the same? Like, for example, North Korea clearly,  
9 you know, helped Syria build a nuclear reactor, which the  
10 Israelis ended up bombing. Have we seen that kind of  
11 activity from --

12 Mr. Rapuano: When we're looking at those countries  
13 that are of greatest proliferation concern, you know, again,  
14 depending -- if you're talking the dual-use commodity size  
15 -- side of the equation, it is more mixed, but then it's not  
16 entirely always clear where those dual-use items are going,  
17 whether they're going into an -- WMD program, potentially,  
18 or a conventional program. But, Iran and Syria are two very  
19 significant nonproliferation actors, in terms of  
20 proliferating technologies. Iran has done it. There are a  
21 number of other countries that we have concerns and issues  
22 with that we would probably be better handling in closed --

23 Senator Sullivan: And North Korea, of course?

24 Mr. Rapuano: And North Korea, of course.

25 Senator Sullivan: Let me ask another question related

1 to that.

2 Mr. Rapuano: Although, just on the point of North  
3 Korea, I wouldn't say in the context of proliferating WMD,  
4 per se. The dual-use piece is a lot more gray.

5 Senator Sullivan: Well, they've built the reactor in  
6 Syria. That's about as dramatic as it gets, isn't it?

7 Mr. Rapuano: So, it is a concern, but, really,  
8 depending on how you want to draw the threshold of, "Are  
9 they knowingly and deliberately looking to provide WMD  
10 capability to another actor?" -- again, that's better left  
11 to a closed session.

12 Senator Sullivan: I had once heard a -- I'll just  
13 describe it as a senior national security official -- say  
14 that the JCPOA -- the Iran nuclear deal with the United  
15 States -- was -- had enabled us to kind of take our eye off  
16 that proliferation threat, because of the fact of the  
17 agreement. That's not the current view of the U.S. military  
18 or others, is it, General?

19 Mr. Rapuano: That is not.

20 Senator Sullivan: Mr. Secretary?

21 General Osterman: I guess I -- from --

22 Senator Sullivan: It was a shocking statement that I  
23 heard. I actually couldn't believe it, where somebody had  
24 mentioned, "Well, because we have the agreement now," which  
25 I was very opposed to, "we don't have to look at them so

1 much with regard to a proliferation nuclear-development  
2 problem." I think that's -- I think that's just incorrect,  
3 and I just wanted to get that out there.

4 Mr. Rapuano: You're correct, that --

5 Senator Sullivan: So, both of you, that --

6 Mr. Rapuano: -- that is not the view of this  
7 administration.

8 Senator Sullivan: Okay. Or the U.S. military as part  
9 of the administration.

10 Mr. Rapuano: Or the U.S. military.

11 Senator Sullivan: Let me ask one final question. With  
12 regard -- we had Secretary Mattis testify in front of the  
13 full committee yesterday on the National Defense strategy,  
14 which I think he got a lot of bipartisan compliments on for  
15 the thoughtfulness of the document, for what its focus is.  
16 But, in particular, one of the areas of focus in the  
17 document is the emphasis on our allies with regard to our  
18 National Security Strategy. And in this effort, the ally  
19 participation with regard to counter-WMD would seem to me  
20 really important. Do you -- are we getting cooperation?  
21 And do we have regular deep consultations with our NATO  
22 allies or other bilateral allies who have similar  
23 capabilities that we have, in terms of counter-WMD? Or is  
24 there more that we can do to help encourage some of these  
25 important countries to coordinate more with our counter-WMD

1 efforts?

2 Mr. Rapuano: So, we have a variety of programs -- I  
3 mentioned the CTR -- but a number of proliferation programs,  
4 where we're developing capacity, on the part of allies, to  
5 operate in CBRN environments. We're assisting them, in  
6 terms of understanding dual-use commodities and the  
7 potential risks. We're working with them, for example, in  
8 the maximum pressure campaign, with regard to illicit  
9 shipments to North Korea, ship-to-ship transfers. So, we  
10 are very active. The Secretary is very serious about  
11 partnerships being a critical element. It's -- from the  
12 Secretary, you've heard it from him -- lethality,  
13 partnerships, and reform. And that partnership component of  
14 our WMD approach is a mainstay.

15 Senator Sullivan: Right. Thank you.

16 Thank you, Madam Chair.

17 Senator Ernst: Senator Shaheen.

18 Senator Shaheen: Thank you, Madam Chair.

19 So, I wanted to follow up on that a little bit, because  
20 I understand that we're a participant under the  
21 Proliferation Security Initiative, and that that works with  
22 our international partners to interdict shipments of WMD-  
23 related items. Can you talk about that a little more than  
24 you just did with Senator Sullivan? And also, talk about  
25 its importance in addressing situations like North Korea, in

1 terms of the potential to interdict shipments of nuclear-  
2 related materials.

3 Mr. Rapuano: Yes, Senator. The Proliferation Security  
4 Initiative is not an operational coordination process. It's  
5 really about developing a common understanding and  
6 prioritization of proliferation consequences and impacts,  
7 and working together. What flows from that oftentimes are  
8 operational coordination. For example, the hail and queries  
9 of ships at sea. But that's not done with NPSI, per se.  
10 It's more about having that worldwide cooperation,  
11 discussing, agreeing conceptually; but actual operational  
12 coordination happens bilaterally in small groups. And  
13 another topic that would be best addressed in a closed  
14 hearing.

15 Senator Shaheen: So, with respect to its importance in  
16 addressing the situation in North Korea, can you speak to  
17 that in this open session?

18 Mr. Rapuano: Simply to say that we have a growing  
19 number of partners and allies who are looking to cooperate  
20 with us on addressing illicit shipments, including ship-to-  
21 ship.

22 Senator Shaheen: And does that include states like  
23 Russia and China?

24 Mr. Rapuano: Well, I just wouldn't go into detail, in  
25 this session, talking about individual relationships and

1 agreements that -- at this point.

2 Senator Shaheen: General Osterman, as you have both  
3 pointed out, we have a multitude of threats of WMD around  
4 the world. Can you talk about how our military assesses the  
5 severity of each threat and the potential resources that it  
6 would require to respond?

7 General Osterman: Yes, Senator. There's -- I kind of  
8 described that pathway framework earlier. Most of the  
9 assessments are addressed in our functional campaign  
10 planning. So, in other words, we look at it from a wide  
11 variety of criteria, from their -- you know, what is their  
12 intent, what is their ability, all the way through that.  
13 And then, really, from a transregional perspective, some of  
14 that threat is, you know, how are they looking to work this  
15 in a transregional fashion? Are they exporting? Is it, you  
16 know, a singular small node? Is it -- what are the  
17 viability of chemicals that they may be capable of  
18 producing, for example? Or, as was mentioned earlier, the  
19 biological-agent aspect of things, et cetera. So, that's  
20 basically how we get into the assessments of that risk.

21 And, really, what we do is, we define that  
22 prioritization, if you will, of threats, and then, as I  
23 mentioned, matrix that with the actors that are out there to  
24 kind of come up with recommendations, up through the  
25 Department, about: How do we prioritize, and how do we set

1 policy, you know, for those? But, that's really about it.  
2 Most of that's based on our intelligence and our technical  
3 means of looking at things. And we translate that  
4 internally, just to make sure that we have the response and  
5 protective-force capability within the military to operate  
6 in that environment and/or, you know, counter the particular  
7 WMD we may be working with.

8 Senator Shaheen: And you were talking -- Senator  
9 Heinrich, earlier, raised the question of ISIS and whether  
10 they continue to have the capacity to inflict major damage  
11 through WMD. You talked about the -- and we've all read  
12 about the reduction of their caliphate, and that they're on  
13 the run. There have been several news reports recently that  
14 have talked about the fact that they -- there are  
15 significant numbers of ISIS fighters who have gone  
16 underground and are reappearing in other places, and have  
17 the potential to reorganize. And, since we saw that in  
18 Syria, and that's how ISIS reconstituted itself from al  
19 Qaeda, what are we doing about that? And how much of a  
20 concern is that?

21 General Osterman: Senator, what we're doing with that  
22 is that, even though the writ-large ISIS has a number of  
23 people that are basically moving to counterinsurgency -- or  
24 to an insurgency type of mode, or whatever, the actual  
25 number of individuals that are associated with WMD



1 production -- and a -- this goes back to your definitional  
2 question about "What is WMD?" You know, the ability to put,  
3 you know, low toxicity into something, is that really WMD?  
4 So, it's a very, very finite technical capability and human-  
5 capital issue. So, it's -- and they are generally not  
6 front-line fighters. They're -- these are -- they are folks  
7 that were not necessarily easy to track, but they're ones  
8 that we've been working on for a number of years, here, and  
9 have ideas where they are, if we haven't already, you know,  
10 basically, taken them off the battlespace.

11 So, that's where my concern is and where we watch very  
12 closely, again, through the transregional approaches, to  
13 make sure that they're not leaving that area of operations  
14 and perhaps then becoming an export or, as we term it, an  
15 ex-ops threat to the United States, proper.

16 Senator Shaheen: Thank you.

17 Thank you, Madam Chair.

18 Senator Ernst: I believe we have time for one more  
19 brief round of questions. So, if we can just maybe ask one  
20 final question in this last round, and then we'll wrap our  
21 subcommittee hearing.

22 And I appreciate, Mr. Secretary, the discussion about  
23 the different agencies that you interact with, whether it's  
24 Department of Energy, Homeland Security, other entities.  
25 Being the junior Senator from the great State of Iowa, one

1 agency that I did not hear was the USDA. And one thing that  
2 we don't often discuss is the fact that, yes, we want to  
3 protect our human capital, but part of that is also  
4 protecting our feedstocks here in the United States. And we  
5 have had an active discussion, in the Ag Committee, about  
6 offshore vaccine banks for things like foot-and-mouth  
7 disease that would impact agriculture at large with  
8 livestock, other diseases that could be introduced into  
9 plant varieties of agriculture. What are the discussions,  
10 when it comes to working on -- with the USDA and protecting  
11 agriculture?

12 Mr. Rapuano: Thank you very much, Senator. That was a  
13 major omission on my part. Agriculture is the lead Federal  
14 agency --

15 Senator Ernst: Okay, thank you.

16 Mr. Rapuano: -- for threats to agriculture, livestock.  
17 And they play a very important role, because that is a  
18 critical commodity, in terms of our economy and our  
19 population's needs. So, they are part of that team, and a  
20 core member of that team, helping evaluate potential threats  
21 to agriculture, and developing approaches either to  
22 forestall or respond to events that threaten U.S. ag.

23 Senator Ernst: Okay. I appreciate that. Thank you  
24 very much.

25 And Senator Heinrich.

1 Senator Heinrich: Thank you, Madam Chair.

2 Secretary Rapuano, you mentioned the draft National  
3 Biodefense Strategy that was actually required back in the  
4 FY-2017 NDAA. And a number of members of this committee,  
5 including the Chair and the Ranking Member of the full  
6 committee, have been sort of waiting with bated breath for  
7 that. What is the holdup? And when will we see that  
8 document, do you think?

9 Mr. Rapuano: So, that is at the White House. We've  
10 been participating in the NSC and DHS-led review of the  
11 biostrategy. I met with the Director and the NSC staff, 2  
12 weeks ago, on that topic. To my understanding, it is just  
13 about there, but --

14 Senator Heinrich: Okay.

15 Mr. Rapuano: -- I don't have the latest --

16 Senator Heinrich: Because we're --

17 Mr. Rapuano: -- and I'm not --

18 Senator Heinrich: And the reason being, we're hoping  
19 to use that for the FY-2019 NDAA. So --

20 Mr. Rapuano: Absolutely.

21 Senator Heinrich: -- the sooner, the better.

22 Mr. Rapuano: Understood.

23 Senator Ernst: Senator Sullivan.

24 Senator Sullivan: Thank you, Madam Chair.

25 And, gentlemen, I just want to ask one final question

1 on interagency cooperation, which I'm sure -- I think we all  
2 would agree is really essential to defeating the networks  
3 that you're -- the proliferation networks that you're  
4 focused on.

5 Do you see that there is, in terms of this mission,  
6 sufficient cooperation between, say, the intel community,  
7 DOD, SOCOM, Department of Energy, Department of Ag, and  
8 others? Or are there statutory improvements that we could  
9 help you with that could help make sure that the mission and  
10 the interagency coordination is not stovepiped, and it  
11 brings together all the agencies?

12 Mr. Rapuano: So, Senator, I don't see any statutory  
13 obstacles. And, in my experience, the interagency community  
14 working CWMD is very collaborative, works very well  
15 together. We are constantly looking for ways we can improve  
16 the process and focus and prioritize those threats that are  
17 most extant to us. Also, looking ahead at evolving  
18 technology and actors to better understand where the most  
19 significant threats will come from. That's part of the  
20 great work that SOCOM is doing in their new coordinating  
21 authority role for the COCOMs. So, we're -- I would just,  
22 speaking for myself, from my perspective, say that we're on  
23 the right road, but we definitely have room to improve, and  
24 we're moving out.

25 Senator Sullivan: Thank you.

1           General Osterman:  Senator, if I could onto that.

2           I -- with all the different functional areas and  
3 different units and everything else I've worked with in the  
4 military, to be honest with you, entering the counter-WMD  
5 realm here, I've never found a community that works more  
6 closely together.  It's literally an open door everywhere  
7 you go, from not only a -- an interagency, but also an IC  
8 perspective, and then also from an allied perspective.

9           So, some of those tangible examples are routinely  
10 meeting with the various intel agencies affiliated with  
11 this.  And there are some organizations collaboratively  
12 working on tools and intel assessments, as well as getting  
13 tangible technical means on certain things.

14           From an allied perspective, that question earlier, we  
15 actually bring in allied partners to our twice-a-year Global  
16 SINC Conference that come in there to participate and sit in  
17 as participating members.

18           So, it really is a -- in my view, a tremendous  
19 community.  And, frankly, just having forums to bring them  
20 together, which is a big responsibility on SOCOM as a  
21 coordinating authority, to be able to convene those  
22 meetings, bring everyone together, and then get concerted  
23 effort in a particular direction, based on departmental  
24 guidance, has actually -- that hasn't been the problem.  You  
25 know, it's -- everybody's willing to help.  It's just trying

1 to -- getting everything moving in the same direction. And  
2 very, very positive responses, so far.

3 Senator Sullivan: Great.

4 Thank you.

5 Senator Ernst: Well, thank you.

6 I'd like to thank my colleagues and Senator Heinrich  
7 for coordinating this meeting for us today.

8 As well, Secretary and General, thank you for your  
9 wonderful expertise and your commitment to the men and women  
10 of our uniformed services, as well as our civilian  
11 population citizens of the great United States, for all that  
12 you do. We look forward to seeing how SOCOM progresses  
13 during this transition, and we look forward to working with  
14 you on any initiatives that you deem necessary. So, thank  
15 you very much for joining us today.

16 And we will conclude this subcommittee meeting.

17 [Whereupon, at 3:40 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

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