

**Senate Armed Services Committee**  
**Advance Policy Questions for General David W. Allvin, USAF**  
**Nominee for Appointment to be Chief of Staff of the Air Force**

**Duties**

**Section 9033 of title 10, U.S. Code, describes the duties and functions of the Chief of Staff of the Air Force.**

**1) What is your understanding of the duties and responsibilities of the Chief of Staff of the Air Force?**

The Chief of Staff of the Air Force (CSAF) is directly responsible to the Secretary of the Air Force and performs duties subject to the Secretary's authority, direction, and control. CSAF is responsible for providing properly organized, trained, and equipped air forces to support combatant commanders in their mission accomplishment. CSAF oversees members and organizations across the United States Air Force, advising the Secretary on plans and recommendations, and, acting as an agent of the Secretary, implementing plans upon approval. If confirmed as the CSAF, I will work very closely with the Secretary of the Air Force and Chief of Space Operations to ensure the Department's ability to rapidly provide forces tailored to meet the needs and objectives of our combatant commanders.

**2) What background and experience, including joint duty assignments, do you possess that you believe qualify you to perform these duties?**

I have had several relevant and meaningful assignments that I believe speak to my qualifications. In my current capacity as the USAF Vice Chief of Staff, I am intimately familiar with the processes and activities within the Air Staff. I not only advise the current CSAF on key issues, but also often represent him in Joint, interagency, and international engagements if he is unable to attend. I have also served in key roles in the EUCOM staff and twice on the Joint Staff, including as the Director of Strategy, Plans, and Policy. As a strategist and planner on the Air Staff from 2013-2015, I led a team that delivered the Air Force Strategic Vision, the Air Force Future Operating Concept, and Strategic Master Plan, which required detailed knowledge of both the institutional and operational elements of the Department. In my first Joint Staff assignment, I was a core member of the Quadrennial Defense Review team, and gained an appreciation for the integration of Services and the Joint Staff into OSD to develop a coherent National Defense Strategy. My command experience is broad, having led units in missions from aerial refueling to command and control to training, including as commander of a NATO training and advising wing in Afghanistan.

**3) Do you meet the joint duty requirements for this position?**

Yes

**4) Do you believe that there are any steps that you need to take to enhance your ability to perform the duties and responsibilities of the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, particularly in regard to serving as a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and assisting the Secretary of the Air Force in performing certain acquisition-related functions?**

At this time, I do not see any necessary steps required to enhance my ability to perform the CSAF duties. I believe my experience as the VCSAF, as well as the time I served as the Joint Staff Director for Strategy, Plans, and Policy (J5) have enabled me to develop significant relevant skills. This, along with my role as a member of the Joint Requirements Oversight Council (JROC) have provided invaluable experience. With regard to acquisition-related functions, if confirmed I will work with the Secretary of the Air Force, the Assistant Secretaries, and the Chief of Space Operations on matters affecting the acquisition of resources needed to train and equip the air and space forces.

**5) If confirmed, what innovative ideas would you consider providing to the Secretary of the Air Force for enhancing the organization, training, and equipping of the Air Force?**

If confirmed, I will continue to work closely with the Secretary of the Air Force to sustain the momentum we have in our Air Force, and leverage our innovative thinking in the following areas:

1. Force Presentation and Force Generation. The USAF has embarked on the path to optimize how we provide our forces to the Combatant Commands in times of competition and conflict. The goal is to maximize available combat power, while enabling the ability to both sustain the tempo in peacetime and surge appropriately in times of conflict. This is an endeavor that is in its early stages, and if confirmed, will be one of my key priorities.
2. Force Design. The USAF has made great strides recently in moving from general concepts to initiating work on developing the capabilities to enable those concepts in order to dominate in the future strategic environment—one that will prove orders of magnitude more difficult than even those we face today. Secretary Kendall has enabled focus for developing those capabilities through the lens of Operational Imperatives. Refining a force design that optimizes these capabilities and enables the USAF to provide the most lethal and relevant combat capabilities to meet the threat will be critical to our success. This design includes proposed size, shape, and composition.
3. Organizational Design. If “form follows function,” then our USAF organizational structure and processes should align with the manner in which we generate and present forces, as well as the Force Design that supports these activities. Additionally, the organization should adapt to the changing environment which demands agility and speed in decisions and action; more data-driven decisions; speed-to-ramp with cutting edge capabilities; and the ability to off-ramp ideas that aren’t delivering even as we accelerate the on-ramp of those with promise. Evaluating innovative options for redesigning our USAF organizational structure has great value.

4. Training Transformation. The pace at which technology is transforming the way people learn is amazing. The opportunities to provide more learner-centric environments, individualized training that can adapt to differences in which students take in and process information, and augmented reality/gamification are just a few areas in which we can gain advantage. Pursuit of these types of technologies and methods serves at least two purposes. First, it creates a more ready and capable Airman in less time, which is something our Nation should expect from its Air Force. Second, it serves to increase the likelihood we can continue to recruit and retain America's best as they see their USAF remains on the cutting edge of technology.
5. Talent Management. We have a dynamic workforce, and many in our USAF formation have both talent and passion to thrive in important areas that may not naturally align with our career development construct. Developing innovative ways to continue to ensure that talent can remain focused on key USAF challenges for which they may be uniquely suited, while ensuring we reward and incentives them to stay requires innovative approaches, and I believe this is a goal worthy of focused attention.

**6) What are your goals, if confirmed, for the transformation of the Air Force to meet new and emerging threats?**

The Department of the Air Force has charted a path to the future that appreciates the threats we face now and into the future, the challenging environments within which we face them (strategic, fiscal and otherwise). I believe this path is likely not 100% correct as the future is difficult to predict, but it is on the right vector. One of the biggest challenges to success in front of us is *time*. We can ill-afford to spend excess time to perfect things for which we may not truly control. With this in mind, my goal is to *follow through*. In order to adjust on the move, we must be on the move, and follow through on the initiatives/approaches we have already begun. This applies in several areas:

1. Follow through on our commitment to the NDS. We must maintain focus on recapitalizing the nuclear force. We must also continue to develop the capabilities that not only support our Joint Warfighting Concept, but are integrated with the other Services in specific areas of command and control, logistics, fires, and information advantage.
2. Follow through on modernization. This means constant attention on balancing the risk of readiness today with readiness tomorrow. In order to enable this, we must be able to "see ourselves," which enables data-driven decision-making.
3. -Follow through on force generation/presentation. Continuing to refine our ability to get Airmen to the fight faster and with more combat capability not only helps our joint force prepare for conflict, but also sends a powerful deterrent message to our potential adversaries.
4. Follow through on force design/organizational design. Force design provides the ability to get the most effectiveness out of our capabilities and ensures we remain focused on the USAF's contribution to joint warfighting, specifically against the pacing challenge. Organizational design is necessary to sustain the DAF's institutional responsibilities, appropriate for the new environment.

5. Follow through for our Airmen. We will continue to demand much from our Airmen. We owe them follow through on our commitment to provide quality of life and quality of service in return. This includes relentless pursuit of safe and affordable housing, access to quality health care and education, sufficient child care, and spouse employment opportunities. This also means seeking to knock down barriers to Service while demanding internal accountability and adherence to standards. In short, it means following through on all we can do to enable all Airmen to reach their full potential.

**In addition to the duties enumerated in Section 9033, it provides that the Chief of Staff shall perform such other military duties as are assigned to him by the President, the Secretary of Defense, or the Secretary of the Air Force.**

**7) In light of the lines of effort set forth in the 2022 National Defense Strategy (NDS), what other military duties do you anticipate the Secretary of Defense or the Secretary of the Air Force would assign to you, if confirmed?**

The 2022 National Defense Strategy provides clear guidance and intent for DoD to tackle the challenging global security environment in support of national security objectives. If confirmed, I anticipate that I will be asked to continue to aggressively organize, train, and equip the force that can enable our Joint Warfighting Concept. I anticipate there will also be an increased emphasis on integrating each of the Services' concepts and capabilities even more tightly—specifically as it relates to critical joint warfighting functions such as command and control. As speed, agility, and resilience become elevated in their importance with the changing character of war, I anticipate that, if confirmed, I will be expected to work closely with all other Joint Chiefs to ensure this increased alignment. In addition, I expect that the theme of integrated deterrence will become increasingly important, and if confirmed, I anticipate my role in engaging with our Allies and partners will grow in importance.

**8) If confirmed, what duties and responsibilities would you assign to the Vice Chief of Staff of the Air Force?**

If confirmed, I would work with Secretary Kendall to establish appropriate duties and responsibilities for the next Vice Chief of Staff of the Air Force, which would include various aspects of presiding over the Air Staff; working with the Joint Chiefs of Staff; and assisting in organizing, training, and equipping the Air Force's Regular, Guard, and Reserve forces, and civilian employees to further the legacy of innovation and success and ensure we remain the greatest Air Force the world has known.

**The Joint Chiefs of Staff**

**Section 921 of the FY17 NDAA made changes to section 151 of title 10, U. S. Code, concerning the service of members of the Joint Chiefs (other than the Chairman) as military advisors to the President, the National Security Council, the Homeland Security Council, and the Secretary of Defense.**

**9) What is your assessment of the authorities of, and process by which members of the Joint Chiefs (other than the Chairman) provide military advice and opinions to the President, the National Security Council, the Homeland Security Council, and civilian leadership of the Department of Defense (DOD)?**

At this point, I am not in a position to make a thorough assessment. As the Vice Chief of Staff, I have witnessed, and occasionally participated in the process in support of the CSAF, and have found the process to be inclusive and the authorities sufficient for providing advice. If confirmed, I will be in a position to assess the sufficiency of the authorities and process for providing military advice and opinions to the President, the National Security Council, the Homeland Security Council, and the Secretary of Defense.

**10) If confirmed, would you commit to provide your best military advice to the President, National Security Council, Homeland Security Council, and civilian leadership of the Department of Defense, even when your advice and opinions might differ from those of the Chairman or the other members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff?**

Yes. If confirmed as the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, it will be my duty to present my best military advice even when my advice and opinions might differ from those of the Chairman or the other members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

**Use of Military Force**

**11) In your view, what factors should be considered in making recommendations to the President on the use of military force?**

In my view, a recommendation to the President on the proper use of military force is a solemn undertaking that must prioritize the advancement of U.S. national security objectives while remaining grounded in domestic law and policy, as well as applicable international law. Advice on the use of military force must weigh the potential risk to U.S. forces and our allies and partners against strategic risk and likelihood of success.

**Major Challenges and Priorities**

**12) What is your vision for the Air Force of today? For the Air Force of the future?**

The United States Air Force of today is a force that stands behind its mission statement: *“Fly, Fight, and Win . . . Airpower Anytime, Anywhere.”* This USAF understands that we are at our best when we are part of an integrated warfighting team, leveraging the strengths of each Service, understanding they will apply differently in different environments. It is an Air Force that recognizes the tension between meeting today’s readiness requirements and appropriately investing in modernization, so that we do not pass a broken—or breaking—Air Force to those who follow. It fosters a culture of innovation to address this tension and unleashes the potential of our Airmen to meet challenges in unexpected and effective ways.

The vision for tomorrow's United States Air Force is one that has realized the transformation journey upon which we're currently embarked. While recognizing that our enduring core functions (global strike, air superiority, ISR, Rapid Global Mobility, and Command & Control) remain indispensable to the joint fight, it will have evolved to ensure mission has primacy over function, as the dynamic environment demands agility to adapt to multiple thinking adversaries and ever-advancing technologies. The US Air Force of the future will have a more closely integrated Total Force—optimized to deliver the most combat effective fighting force in a sustainable way. It is also a force that continues to attract the best of America's youth as an institution that not only serves a noble cause, but does so with mission-focused, team-oriented culture that is underpinned by dignity and respect.

**13) What is your vision for how the Air Force and the Space Force will work with each other?**

My vision is that the relationship between our two Services continues to be as strong as it is now. The value of having both Services under one Department in the "One Team, One Fight" mentality helps ensure this cooperation will endure. There are interdependencies and synergies that make the enduring working relationship between our two Services important. In addition, the logistical and administrative support the USAF provides to the USSF, to comply with Congressional direction to avoid duplication, continues to be a tie that binds the two Services.

**14) What do you consider to be the most significant challenges you will face if confirmed to be the Chief of Staff of the Air Force?**

At every point in our existence, the USAF has faced challenges—some acute and some enduring, but none insurmountable. I consider that among the most significant challenges I will face, if confirmed include: continued fiscal challenges in developing and fielding the US Air Force the Nation needs to confront the rapidly advancing threats; the associated risk we will incur with some of our foundational underpinnings of the force (infrastructure, IT, sustaining old weapons systems, obsolete training tools); and challenges recruiting and retaining talent.

**15) What plans do you have for addressing each of these challenges, if confirmed?**

The fiscal challenge remains the most prevalent. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Secretary of the Air Force to remain focused on the most critical capabilities in the right capacity to meet the threat, and making the tough decisions to terminate those with less promise. I will also continue seeking innovative ways to manage an aging fleet that continues to be more costly and less relevant. If confirmed, I will work closely with Congress to articulate the value proposition behind the critical capabilities needed to win, while advocating for stable funding to enable the Department to get the most combat capability out of every taxpayer dollar.

On recruiting talent, if confirmed, I will continue work with the Secretary of the Air

Force, other Services and OSD to improve how we reach all the talent resident in our country, and make data-driven, risk-informed decisions on accessions policy. I will also work with the institutions in the recruiting system to improve the bureaucratic speed of processing potential recruits, so we don't unnecessarily lose quality talent.

**16) Given the major challenges you identified above, what other priorities would you set for your term as Chief of Staff of the Air Force, if confirmed?**

If confirmed, I will also prioritize communication—with our Airmen, DoD, Congress, and other stakeholders—to ensure we remain aligned and approach the changes we must execute with a common understanding and a suitable sense of urgency. In support of our Secretary, I will also make it a priority to examine our institution to ensure that we are optimized for great competition in how we organize, train, and equip the force. I will also work to ensure our Airmen and families can work and live in an environment of trust, dignity and respect as we field the most lethal fighting force in history.

**Civilian Control of the Military**

**17) If confirmed, what specific actions would you take to ensure that your tenure on the Joint Chiefs of Staff epitomizes the fundamental requirement for civilian control of the Armed Forces embedded in the U.S. Constitution and other laws?**

If confirmed, I will continue to serve in a manner befitting the goals, ideals, and mandates written into our Constitution and federal laws—one of the most important being the principle of civilian control of the military. As I serve under the elected leadership and their representatives to further our national security interests, I will be thoughtful and candid with my advice and feedback. Furthermore, I will commit to provide all relevant information at my disposal to aid in decision-making. This will include all elements of risk of which I am aware and can articulate.

**18) If confirmed, what specific actions would you take to ensure that the Secretary of Defense and the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy are fully engaged in preparing guidance for and reviewing contingency plans?**

If confirmed, as a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, I will work with my fellow Joint Chiefs and the Chairman to ensure transparency in military planning and routine engagement with the Secretary of Defense and his staff. Continuous constructive dialogue is essential to producing plans that are informed—and therefore improved—by policy insights, guidance, and oversight. Additionally, routine communications on capabilities, risk, and risk mitigation will aid in policy development and coordination.

**19) How would you define effective civilian control of the military? Aside from civilian control of the military via the Executive Branch, please describe the extent to which you believe Congress plays a role in furthering civilian control of our military?**



Effective civilian control of the military requires a functional relationship between the civilian leadership and the military who provide advice and carry out the orders, direction, and guidance of the civilian leadership. This is most effectively done through candid advice from the military, thoughtful deliberation by the civilian decision-makers, and executable, lawful direction to the military for execution. The Congress plays a key role in this in their access and leverage of advice from military leadership in developing legislation to resource the military, as well as provide consent and guidance for execution of the resources and consent to the President's proposed military leadership.

**20) As a military officer, you take an oath to support and defend the Constitution. How do you balance this obligation with the responsibility to provide your best military advice to civilian leadership, even when that advice may differ from civilian political priorities?**

As a military officer, my responsibility to support and defend the Constitution includes the responsibility to execute policy and guidance directed by our civilian leadership and their representatives. While I have the obligation to provide my military advice to inform civilian leadership of the opportunities and risks associated with the US military executing policy, the political elements of those decisions are not within the purview of my advice. Once decisions are made by civilian leadership, I have a duty to faithfully execute those decisions.

**21) In your view, what is the appropriate role for the Department when supporting law enforcement in state or national emergencies?**

DAF should be prepared to provide support to Civil Authorities, including civilian law enforcement, consistent with the legal limitations on direct DoD involvement in civilian law enforcement activities. Defense Support of Civil Authorities should be considered against military readiness requirements necessary to execute the National Defense Strategies.

**If confirmed as Chief of Staff of the Air Force, you will testify regularly before Congress, and may be asked to comment on partisan political matters.**

**22) What is your view of your responsibility to provide your best military advice to Congress while also ensuring that you and your office remain apolitical, recognizing that you serve as a model for other senior uniformed officers and the entire armed forces?**

Remaining apolitical is a fundamental responsibility to ensure credibility as a military professional in supporting and defending the Constitution. I see no tension between the two mandates of providing the best military advice and remaining apolitical. If confirmed, my advice will continue to be based on my military judgment and experience with respect to risks and opportunities to fulfill my obligation as the Chief of Staff. These risks and opportunities will be based on principles of my profession, and not political or ideological positions or perspectives.



## **2022 National Defense Strategy**

**The 2022 National Defense Strategy (NDS) identified China as the “most consequential strategic competitor and the pacing challenge for the Department” and stated that Russia poses an “acute threat,” as illustrated by its brutal and unprovoked invasion of Ukraine. The NDS also identifies “[m]utually-beneficial Alliances and partnerships” as “an enduring strength for the United States.”**

**23) In your view, does the 2022 NDS accurately assess the current strategic environment, including prioritization among the most critical challenges and enduring threats to the national security of the United States and its allies? Please explain your answer.**

Yes, the 2022 NDS accurately characterizes the PRC as our pacing challenge (demonstrated by unsafe and unprofessional activity in international airspace by the People’s Liberation Army) and the acute threat posed by Russia (demonstrated by Russia’s unprovoked invasion of Ukraine). The 2022 NDS sets strategic priorities, and we remain vigilant in the face of other persistent threats, including those posed by North Korea, Iran, and Violent Extremist Organizations (VEO).

The PRC and Russia increasingly challenge the free and open international order by imposing their authoritarian models beyond their borders and employing misinformation campaigns to change perceptions favorable to their objectives. The PRC’s predatory attempts to weaken U.S. and Western economies highlight the threat it poses to U.S. prosperity and security as a strategic competitor. North Korea and Iran continue to seek weapons of mass destruction and long-range delivery systems through development or purchase. VEOs continue to threaten our security with increasingly sophisticated capabilities.

**24) In your view, does the 2022 NDS correctly specify the priority missions of the DOD and the capabilities by which DOD can achieve its objectives in the context of the current strategic environment? What do you perceive as the areas of greatest risk?**

Yes, the 2022 NDS sets real priorities and properly identifies the most important strategic ends. It provides clear direction to establish a competitive stance against our adversaries, emphasizes the need to maintain credible deterrence, and ensures homeland defense. The NDS also acknowledges that close collaboration with Allies and partners is foundational to U.S. national security interests. Future success will require our collective ability to address challenges the PRC and Russia present, while responsibly managing other threats.

Additionally, the 2022 NDS correctly identifies several key operational areas for modernization to solidify our competitive advantage. Air Force analysis of operational

plans and wargaming scenarios show a need to modernize, develop new operational concepts, and field advanced capabilities to build an Air Force that supports NDS intent.

Lastly, in 2023, General C.Q. Brown signed the Air Force Future Operating Concept (AFFOC), which articulates how the Air Force will execute our Core Functions in the future to win six critical conceptual fights. This document lists several new concepts, attributes, and capabilities we need to further develop, field, and train if we are to succeed in a future fight and deliver airpower to deter, and if necessary, stop aggression by a peer adversary. I welcome the opportunity to engage in a more detailed discussion of risk in a classified forum.

**25) In your view, is the Air Force adequately sized, structured, and resourced to implement the 2022 NDS and the associated operational plans? Please explain your answer.**

The NDS calls for broad and deep change in how we produce and manage military capability. Implementing the NDS requires hard choices and adherence to priorities. Over the past four years, we've made significant progress toward ensuring the Air Force is organized, trained, and equipped to meet the objectives of the 2022 NDS, but more work remains. The Air Force is intensely focused on rebalancing investments to ensure we can defend the United States, modernize our deterrence mission, and be capable of projecting combat airpower against any adversary in the future. Through the implementation of the DAF Operational Imperatives and our force design efforts, we have identified and begun moving out on many of the hard choices required to balance the capability and capacity needed today with developing the force we know we will need tomorrow.

The NDS calls for an overhaul of force development and design to address key operational areas. Although our current structure served us well in the past, the changing character of war and dynamic nature of our external environment requires an increased agility our current organizational structure does not support. It is time to review how we can restructure as part of our modernization efforts. If confirmed, developing and implementing a future force design will be one of my primary focus areas. I am confident the Air Force is on the path to get this right.

**26) If confirmed, how would you address any gaps or shortfalls in the ability of the Air Force to meet the demands placed on it by the 2022 NDS and the operational plans that implement the strategy?**

Building upon the 2018 NDS, the 2022 NDS provides force planning guidance to build strength and capability in key operational areas. Significant work has already been done in developing concepts and capabilities, as well as making investments, to meet the demands of the strategy. If confirmed, I will work to continue programs to recapitalize the intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) and bomber legs of the nuclear triad and continue to implement programs that have been defined by the analysis of the DAF Operational Imperatives.

In addition, through robust analysis and wargaming, we will aggressively engage in a campaign of learning that refines our force design to meet the NDS requirements, as well as the concept-required capabilities relevant to the Joint Warfighting Concept. This analysis will entail not only the “what,” but also the “how” and “how many” to ensure we have the optimal portfolio mix of capabilities to most effectively meet the demands of the NDS.

**27) If confirmed, what changes or adjustments would you advise the Secretary of the Air Force to make in the Air Force’s implementation of the 2022 NDS?**

I fully support Secretary Kendall’s urgent efforts to implement the 2022 NDS. If confirmed, I will continue to support and assess the Air Force’s implementation of the 2022 NDS force planning guidance to build strength and capability in key operational areas. The Air Force has made significant progress to meet the demands of the strategy, including development of relevant concepts and capabilities, investments in key areas, and improved relationships with Allies and partners.

If confirmed, I will continue to implement programs and develop capabilities in support of the Department of the Air Force Operational Imperatives, working closely with our Allies and partners throughout the design process to optimize investments and integrate efforts towards meeting future military challenges. Through robust analysis and wargaming, I will ensure the Air Force applies lessons learned to refine a force design that meets NDS requirements and the concept-required capabilities enabling the Joint Warfighting Concept (JWC). Finally, I will continue to support programs that recapitalize the Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) and bomber legs of the nuclear triad.

**28) Does the Air Force have the requisite analytic capabilities and tools to support you, if confirmed as the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, in developing and implementing the force structure, sizing, and shaping plans required to position the Air Force to execute the operational plans associated with the 2022 NDS? Please explain your answer.**

Yes. The Air Force employs a talented cadre of analysts who leverage cutting-edge wargaming and modeling & simulation tools to design a future force that can succeed in the future strategic environment. These professionals and critical tools, in partnership with industry, enable the Air Force to transform capabilities and concepts of operation into real force sizing, shaping, and composition plans to execute the 2022 NDS. If confirmed, I will build upon current efforts to continuously improve our analytical capabilities, such as modernizing our analytic tools to ensure the entire spectrum of conflict can be analyzed, and developing information sharing processes across Services to accurately portray Joint capabilities in wargaming, modeling, and analysis.

**Overall Readiness of the Air Force**

**29) How would you assess the current readiness of the Air Force—across the domains of materiel and equipment, personnel, and training—to execute the NDS and associated operational plans?**

- The change from two decades of COIN operations to combat against a peer adversary requires time and money to align our force and training to a contested operational environment. This process will include divesting/replacing aging, costly, legacy platforms that are ill-suited to contested environments; modernizing our current fleet where feasible; and developing a new generation of capabilities that will enhance our likelihood of success in the future.
- The Air Force continues to build upon progress made in recent years to both invest in modernization while improving overall readiness across our personnel, equipment and training programs.
- Air Force readiness is maintained at acceptable levels to support combatant commanders worldwide and continues to balance the risk between maintaining current readiness, midterm improvements, and longer-term modernization to be ready for conflict against a peer adversary now and in the future.
- While personnel and training have improved slightly over the past 5 years, we are observing delays in accelerating supply and equipment recovery. Fact of life changes complicate equipment and supply health, and can erode 3% to 4% of weapon system sustainment (WSS) funding gains each year.
- Factors include contract delays, requirement changes, natural disasters and emerging contingency operations.
- Across our readiness portfolio, delays are most acutely felt from trying to resource the Organic Industrial Base and Defense Industrial Base to respond rapidly to readiness requirements.
- The Air Force organic supply chain plays a substantial role in executing flying hours and WSS requirements. Aircraft availability is a key component to readiness recovery, and can be improved through a healthy inventory of parts for consumables and repairs.
- Regarding training infrastructure, modernization and sustainment efforts continue in programs such as JSE, NTTR and JPARC to improve our training environments to replicate the high-end fight and near-peer capabilities.

**30) In your view, what are the priority missions for which *current and future* Air Force forces should be trained and ready in the context of day-to-day activities, as well as for contingencies?**

The Air Force executes five Core Functions to ensure our ability to meet our value proposition to National defense. Air Superiority, Global Strike, Rapid Global Mobility, ISR, and Command and Control are critical to our ability to defend the United States from air, space, and cyber-borne threats, ensure a credible strategic deterrent, and project combat airpower when called upon. This is the Air Force's enduring role. How we execute that role changes over time. One of the things I am most excited about, if confirmed, is bringing the Air Force Future Operating Concept into reality. General

Brown signed this capstone concept, which articulates how the Air Force will execute our Core Functions in the future to win six critical fights. The AFFOC proposes transformational changes to the modes of accomplishing our core functions, but the functions themselves remain fully aligned with the NDS. If confirmed, force design efforts to bring the AFFOC-required capabilities to the warfighter will be one of my top priorities.

**31) In what specific ways has the Air Force improved or not improved its state of readiness across the domains of materiel and equipment, personnel, and training?**

We continue to evaluate, manage, and when appropriate, accept risk in near-term operational readiness across multiple platforms as the Air Force invests in modernization. Risks span across all domains of materiel, equipment, personnel, and training. Real world events and post-Covid operations tempo have improved the training domain, while expectedly, causing a decline in overall equipment readiness. Under investment in foundational readiness accounts, and the impacts of inflation on the buying power of programmed dollars continue to hamper the Air Force's capacity and ability to generate the necessary training and equipment to meet current requirements.

**32) If confirmed, what would you do to restore full spectrum Air Force readiness, and under what timelines?**

I recognize the importance of Full Spectrum Readiness and concur that it is a key priority as we posture our force for potential conflict. While the readiness focus for the last two decades was to counter violent extremism operations, we must continue to shift our focus for conflict with a peer adversary; this effort will be much more difficult and much more expensive than previous readiness endeavors.

One example of this critical readiness shift that I have been personally monitoring is the Joint Simulation Environment (JSE), an advanced multi-domain, synthetic digital test and training range which facilitates the Air Force and Navy training together virtually. If confirmed, the Air Force will continue to strike an appropriate balance between near-term readiness and investing in the future force to support the National Security Strategy and National Defense Strategy. I assure you full spectrum readiness is among my highest priorities.

**Budget**

**33) If confirmed, by what standards would you measure the adequacy of the Air Force budget?**

If confirmed, I would measure the adequacy of Air Force funding by its ability to contribute to effective integrated deterrence, campaign, and build enduring advantages in accordance with the NDS.

**Section 222a of title 10, U.S. Code, provides that not later than 10 days after the President’s submission of the defense budget to Congress, each Service Chief must submit to the congressional defense committees a report that lists, in order of priority, the unfunded priorities of his or her armed force.**

**34) What are your views of this statutory requirement and the utility of unfunded priorities lists?**

If confirmed, I intend to execute in accordance with Congressional direction and submit the annual CSAF Unfunded Priority List in a timely manner to ensure some of our urgent but unfunded programs are considered for funding. The Air Force must make difficult funding decisions and prioritize capabilities that give us a competitive edge in a future high-end conflict.

**35) If confirmed, do you agree to provide your unfunded priorities list to Congress in a timely manner?**

If confirmed, I intend to execute in accordance with Congressional direction and submit the annual CSAF Unfunded Priority List in a timely manner to ensure some of our urgent but unfunded programs are considered for funding.

### **Alliances and Partnerships**

**The 2022 NDS stresses the importance of U.S. alliances and partnerships and considers these relationships a critical strategic advantage.**

**36) If confirmed, what specific actions would you take to strengthen existing U.S. alliances and partnerships, build new partnerships, and leverage opportunities for international cooperation to advance U.S. security interests?**

The United States Air Force’s relationships with our Allies and Partners are vital to America’s national security. If confirmed, I will continue the Air Force’s long-established efforts to develop and maintain strong partnerships across the globe. Using the Air Force’s robust security cooperation enterprise, including foreign military sales, international armaments cooperation, and engagement with my fellow air chiefs, I will ensure we are working with our Allies and Partners to deter aggression and do our part to ensure the continuance of a rules-based international order.

The United States and like-minded nations are engaged in a global strategic competition. Our most significant advantage over our competitors is our ability to operate alongside our Allies and Partners. If confirmed, I will continue to develop programs that produce integrated mobility, combat, and command and control air and space-based capabilities with our international partners.

**37) What are the major challenges for strengthening existing alliances and partnerships or building new ones, including for improving interoperability and**

**shared operational concepts? What steps would you recommend, if confirmed, for overcoming these challenges?**

Mutually beneficial alliances and partnerships are an enduring U.S. strength and are critical to achieving our objectives. The Department of the Air Force seeks to strengthen international relationships and work with our partners to build shared air and space capabilities and capacity. This cooperative endeavor is not without challenges.

Differences in strategic priorities between the U.S. and allies and partners can lead to unrealized expectations and diminished cooperation. To mitigate these differences, we must increase service-to-service level engagement to focus on common operational needs and expand bilateral defense exchanges in research and technology. Additionally clarifying expectations regarding approaches, priorities, and government vs. industry roles early in collaborative programs will also address difference in strategic priorities.

Another challenge we face when working with our allies and partners is differing views over “sensitive” information and the lack of technical collaborative infrastructure to share information. To address this critical issue the Department should implement policies to facilitate more accessible information sharing with allies and partners, while preserving appropriately classified information. At the same time, we must address technological barriers to information sharing and work towards developing a secure collaborative infrastructure between U.S. and partner cyber organizations to discuss classification issues.

To stay globally competitive, we must engage with our allies and partners early in concept and system design and remove barriers to cooperation on fast-evolving technologies. Including allies and partners in key concept development discussions and programs will ensure they are able to appropriately access advanced technologies to strengthen alliances and enable integrated deterrence.

## **Joint Operations**

**Operations are becoming increasingly joint as the Air Force and the Army invest in counter-maritime capabilities, and both air and naval forces continue to develop and implement capabilities to defeat anti-access and area denial (A2/AD) networks.**

**38) Are the Services’ current roles and mission assignments appropriate in light of today’s Joint warfighting requirements? Should certain roles and missions be realigned or divested? Please explain your answer.**

Both the Joint Staff and the Air Force have recently completed and signed new operational concepts for how the Joint Force must operate to deter and, if necessary, defeat an adversary in a highly contested environment. The Joint Warfighting Concept and the Air Force Future Operating Concept describe the need for more interoperability between the services and alongside Allies and partners. While most core missions should remain, we see significant overlap in today’s assignments of base defense, logistics,



space, and cyber operations mission roles between the services. To successfully compete, the Air Force must ensure deconfliction of shared responsibilities and focus capability development on those areas of the Joint Warfighting Concept which require the Air Force's unique core competencies.

**39) Which other Service doctrines and capabilities offer the greatest opportunity for synergy with the Air Force in joint operations?**

The USAF will continue to work closely with the Space Force to describe our operational requirements and ensure the Joint Force has the capabilities they need across the spectrum of conflict. Furthermore, Service, Ally, and Partner interoperability that allows seamless information sharing among all friendly forces will be critical in future operations. All U.S. Services and our Allies recognize the value of data interoperability and are working hard to break down technical barriers. Success here will force adversaries to defend across all domains and will give us powerful advantages on a future battlefield.

**40) What innovative ideas are you considering to increase Service interoperability to accomplish missions and tasks in support of Department of Defense objectives in joint operations?**

The Joint Warfighting Concept (JWC) and the Air Force Future Operating Concept (AFFOC) describe the need for increased interoperability between the Services and alongside Allies and partners. It is critical that the defense innovation ecosystem identify and develop technologies that enhance the Joint Force and maintain our competitive advantage. The Department of the Air Force Operational Imperatives leverage this ecosystem to develop innovative approaches and capabilities that will enhance Service interoperability and information sharing, supporting the DoD's Combined Joint All-Domain Command and Control (CJADC2) effort.

The Advanced Battle Management System (ABMS), along with a resilient Moving Target Engagement architecture in both air and space domains, provides the data necessary to execute command and control capabilities and achieve information and decision advantage over our adversaries. Additionally, the Air Force continues to work with other Services to expand the Joint Simulation Environment, as well as conduct joint and combined wargames, and exercises aimed at enhancing readiness through realistic, challenging multi-domain training scenarios. These efforts aim at significantly improving the interoperability of US military services, preparing warfighters for the high-end fight.

**The Air Force is moving to a disaggregated architecture for Air Battle Management. The Navy, on the other hand, is investing heavily in the E-2D Advanced Hawkeye and P-8 Poseidon for managing operations of naval forces.**

**41) What is your understanding of why the Air Force and the Navy pursuing different strategies?**

The Air Force and the Navy are aligned to the Secretary of Defense and the Chairman of the Joint Chief's vision for Combined Joint All-Domain Command and Control (CJADC2) and battle management. The Air Force is investing in the E-7, beyond line-of-sight communications, moving target engagement at scale and disaggregated ground-based battle management nodes. This multi-domain approach to C2 preserves its resiliency while conducting offensive and defensive missions within the highly contested operating environment outlined by the Joint Warfighting Concept. E-2D and P-8 acquisitions are influenced by the Navy's imperative for fleet defense; however, they perform as nodes in the Navy's architecture the same as Air Force nodes perform in its architecture. Therefore, Air Force investments work toward seamless integration with Navy battle management nodes and sensors to collaboratively manage Joint Force power projection and long-range strike missions. The Air Force and Navy capitalize on lessons learned during Northern Edge, Project Convergence Capstone, and Valiant Shield exercises to drive capability development aligned under CJADC2.

**42) What is your understanding of the Air Force's approach to airborne battle management and how do the Air Force and the Navy intend to execute joint airborne battle management in a high-end fight?**

The Air Force is pursuing a layered, multi-domain approach to provide battle management resiliency, allowing Airmen to conduct operations in permissive and highly contested environments. To meet the Secretary of Defense and the Chairman of the Joint Chief's vision for Combined Joint All-Domain Command and Control (CJADC2), the Air Force and Navy are working together to develop solutions for data connectivity and understanding of battle management decision functions in order to achieve decision advantage in a high-end fight.

To accomplish this, the Air Force and Navy are co-developing a decision advantage framework to enable joint airborne battle management and networking among joint tactical platforms. This will enable battle management nodes to operate as an integrated whole regardless of service, seamlessly shifting and sharing battle management functions across joint battle management nodes to achieve decision superiority and battle management resilience.

**43) How is the Air Force ensuring that the air battle manager career field is sustained between retirement of the Joint Surveillance/Target Attack Radar System fleet and the implementation of the Air Battle Management architecture?**

The DAF is executing the migration of air battle managers to areas where the DAF can best utilize battle management expertise. A new Battle Management node at Robins AFB, GA is re-purposing a portion of the manpower authorizations from the ongoing Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System (JSTARS) divestment. This recapitalization of human capital is part of a more significant evolution of the DAF Ground Theater Air Control System (GTACS) construct into the Tactical Operations Center Family of Systems (TOC FoS). Initially, the battle management node at Robins

AFB will assume the primary GTACS mission in support of USCENTCOM. In future years, this node may have capacity to support multiple combatant commands.

Maintaining current air battle manager manpower levels is necessary for test and experimentation activities to realize the future TOC FoS structure that is still being developed. Operationally, this dovetails with the Distributed Battle Management Node acquisition strategy. Additionally, the career field must be positioned to meet future E-7 Wedgetail manning requirements with the right mix of experience. Currently there are no forecasted force shaping measures that will affect the size of the air battle manager career field.

## **Acquisition**

**In recent National Defense Authorization Acts, Congress expanded and refined the acquisition-related functions of the Chief of Staff of the Air Force.**

**44) If confirmed, how would you assist the Secretary of the Air Force in the performance of certain acquisition-related functions, while ensuring compatibility with the duties and responsibilities of the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics (as established in title 10, U.S. Code, sections 9013 and 9016)?**

If confirmed, I would work closely with the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics to ensure that all recommended requirements have been properly vetted, sourced, and funded. Identifying present and future requirements avoids scope creep which ultimately saves money, manpower and resources. Although our roles vary we all have one common goal which is to provide the warfighter with the necessary capabilities to deter our strategic competitors, and defeat adversaries if deterrence fails.

**45) If confirmed, what actions would you take to improve each of the three aspects of the acquisition process—requirements, acquisition, and budgeting?**

If confirmed, I will continue to put a focus on improving the acquisition process. I will focus on including the warfighter early in the requirements process and making sure we validate our requirements through a robust and data driven process. I will advocate for and use improved modeling and simulating capabilities and digital tools. I will continue to ensure Combatant Commander engagement happens early and often with the acquisition community to define cost, schedule, and performance criteria that meets the warfighter needs and hold our senior leaders accountable for cost, schedule, and performance of programs.

**46) If confirmed, what actions would you propose, if any, to ensure that requirements are realistic, technically achievable, and prioritized?**

If confirmed, I will continue work on developing an Air Force force design that guides our future capability development efforts using robust, data-driven, and strategy/threat-informed analysis. The force design will establish requirements priorities that are aligned with our largest capability gaps while also providing supporting capability development plans that deliver roadmaps from capability demonstration through transition to Programs of Record (POR). This will include the warfighter early in the requirements process.

I will maintain a close working relationship with the Secretary to synchronize our budgetary and warfighter requirements within the force design under the authorities granted by Congress. I will work closely with the Secretary on proposed program requirements changes or acceptance of operational risks required to execute programs to ensure the best value for the taxpayer and capability for the warfighter.

Finally, I will drive alignment between the MAJCOM Commanders and Air Staff to ensure proposed requirements changes are vetted through a validation process that ultimately is aligned with our National Defense Strategy (NDS) and relevant to our Joint Warfighting Concept (JWC).

**47) If confirmed, what specific measures would you recommend to control “requirements creep” in the defense acquisition system?**

If confirmed, I will take an active role in the decision space between cost, schedule, and performance requirements of our major acquisition programs. Our modernization efforts must align with our future Air Force force structure to meet the challenges and threats posed by our strategic competitors. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Secretary on proposed program requirements changes or acceptance of operational risks required to execute programs within cost or schedule constraints to ensure the best value for the taxpayer and capability for the warfighter. Additionally, I will ensure alignment between the MAJCOM Commanders and Air Staff to ensure proposed requirements changes are vetted through a validation process that ultimately is aligned with our National Defense Strategy and relevant to our Joint Warfighting Concept with the aim to minimize cost and schedule impacts to our acquisition programs.

**48) If confirmed, how would you utilize your authority to arrest the exponential escalation in cost that, in recent history, has marked the acquisition life-cycle of Service platforms and weapons systems?**

If confirmed, I will continue to ensure Combatant Commander engagement happens early and often with the acquisition community to define cost, schedule, and performance criteria that meets the warfighter needs and hold our senior leaders accountable for cost, schedule, and performance of programs. My team and I will review and assess existing policy requirements to ensure that they are flexible enough to support a program’s cost, schedule, and performance goals, but structured enough to provide historical data for future procurement efforts. We will seek to triage programs that may become a breeding ground for wasteful spending, by working to develop new and innovative ideas that will

expedite the procurement process and ensure that the warfighter has what they need before they realize they need it.

**49) In your view, in whom should accountability for large-scale acquisition failures and extraordinary cost overruns vest?**

If confirmed, the Secretary and I would work as a team and be fully accountable for acquisition programs. I intend to continue fostering an environment where our program leaders are encouraged to move with deliberate purpose and deliver outcomes at the speed of relevance for our warfighters.

**50) In your view, are there other roles or responsibilities in the acquisition process that should be assigned to the Chief of Staff of the Air Force and the other Service Chiefs, in your view?**

If confirmed as the Chief of Staff, I consider the roles and responsibilities currently assigned to the office to be adequate and sufficient but realize that my approach to these responsibilities may be slightly different. If confirmed as Chief of Staff, I plan to be fluid and agile, interacting with each organization based on their unique needs or circumstances. I would also build strong partnerships with other service Chiefs to exchange ideas and share Lessons Learned for existing capabilities. This collaboration can reduce unnecessary redundancy and improve joint interoperability.

**51) How would you ensure the “process” of programs of record does not limit service investment in portfolios of capabilities or mission threads?**

If confirmed, I would work with the Secretary and the Department to assess, establish, and implement an approach to align budgets to portfolios of capabilities and mission threads. Additionally, I would work with the Secretary to leverage the lessons learned from the initial implementation of the Secretary’s Operational Imperatives to infuse a mission focus across the integrated requirements, acquisition, and budgeting process.

**52) How would you resource enablers (like authorities to operate or data or certification) that Program Managers/Program Executive Officers see as outside of their requirements?**

If confirmed, I will continue to work with the Service Acquisition Executive to focus on improving all aspects of the acquisition process, including those performed by acquisition enablers. My team and I will evaluate opportunities to resource enablers in order to deliver cross-cutting weapons systems, at best value for the taxpayer, at the speed of relevance.

**53) How would you enable processes for the Air Force that empower acquisition professionals and reduce institutional policy barriers to enable cross service requirements development and capabilities discussions?**

If confirmed, I will continue to work with the Service Acquisition Executive to put a focus on improving the acquisition process. In coordination with the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics, my team and I will review and assess existing institutional policy barriers to drive cost, schedule, and performance decision-making to the lowest appropriate risk level. In addition, I will be actively engaged with my counterparts across the other Services to ensure we are delivering cross-cutting capabilities for the Joint force at the best value for the taxpayer.

**A natural tension exists between the objectives of major defense acquisition programs to reduce cost and accelerate schedule and the need to ensure performance meets requirements and specifications—the objective of the test and evaluation function.**

**54) Has the Secretary of the Air Force assigned to the Chief of Staff of the Air Force responsibility for those aspects of the function of research and development relating to test and evaluation for Air Force acquisition programs? If so, how would you exercise this responsibility, if confirmed?**

Yes, SecAF has assigned CSAF aspects of the function of R&D relating to test and evaluation for service Acquisition Programs. If confirmed, I would continue to engage with the Air Force Test Community through AF/TE, Air Force Operational Test and Evaluation Command (AFOTEC), and Air Force Test Center, while coordinating efforts with Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) test and evaluation (T&E) organizations.

**55) What is your assessment of the appropriate balance between the desire to reduce acquisition cycle times and the need to perform adequate test and evaluation?**

Test and evaluation is a critical component to the acquisition lifecycle that ensures our warfighters are given safe and effective weapon systems. Inclusion of test and evaluation processes at the onset of an acquisition program along with milestone decisions informed by critical test and evaluation information will ensure a balance between reduced acquisition cycle times and adequate test and evaluation. Advances in digital engineering and DEVSECOPS approaches to software development provide opportunities to increase “speed to ramp” without increasing risk. If confirmed, I will continue to aggressively pursue avenues to leverage technology in this space while preserving the criteria for adequate test and evaluation.

**56) Under what circumstances, if any, do you believe it appropriate to procure weapon systems and equipment that have not been demonstrated through test and evaluation to be operationally effective, and operationally suitable?**

If there is a clear solution to a capability gap where the system has been demonstrated in a relevant environment, reviewed by acquisition experts and deemed low risk to fielding a capability to the warfighter that is likely to be operationally effective and suitable, dedicated operational test and evaluation could be delayed until after a limited procurement. In addition, in times of extreme national emergency when the absence of a given capability is resulting in excessive combat losses and/or risk of strategic failure, an

appropriate risk assessment may yield a result favorable to procurement/employment ahead of robust testing.

**57) What do you see as the role of the developmental and operational test and evaluation communities with respect to rapid acquisition, spiral acquisition, and other evolutionary acquisition processes?**

Developmental testing can be leveraged to evaluate a system in a controlled matter to either reduce system safety risk or evaluate particular conditions. Operational testing and evaluation allows trained users, familiar with similar systems, to find alternative ways to employ a system in an operationally-relevant environment. Both can be used to de-risk delivery of warfighting capabilities using trained crews in controlled environments to expedite acquisitions. We look forward to developing systems in virtual, relevant, and operationally-relevant environments with partnerships across the Test Enterprise and Digital Environments through the Joint Simulation Environment.

**58) Are you satisfied with the Air Force's test and evaluation capabilities, including the test and evaluation workforce and infrastructure?**

Yes. The Air Force has a dedicated test and evaluation (T&E) Enterprise that is continuously adapting to meet emergent threats and technologies. The T&E workforce is working to modernize and digitize where those investments will obtain the highest returns. If confirmed, I look forward to seeking opportunities made possible by digital engineering and agile software development to better integrate developmental and operational test in order to accelerate fielding of capabilities without increasing risk.

**59) In which areas, if any, do you feel the Air Force should be developing new test and evaluation capabilities?**

If confirmed, I will support continued investments to improve modeling and simulation capabilities, digital tools, and prototyping to help refine technical requirements and measure technical success in critical areas such as Hypersonics, Cyber-Security, Directed Energy, Autonomous Systems, and Artificial Intelligence/Machine Learning.

**60) If confirmed, how would you accelerate the development of these new capabilities?**

If confirmed, I will continue to leverage the successful partnerships between the Air Force Test Center, Air Force Operational Test & Evaluation Center, and Program Executive Office for Digital in improving current and developing new test approaches to support rapid acquisition of new capabilities.

**61) What are your views on the appropriate roles of Office of the Secretary of Defense developmental and operational testing organizations with respect to testing of Air Force systems?**



I support the established role of OSD for the testing of Air Force systems. OSD oversight provides an independent assessment of the adequacy of the testing of Air Force systems. They also have visibility across the other services which presents an opportunity to apply lessons learned and best practices in other services to improve the Department's ability to deliver effective warfighting capability at the speed of relevance and more efficiently.

If confirmed, I will ensure Air Force program offices work closely with OSD in the testing and assessment of Air Force systems.

**62) Do you think the current operational test and evaluation system also provides for the flexibility to assess commercial technologies that might be acquired or fields by the Department of Defense through means or processes that are not traditional acquisition programs of record?**

Our current rapid fielding policy and guidance allows for flexibility and supports the use of commercial technologies acquired or developed through non-traditional means. The operational test and evaluation process can assess fielding decisions of commercial technologies for military use based on the warfighter's requirements. This evaluation remains independent of the acquisition process by which the potential weapon system is procured.

**Joint Acquisition**

**63) What are your views regarding the merit and feasibility of joint development and acquisition programs?**

The Department of the Air Force has historically been a leading developer and integrator of advanced technology for military advantage with significant benefits to the joint warfighter. When practical, we should contribute to and leverage the development efforts of other Services and our coalition partners. This allows the Air Force to accept prudent risk, reduce costs, and increase resilience in our collective capabilities.

**64) What additional programs would you consider to be candidates for joint development and acquisition?**

If confirmed, I will be actively engaged with my counterparts across the other Services to identify any opportunities to pursue a joint development and acquisition. I will continue to support the Joint Requirements Oversight Council's efforts to review, assess, and support joint capability development priorities under the Joint Warfighting Concept, and work within the Joint Capability Integration and Development System (JCIDS) to define cross-cutting capabilities for the Joint force at the best value for the taxpayer.

**65) What are your views on joint, enabling or cross-cutting capabilities that may not be treated as acquisition programs, such as JADC2? Do you have sufficient**

**authority to advocate or manage Air Force capabilities to ensure there are no seams in planning or execution of such efforts?**

The DAF has a robust C2 integration capability with the ABMS cross functional team (CFT) and the DAF PEO C3BM team. I have all the authorities I need for the work we need to do within the DAF. The CFT and PEO are integrating across requirements, acquisition, and budgeting to eliminate the historical seams in this mission area.

**Nuclear Enterprise**

**66) Do you agree that modernizing each leg of the nuclear triad and the National Nuclear Security Administration weapons complex is a critical national security priority?**

Yes. A safe, secure, reliable, and effective nuclear triad is essential to deterring threats against the U.S. homeland and underpins every other military operation around the world. The Department of the Air Force operates two-thirds of the nuclear triad and seventy-five percent of the Nuclear Command, Control, and Communications (NC3) system. The 2022 Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) continued to make clear that deterring strategic attack and protecting the United States and our allies is a national priority. To do that, we must continue to recapitalize current systems whose operational lifetimes have been extended far beyond their original service lives. Modernization will ensure we can continue to provide a credible nuclear deterrent for our Nation and extended deterrent for our allies. Any delay in funding will put our modernization efforts at risks which could undermine the capability and credibility of our nuclear deterrent.

**67) What is your assessment of the efficacy of current nuclear modernization acquisition programs with respect to nuclear certification of the systems at issue?**

My assessment is the Air Force has all the elements in place to ensure timely nuclear certification of its nuclear modernization acquisition programs. Nuclear certification is a key element of our nuclear modernization programs and is an integrated element in the defense acquisition process for the systems under procurement and recapitalization. Based on several reviews of its nuclear certification process, the Air Force is taking the following steps to improve certification execution:

- Increasing certification manpower in specific organizations to address increased certification task activities across Sentinel, B-21, LRSO, F-35, and B-52 development and modernization.
- Development of a methodology to quantify risk to certification to inform senior leaders when a risk-balanced approach is required.
- Introduction of the Nuclear Certification Analysis Tool (NCAT) to track certification requirements and task execution.

**68) Do you believe the current Air Force program of record is sufficient to support the full modernization of the Air Force legs of the nuclear triad?**

Yes. The Air Force has fully committed the resources necessary to modernize the air and ground components of the nuclear triad to include the Nuclear Command, Control, and Communications (NC3) system, the B-21 bomber, the development of the Long Range Stand Off (LRSO) weapon to replace the AGM-86B Air Launched Cruise Missile, and the Sentinel ICBM weapon system as the replacement for the Minuteman III. The Department of the Air Force is synchronizing efforts with the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA), and our Navy counterparts, to ensure on-time delivery of warheads and platforms.

In the Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 enacted budget, the Department of the Air Force is investing \$15.7 billion dollars in the sustainment, modernization, and recapitalization of the nuclear enterprise. Those resources sufficiently fund sustainment efforts for MMIII, ALCM, UH-1 helicopter, and nuclear-capable bombers, as well as Dual-capable Aircraft. All major recapitalization programs, including B-21, Sentinel, LRSO, and the MH-139 helicopter are fully funded. The Air Force is also addressing critical manpower requirements, funding 1,444 civilian positions in our nuclear recapitalization and sustainment workforce within this Fiscal Year Defense Plan (FYDP) to keep our current programs on time and within budget.

**69) What are your ideas for working across the Joint Force to mitigate the risk that all three legs of the nuclear triad will be “aging out” simultaneously at the end of the 2020s?**

If confirmed, I will ensure the Air Force works with Navy and other DoD Components to identify “age-out” issues as we transition from our current systems to our new nuclear weapon systems. I will also work with our mission partners to develop options across the Joint Force to mitigate transition risk across the DoD Nuclear Enterprise. I also agree with both the Secretary of the Air Force and the current Air Force Chief of Staff that the best way to reduce the risk of “aging out” is to ensure we effectively manage the end-of-life margin on our current systems while keeping current modernization efforts on track by maintaining stable funding for all three legs of the triad. Additionally, I will work in collaboration with the Nuclear Weapons Council and the Defense Acquisition Board to identify opportunities to partner with the Navy and when appropriate, jointly develop technologies critical to the success of both of our missions. I will also ensure our respective research and development teams are leveraging each other’s technological accomplishments to minimize duplication of effort.

**In 2014, then-Secretary of Defense Hagel directed a comprehensive review of the DOD nuclear enterprise in response to adverse incidents involving U.S. nuclear forces and their senior leadership. The review recommended improved personnel management, enforcement of security requirements, increased senior leader focus and attention, and changes in community culture. Almost 10 years later, responsibility for addressing these recommendations and monitoring implementation of corrective actions has been transferred from OSD to the Military Services.**

**70) In your view, is the Air Force continuing to maintain appropriate focus on implementing the corrective actions recommended by the Nuclear Enterprise Review?**

Yes. Since the 2014 Nuclear Enterprise Review, the Air Force restructured, streamlined authorities, and realigned organizational responsibilities across the Headquarters Air Force staff and Major Commands to oversee and monitor the health of the nuclear enterprise. These changes include elevating the Commander, Air Force Global Strike Command (AFGSC), to a four-star commander and the Strategic Deterrence & Nuclear Integration Directorate (AF/A10) from a two-star Assistant Chief of Staff to three-star Deputy Chief of Staff. Responsibility for nuclear acquisition and life-cycle management activities were consolidated under a single general officer, realigning nuclear operational and operational support missions from Air Force Material Command (AFMC) to AFGSC, while transferring authority for the Air Force Nuclear Weapons Center operating location-Ramstein (maintenance mission) from AFMC to United States Air Forces in Europe (USAFE).

**71) Do you believe “Arming/Use of Force” protocols for Security Forces adequately meets the spirit and intent of the Personnel Reliability Program?**

Yes. Both programs require personnel to meet the same essential elements that address an individual’s reliability in both personal and professional capacities. While the Arming and Use of Force and Personnel Reliability Programs are administratively different, the program protocols are functionally the same. PRP is promulgated in DoDM5210.42. AUoF is promulgated in AFI 31-117, that instruction comports with the guidance in DoDM 5210.42. Both programs share the nine essential elements listed in DoDI 5210.42, DoD Nuclear Weapons Personnel Reliability Assurance.

**72) If confirmed, how would you ensure that the Air Force continues its efforts to improve the training, readiness, morale, welfare, and quality of life of the airmen charged to execute and support the Air Force’s nuclear mission?**

If confirmed, I will continue to focus on optimizing and leveraging the special skills and talent of nuclear mission professionals through sustained training, education, and professional development, while offering wellness and quality of life programs that build resilient Airmen, and families. We addressed the issues in the 2014 Nuclear Enterprise Review (NER) and continue to monitor all aspects of the nuclear enterprise to include human capital ensuring Airmen benefit from these improvements.

**Air Force Programs**

**73) What is your understanding and assessment of the following research, development, and acquisition programs? Is each program currently within projected cost, schedule, and performance criteria? If not, what would you do, if**

**confirmed as Chief of Staff of the Air Force, to bring each program into compliance?**

- **F-35**

I am aware of development efforts within the F-35 program that are not within projected cost, schedule, and performance criteria (e.g., software instability, flight test, weapons certification, radar instability, and additional classified requirements associated with the certification of Tech Refresh-3 (TR-3) which continue to delay the integration of advanced Block 4 capabilities and the delivery and acceptance of Lot 15 aircraft.) If confirmed, I will work with Service and OSD Acquisition Executives to verify that contractual commitments are being met to ensure combat relevant capability is delivered to the warfighter.

- **F-15EX**

I am aware that the F-15EX program is within projected cost, schedule, and performance criteria. Lot 1B aircraft are progressing to the final phases of assembly with deliveries to complete by December 2023. While later than initially planned, aircraft deliveries and program milestone dates remain consistent with the program's acquisition baseline. If confirmed, I will work with the Service Acquisition Executive to ensure this program progresses to provide the necessary combat capability.

- **KC-46**

I understand that the KC-46A is on a Firm Fixed Price Not-To Exceed cost lot procurement contract with Boeing and it remains within the projected program costs. Though we have had program setbacks, if confirmed, I will continue to work with the Service Acquisition Executive and MAJCOM leaders to maintain schedule and performance criteria. As we work to resolve performance deficiencies, through its Interim Capability Release Process, Air Mobility Command (AMC) has made KC-46A tankers available for worldwide operational employment and taskings. AMC has cleared KC-46As to carry out operational refueling on nearly all required aircraft.

- **F-22**

I am aware that the F-22 Sensor Enhancements program has faced both schedule delays and cost growth, largely due to technical maturation issues. I understand that the Sensor Enhancement demonstration is set to begin in early FY24. If confirmed, I will continue my engagement with the Service Acquisition Executive and industry partners to ensure the program reaches the technology and manufacturing readiness levels needed for fielding, and that we deliver the capabilities needed to gain and maintain air superiority against rapidly emerging peer threats.

- **B-21**

I am aware that the B-21 program is within projected cost, schedule, and performance criteria. We anticipate first flight to occur by the end of the calendar

year. If confirmed, I will continue to work with the Secretary to ensure the program remains on track to meet the warfighter need date.

- **MH-139**

I am aware that the MH-139A program is within the original cost and performance criteria established at program initiation. While the MH-139A schedule slipped early in the program due to delays in achieving FAA certifications, Milestone C was approved by the Service Acquisition Executive in March 2023. This re-baselined the schedule and initiated production of the first lot of 13 aircraft, training devices, and associated spares and support equipment. If confirmed, I will continue to work with the Service Acquisition Executive to ensure the program continues to execute within the cost, schedule, and performance guidelines established by Milestone C directive.

- **EC-37**

I am aware that the Compass Call Rehost program is transitioning the legacy EC-130H mission capabilities on to a commercial derivative Gulfstream G550 aircraft and that the Air Force is on schedule to begin developmental and operational testing soon and will deliver the first aircraft for training in early FY25. If confirmed, I will work with the Service Acquisition Executive to ensure the EC-37B program progresses well and remains within projected cost, schedule, and performance criteria.

- **Air Force One**

I am aware that the VC-25B program is based on a firm fixed price contract and remains within projected cost criteria. I am also aware that the VC-25B modification schedule has been delayed by an interiors supplier transition, manpower limitations, and wiring design timelines. If confirmed, I will work with the Service Acquisition Executive to monitor and evaluate modification progress to ensure we provide realistic planning dates for the White House Military Office.

- **B-52 Re-engining and overall modernization**

The B-52 is undergoing the most significant modernization in the platform's history including an engine upgrade, radar modernization, and nuclear survivable communications. I am aware that the program is also executing multiple development and production programs to sustain fleet viability and improve operational availability through 2050. I am aware that the B-52 Commercial Engine Replacement Program and overall modernization efforts are within projected cost, schedule, and performance criteria. If confirmed, I will continue to track these critical modernization efforts closely with the Service Acquisition Executive.

- **Combat Rescue Helicopter**

I am aware that the Service Acquisition Executive approved Full Rate Production in April 2023 and FY23 is the final year of planned HH-60W aircraft

procurement. Although there was an earlier Nunn-McCurdy Breach after the reduction in total aircraft procurement, I understand that the HH-60W is currently in cost and schedule compliance. I am also aware that the program will achieve performance compliance after Follow-On Operational Test and Evaluation is completed on implemented deficiency fixes. If confirmed, I will work with the Service Acquisition Executive to ensure that we are committed to improving the capability of the service's primary Combat Search and Rescue recovery vehicle.

- **Sentinel / Ground Based Strategic Deterrent**

I am aware that the Sentinel program is working with Northrop Grumman to implement an updated acquisition strategy which was approved in March 2023. I believe this acquisition strategy update, which focuses on decoupling aspects of the Sentinel weapon system to progress areas as they mature, is the right strategy for Sentinel. If confirmed, I will continue to engage with the Service Acquisition Executive to develop a high confidence and executable schedule to ensure the system is ready by the warfighter need date.

- **Long Range Standoff Weapon**

I understand that this joint Department of Energy (DOE) and Department of Defense (DoD) effort is currently within projected cost, schedule, and performance criteria. If confirmed, I will continue to work with the Service Acquisition Executive to ensure the program continues to make significant progress against stated requirements and remains on track to meet the warfighter need date.

- **Next Gen OPIR and Proliferated OPIR**

If confirmed, I will support Secretary Kendall and the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Space Acquisition and Integration, HON Frank Calvelli, in his role as the Service Acquisition Executive for Space Systems and Programs, regarding these critical missile warning / missile tracking programs.

- **ABMS/JADC2**

I understand that the ABMS program is currently within projected cost, schedule, and performance criteria. If confirmed, I will continue to work with the Service Acquisition executive to ensure delivery of initial operational and modernized C2 capability in FY24, directly enabling the Department of Defense Combined Joint All Domain Command and Control effort.

- **Unified Platform**

I am aware that US CYBER COMMAND will begin executing this program starting on 1 October 2023 in accordance with the FY22 NDAA Section 1507 for enhanced budgetary control. If confirmed, I will work with US CYBER COMMAND leadership and the Service Acquisition Executive to ensure appropriate execution of the program.

- **GPS III & OCX**



If confirmed, I will support Secretary Kendall and the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Space Acquisition and Integration, HON Frank Calvelli, in his role as the Service Acquisition Executive for Space Systems and Programs, regarding these important National Security Space programs.

- **Armed Overwatch**

The procurement of USSOCOM's Armed Overwatch Aircraft, the OA-1K, will enable our AFSOC Airmen to deliver low-cost, austere, and sustainable counter-VEO capabilities to geographically isolated joint special operations units. The program is executed under the acquisition authorities, MFP-11 funding, and validated requirements of USSOCOM. If confirmed, I will gladly support CDRUSSOCOM's efforts in developing, procuring, delivering, and sustaining our nation's needed joint warfighting capabilities and capacity, and provide backing to enable the continued success of joint acquisition programs.

- **T-7**

I am aware that the T-7 program has experienced developmental delays which made the Milestone C schedule be delayed to February 2025. I am aware that the program is making progress in resolving key technical problems, including engineering required to resolve software (control laws) and escape system issues. Since the T-7 is still in the developmental phase, we can expect discoveries during flight test, as with any program. If confirmed, I will continue to work with the Service Acquisition Executive to ensure this important capability is fielded as quickly as possible.

- **Collaborative Combat Aircraft**

CCA will be a force multiplier fielded at strategic locations worldwide by the end of the decade, providing immediate combat capability to critical operational theaters. I understand that an acquisition strategy that relies upon incremental development, continuous competition with multiple vendors, full-scale prototypes, and speed-to-ramp with available technologies was approved in May 2023 and that the program is executing within cost, schedule, and performance criteria. If confirmed, I will work with the Service Acquisition Executive and industry partners to meet program objectives and ensure we deliver the right capabilities to maintain air superiority against pacing threats around the globe.

**The Air Force is on record as stating a need to purchase a minimum of 72 fighter aircraft per year to maintain requisite force structure.**

**74) In your opinion, what is the optimum mix of 4th and 5th generation aircraft required to meet the threat outlined in the NDS?**

The Air Force must evolve its fighter force to meet the threat posed by the PRC and Russia to ensure air superiority and dominance over peer adversaries, as well as provide the capability and capacity to meet world-wide demands in the 2030s and beyond. The Air Force will continue to modernize to ensure a more lethal, resilient, sustainable,

survivable, agile, and responsive force. This will include a mix of multi-role air superiority capability and capacity to defend the homeland, project airpower globally, and operate as a joint, allied and partner force.

To attain the required fighter force, the Air Force must transition its fighter fleet from seven platforms (F-35, F-22, F-16, F-15EX, F-15E, F-15C, A-10) to four platforms (NGAD, F-35, F-15 platform, F-16) and introduce the first operational, uncrewed CCAs. If confirmed, I will work to ensure we have the optimal portfolio mix of capability and capacity to most effectively meet the demands of the 2022 NDS.

**75) Given the importance of extending the range of U.S. aircraft, what do you believe to be the overall tanker requirement for the Air Force and at what rate and on what schedule must the Air Force procure the new KC-46 to meet that requirement?**

To maintain the Rapid Global Mobility strategic advantage, tanker aircraft must be able to operate in contested environments and be able to see and identify threats to make timely decisions. To meet the needs of the joint force, allies and partners, the DAF intends to maintain a 466 Total Active Inventory (TAI) tanker fleet in accordance with the FY23 NDAA to present an acceptable balance between warfighter risk and the critical need to invest in tanker modernization and recapitalization. I support the DAF's goal to use Tanker Recapitalization to replace up to 15 retiring KC-135 aircraft per year between KC-46As and the accelerated development and delivery of the Next Generation Air-Refueling System (NGAS).

**76) What are your views of the Air Force plans to shift to a new design for strategic tankers?**

I support our Air Force plans to enable and accelerate relevant Air Refueling into the future. The KC-46A is the first step in recapitalizing our aging tanker fleet. Accelerating future tanker capability and recapitalizing the Air Force's aging tanker fleet is a top priority for the Department of the Air Force. The DAF's goal is to use Tanker Recapitalization to replace 15 KC-135s per year as they retire between KC-46A and an accelerated Next Generation Air-Refueling System (NGAS).

**Large-scale exercises such as Red Flag have illustrated that 5th generation fighters such as the F-22 and F-35 need to fly against multiple adversary aircraft to conduct much of their required training. The Air Force has taken a number of steps to address shortages in adversary air, including using contract air and requiring units in training to supply their own adversary air.**

**77) What are your views as to the appropriate balance of contract and organic adversary air capability?**

With the emphasis on preparing for the near-peer fight as directed in the 2022 National Defense Strategy, the United States Air Force Adversary Air Enterprise must be able to

replicate the high-end threat of advanced fighters with Red Force Ratios that outnumber Blue Forces; integrate diverse, multi domain threats; and have robust electromagnetic activity to complicate blue force targeting. Satisfying all high end training OPSEC variables is unattainable in live-fly with our current adversary air and range capabilities. Due to this reason, the Air Force is transitioning high-end training to the synthetic environment. Until this transition is complete, balancing the limited Adversary Air Enterprise resources for test, training, and operational units requires a prioritized distribution of organic adversary air support as well as contracted air support at appropriate locations while meeting combat requirements.

**78) If confirmed, how would you ensure that the Air Force properly addresses the challenges associated with the availability of adversary air to ensure that its 5th generation fighters are properly trained and ready for combat?**

The United States Air Force requires a professional aggressor force capable of replicating the capabilities of a peer or higher threat to provide realistic and relevant live training. While future high-end training, test, and tactics development will be best executed in the synthetic training environment due to operations security, threat density/diversity, and unconstrained operating area, the requirement to conduct live air combat training and testing remains. Live training provides the baseline against which the United States Air Force measures aircraft generation, maintenance and logistics support capabilities, aircraft avionics, weapons systems integration effectiveness, and aircrew physiological stresses. Additionally, it is imperative our approach include early integration of our partner nations considering European theater the 5th generation fighter inventory will grow. Specifically, Joint Synthetic Environment (JSE) will allow fighter pilots to train as a combined and joint force, using extremely high fidelity capabilities to train above the level available in relation to live flying. Technology like JSE is the needed additive training, supplementing live flights, to keep our fighter force trained to the highest caliber against the pacing threat.

**79) What is your assessment of the readiness of the Air Force heavy bomber fleet? As to each of the airframes listed below, what improvements would you direct, if confirmed, to increase the mission readiness of each airframe?**

- B-1
- B-52
- B-2

The B-1, B-52, and B-2 fleets are ready for mission. The Air Force plans to acquire at least 100 B-21s to replace 45 B-1s and 20 B-2s over the next decade. As these are all aging fleets, we will require continued to diligence to ensure they gain/maintain the required reliability as we introduce the B-21 into the force, and, if confirmed, I will be very engaged in this endeavor. The B-21 will be available for combat use projected to be in the mid-2020s. A new airframe replacing the B-1 and B-2 will greatly enhance the readiness of the bomber fleet enterprise. The B-52 is undergoing significant modernization with the Rolls-Royce F130 Engine upgrade; over 600 F130 engines

expected to be delivered. The Air Force expects the engine modernization to be available for initial use at the end of the decade. Additionally, we appreciate Congress' support in finding funding avenues for the 4600+ gap of maintainers that affect the readiness of the DAF fleet writ-large.

## **Munitions**

**Air Force munitions inventories—particularly for precision guided munitions and air-to-air missiles—have declined significantly due to high operational usage, insufficient procurement, and a requirements system that does not adequately account for the ongoing need to transfer munitions to our allies. Due to draw down of certain weapons systems to support Ukraine, the Department of Defense has begun efforts to increase production and bolster the industrial base.**

**80) If confirmed, what steps would you take to ensure the Air Force has sufficient inventories of munitions to meet the needs of combatant commanders?**

The Air Force is working energetically to reduce munitions shortfalls. Partnering with munitions manufacturers, we have supported increases in production capacities for munitions most needed to deter a near-peer adversary in the Pacific theater. Air-to-air and stand-off air-to-ground munitions will continue to need high-level attention, to ensure adequate resource allocation for production rates that best balance the combatant commander's needs with budget limitations and other Service requirements. If confirmed, I will continue to work with our Air Force Secretary to ensure we mature our thinking of munitions requirements for the future to match the new platforms and concepts we are developing through our operational imperatives. Platforms that require munitions for operational effect are not true capabilities without them.

**81) What changes in budgeting and acquisition processes would you recommend to facilitate faster Air Force munitions replenishment rates?**

If confirmed, I will emphasize new approaches to weapons development and procurement, to support creation of modular designs for both air-to-air and air-to-ground weapons. This will allow us to modify weapons designs to respond to evolving threats without requiring a completely new weapon design that would require extended periods of development, test, and aircraft integration. This approach will likely need more upfront investment to enable rapid development and deployment cycles as weapon module designs are revised to counter changing threats. Having the ability and resources to “learn fast and early,” then fix requirements to enable more rapid fielding will be increasingly important, and I will support our Secretary’s efforts to do so.

## **Equipment Readiness**

**82) What is your understanding and assessment of the methods currently used for estimating the funding needed for the maintenance of Air Force equipment?**

The AF determines spares requirements for weapon systems through an in-depth analysis of historical usage at the individual item level via the Spares Requirements Review Board. The cost for each item is then applied to determine the funding required for the spares. The challenge is the uncertainty embedded in a process that seeks funding two years ahead of need, and the volatility of macro-economic factors that, while factored into the analysis, can't fully anticipate external events. This is made more complex with unanticipated surges due to unforeseen operational contingencies, and the challenges of an aging fleet.

For the depot repair portion of the maintenance effort, the AF employs a rigorous Logistics Requirements Determination Process to develop, validate, prioritize, and calculate sustainment requirements at the task-level (bottom-up build). Every sustainment task is catalogued, captured in a management information.

**83) Do you believe that increased investment is needed to reduce the backlog in equipment maintenance?**

Yes. Increased resourcing is necessary to achieve higher levels of near-term and longer-term readiness. Increased resourcing would allow the Air Force to better fund equipment maintenance and invest in newer equipment needed for future operations.

A consistent and predictive funding stream would allow for more accurate forecast sustainment actions of equipment.

**84) How important is reduction of the materiel maintenance backlog to improvements in readiness?**

Materiel maintenance backlogs vary by weapon system and are driven by several root causes, to include fiscal limitations and supply chain difficulties. Reduction of the materiel maintenance backlog as part of a balanced approach to managing near- and long-term risk is essential to improving Air Force readiness. Congress's annual support of the President's Budget request is needed for weapon system sustainment, training, and infrastructure to reduce the materiel maintenance backlog and ensure the Air Force can improve readiness.

**Indo-Pacific Region**

**China's robust anti-access, area denial (A2/AD) capabilities—including long-range ballistic and cruise missiles, advanced integrated air defenses, electronic warfare, and cyber—pose a significant challenge for U.S. forces. The Commander of United States Indo-Pacific Command (INDOPACOM) and the Chiefs of the Military Services have often**

**emphasized the importance of distributed, adaptive, and resilient basing in the Indo-Pacific region to address the challenge posed by China's advanced A2/AD capabilities.**

**85) What are the key areas in which the Air Force must improve to provide the necessary capabilities and capacity to the Joint Force to prevail in a potential conflict with China?**

Secretary Kendall has developed seven Operational Imperatives that identify critical warfighting capabilities needed to deter our adversaries and prevail in combat. Investing in the Operational Imperatives to close these key capability gaps is critical to enabling the Joint Force to deter, and if necessary, defeat our pacing challenge.

1. Resilient Space Order of Battle (for which the Air Force provides support)
2. Advanced Battle Management System / Joint All Domain Command and Control
3. Moving Target Engagement at Scale
4. Next Generation Air Dominance Family of Systems
5. Optimized Resilient Forward Basing
6. B-21 Long-Range Strike Family of Systems
7. Readiness Transition to Wartime Posture

Additionally, the Secretary has identified cross-cutting operational enablers to prioritize in conjunction with the Operational Imperatives. These areas include Mobility, Munitions, Electromagnetic Spectrum Operations, and Operational Test and Training Infrastructure. Excelling in these areas will enhance the Air Force's ability to support the Joint Force and prevail against any future adversary.

**86) How does the threat posed by Chinese missile forces affect the Air Force's posture in the Indo-Pacific region? In your assessment, have Air Force investments, posture shifts and/or new operational concepts sufficiently addressed this threat?**

The People's Liberation Army (PLA) missile forces pose a distinct and increasing threat to our Air Force and facilities in the Indo-Pacific region, as well as our Allies and partners. PLA could mount a sustained attack on our combined forces at the beginning of a contingency to disrupt our ability to project air power. The Air Force's ability to generate combat power relies on protecting our critical infrastructure from competitors seeking to disrupt airpower operations. These include disruptions through non-kinetic means that have impact on the U.S. and our Allies.

The Air Force is assessing and fielding a broad protection network of capabilities, to include the hardening and recovery of infrastructure; camouflage, concealment, and deception measures; and active, passive, kinetic, and non-kinetic sensing and site defense. In addition, through our development and maturation of our Agile Combat Employment (ACE) concept, we are leveraging agility and mobility to more effectively maneuver in the contested environment and complicate enemy targeting calculus. These are critical measures required for effective operations in the theater.

**87) Do you believe the planned joint force mix of tactical aircraft is sufficient to counter current and future threats in INDOPACOM, where the “tyranny of distance” is such a major factor?**

Critical joint warfighting functions, such as Air Superiority and Joint Strike, will be stressed due to “tyranny of distance” challenges inherent in operations in the Indo-Pacific region. Our ability to bring speed, agility, and resilience will be crucial to success in countering current and future threats in the Indo-Pacific region. Integrated deterrence will be important, and if confirmed, I will prioritize engaging with all Services, the Secretary of Defense, and our Allies and partners to organize, train, and equip the US Air Force to compete effectively in the Indo-Pacific region. In addition, the right mix of “stand-in” forces--enabled by increased survivability through base resiliency and Agile Combat Employment—and “stand-off” precision strike will be essential to support the Joint Warfighting Concept. If confirmed, I will continue to place emphasis on rigorous analysis, wargaming, and exercising to ensure we have the best mix to support the NDS.

**88) Do you believe DOD has sufficient sealift and airlift capabilities to support the Air Forces throughout INDOPACOM for both training and contingency purposes?**

Expected operating environments in the Indo-Pacific theater continues to place high value on the ability to swiftly project and sustain the Joint Force over global distances through contested environment threats. Recent studies continue to highlight the challenges to the Air Force mobility enterprise’s ability to meet contingency demands. Efforts to ensure ready mobility capacity will remain an imperative, emphasizing the importance of theater air and sealift capacities, as these must work together to train, deliver, and sustain forces across the vast Indo-Pacific theater. If confirmed, I will work closely with my fellow Joint Chiefs to ensure we have the best solutions for all of the joint force.

More detail could be provided in a classified setting.

**89) What alternative concepts of operation, platforms, and basing opportunities exist to address potential shortfalls in this area?**

The Air Force’s Agile Combat Employment (ACE) concept enables us to more effectively maneuver in a contested environment and counter the PRC’s impact to forward bases and other high-value targets. Specifically, the ACE scheme of maneuver distributes our forces to a network of dispersed locations to complicate enemy targeting and maximize opportunities to generate combat power, thus increasing aircraft survivability and reducing risk to the force. Recent wargames have demonstrated that the forward presence of capable U.S. and Allied forces can have a significant deterrent effect on peer adversaries’ willingness to start a conflict; however, this involves a significant investment in additional basing options.

Through the Department of the Air Force Operational Imperatives, we are making critical investments to mature ACE concepts and resiliency of distributed operations within the



Indo-Pacific. Examples include enhancing the infrastructure of traditional and historical airfields, expeditionary communications, prepositioning materiel, hardening, air base defense capabilities, and enhanced camouflage concealment and deception capabilities and processes. In addition, we continue to work with our Allies and partners to maintain and even increase access, basing, and overflight options in the Indo-Pacific to help us remain strategically predictable, but operationally unpredictable. Finally, the Air Force released a doctrine on Mission Command, which empowers Airmen to operate in uncertain, complex, and rapidly changing environments through trust, shared awareness, and understanding of commander's intent.

## Europe

### **90) What are the key areas in which the Air Force must improve to provide the necessary capabilities and capacity to the Joint Force to meet NDS priorities in the European AOR?**

The 2022 NDS prioritizes the PRC as our pacing challenge, while acknowledging that Russia remains an acute and present threat in Europe, as demonstrated by Russia's unprovoked invasion of Ukraine. While preparing to meet the challenges posed by the PRC, we are maintaining the ability to support the Joint Force in deterring further aggression in Europe and, if necessary, prevail in a potential conflict with Russia. This requires agile, resilient, adaptable concepts and command and control structures. If confirmed, I will continue to work with the Joint Force and our Allies and partners to ensure we are maximizing opportunities to increase capacity and capabilities through integration efforts. To this end, Secretary Kendall has identified seven Operational Imperatives, supplemented by cross-cutting operational enablers, that identify critical warfighting capabilities needed to deter our adversaries and prevail in combat. Investing in these imperatives will close key capability gaps and ensure we ready and able to meet the European AOR challenges presented in the NDS and prevail against any future adversary, including Russia.

## Unmanned Systems

### **91) What is your opinion on the manned and unmanned teaming envisioned by the Collaborative Combat Aircraft (CCA) program?**

My opinion is CCA represents a transformational and force multiplying capability critical to mission success in highly contested engagements against a peer-type threat. CCA will be designed to work in conjunction with 5th generation and next generation aircraft. CCA will provide the mass needed to sustain a sufficient sortie tempo, at a more affordable price point, and will give commanders more options by providing risk-tolerant assets with an operationally relevant capability. If confirmed, I will continue to work with the Service Acquisition Executive to get an operational CCA capability fielded as quickly as possible.

**92) Given the amount of intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) required to meet combatant commander demands, do you believe it is appropriate to shut down the production lines for the current unmanned fleet of MQ-9s and divest all of the RQ-4s before adequate ISR capacity in other systems is fielded ?**

Yes, it is appropriate. Closing the MQ-9A production line does not impact the ISR capacity through the mid-2030s. The DAF maintains a sufficient MQ-9A inventory to provide required combat lines. We must be willing to make tough choices as we engage in great power competition and execute the NDS by divesting legacy systems, low priority tasks, and activities which deliver less value in denied and contested environments. To adapt to the changing character of war and the anticipated environment in which we may have to fight, we must look at ISR through the lens of systems, rather than individual platforms. To be relevant, platforms must be able to be persistent, survivable, and connected to the larger system. Only then can we have the ability to sense, make sense, and act at the speed of relevance. If confirmed, I will continue to ensure we develop and offer multi-domain ISR capabilities to meet NDS objectives in a contested environment.

**93) Do you see utility in encouraging the Military Services to conduct more joint development in the area of aircraft and unmanned systems?**

The Department of the Air Force has historically been a leading developer and integrator of advanced technology for military advantage with significant benefits to the joint warfighter. When practical, we should contribute to and leverage the development efforts of other Services and our coalition partners. This allows the Air Force to accept prudent risk, reduce costs, and increase resilience in our collective capabilities.

### **Operational Energy**

**The Department defines *operational energy* as the energy required for training, moving, and sustaining military forces and weapons platforms for military operations, including the energy used by tactical power systems, generators, and weapons platforms. Longer operating distances, remote and austere geography, and anti-access/area denial threats are challenging DOD's ability to assure the delivery of fuel. As the ability to deliver energy is placed at risk, so too is the Department's ability to deploy and sustain expeditionary Air Force units around the globe.**

**94) What are your ideas for future capabilities that would enable an expeditionary Air Force through the assured delivery of energy to the warfighter?**

If confirmed, I will support the continued research and development of technologies and improved processes to decrease forward-fuel demand and increase warfighter capability. Drag reduction technologies on our legacy aircraft, improved engine sustainment, and operator incentives outline the benefits of flying more efficiently to enable more 'lethality per gallon.' Agile software optimizes mission planning and execution, while virtual reality training increases our readiness and aircraft availability. Finally, I will support

initiatives focused on more agile, resilient, and survivable energy logistics - from bulk fuel transportation and infrastructure to deliveries at the tactical edge.

**95) What are your ideas for reducing the risk associated with the Air Force's dependence on vulnerable supply lines?**

I believe the Air Force must continue to leverage data-driven analytic methods, such as joint energy-informed wargaming and comprehensive modeling and simulation, to identify critical fuel supply lines and infrastructure and provide solutions to overcome future energy logistics challenges. Working within the Air Force, with DoD, and partners and allies, we can mitigate risk throughout the fuel supply network – from refinery and transport to storage and delivery – to increase our resiliency and interoperability. Additionally, it is vital we reduce our fuel demand to lessen our logistical burden, while exploring innovative ways to deliver power directly to the warfighter through on-site generation.

**Information Operations**

**In 2019, the Air Force activated the 16<sup>th</sup> Air Force, the first information-warfare-focused numbered Air Force. This unit combines and consolidates cyber, electronic warfare, information operations and intelligence under a single command.**

**96) What is your understanding of how this Command is establishing or will establish units or teams that are responsible for providing integrated capabilities to support the information warfare needs of the combatant commands?**

CSAF signed the USAF Information Warfare Strategy in July 2022, delivering guidance for organizing, training, and equipping the Air Force to present integrated information warfare capabilities, under appropriate authorities, for service-level, Commander Air Forces (COMAFFOR), and Joint Force Commander requirements.

16AF is developing an information warfare support capability using organic subject matter experts who reside on the 16 AF staff and subordinate wings. 16 AF operational-level information warfare teams organize, train, and equip, focused on National Military Strategy (NMS) problem-sets, and engage in competition planning support to the air components. 16AF continues to develop its information warfare capability by maintaining and sustaining this initial capability; maturing it to address all NMS problem-sets while increasing capacity to serve all AF service components along with support to Geographic Combatant Commands.

**97) What specific structures and processes are being put in place in this Command specifically to integrate across the elements of Information Warfare?**

The CSAF designated the A2/6 as the lead Deputy Chief of Staff (DCS) for information warfare, responsible for overseeing and coordinating information warfare issues and

leading AF-wide implementation of the Air Force Information Warfare Strategy. The A2/6 leads an Information Warfare General Officer Steering Group to coordinate decisions related to policy, oversight, and guidance for organizing, training, and equipping USAF information warfare. Additionally, the Air Force published Air Force Doctrine Publication 3-13 in February 2023, Information in Air Force Operations.

Within 16 AF, the initial Information Warfare teams are problem-set focused and are beginning their efforts against peer and acute threats. The teams are composed of subject matter experts from all 16 AF information warfare components (including Information Operations, ISR, Cyber, Electronic Warfare, and Weather). The teams engage in wargames and coordinate with the air component during exercises to develop and refine tactics, techniques, and procedures. Multiple processes, subject matter experts, and products will be required to grow a full capability to satisfy the support required to counter all NMS problem-sets throughout the conflict continuum.

**98) From what source, if any, does this Command receive common requirements for joint forces and joint training to support joint information operations?**

In accordance with Deputy Secretary of Defense memorandum, dated 29 Jun 23, the Air Force, along with the other Services, is designated as an Operations in the Information Environment force provider. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is designated as the Operations in the Information Environment Joint Force Trainer.

16AF derives the responsibility to build out the Air Force's only information warfare focused Numbered Air Force from Program Guidance Letter 19-05, 5.0 (a) to develop the capabilities to support information warfare activities across the force in support of Joint Forces ability to deter, compete, and win across all domains. Requirements for 16AF support to USEUCOM, USSPACECOM and USSTRATCOM are received through the USCYBERCOM Annual Campaign Order. This order provides tasking for Cyber Effects Operations (CEO) and Information Operations (IO).

16AF requires joint training to meet Joint Force support requirements. It is imperative for efficiency and interoperability across supported commands and Joint Force partners that 16AF ensures information warfare personnel have a common training background in Information Operations (IO) to include Military Information Support Operations (MISO), Military Deception (MILDEC), and Operations Security (OPSEC) integration.

## **Cyber**

**The readiness of the Cyber Mission Forces assigned to U.S. Cyber Command is substantially below acceptable levels. This shortfall is due primarily to the lack of sufficient numbers of personnel in each of the services in three critical work roles that are especially demanding: tool developers, exploitation analysts, and interactive on-net operators.**

**99) What is your understanding of the causes for the Air Force’s shortfalls in recruiting, training, and retaining personnel qualified for these work roles?**

When we talk about Cyber Mission Forces (CMF) we’re really talking about a very diverse work force. CMF teams are composed of Cyberspace Effects Operations (17S) officers, Cyber Warfare Operations (1B4) enlisted members, Cyber Intelligence (1N4X1A) enlisted members, and Cyber Defense Operations (1D7) enlisted members. Each of these career fields has its own unique set of training and retention challenges, but we do see some common themes across the board. Lack of parity with industry financial incentives with high demand, low density skillsets is one common factor impacting retention. The Department of Defense will never keep pace with commercial sector pay, but we will consistently attract top tier personnel passionate about the mission of serving their nation. Furthermore, we identified opportunities in our development track of these talented Airmen that required adjustment from the quality of training to deliberate placement in CMF roles.

**100) What is your understanding of the Air Force’s plans to correct this shortfall?**

The Air Force recognized the challenges outlined above and if confirmed, I will continue to emphasize progress in our plan moving forward to bolster readiness within our cyberspace forces. Our Career Field Management Team recently completed an enterprise-wide review of all our cyberspace forces personnel ensuring we have the right Airmen with the right training in the right spot. This will be a continuous effort to ensure we are meeting the needs of the cyberspace forces for the fight tonight and into the future. Furthermore, we are moving forward with consecutive tours for Airmen assigned to the cyberspace forces, which allows them the ability to deepen their technical expertise which raises the readiness levels of our force.

On the financial side, we are grateful for the authorities under Section 1534 in the 2023 National Defense Authorization Act to look at ways to maximize the use of compensation and incentives tied to our cyberspace personnel. For starters, we are launching the Cyber Assignment Incentive Pay (CAIP), which provides members in critical roles on the CMF teams with up to an extra \$1,500 a month. Additionally, CAIP is on top of the Special Duty Assignment Pay (SDAP) that our cyberspace Airmen receive today. Going into this upcoming Fiscal Year, these Airmen will move into the top-tier pay rate under the SDAP program. While the Department of Defense will continually struggle to match the pay from the commercial sector, this helps close the gap and reinforces that we value their skillset.

If confirmed, I remain committed to following this through to ensure we are providing cyber ready Airmen to defend our nations critical assets.

**The mission of U.S. Cyber Command (CYBERCOM) is offensive and defense warfighting in the cyber domain. However, so far, General and Flag Officers selected to serve as Commander of Cyber Command have been intelligence specialists rather than line**

**officers. If confirmed, you will be a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and an adviser to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs and the Secretary of Defense.**

**101) Do you think that CYBERCOM as a warfighting command could or should be led by an officer trained and experienced in commanding combat units and joint operations?**

While command is ultimately about leadership, I believe it is advantageous for the CYBERCOM Commander to have familiarity with the cyber mission and does not need to be confined to one or two AFSCs to be credible or effective. In this way, CYBERCOM is similar to how Commanders are chosen for SOCOM. Every SOCOM Commander has familiarity with the SOF mission. In the United States Air Force, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) Operations and Offensive and Defensive Operations in Cyberspace are warfighting operations and our officers train to lead as warfighters. ISR and Cyber Effects Operations are operations. In both cases, these line officers have commanded combat units during operations. The leaders of this Command must possess the ability to operate in this dynamic environment while understanding the future threat landscape so we can develop forces capable of winning tomorrow's fight. Having knowledge and experience in cyberspace operations, intelligence activities, and commanding combat units or involvement in joint operations will only benefit any commander of USCYBERCOM.

### **Electronic Warfare (EW)**

**102) What is your vision for the future of Air Force EW capabilities?**

In order to align with the National Defense Strategy, the Air Force will need to embrace new concepts for EW and increased emphasis on the broader Electromagnetic Spectrum (EMS). My vision includes an Air Force with distributed software-defined systems and capabilities that are agile and increasingly leverage AI/ML to move to more robust cognitive EW. These capabilities should enable updates at tactical speeds vice acquisition timelines in order to maintain advantage over any adversary employing complex systems. To achieve this vision, the Air Force will need to explore, develop, and produce new and innovative concepts and doctrine that expand on historic electronic warfare principles in favor of Electromagnetic Spectrum Operations (EMSO), the merger of traditional Electronic Warfare with Spectrum Management. The current Cross-cutting Operational Enabler team commissioned by the Secretary of the Air Force will be instrumental in capability development to achieve this vision.

**103) How does electronic warfare play a role in the Air Force's Operational Imperatives and with respect to near peer adversaries?**

Electronic Warfare (EW) plays a vital role in the Department of the Air Force's Operational Imperatives (OIs) and in combatting a near peer adversary *across all phases of conflict* in the multi-domain environment, across which the Electromagnetic Spectrum



(EMS) exists. Ensuring our access to the EMS while denying the adversary that same freedom of action will be crucial in prevailing in any phase of military operations, particularly in deterring or shaping conflict.

Spectrum dominance facilitates freedom of operation in the land, sea, air, space, and cyberspace domains by protecting Joint and partner forces, ensuring our ability to detect, deny, degrade, deceive, and destroy adversary sensors and emitters. The USAF and USSF investments in EW include distributed software-defined systems and capabilities that are agile and increasingly leverage AI/ML. Developing these more robust, adaptive, cognitive electronic warfare capabilities, and accompanying concepts and doctrine, will enable the Joint Force to effectively maneuver and succeed within all domains.

**104) What is your assessment of the adequacy and efficacy of EW training that Air Force personnel receive in an Air Force environment in specific airframes? In a joint environment with other Military Services?**

Any conflict today or tomorrow requires significant emphasis on training in contested and congested electromagnetic environments, combining EW with spectrum management into electromagnetic spectrum operations. We need to train on a wider range of the electromagnetic spectrum (EMS) that advanced technology makes usable for both the Air Force and its adversaries and train both offensively--to counter our adversaries, and defensively--to ensure friendly forces can operate as desired in the EMS. We train alongside the other Services and our Coalition Partners who face similar training challenges. The Joint force will need to face this challenge together through tighter integration in day-to-day training and exercises in improved live and virtual environments. The Air Force is integrating with the Navy Long-Range Kill Chain effort to ensure proper integration of EMS activities for offense and defense.

**105) What is your understanding of the difference in DOTMLPF between electronic warfare and cyber?**

Modern warfare is highly dependent on the EMS and maintaining an advantage within this discipline is necessary to gain tactical, operational, and strategic advantage. Our platforms, weapon systems, and kill chains rely on the EMS—a reliance increasingly challenged by competitors and adversaries. Both Electronic Warfare (EW) and cyber operate in-and-through the EMS, but each have specific purposes, requirements, and differences in authorities. For this reason, though similar in nature, the two functions are developed on separate paths. In both cases, we have a DOTMLPF plan that focuses on airmen, training, and tools that make both EW and cyber lethal. EMSO focuses on exploiting, attacking, protecting, and managing the physical EMS, while Cyber is focused on the data driven human use of digital applications and the data contained within cyberspace and the EMS.

**106) Please explain the importance of the 350<sup>th</sup> spectrum warfare wing to the Air Force and the Joint Force?**



The 350th Spectrum Warfare Wing (SWW) is vital to the Joint Force and its allies by maintaining a competitive advantage over our adversaries in the EM spectrum through rapid reprogramming, target and waveform development, and assessment of our EW capabilities. The 350 SWW is the sole entity within the AF developing target and waveform capability against EW threats, managing the classified databases and tools used to rapidly reprogram over 70 platforms and ensure 27 partner nations are current to the threats. Finally, to support the joint and coalition force, the SWW is responsible to ensure every F-35 in the world has access to the latest EW information to maximize lethality. We plan to add another group under the 350 SWW in late FY23 or early FY24, to have three total groups in the wing, and if confirmed, I plan to support and advocate for this capability.

**107) What is your assessment of the Electronic Protection capabilities of Air Force systems in relation to the offensive electronic warfare threat from peer and near-peer adversaries, especially in light of the Northern Edge exercises?**

The Air Force is working to rebuild its EMS warfighter culture and awareness of EMS operational significance. In addition, the Air Force is working towards a holistic EMS investment strategy to include electromagnetic protection. Of note, DAF assets were providing the tailored Offensive EA as “Red Force” players, driving the noted Northern Edge exercise EP highlights. The platforms that experienced the degradation in the Northern Edge exercise are also taking lessons learned to improve their EP.

**Spectrum**

**108) Electromagnetic spectrum plays a critical role in many DOD missions. In what ways does the Air Force rely on spectrum to support warfighter requirements?**

As a cross cutting operational enabler, the EMS is the cornerstone to success in all domains of warfare. To meet ever changing warfighter requirements the DAF must have the ability to maneuver within the EMS at a time and place of our choosing. We must be able to protect, manage, exploit and attack using the EMS to gain tactical, operational, and strategic advantage. DAF EMS access is as essential in peacetime for development, test, and to conduct training. In war, and without it, we will lose.

**109) In your view, which warfighter spectrum requirements will be essential to competing with Russia and China on a future battlefield?**

Our military must train like we fight and be ready at all times to defend the homeland. We must have the electromagnetic spectrum to do this, and gain tactical, operational, and strategic advantage in conflict. In a high-end fight, warfighters require spectrum-dependent systems to win. These systems will operate on frequency bands across the entire spectrum and are critical in a peer-contested environment. We expect our adversaries to attack across the spectrum and we must be ready and responsive to that, by training and fighting in all parts of it. While we remain committed to spectrum sharing in

the United States, it must be done with no degradation to national security, homeland defense missions, weapons development, and warfighter training.

**In March 2023 testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee, Secretary of Defense Austin stated that, with respect to losing “S-band” spectrum, “it be devastating, ... it would take us somewhere north of 20 years to try to recover from -- from the loss of that -- that spectrum. Parts of that spectrum are vital to our national defense and the protection of the homeland. And -- and, you know, in order to describe exactly -- well, you know what the -- what the specific platforms are, but we would have to go to a classified session to speak in detail about this. But I would tell you that this is not something you can fix overnight once you break it. It'll take 20 years plus to recover from that.”**

**110) What Air Force systems might be affected by this loss of “S-band” spectrum, in your view?**

Losing access to this portion of the spectrum affects numerous systems critical to supporting testing, training, and defense of homeland operations, and could compromise national security readiness and defense capability. We have radars, aircraft station keeping equipment, communications, and command and control assets in this band, among other things. I can provide you a complete listing and further details in a closed session.

**111) Were DOD required to “vacate” or leave the spectrum in “S-Band” instead of sharing, what would be the potential operational and monetary costs to the Air Force, in your view?**

Military systems operating in this spectrum perform a broad range of national security missions, including critical homeland defense operations. Our Service members rely on the operational capabilities in this band to prepare for overseas contingencies and defend our homeland. As part of the recent Emerging Mid-Band Radio Spectrum Sharing (EMBRSS) study, we estimated that moving from the 3.1-3.45 GHz range alone would cost billions of dollars and take decades. Further, if DoD were required to completely vacate the full S-Band, this would have dire consequences to the NORTHCOM mission for defense of the homeland. Additionally, it would set back our ability to successfully keep pace with our national security threats for decades.

**112) How long would it take for the Air Force to move its systems to a different area of the spectrum, in your view?**

I agree with previous testimony that has been provided by Secretary Austin that this would take decades.

### **Science, Technology, and Innovation**

**U.S. superiority in key areas of innovation is decreasing or has disappeared, while our competitors are engaging in aggressive military modernization and advanced**

**weaponry development. DOD has identified 14 critical technology areas in which investment to develop next generation operational capabilities is imperative: hypersonics; future generation wireless technology; advanced materials; integrated network systems-of-systems; directed energy; integrated sensing and cyber; space technology; quantum science; trusted artificial intelligence (AI) and autonomy; microelectronics; renewable energy generation and storage; advanced computing and software; human-machine interfaces; and biotechnology. Much of the innovation in these technologies that could prove suitable for national defense purposes is occurring outside of the traditional defense industry.**

**113) What do you see as the most significant challenges (e.g., technical, organizational, or cultural) to U.S. development of these key technologies, or gaining access to such technologies from the commercial marketplace?**

I support efforts to reach outside the traditional industrial base to bring innovative ideas and products into the Air Force, including technologies from the commercial marketplace. Significant challenges include the ability to quickly analyze the impact of these technologies, experiment and prototype capability, and insert new technologies into either existing weapon systems or rapidly develop programs that can integrate these technologies into new capability for the Department of the Air Force. The Air Force must continue to adapt to emerging technologies, relook at policy and process that may inhibit innovation, and work creatively within the acquisition system to partner with commercial providers to take advantage of emerging technology. If confirmed I will continue to ensure technologists, operators, and our acquisition workforce work together to overcome barriers to rapidly fielding needed capability.

**114) How well do you think those Department investments in these technologies are appropriately focused, integrated, and synchronized across all Military Departments and Agencies?**

The Office of the Undersecretary of Defense (OUSD) for Research and Engineering is responsible for overseeing the coordination on these critical technologies between Services. The Air Force is working closely with OUSD and the Services on each of them, collaborating across Service lines to ensure integration across the Department of Defense. Two examples are the joint Air Force/Navy/OSD program for High Power Microwave Development (DEFEND) and a synchronized technology investment strategy that aligns with the DoD Hypersonics Roadmap. If confirmed, I will work with the enterprise to ensure our investments are appropriately focused, integrated, and synchronized.

**115) In your view, how has the Air Force prioritized limited research and development funding across its technology focus areas? Specifically, where is the Air Force either increasing or decreasing focus and funding?**

The Air Force has a broad Science and Technology investment portfolio which balances near term needs with longer term revolutionary technology development, and far-term

discovery needed for an enduring technical advantage in the future. Today, the Air Force is accelerating projects associated with collaborative combat aircraft; networked weapons; autonomous integrated Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance; and Artificial intelligence. Additionally, in alignment with our Air Force Science and Technology Strategy, we have established a portfolio to develop transformational capabilities competed from the best ideas throughout the national Science and Technology ecosystem. I support this portfolio that focuses on rapidly delivering capabilities through collaborative teaming between warfighters, acquisition professionals, and technologists.

**116) In your view, how is the Air Force balancing revolutionary capability advancements as compared to “quick win” incremental improvements that can be rapidly fielded?**

I agree that our research and development activities must balance revolutionary capability advancements with “quick win” incremental improvements that can be rapidly fielded. The Department has focused through the Operational Imperatives on both the fight tonight and the future fight. Today our technologists work closely with COCOMS, MAJCOMS, and PEOs to rapidly develop and deploy prototypes and experiments and mature technology across the spectrum of requirements. If confirmed I will focus on forming strong teams of technologists, operators and acquirers along with a disciplined capability development process to ensure a balance between near term “quick wins” and revolutionary capability advancements.

**117) What efforts is the Air Force making to identify new technologies developed commercially by the private sector and apply them to military and national security purposes? What are the challenges that you perceive to increasing collaboration between the private sector and Air Force?**

The Air Force is working to accelerate agile and affordable capability transitions by teaming innovative technology developers with Airman talent through AFWERX and Air Force Ventures. By developing an innovation corps and expanding collaboration beyond traditional networks, the Air Force is working to shape future operational systems and the capability development structures necessary to field those systems. Aligning investments (including industry’s IR&D) to successfully transition technologies, as well as determining the acceptable level of risk for both the Air Force and the private sector are challenges that we are working to overcome.

**118) If confirmed, how can the operational experience of the warfighter better be integrated into the research and development process? Are there appropriate places to interject warfighters in the interaction between the DOD research and engineering community and the private sector?**

The Air Force has made good initial strides in integrating the warfighter into our research and development processes, particularly through the WARfighter TECHnology (WARTECH) process. WARTECH brings together warfighters, technologists, planners,

and acquisition personnel to collectively develop operational concepts motivated by future force design and enabled by high-payoff S&T. I've seen the process demonstrate success through the larger Vanguard efforts, such as Skyborg and Golden Horde, that are poised to transition this year. If confirmed, I will continue to grow activities that synchronize acquisition, requirements, and resourcing processes toward our operational imperatives.

**119) If confirmed, how are you leveraging experimentation and prototyping opportunities to look at new technologies and concepts that might be beneficial for the Air Force, or better support the Air Force role in joint operations?**

The Air Force utilizes prototyping and experimentation to evaluate strategic concepts and new technologies to support the Department of the Air Force Operational Imperatives and the Air Force role in joint operations. By bringing together cross-functional experimentation campaign teams composed of operators, technologists, engineers, acquisition, and requirements personnel the Air Force is able to conduct experimentation and prototype activities to rapidly discover whether a new concept or technology provides relevant and affordable warfighter capability. The Air Force also collaborates with OSD in joint experimentation venues. If confirmed, I will support continued efforts to explore innovative solutions across the full doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership and education, personnel, facilities (DOTMLPF) and policy spectrum to give us a quicker understanding of operational utility, leading to better decisions on what technologies and concepts to pursue to provide the force with superior capability.

**120) In your view, what steps must DOD take to protect and strengthen our National Security Innovation Base to ensure that critical information is protected?**

The Department of the Air Force and the DoD are working diligently to protect our National Security Innovation Base and safeguard critical information through sustained, close collaboration between government and industry. We are working closely with OSD to identify Critical Programs and Technologies and establish Mandatory Protection Measures. We are also protecting our most innovative technologies by implementing a new Due Diligence process for companies entering the Defense Industrial Base. Through this partnership, we are enabling enterprise-wide, short- and long-term solution sets to protect critical technologies and information.

**One of the main objectives of the defense research enterprise is to develop advanced technologies that will be of benefit to the warfighter. In this regard, it is critical that advancements quickly transition from the development phase into testing and evaluation and ultimately into a program of record for the deployment of capability to the warfighter.**

**121) If confirmed, how would you ensure that a greater percentage of the technologies being developed by Air Force labs transition into programs of record for deployment to the warfighter? How would you ensure that appropriate technologies are transitioning more quickly into programs of record?**

If confirmed, I will work to accelerate transition of technologies from the laboratory to the warfighter. To do this effectively we must ensure operator involvement early in the process, understand the art of the possible from a technology standpoint, and develop an understanding of how these technologies can be exploited to provide relevant capabilities. The Air Force has successfully demonstrated this ability through the execution of our Operational Imperatives and Cross-Cutting Operational Enablers. Through rigorous validation of capabilities in the development pipeline we have increased confidence in production and fielding decisions. We also continue to leverage our collaborative WARTECH and Vanguard initiatives to foster and transition early S&T investments. While we will not transition everything we develop, we will advance our technological edge on the path to maintaining an effective balance of warfighter “pull” and technology “push” in our S&T investment portfolio.

**122) How do you see the laboratory facilities in the Air Force contributing to your goals for developing technology for the warfighter? Do you think Air Force lab facilities are keeping pace with the needs of the Air Force? If not, what do you think could be done to improve the Air Force’s ability to modernize its lab infrastructure?**

The Air Force Research Laboratory (AFRL) leads the discovery, development, and integration of warfighting technologies through a blend of unique, one-of-a-kind research facilities, world class workforce and strategic collaborations. While competition for military construction resources does present challenges for building new or performing major modifications and upgrades to existing facilities, I am aware that AFRL utilizes many unique authorities and innovative agreements such as Cooperative Research and Development Agreement (CRADA), Educational Partnership Agreement (EPA), and Partnership Intermediary Agreement (PIA), to extend its reach and outreach and gain access to world class talent and facilities. If confirmed, I will continue to support AFRL’s ability to organically and through partnership develop and test next generation warfighting capability.

### **Technical Workforce**

**A significant challenge facing the Air Force today is a shortage of highly skilled data scientists; computer programmers; cyber; and other scientific, technical, and engineering talent to work at Defense laboratories and technical centers.**

**123) In your view, what are the pros and cons of having Air Force active duty military personnel trained and working as scientists, engineers, software coders, and in other technical positions across the Air Force’s research, development, and acquisition enterprise?**

The Air Force needs a combination of both active duty and civilian personnel trained and working as scientists, engineers, software coders, and in other technical positions across the Air Force’s research, development, and acquisition enterprise. Active-duty personnel trained in these technical positions offer greater insights into operational challenges,



mission necessity and tighter coupling of technical solutions to operational realities; however, active-duty personnel may not have the same level of experience or depth as the civilian personnel community provides. Each cohort brings different capabilities and limitations in terms of experience, background, motivations, perspectives, and rotational agility. Therefore, it is imperative that we utilize a mix of personnel and employment models to ensure the Air Force has access to the talent it needs in the most operational relevant way possible. If confirmed, I will leverage all the talent management tools at my disposal to ensure we recruit and retain the necessary talent and maintain an effective balance between military and civilian personnel numbers to optimize mission performance and workforce development and continuity.

**124) How do you propose to leverage other initiatives in the Air Force or in DOD to help with these challenges, such as the Defense Civilian Training Corps?**

The Air Force is strategically leveraging a variety of programs and partnerships to include exploring the potential of the newly launched Defense Civilian Training Corps (DCTC) as an avenue to a direct pathway into DAF acquisition-related careers. It is worth highlighting the DAF's own Premier College Intern Program (PCIP). PCIP provides 10-12 week paid summer internships for college juniors that prepares students for a number of promising career fields within the DAF, including Science and Engineering, Cybersecurity, IT, Acquisition, and other mission-critical specialty positions. All told, 500 internships are awarded annually in 45 locations across America. There is a very high conversion rate and students transfer to permanent positions, or to other development programs upon graduation. This includes PALACE Acquire (PAQ), preparing employees for a wide range of careers from Science and Engineering to Cyber and IT, or Copper Cap (COP), readying employees to become Contract (procurement) Specialists. To fill immediate needs, the DAF aggressively utilizes DoD Direct Hire Authorities and the flexibility provided by various alternate personnel systems, such as DoD Acquisition Demonstration Project, and the Air Force Research Laboratory and Lab Demonstration Project. We use our Air Force Civilian Service hiring website and a targeted social media presence to find candidates where they are. We conduct outreach at career fairs and through the Air Force Talent Acquisition Team. Finally, we use programs, such as CyberPatriot, to grow interest in STEM disciplines at the K-12 level; projecting participants will become the scientists of the future who have a propensity to serve and a positive familiarity for the Air Force.

**Suicide Prevention**

**On May 17, 2022, Secretary Austin established the Suicide Prevention and Response Independent Review Committee (SPRIRC) to conduct a comprehensive review of clinical and non-clinical suicide prevention and response programs across the force.**

**125) If confirmed, what specific role and tasks would you establish for the Air Force in implementing the SPRIRC's recommendations?**



Airmen and their families are our greatest asset, and one unnecessary loss is one too many. If confirmed, I will remain committed to ensure all have a safe work and home environment and continue the initiatives we have already implemented across the DAF to include Lethal Means Safety and limited Privilege suicide prevention programs. I will support maximum maneuverability for our prevention workforce so they can continue to innovate and revolutionize suicide prevention.

**126) If confirmed, specifically what would you do to ensure that sufficient suicide prevention and mental health resources are available to deployed airmen, as well as to airmen and their families at home station?**

We currently deploy combat and operational stress control teams in addition to clinical mental health providers to take care of our airmen in theater. There are currently efforts to ensure all airmen are trained in the basics of psychological first aid. If confirmed, I will continue to support all these efforts because everyone needs access to basic mental health awareness and support. Additionally, families and airmen at home station locations will continue to have the robust resources provided by their MTFs and TRICARE networks, in addition to MilitaryOneSource, Military and Family Life Consultants, outside agencies (like the Cohen Veteran's Network), Primary Care Behavioral Health Providers, Primary Care providers and chaplains.

**Military Health System (MHS) Reform**

**Section 702 of the NDAA for FY 2017, as modified by Sections 711 and 712 of the NDAA for FY 2019, and sections 711 and 712 of the NDAA for FY 2020, transferred the administration and management of military treatment facilities (MTFs) from the Military Services to the Defense Health Agency (DHA).**

**127) Do you support the implementation of the MHS reforms mandated by the NDAAs for FYs 2017, 2019, and 2020?**

Yes, I support the direction of Congress to standardize the administration and management of the MTFs under the Defense Health Agency (DHA). The DAF has been a resources transparent and proactive partner, providing project management constructs, direct support, and leadership in transferring programs, tasks, and to support the DHA's expanded mission. DAF was also the first Service to complete its transfer of headquarters manpower and centralized contracts to DHA worth about \$1B. DAF continues to support DHA in many ways, such as the changes in the DHA market structure, DHA support activities, and transferring the remainder of our Air Force Public Health programs to DHA-Public Health.

As previously mentioned by the AF and Army Surgeons General, there have been many challenges based on the disparate organization of each of the Services and Service specific needs. DAF follows NDAA 20, sec.712 by keeping 80% of AD medics assigned

within MTFs. AFMED will not reduce AF medics within MTFs. With the stand-up of AFMED on 1 Oct 2023, the DAF will be better postured to continue supporting DHA and MTFs located on AF installation for readiness and healthcare delivery.

**128) In your view, is the Air Force medical force properly sized to meet the joint medical requirements set forth in operational plans implementing the NDS?**

No, the AFMS is not properly sized to meet the joint medical requirements. After prioritizing the health service support Force Element requirements for the expeditionary air base, joint forces, homeland defense, and embedded medics health services support the AFMS is insufficient to meet force generation requirements. Specifically, the AFMS need includes in-garrison primary and specialty care services in the event of the execution of operational plans set forth in the NDS.

1. The situation developed due to simultaneous needs for operationally required (Expeditionary Force Element and UTC) personnel to provide force generation and garrison support.
  - a. The risk presented by an improperly sized medical force can be reduced through optimizing existing medical force structure to meet requirements set forth in operational plans.
  - b. Utilizing civilian personnel to provide garrison healthcare delivery would also minimize the gap in staffing, enabling military personnel to focus on joint medical requirements.
  - c. Air Force Medical Command (AFMED) will allow the Service to efficiently restructure the uniformed medical force to meet DAF and joint mission requirements.

**129) In your view, do Air Force medical providers today possess the critical wartime medical readiness skills and core competencies required to provide effective and timely health care to military personnel engaged in combat or contingency operations?**

Air Force medical providers today possess the critical wartime medical readiness skills and core competencies required to provide effective and timely health care to military personnel engaged in combat or contingency operations. Preventive and Aerospace Medicine directed at illnesses and non-battle injuries are the primary medical skills and core competencies required to provide effective and timely operational health care. Additionally, select Air Force providers assigned to discrete SOF, combat, and mobility medical capabilities can also deliver a full range of expeditionary medical skills at the Point of Injury, during patient movement, and at each echelon of care. Finally, providers assigned to a limited number of Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear (CBRN) response capabilities are organized, trained, and equipped to detect, identify, respond, and treat mixed conventional and CBRN injuries.

Joint Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities serve as a foundation to sustain critical wartime medical readiness skills and core competencies. JKSA delineate currency and

competency requirement for select Air Force medical professionals. The Air Force may lack capacity for emerging threats such as large scale combat operations with a peer competitor, Prolonged Casualty Care when immediate patient movement isn't possible, cold and stressful climates, and CBRN environments. Additional resources are required to increase capacity for emerging threats and sustain JKSA's for Air Force medical professionals to include medical support staff.

In summary, Air Force medical providers possess the critical medical readiness skills required by the supported Combatant Commander. Additional resources are needed to fully establish and sustain emerging medical readiness skills requirements.

### **Air Force Military End Strength**

**Over the last 20 years, the Air Force has experienced near-constant flux in its end strength, from a high of 357,900 airmen in 2005 to a low of 311,357 airmen in 2015. The President's budget has requested an end strength of 324,700 for fiscal year 2024.**

**130) In your assessment, what is the effect on the force of these frequent end strength fluctuations?**

The DAF is committed to enabling Airmen to build rewarding careers while serving on active duty or as members of the Air Force Guard and Reserve. More consistent opportunities for promotion and advancement over time are considerations driving Airmen retention decisions. End strength fluctuation is inevitable as threats, equipment modernization, authorized funding, and the corresponding force needed to meet NDS requirements evolves over time. Gradual and phased-in end strength changes allow for consistent opportunities to on-and off-ramp required personnel; predictable and stable promotion and advancement opportunities which enhance the retention of our trained and experienced personnel ensuring we have forces sufficient to counter our adversaries.

**131) In your view, is the Air Force's current end strength sufficient to implement the 2022 NDS and execute the associated operational plans? If not, what end strength do you believe is necessary to meet the demands placed on the Air Force by the NDS and associated operational plans?**

We have the appropriate authorized end strength to match our current capabilities. As we continue to modernize our capabilities and capacity, we will require an adjusted end strength. Additionally, as we continue to seek ways to leverage technology, including AI/ML, we will convert those efficiencies into a more efficient and lethal Air Force. If confirmed, I would work with Congress and SecAF/ SecDef to determine the appropriate force size needed to meet the NDS and operational plans and assess whether there are any changes in the strategy or likely resource levels that would require a change in the current plans.

**132) If recruiting continues to be a challenge, how will you ensure the Air Force has**

### **sufficient personnel to support the 2022 NDS?**

The Air Force is committed to finding and accessing Airmen who are the future of our force by reaching segments of our population who have historically not considered military service. While maintaining the Air Force's high standards, we continue to review our talent recruitment policies, such as appearance, fitness requirements, and medical/testing processes ensuring we do not inadvertently restrict our pool of eligible applicants. The Air Force is reviewing potential FY24 force management programs aimed at retaining highly qualified Airman to support the NDS. We are actively managing the High-Year Tenure program and issuing waivers for some of our more experienced members to allow them to serve longer. We are maximizing Airman retention using programs such as targeted bonuses and other monetary and non-monetary incentives and introducing new talent management initiatives and programs such as technical career paths, temporary promotions to ensure we attract and retain the talent needed to perform Air Force missions.

### **133) What additional force shaping authorities and tools does the Air Force need, in your view?**

From my perspective, the Air Force currently has the necessary force-shaping tools. However, I will continue to work with Congress and SecAF/ SecDef to ensure the Air Force remains agile and responsive regarding the size and skill mix we need in the Air Force.

## **Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve**

### **134) What is your vision of the roles and missions of the Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve?**

The Air National Guard and the Air Force Reserve are valued and foundational members of our Total Air Force team. As such, our assessment of threats and our national security strategy to meet those threats drives roles and missions, including the Guard and Reserve. Roles and missions are assigned in line with Air Force core functions to ensure that the Total Force can meet the National Defense Strategy in the most efficient and effective manner.

### **135) If confirmed, what objectives would you seek to achieve with respect to the organization, end strength, and force structure of the Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve?**

As a cost-efficient and mission-effective force, the Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve provide the nation with combat-ready operational capability overseas and here at home. A strong Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve is vital for global reach and integrated deterrence, enabling the Total Force to maximize fight-tonight capacity. The Air Reserve Component also offers the opportunity for ready access with much-needed skills in many non-flying missions, and thus are excellent candidates for wing missions

like Cyber and Contingency Response, where they maintain many relevant skills while doing their civilian jobs. The Air Reserve Component's wide-ranging operational capability serves the diverse needs of every Combatant Commander, whose requirements are as varied as the geographic and functional areas they support. Concurrent and appropriate recapitalization and modernization across both the Regular and Reserve Components is crucial to effective Total Force Optimization.

**136) What are your views as to the optimal role for Air Reserve Component forces in meeting Air Force combat mission requirements?**

The Air Reserve Component is a force multiplier providing strategic depth and operational capacity across all mission sets, domains, and capabilities of the Total Force, including supporting combat missions. Readiness remains the Air Force's top priority, across all components. If confirmed, my objectives would continue to align accordingly, ensuring an integrated, Total Force approach to organizing, training, and equipping Airmen.

**137) In your view, do the Air Force Reserve Components serve as an operational reserve, a strategic reserve, or both? In light of your answer, should the Air Force Reserve and the Air National Guard be supported by improved equipment, increased training, and higher levels of overall resourcing for readiness going forward?**

We need the Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard to maintain their indispensable role as both a strategic reserve, providing additional surge capacity to the joint force when called upon, and an operational reserve, providing a layer of daily capacity to support on-going operations and training. Both roles are critical to meet wartime and competition requirements set forth in the National Defense Strategy. The Air Reserve Component must be resourced appropriately to maintain readiness and lethality, ensuring successful execution of the Total Force mission.

**138) Do you expect to meet prior service accession goals for the Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard this fiscal year? Why or why not?**

Current projections indicate the Air National Guard will not meet prior service accession goals for FY23. The ANG expects a slight increase in enlisted and officer accessions from FY22 overall but will not meet the established percentage goal. Several factors are influencing prior service decision making. Prior-service members desire more options for flexible work, more predictable work-life balance, and better pay. Also, changing life interests are often cited, particularly those involving decisions to focus on education and plans to start a family. To strengthen prior service recruiting, the Air National Guard increased marketing efforts for Air National Guard brand awareness on active-duty bases. We are also working to streamline processing efforts for permeability between active-duty and Air National Guard accessions. These efforts include granting access to Air National Guard vacancies via online virtual platforms that increase visibility of Air National Guard vacancies for prior-service members coming off active-duty.

The AFR is projecting to fall short of meeting its overall end strength requirements and established recruiting targets for FY23 which includes prior service accessions. Several factors have contributed to this shortfall to include a very challenging recruiting market, low unemployment, recruiter manning shortages, and propensity to serve, to name a few. The AFR is working several initiatives to get after those things we control to include eliminating barriers to service for members transitioning from active duty, offering additional bonuses, and reevaluating accession standards. We're optimistic that implementation of these initiatives will have a positive impact on FY24 recruiting efforts.

**139) What is your understanding and view of the Office of the Under Secretary for Personnel and Readiness proposal for comprehensive Reserve Component Duty Status Reform?**

Just as the military modernizes our weapons systems, we must modernize our organization and not continue to operate under authorities established decades ago. Currently, Reservists conducting training or supporting operations are placed in status under one of ~30 unique statutory authorities. Duty Status Reform legislation is needed to streamline and consolidate today's overly complex system and eliminate longstanding pay and benefits inequities.

Duty Status Reform should be designed to: correct pay inequalities, align entitlements across duty categories, and clarify the entitlements for Reservists who transition between statuses. Duty Status Reform will simplify the rules and procedures associated with Reserve support to operational missions, ensure AFR personnel are correctly compensated for their service—preventing disruptions in pay and benefits, including critical medical coverage—as well as make it easier for Combatant Commanders to call upon and operationally integrate Reserve Citizen Airmen, improving the Air Force Reserve's ability to support the joint force.

Enactment of Duty Status Reform legislation that streamlines the current system and enables Reserve Component pay and benefit parity for Reserve Component members. We urge Congress to continue to work with the DoD and OMB to move this legislation forward.

**140) In your view, are the Air National Guard units and personnel performing missions in support of the Space Force able to successfully execute those missions? If not, what challenges exist, and how would you propose to overcome them?**

The Department of the Air Force (DAF) values the people and units in the Air National Guard who perform space missions and we rely on the capabilities they provide. While Air National Guard units and personnel performing missions in support of the Space Force can execute their missions, the Air Force Legislative Liaison continues to work with Congress to explore all options to optimize organizational structure and unity of command over all DAF space forces. Our goal is maximum flexibility for organize, train, and equip (OT&E) and operational responsibilities, and ensures access to part-time forces

for surge capacity. We must make decisions that ensure mission accomplishment while maximizing resources and efficiencies.

### **Air Force Recruiting and Retention**

**The National Defense Strategy Commission asserted unequivocally that the most critical resource required to produce a highly capable military is highly capable people, in the quantity required, willing to serve. Yet, DOD studies indicate that only about 23% of today's youth population is eligible for military service, a decrease of six percentage points in the last five years. Further, only a fraction of those who meet military accession standards are interested in serving.**

**141) If confirmed, how would you ensure that the Air Force maintains sufficiently high recruitment and retention standards, even if such standards result in the Air Force not achieving authorized end strength growth?**

Given the nature of our business, it is essential we recruit only those who are qualified to meet the unique demands of military service. The latest recruiting numbers are promising and partly attributable to the steps we took this past year to open our accessions aperture, while maintaining our high standards. We know that despite record low unemployment and record high private sector wage growth, our 90% retention means that when our Airmen join, they are likely to stay. If confirmed, I will continue to champion the initiatives underway that involve a thorough look at our policies while maintaining our standards. I will also work to ensure we emphasize better connection with the American public, as one of the key challenges we face in recruiting is the decreasing familiarity of our youth with the opportunities and value of service in the Air Force.

**142) Rather than relying solely on ever-higher compensation for a shrinking pool of volunteers, what creative steps would you take, if confirmed, to expand the pool of eligible recruits and improve Air Force recruiting?**

If confirmed, I will continue General Brown's work to reduce unnecessary barriers to service as well as expand the service's ability to reach and inspire both veterans and America's youth from all backgrounds, so our Nation's Air Force exemplifies the population it represents. Our principal challenge remains historically low and declining propensity to serve due to a lack of familiarity with military life, and that is where we see the most opportunity to expand the applicant pool. We need to partner with the Department of Defense and undertake whole of government efforts to enhance our connection with the American people, but particularly America's youth, to share the incredible opportunities, professional development, and one-of-a-kind mission that military service provides.

**143) What do you consider to be key to the Air Force's future success in retaining the best qualified personnel for continued service in positions of greater responsibility and leadership in the Air Force?**



To retain the best qualified Airmen, we must maintain high standards of excellence while maximizing the quality of service and quality of life. The Air Force continues to retain and develop extremely competent leaders. We will also greatly benefit as a Service if we can develop innovative ways to retain talented individuals with a passion for what they do, but prefer a non-standard career path. If confirmed, I will continue to improve upon our leadership development opportunities and assess whether additional opportunities over the career continuum are needed to enhance the careers of individual Airmen (officers, enlisted, and civilians).

**144) In your view, do current accessions standards—particularly DOD-wide criteria for tier-one recruits—accurately predict recruit attrition and/or future success in the Air Force?**

Yes, in my view, Air Force's Accession standards are effective in determining a recruit's compatibility and potential future success. The department continually re-assesses these standards to remove unnecessary barriers to service and adapt to the department's changing needs. If confirmed, I will continue in that endeavor.

**145) Given the historically low numbers for eligibility to serve, do you believe a reassessment of accessions standards is in order? If so, what accessions standards in your view are outdated or worthy of review?**

If confirmed, I will support the continual assessment of our standards and policies ensuring they support current and future Air Force requirements. I championed the Barriers to Service Cross-Functional Team, which tackled several known applicant disqualification drivers and introduced incentive programs to spur interest in AF service. Adjustments to body composition (BMI) for entrance into the AF and tattoo standards allowed approximately 700 additional Airmen, who would otherwise not be eligible, to serve since January 2023. We updated Strength Aptitude Test requirements to better reflect the actual demands of the career fields thus expanding career field opportunities, especially for our female recruits; and we approved permanent accession waivers for historically waived medical conditions. Throughout, we have maintained the focus on quality and will follow-up long term to ensure that any changes made thus far have not had a negative impact on readiness or fitness of the force. If confirmed, I will ensure continuous review of accession standards and also apply judgment as to when and where we can adjust or waive as appropriate.

**146) In your view, does the Air Force have the necessary authorities to recruit and retain personnel with critical skills, including cyber?**

With the recently expanded authorities provided by Congress, the Air Force is better equipped to compete with industry and our adversaries over the nationwide shortage of highly skilled cybersecurity professionals and the limited pool of highly technical-focused applicants. Direct appointment authority, constructive credit for cyber and other critical line officers and other pay flexibilities, such as cyber assignment incentive pay, allows the Air Force to recruit better and retain these in-demand skilled personnel. If

confirmed, I will continue to advocate for flexibility to grow and advance our workforce, ensuring we have the right skills in sufficient numbers to maintain competitive advantage in a high-end fight.

### **U.S. Air Force Academy**

**147) In your view, what is the unique value provided by the U.S. Air Force Academy (USAFA) when compared with the other Air Force commissioning sources?**

Each DAF source of commission has a unique purpose and provides highly capable officers ready to immediately contribute to the mission. The unique value provided by USAFA, when compared to other commissioning sources, is its expansive and immersive experience. The Academy offers one of the most well-rounded college experiences available anywhere, with a broad-based, STEM heavy curricula, emphasizing leadership skills, character development, physical fitness, and experiential learning in a military environment over a four year period. Moreover, the Academy has a robust research capability and can quickly adapt its curricula to meet the changing needs of both the Air and Space Force in order to ensure our officers are prepared to lead our forces in the successful execution of the Department's various mission-sets.

**148) If confirmed, what changes to the organization, curriculum, or operations of USAFA do you envision recommending?**

First and foremost, it is my expectation that USAFA will continue to develop leaders of character and integrity, dedicated to the defense of this Nation and the Constitution. The Academy must also continue to evolve, to remain at the forefront of innovation and optimize its organization, curriculum, and/or operations in order to develop commissioned officers capable of leading our Airmen and Guardians in the most difficult of situations in order to accomplish the mission.

**The National Defense Authorization Act re-emphasized for the third time in the last five years that service academy graduates are expected to serve for at least two-years on active duty prior to pursuing employment as a professional athlete.**

**149) Do you support this requirement?**

Yes. The primary purpose of the United States Air Force Academy is to develop future leaders for our Air and Space Forces. I am also aware of the changes to Section 553 and 202 of the FY23 NDAA with respect to professional sports notification of graduating cadets. As I understand the legislation, the new provisions apply to cadets and midshipmen who enroll on or after June 1, 2021 (Classes 2025 and beyond). Section 202 granted the Class of 2023 the option to seek a waiver to pursue employment in professional sports and the Air Force ensured compliance with DoD guidance on submitting any waiver requests for the class of 2023 to the Office of the Secretary of

Defense for consideration. The Air Force also strictly enforces annual reviews of those that were previously approved for participation in professional sports to ensure that they uphold obligations on representation and recruiting on behalf of the Service.

## **Pilot Retention**

**Increases in commercial airline pilot hiring over the past few years have contributed to persistent and alarming pilot shortage and retention problems in all of the Military Services, but the Air Force most acutely.**

**150) What monetary and non-monetary incentives has the Air Force employed to address the pilot retention crisis? In your view, which incentives or combinations thereof have proven most effective and why?**

Headquarters Air Force A1, in close coordination with Headquarters Air Force A3, focused efforts on four critical areas relating to pilot retention. The Air Force is taking deliberate steps to address Compensation, Talent Management, Quality of Life, and Quality of Service. Specifically, the Air Force uses the annual Aviation Bonus program as its primary monetary incentive to retain many of its highly experienced combat aviators reliably. Non-monetary incentives target quality of life factors, such as stability, achieved through carefully managed assignment options. Combining all incentives is critical for our retention efforts to be effective. Failure to address any of these incentives would certainly be detrimental to our retention.

**In March 2020, Air Mobility Command (AMC) ended its “flying-only” career track for pilots who were not interested in command.**

**151) In your view, was it prudent to disestablish the “flying-only” career track? What is your view of this issue now?**

Air Mobility Command launched the Aviator Technical Track, or “flying-only” career track in 2018 and concluded the program in 2020. Despite a nearly two-year trial period, the program had a notable lack of interest from aviators with only two airmen joining the Aviator Technical Track. Based on the recency of the trial and its lack of interest from the force, the Air Force did not continue the program and has not considered reviving the effort at this time.

**152) If confirmed, what additional steps would you take to retain the requisite number of pilots in the Air Force?**

To retain these highly trained and valued aviators, the Air Force rated retention efforts must evolve from crisis response to deliberate planning, informed by data-driven modeling designed to create an understanding of changes in retention sentiment over the course of members' careers from winging through their departure. The new Aircrew Engagement Survey that closed in March 2023 showed the top reasons pilots separated are: lack of location stability, lack of resources to accomplish the mission, and

compensation. The Air Force will continue to address these concerns with new initiatives and by continuing initiatives like increased second assignments in place and increased administrative contractor support in squadrons. The Air Force aggressively addressed compensation in FY23 by increasing the maximum annual Pilot Aviation Bonus from \$35,000 to \$50,000, Critical Skill Incentive Pay, and Special Duty Assignment Pays. Additionally, the FY23 National Defense Authorization Act directed the Air Force to execute a Rated Officer Retention Demonstration Program consisting of up to \$50,000 annually and a base of preference option, offered up to three years prior to the expiration of a members undergraduate flying training active duty service commitment. The Air Force will use the annual Aircrew Engagement survey to continually monitor sentiment on these initiatives and adjust or pursue new initiatives as necessary to meet our retention goals.

**153) How has the Air Force increased pilot production capacity commensurate with the demands of the NDS?**

The United States Air Force has implemented numerous programs to increase production. Combining transformational programs like Undergraduate Helicopter Training-Next and Air Mobility Fundamentals, with a foundational competency-based training syllabus, sustains the integrity of the force's premier pilot training program while improving production outcomes. We continue to target a steady-state pilot production potential of 1,500 pilots annually. Maintenance and supply challenges for aging training aircraft, combined with low manning in our Civilian Simulator Instructor (CSI) force, continues to challenge our ability to increase pilot production capacity.

**Section 1052 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 required the Air Force to adopt an organizational model for all Air Force remotely piloted aircraft that uses a significant number of Air Force [enlisted] as operators of such aircraft rather than officers only. The President's budget request for Fiscal Year 2024 would repeal that requirement. The Air Force has conveyed to the committee that the program failed to generate sufficient interest among enlisted airmen.**

**154) In your view, what are the causes for the failure of the Air Force to successfully implement the requirements of section 1052 of the FY 2017 NDAA?**

The United States Air Force successfully implemented the requirements of section 1052 of the FY 2017 NDAA and currently maintains an Enlisted Pilot Program. Expanding the program would require overcoming enlisted pilot recruitment, retention, and career progression challenges while decreasing officer pilot accessions due to constrained production pipelines.

**155) In your view, what steps could the Air Force take successfully revive the program so that the Air Force is in compliance with the statutory mandate?**

The United States Air Force successfully implemented the requirements of section 1052 of the FY 2017 NDAA and currently maintains an Enlisted Pilot Program. Expanding

the program would require overcoming enlisted pilot recruitment, retention, and career progression challenges while decreasing officer pilot accessions due to constrained production pipelines.

**156) How could the establishment of a robust enlisted RPA pilot program address shortfalls in pilot recruiting and retention?**

The enlisted pilot program does not address shortfalls in the Air Force’s aircrew force management issues. Enlisted pilots require the same training as officer pilots, which results in no additional gains in already constrained production pipeline. Despite its initial success, the enlisted pilot program faced similar challenges with recruitment, retention, and career progression. Additionally, the current National Defense Strategy (NDS) priorities are driving a reduction of the future remotely piloted aircraft forces.

**The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023 authorized a “Rated Officer Retention Demonstration Program” that provided additional flexibility to structure retention contracts with active duty pilots.**

**157) If confirmed, will you commit to keeping the monetary value of retention contracts offered under the demo program higher than the monetary value of retention contracts offered under the legacy pilot bonus program?**

In the FY23 NDAA, Congress granted additional authorization for the Rated Demonstration program. With this authority, the Air Force has the advantage of offering retention contracts and the associated monetary incentives to additional year groups of aviators providing additional stability for our rated community. The legacy aviation bonus and the demo program complement each other. The monetary incentives are tiered so the highest monetary incentive is offered to aviators who request a retention contract earlier in their career and for a longer commitment. If confirmed, I will commit to supporting these programs, ensuring alignment with retention goals, and engage OSD and Congress if updates are advisable.

**Military Compensation**

**The Department of Defense has traditionally assessed the competitiveness of military pay by comparing Regular Military Compensation against salaries earned by a comparable civilian demographic.**

**158) Do you agree that the primary purpose of a competitive military pay and benefits package is to recruit and retain a military of sufficient size and quality to meet the objectives of the 2022 NDS?**

Yes, the regular military compensation package, including basic pay, housing allowance, subsistence allowance, Federal Income Tax advantage of allowances, leave program, the Blended Retirement System, and other pay and benefit components, are intended to effectively compensate military members during peace and war, be equitable and fair,

flexible, competitive, motivational, predictable, and understandable. DoD exceeds the established 70th percentile as the baseline for military compensation. The 2023 4.6% increase in military basic pay and 10.7% increase to housing allowance to combat rising inflationary costs, is a key factor in retaining and recruiting members necessary to maintain a sufficient size and quality of the Air Force required by the 2022 NDS.

**159) What is your assessment of the adequacy of the current military pay package in achieving this goal—particularly given the ever-tightening recruiting market?**

I believe that overall, we have a competitive pay package. With an all-volunteer force, the comprehensive compensation package must be competitive enough to attract and retain talent and while recruiting has been a challenge, statistically, when people join the AF, they stay with us (~90% retention rate). I believe that is a testament to many factors such as our mission, quality of life, and care for our force and their families, but pay and compensation is very important. However, that is not to say that there are not areas where we can and should improve. Meeting the unique challenges of military life for our Airmen and their families, such as spousal employment and the cost and turmoil of multiple moves is always a challenge. Also, we need to look at targeted areas where pay may be challenged. If confirmed, I will continue to champion and address change where needed.

**160) Do you believe the largely “one-size-fits-all” model for military pay adequately rewards individuals for their specialized skills and provides an appropriate incentive to scientists, engineers, and members of other high-value professions to access into the military?**

Basic pay, which is largely a “one-size-fits-all” structure, is just the starting point for military compensation. The Air Force uses the special and incentive pays Congress provides to further compensate Airmen with specialized and critical skills to meet many of our talent management goals. The DAF recently contracted with the RAND Corporation to study the effectiveness of our bonus and special pay compensation programs; the results will illuminate any areas for improvement. Additionally, we are working with the DoD and other Services on the Quadrennial Review of Military Compensation (QRMC) to further address pay and compensation issues.

**161) What changes, if any, would you recommend to the current military pay and benefits package?**

The 14th Quadrennial Review of Military Compensation continues to study the efficacy of our current military pay and benefits package, including the effect of dual-income households, junior enlisted pay tables, and the calculations for housing allowance, subsistence allowance, Cost of Living Allowance and Basic Needs Allowance. I look forward to reviewing those results over the next two years to recommend data-driven changes to the current military pay and benefits package. The budget process drives every aspect of the military compensation program and any adjustments required due to the changing economic, housing, and food security environment. DoD leadership

requires more flexibility to keep pace with the changing environment. Just as necessary, our service members understand it is not all about money; the military compensation package alone cannot inspire a call to service for an all-volunteer force. If confirmed, I will continue to explore non-monetary incentives, living and work environments, and a sense of purpose to optimize the force for global power competition.

**162) What specific recommendations do you have for controlling the rising cost of military personnel?**

People are our greatest asset. I recognize challenges exist associated with controlling personnel costs in an all-volunteer force. If confirmed, I will work towards ensuring the workforce is properly compensated, along with the correct, cost-effective mix of manpower (officer, enlisted, civilian, contractor) and the most cost-efficient use of that manpower. In addition, I will energetically pursue advances in technology such as machine learning and automation to drive those tasks that do not require humans out of the workforce and into our digital systems.

**Service of Transgender Persons**

**Each of the Service Chiefs has testified before this Committee that in their personal experience, the service of transgender individuals in their preferred gender has had no negative impact on unit or overall military readiness.**

**163) In your personal experience, has the service of transgender individuals in their preferred gender had any negative impact on unit or overall military readiness?**

In my experience, no. Service members undergoing transition progress along individual timelines and transition plans can be individually tailored to meet the Service member's needs while minimizing any impact on military readiness. The Department's most senior leaders have made it clear that anyone who meets our high standards should have the opportunity to serve in an environment free from discrimination and characterized by dignity and respect. The DAF remains committed to availing ourselves of the best possible talent that America has to offer, regardless of gender identity.

**164) In your view, what would be the impact on readiness of requiring the separation of all transgender airmen currently serving in the military? Please provide specific data to support your view.**

DAF policies that encourage service, remove barriers to service, and treat all qualified individuals with dignity and respect are necessary to ensure we have a maximally ready and lethal force. In today's Air Force, people of different backgrounds and views work, live, and fight together on a daily basis. Involuntarily separating Service members solely based on gender identity would be antithetical to the Department's policies and values. Separating otherwise qualified individuals because they are TG would have a detrimental effect on the mission, resulting in the waste of hundreds of training hours and the loss of



significant financial investment costs related to training and developing the skill sets of these Service members. For those Service members serving in critical or undermanned career fields, the loss would be even more significant.

Our culture of nondiscrimination currently affords us a voluntary retention rate of about 90%; a blanket separation of transgender Service members would threaten the integrity and effectiveness of that culture and could expose us to unnecessary litigation.

### **Military Quality of Life**

**The Committee remains concerned about the sustainment of key quality of life programs for military families, such as family advocacy and parenting skills programs; child care; spouse education and employment support; health care; and morale, welfare and recreation (MWR) services.**

**165) If confirmed, what quality of life and MWR programs would you consider a priority?**

If confirmed, priority programs at the top of my list will help foster resilient and ready families because of the impact they have on Airmen recruitment, retention, and readiness. Programs such as health care, spouse employment, spouse education, family advocacy, exceptional family member program, dependent schools, and QoL programs like childcare, youth development, libraries, and fitness programs will be at the top of my list.

**166) How would you work across the Air Force and with Military Service Organizations and Congress, to sustain and enrich high-value quality of life and MWR programs for airmen and their families?**

Quality of life and MWR programs are essential to maintaining the readiness of our force and the resiliency of our Airmen, Guardians, and their families. Programs that foster resilient and ready families are key on my list and include health care, spouse employment and education, family advocacy, exceptional family member support, dependent schooling, and MWR programs such as child care, youth development, libraries, and fitness. We continue to evaluate programs to identify those with the most significant impact on Airmen, Guardians, and family health and resiliency, recruiting, retention, and readiness. We will use Airmen and Guardian feedback to focus our efforts on strengthening the most impactful programs. We will use innovative modeling to guide current and future MWR portfolios to provide our Total Force Airmen and Guardians the support they deserve.

### **Military Housing**

**167) What is your current assessment of privatized housing inside the Air Force?**

The Military Housing Privatization Initiative (MHPI) program has enabled the Department of the Air Force to modernize its housing and support our servicemembers with quality housing by leveraging private sector funding and expertise.

The Department of the Air Force has made significant progress at all levels and implemented reforms to enhance oversight of privatized housing and holding our privatized housing companies accountable for providing quality housing, and a positive living experience for our members and their families.

As a result of these reforms and as evidenced by the overall MHPI's satisfactory resident satisfaction survey results, I believe privatized housing inside the DAF is and will continue to remain in a strong position to provide quality, affordable housing accommodations that our Airmen/Guardian and their families choose to live in

As we move forward, DAF will continue to focus on Project Owner accountability, improving oversight, resident satisfaction, and sustainment of our portfolio to ensure its long-term success, while also providing safe and healthy housing for our servicemembers and their families.

**168) As it pertains to unaccompanied barracks, do you believe the Air Force should utilize waivers to waive habitability and living standards?**

The health, welfare, and quality of life for our Airmen and Guardians living in dormitories is a top priority and a fundamental responsibility of our commanders and enlisted leaders.

If confirmed, I believe the Air Force should continue its policy of not issuing habitability waivers pertaining to health and life safety in its dorms. The existing short-term waiver authority regarding living standards, such as configuration and privacy standards, should be maintained in order to respond to unforeseen mission or emergency situations.

Overall, Air Force dorms are in satisfactory condition - with 99% of our dorms above the OSD standard. The Air Force has made a concerted effort to increase investment in our dorms above and beyond what is required by the FY22 NDAA, and will continue to do so in FY24.

**Family Readiness and Support**

**169) What do you consider to be the most important family readiness issues for airmen and their families?**

My focus will center on the Financial Readiness of our Service Members and their families, including combating food insecurity concerns primarily in our junior grades; and ensuring childcare availability. Additional issues that continue be critical to our collective family readiness are access to healthcare, including mental and behavioral health and resiliency, and safe/adequate housing. These issues remain top of mind and if

confirmed, I will continue the momentum and assess the impact of our current execution strategies.

**170) If confirmed, how would you ensure that the family readiness issues you identified are properly addressed and adequately resourced?**

For Financial Readiness, I believe the touchpoint training courses provided through OSD's Office of Financial Readiness give Service Members the necessary tools to successfully navigate their current financial situation and plan for their futures. In addition, the increased eligibility of Service Members at or below 150% of the local poverty level to receive supplemental income provides a safety net for members in high-cost areas to meet the financial needs of themselves and their families. I would focus on furthering DAF efforts of creating a culture where Service Members and their families understand that help-seeking behaviors do not constitute failure on their part, but are acceptable and will not negatively impact their careers.

For childcare availability, I will continue advocating for Child and Youth Program recruitment and retention incentives; and to continue expanding capacity on and off installations to ensure childcare needs are met.

**171) If confirmed, how would you ensure that support related to mobilization, deployment, and family readiness is provided to Air Force Reserve Component families, as well as to active duty Air Force families who do not reside near a military base?**

Active-duty Military and Family Readiness Centers (M&FRC) are postured to support our Total Force through all four phases of deployment: pre-deployment, deployment and sustainment, re-deployment and reintegration, and post-deployment, regardless of where they reside. Our deployment program staff remain connected with those deploying or deployed, units of the deployed, and family members to the extent they request, require, or accept. Our Reserve Components have added program areas using local community resources and authorities such as the DoD Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program (YRRP). If confirmed, I will ensure that as we evolve our Air Force Force Generation and Force Presentation approaches to better adapt to the change in the strategic environment, we do so with Total Force considerations from the start.

**172) In your view, what role do non-medical counseling services provided by DOD Military Family Life Counselors have in promoting the readiness of the force and family?**

The DoD-administered Military and Family Life Counselor (MFLC) program is crucial in providing immediately available counseling for military life adjustment and daily challenge experiences for Service members and their families. MFLC capabilities run the gamut from deployment stress, reintegration, relocation adjustment, separation, anger management, conflict resolution, parenting, parent-child communication, relationship and family issues, coping skills, homesickness, and grief and loss. The DAF has over 900

established MFLC requirements for adult, child and youth, and school-based programs, which serve as a first line of engagement for our Airmen, Guardians, and families.

**The Committee often hears that active duty families have difficulty obtaining child care on base and can struggle to obtain care off base in certain high-demand areas.**

**173) If confirmed, specifically would you do to provide Air Force families with accessible, high-quality childcare, at an appropriate cost?**

Available, affordable, and quality childcare services allow Airmen and Guardians to focus on and execute the Department's mission. If confirmed, I would work to ensure the Department continues to emphasize staffing and management efficiencies to maximize available childcare, invest in solutions that expand options such as subsidized community care, and smartly invest in facilities to expand the number of spaces available where needed most. This is an area in which data-driven decisions are of critical importance. If confirmed, I will seek to ensure we have the most robust set of data to enable precision in our decisions based on nuances of geographic, demographics, socio-economic factors, and others that make each installation unique in its ability to have the right combination of military facilities, family care centers, and other means to support our collective childcare needs.

### **Support for Military Families with Special Needs**

**174) If confirmed, how would you ensure that an airman with a special needs family member is relocated only to a new duty station at which the medical and educational services required by that family member are available?**

The DAF utilizes DoD guidelines to ensure families with special needs are reassigned to duty locations where educational and medical services are available. In conjunction with reassignments, the Family Member Travel Screening process allows for a comprehensive review of family care needs and care availability at the gaining location. Suppose medical or educational services at the gaining duty location are not available. In that case, the DAF will cancel the pending assignment and work jointly with the family and HQ assignments team to match the family to a location where care needs can be met. If confirmed, I will continue to advocate for improvements to the system to ensure responsiveness, precision, and consistency in matching the airmen with the right assignments to ensure their family members are well supported.

**175) If confirmed, how would you incentivize airmen to enroll in the exceptional family member program (EFMP) balancing the needs of the Air Force, the needs of exceptional family members, and the desires of both airmen and their dependents to have a rewarding experience in the Air Force?**

EFMP is a congressionally mandated program; families are enrolled once they meet enrollment criteria. Enrollment automatically connects families with information,

services, and resources to include enrollment benefits, ensuring medical/educational services are available at duty locations and access to integrated support services at the installation level, such as specialized legal assistance in education law and estate planning concerns. The key to program success is members' confidence in the benefits of supporting them and their families as they progress through their careers. If confirmed, I would incentivize airmen to enroll in the EFMP through a sustained advocacy for the EFMP and its commitment to families with special needs. I would ensure that the institutional and process improvements made by the DAF to the EFMP program in the past few years are more broadly known and appreciated through effective communication.

**176) If confirmed, what new initiatives might you suggest for improving the ability of airmen with a special needs family member to obtain the medical services and support their family member requires?**

The Developmental and Behavioral Family Readiness Center (DBFRC) is a new initiative that began in 2020 as a hub and spoke program that connects pediatric Air Force family members with special needs with developmental, behavioral, and mental health services at smaller/remote locations through video telehealth, supporting local providers, and periodic in person visits. There are 9 DBFRC hubs around the world. The 9<sup>th</sup> hub opened August 2023. When fully staffed, each hub will have a developmental and behavioral pediatrician, a child and adolescent psychiatrist and psychologist, and an autism consultant as well as a nurse and medical technician. The Air Force is building towards a goal of adding behavioral care providers for adult dependents as manning becomes available in the future. Additionally, BRAVE (Behavioral Health Resources and Virtual Experience) is a new DHA program that provides tele-behavioral health visits serving active duty and adult family members. In the future, the program will be available world-wide, with a focus on austere locations.

Additionally, in response to § 582 of FY21 NDAA, the Air Force JAG Corps established the Exceptional Family Member (EFM) Legal Assistance and Policy Branch in April 2021. This office develops the capability across all legal offices in the Department to provide legal assistance in education law to families enrolled in the EFMP. Our legal assistance attorneys are available to assist the 9,000+ eligible family members Department-wide, who have been identified by their sponsor as having an educational need, helping over 200 family members with special education needs in the past 2 years. Additionally, Department legal assistance attorneys have provided assistance for over 1,000 clients involving both guardianships and estate planning matters for families with special needs dependents. We continue to partner these needed legal services with other EFMP initiatives to ensure DAF families enrolled in the EFMP are aware of our growing avenues of support. I look forward to continuing to develop more efficient and effective means for these families to get necessary services.

**Domestic Violence and Child Abuse in Military Families**

**177) What is your understanding of the extent of domestic violence and child abuse in the Air Force, and if confirmed, what actions would you take to address these issues?**

The Air Force is engaged in multiple efforts to improve available resources and communication of those resources to domestic violence victims while simultaneously increasing education and awareness efforts on the prevention of child abuse and neglect and domestic abuse for an Airmen and their family members. Earlier this year the Secretary of the Air Force directed a Domestic Violence Cross-Functional Review to comprehensively assess the Air Force's domestic violence response, processes, and resources. As a result, we will be increasing victim advocacy support, improving leadership and individual member training, modifying our response and assessment processes, and translating resources into multiple languages to better support victims and families. At the same time, we are also committed to holding abusers appropriately accountable through their chains of command according to the Uniform Code of Military Justice. Accordingly, starting in December 2023, the disposition of domestic violence and child sex abuse offenses will fall under the exclusive jurisdiction of the Office of Special Trial Counsel (OSTC). If confirmed, I will support these initiatives and any others that help protect our Airmen and Guardians and their families.

**178) In your view, what more can the Department do to *prevent* child abuse and domestic and intimate partner violence?**

The DAF must continue efforts to engage directly with those who are at the highest risk of child abuse and neglect or domestic and intimate partner violence. The Prevention Workforce will integrate primary prevention efforts to increase protective factors and reduce risk factors shared across multiple forms of violence and increase efficiency in the installation prevention system. We must also provide those at risk of engaging in such behavior with the positive coping skills and assistance they need to seek help rather than resort to violent, abusive, or neglectful behaviors.

**179) Do you believe that the Air Force Department's Family Advocacy Program strikes the right balance between healing families and holding individuals accountable for acts of domestic violence and child abuse?**

Addressing domestic violence and child abuse and neglect will enable individuals and families to access the resources they need to heal and ensure that abusers are held accountable for their actions. The Family Advocacy Program focuses on providing families with appropriate preventative and support resources. Our military justice system, including the Office of Special Trial Counsel and the chain of command, holds those who commit domestic violence and child abuse offenses accountable. We will focus on both the prevention of and response to this crucial issue.

To this end, if confirmed, I look forward to supporting the implementation of the recommendations advanced by the Secretary of the Air Force's Domestic Violence Cross-Functional Review, including establishing a Coordinated Community Response Senior

Steering Group for all domestic abuse cases. This steering group will better enhance the coordination among Family Advocacy, commanders, and other key stakeholders, to provide families in need the best services possible.

### **Sexual Assault Prevention and Response**

**Despite significant efforts by the Military Services over the past decade to enhance their response to sexual assaults, including measures to care for victims and hold assailants accountable, the current data continues to show increasing prevalence of sexual assault and unwanted sexual conduct, primarily for female service members aged 17 to 24. These findings echo reports this year of increases in the prevalence of sexual harassment and assault at the Military Service Academies.**

**180) Do you believe the policies, programs, and resources that the Department of the Air Force have put in place to prevent and respond to sexual assault, and to protect airmen who report sexual assault from retaliation, are working? If not, what else must be done?**

The DAF has put in place a multidisciplinary approach to prevent and respond to allegations of sexual assault as well as to address retaliation resulting from reporting allegations of sexual assault. The approach includes a wide range of policies, programs, and trainings to reinforce the DAF commitment to counter sexual assault by enhancing accountability, prevention, culture and climate, and victim care. To that end, we are implementing the recommendations that Secretary Austin approved following the Independent Review Commission on Sexual Assault in the Military (IRC). Additionally, educating commanders on retaliation and the effects it has on victims and how the holistic climate and culture is critical to mission readiness. It is our collective responsibility to see that our Airmen understand these behaviors are the antithesis of our core values. We will continue to address training efficacy to ensure we are equipping leaders at all levels to promote a positive unit climate and cultivate environments that protect Airmen from sexual assault, sexual harassment, and retaliation.

**The most recent report on the prevalence of sexual assault and harassment at the Military Service Academies revealed disturbing levels of sexual harassment in particular, placing the Service Academies among the poorest performing military units in incidents of harassment, suggesting an environment conducive to sexual assault and other misconduct.**

**181) What is your reaction to this report, and what actions would you propose to reduce the prevalence of sexual harassment at the Service Academies?**

Sexual assault and sexual harassment have no place in our Air and Space Forces, including on campuses that are developing our future military leaders. We owe it to our Airmen and Guardians to foster command climates grounded in inclusion, dignity and respect from time of accession into the force and throughout their military careers.



The Department of the Air Force (DAF) will continue engaging with the United States Air Force Academy (USAFA) to implement programs building awareness and skills to reduce the prevalence of such negative and detracting behaviors. This includes continuing to implement Independent Review Commission recommendations, as approved by the Secretary of Defense, across the DAF and USAFA as well as assessing and implementing findings from congressionally mandated annual sexual harassment and sexual violence assessments, as well as the Secretary of Defense directed On-Site Installation Evaluations at Military Service Academies.

Most recently, the DAF is coordinating with USAFA and the Department of Defense to develop plans of actions to counter trends of harmful behaviors at USAFA and will participate in the Service Academy Climate Transformation Task Force enhancing cooperation and adopting best practices on improving climate and integrated prevention efforts at Military Service Academies. This includes implementing recently issued policy that overhauls the command climate assessment processes to better assess impact of identified risk and protective factors as well as conducting annual prevention self-assessments to swiftly course correct as needed.

**182) If confirmed, what specific role would you establish for yourself in preventing sexual harassment in the Air Force, including within the civilian workforce?**

Ensuring a positive climate and culture where all members are valued is key to preventing sexual assault and sexual harassment. If confirmed, I will prioritize leadership addressing problematic behaviors early in the continuum of harm before they escalate to sexual harassment and sexual assault. The Air Force will continue to use a public health perspective in prevention planning and employ data-driven, researched-based prevention outcomes and response practices to reduce conditions conducive to harm. The Air Force is fully committed to, and has made great progress in, implementing independent investigations of sexual harassment in accordance with the requirements of the FY22 and FY23 NDAAAs. The Air Force will continue implementing our programs and processes with fidelity, ensure they are effective, and remain fluid and dynamic to address harmful behaviors.

**183) Do you perceive that you need additional authorities from Congress to improve the Air Force programs to prevent sexual harassment and sexual assault?**

I believe we have the appropriate authorities from Congress to address and develop programs that prevent sexual harassment and sexual assault. Utilizing the additional personnel that Congress authorized as recommended by the IRC and approved by the Secretary of Defense, the Air Force strengthened the interdependence between prevention and response workforces. This allows us to make data-driven decisions and evaluate evidenced-based outcomes to reduce the prevalence of sexual harassment and sexual assault. We are taking a more holistic approach to both individuals and environments that will mutually reinforce efforts and drive down risk factors and enhance protective factors.

**Mental and Behavioral Health Care**

**184) If confirmed, what actions would you take to ensure that sufficient mental and behavioral health resources are available to airmen in theater, as well as to airmen and families at home station locations?**

We currently deploy combat and operational stress control teams in addition to clinical mental health providers to take care of our airmen in theater. There are currently efforts to ensure all airmen are trained in the basics of psychological first aid. If confirmed, I will continue to support all these efforts because everyone needs access to basic mental health awareness and support. Additionally, families and airmen at home station locations will continue to have the robust resources provided by their MTFs and TRICARE networks, in addition to MilitaryOneSource, Military and Family Life Consultants, outside agencies (like the Cohen Veteran's Network), Primary Care Behavioral Health Providers, Primary Care providers and chaplains.

**185) If confirmed, what specifically would you do to ensure that sufficient mental and behavioral health resources are available to Reserve Component airmen and their families who do not reside near a military base?**

Reserve members on Title 10 orders for greater than 30 days are eligible for the same mental health benefits as their active duty counterparts. When Reserve members are not in a Title 10 status (inactive duty for UTA/ training/ points only) every base has Defense Health Programming (DHP) resources such as Chaplains and Family Advocacy program coordinators who can assist military and DEERS registered family members to mental health resources available in their local community. Mental healthcare provision when not in Title 10 status is covered through their civilian insurance, or Tri-Care Reserve Select if they are enrolled. DHP- or helping services are available on a full and part-time basis and can guide members and families to resources that would be most appropriate.

Additionally, Military One Source is available to all servicemembers and DEERS registered family members 24/7. Military One Source connects members to full-spectrum military resources to include mental health and resiliency initiatives. Services include nonmedical counseling (such as stress management, marital problems, grief or loss, adjustment and deployment concerns). There are entities like the Cohen Veteran's Network (<https://www.cohenveteransnetwork.org/>) who will see Reserve forces and their families as well. Military One Source is a Department of Defense-Funded program serving service members, families, and survivors to assist in living their best military life.

**The Air Force has made progress in reducing the stigma associated with help-seeking behaviors, but many airmen, especially senior leaders, remain concerned that their military careers will be adversely affected should their chains of command become aware that they are seeking mental or behavioral health care. At the same time, the Air Force chain of command has a legitimate need to be aware of physical and mental health conditions that may affect the readiness of the airmen under their command.**

**186) In your view, does the Air Force effectively bridge the gap between a**

**servicemember’s desire for confidentiality and the chain of command’s legitimate need to know about matters that may affect individual service member and the unit readiness?**

The Air Force has several policies and procedures in place to balance the need for confidentiality with the chain of command’s legitimate need to know. SAPR personnel and domestic abuse advocates continually assess for risk and victim safety to mitigate unintended consequences, readiness, and retention. The balance of “need to know” with “need to share” impacts victims’ perception of privacy and confidentiality and may affect others perception of help seeking, decisions to report, and overall trust in the system.

**187) In your view, do non-medical counseling services provided by DOD Military Family Life Counselors have a role in promoting the readiness of airmen and their families?**

As the Chair of Air Force’s Commanders’ Action Board, I confidently say non-medical counselors, such as DoD Military Family Life Counselors (MFLCs), play a pivotal role in promoting the readiness of Airmen and their families, which underpins mission success. These counselors have a multi-faceted mission. They are a ready, reliable resource for tailored non-medical counseling services to the individual Airmen and families to overcome daily stressors of military life. They embed in on-base schools assisting our youngest demographic with unique military child challenges. Additionally, command teams can request MFLCs to embed in their units when they identify potential unit-wide hot spots. Finally using their collected trend data, MFLCs can proactively identify areas of concern in units, installations, etc. and target resources to address issues.

**Audit**

**188) Why is it important for the Air Force to achieve a clean audit opinion?**

Now more than ever, with a Department of Air Force (DAF) Fiscal Year 2024 budget of over \$215 billion, fiscal responsibility is essential to the success and vitality of the United States and the Agencies and Departments charged with defending it. As budgets and spending come under heightened scrutiny, missions can no longer succeed without first demonstrating how citizens’ investments were spent and how it informs future expenditures on the country’s defense. The annual audit continues to shine a light on our deficiencies and reveal opportunities for real change. Our teams are communicating and collaborating like never before, tearing down traditionally siloed parts of the organization to develop innovative solutions as one team with one goal. The audit is empowering the DAF to transform our systems, capabilities, and business processes to better ensure Airmen and Guardians have the resources they need, when they need them, to accomplish their mission and return home safely. The work we are doing to achieve a clean audit opinion will help the DAF become better stewards of taxpayer dollars, better spenders by improving mission critical asset accountability, better secured by identifying and reducing cyber vulnerabilities, and better informed through more accurate, complete, and

timely data. All these areas lead to improved readiness posture.

**189) What steps has the Air Force taken to evaluate unit readiness and commander performance based on audit results?**

In 2018, in support of Department priorities and aligned with the National Defense Strategy (NDS), the IG-Enterprise significantly modified how we assesses Readiness and Lethality within the Air Force Inspection System. Between 2018-2020 we instituted policy changes requiring all Wings and Deltas to accomplish annual Readiness Exercises based upon the most likely and consequential threats, as defined within the National Defense Strategy. During this time, the IG-Enterprise also instituted a Classified Readiness Assessment (CRA) requirement where the Major Commands assess subordinate Wings and Deltas on a biennial basis (once per UEI cycle). Readiness Exercises and Classified Readiness Assessments produce Wing, Delta and Unit assessments as well as Mission Essential Tasks (METs) grades, which are used as another data point in determining unit readiness beyond the Defense Readiness Reporting System (DRRS). The SAF/IG continues to ‘assess readiness, discipline, efficiency and economy of the Air Force’ in accordance with 10 U.S.C. §9020 and the results of those assessments are shared across the Department. In the last 18 months, the Department accomplished 200+ graded Readiness Exercises, 50+ Classified Readiness Assessments and 7 classified briefings to Senior Leaders to include the Secretary of the Air Force, the Chief of Staff, the Chief of Space Operations and numerous other Senior Leaders.

**Officer Personnel Management System Reforms**

**The John S. McCain NDAA for FY 2019 contained several provisions to modernize the officer personnel management system. These reforms were designed to align officer career management with the priorities outlined in the 2018 NDS.**

**190) How is the Air Force implementing these authorities today and to what effect?**

The Air Force transitioned to a merit-based reordering of the Promotion List in 2020. Merit-based reordering informs officers of their relative standing compared to their peers, providing increased transparency. This new approach to promotion sequencing incentivizes performance while maximizing development.

Additionally, the Air Force transformed the officer promotion process by establishing distinct officer developmental groupings for active component line officers, which took effect in March 2020. The reconfiguration of the line officer development categories enhanced the officer talent management system and enabled tailored and agile development. The developmental agility gained by creating more line officer competitive categories placed emphasis and value on the appropriate education, training, and unique career field experiences.

**191) If confirmed, how would you lead the Air Force in further leveraging these new authorities?**

The Air Force is on track to execute Temporary Promotion Authority within the next 12 months to alleviate unique manning requirements in understaffed career fields, selectively manned positions, and hard-to-fill locations and positions, specifically for operationally challenging positions requiring an officer's specific critical skill or set of skills essential for unit readiness or mission effectiveness. The Air Force is focusing on positions in low-density career fields that are unable to be filled by an officer in the appropriate grade with the required critical skills or a critical position that is unable to be filled by a volunteer from the desired grade who possesses the appropriate knowledge, critical skills, and behaviors required for that position.

**192) Are there other authorities that the Air Force needs in order to modernize the management of its officer personnel?**

Permeability between regular and reserve forces would help the Air Force to attract and retain talent and better leverage the full capabilities of our entire workforce. The Air Force would benefit greatly from additional flexibilities in our ability to move seamlessly between the regular and reserve components.

**Joint Officer Management**

**The NDAA for FY 2017 modified the Joint Qualified Officer (JQO) system established by the Goldwater-Nichols Act in two significant ways. First, it broadened the statutory definition of "joint matters" to expand the types of positions for which an officer can receive joint duty credit. Further, it reduced from three years to two the minimum tour length required for joint duty credit.**

**193) What is your assessment of the effectiveness of the FY 2017 modifications to the JQO system?**

The FY 2017 modifications are effective. The Joint Qualified System (JQS) offers 4 levels of joint qualification that enable the DAF to recognize the career-long accumulation of joint knowledge, skills, experience, and abilities of Air Force Officers. The 2017 modifications gave the DAF enhanced decision space to approve a service member's joint experience credit requests and JQO designation by considering a broader range of environments where officers gain experience. The change in tour length requirement enabled the DAF to deliberately develop and rotate more service members to Standard-Joint Duty Assignment (SJDA) positions to ensure systematic, progressive, career-long development of officers capable of critical and strategic thinking in joint matters.

**194) In your view, are the requirements associated with becoming a JQO, and the link between attaining joint qualification and eligibility for promotion to general officer rank, consistent with the operational and professional demands of Air Force officers?**

The requirements associated with becoming a Joint Qualified Officer and the link between attaining joint qualification and eligibility for promotion to the general officer rank are consistent with Air Force officers' operational and professional demands. DODI 1300.19, DoD Joint Officer Management Program, mandates the Secretaries of the Military Departments ensure all officers assigned to S-JDAs meet joint promotion qualification objectives. Air Force Career Field Managers and Assignment Teams vector highly competitive officers to joint billets and monitor the careers of JQOs and officers who are serving or have served in joint billets and subsequently keep them on track in competitive assignments for promotion to meet operational and professional demands.

**195) In your view, what additional modifications, if any, to JQO prerequisites are necessary to ensure that Air Force officers are able to attain both meaningful joint and Air Force-specific leadership experience and adequate professional development?**

The Department of the Air Force recommends no additional prerequisites at this time. The current Joint Officer Qualification System is effective and offers Air Force Active and Reserve component officers the opportunity to attain joint qualifications after finishing the necessary joint professional military education and completing a full tour of duty within a joint assignment (via either the standard path or the experience path). The Department of the Air Force is internally researching and developing additional policies and procedures for the talent management of Joint Qualified Officers; potential internal program changes will increase the deliberate assignment and follow-on utilization of officers to ensure systematic, progressive, and career-long development in joint matters.

### **Professional Military Education**

**The 2022 NDS asserts that Professional Military Education (PME) should be refocused to foster critical thinking and analytical skills, fluency in critical languages, and integration of insights from the social and behavioral sciences.**

**196) If confirmed, what actions would you take to update the Air Force's PME system to ensure that it fosters the skills highlighted in the NDS to develop a cadre of strategic thinkers and planners with both the intellectual and military leadership acumen to merit promotion to General Officer?**

The Air Force has worked hard to ensure that all of our professional military education programs educate and train Airmen for competition, including key adversaries' strategy, force design, and warfighting approaches. If confirmed, I will ensure the Air Force continues to support the NDS by developing Airmen with the scholarly expertise, critical-thinking skills, and strategic vision necessary to anticipate requirements and future capabilities— focusing on technology, innovation, and STEM. Enhancing the PME curriculum and fellowships will maintain enduring military advantages and produce strategically minded joint warfighters that can creatively apply military power.



**197) In your view, are there opportunities in Air Force PME to improve STEM cognizance and cyber fluency across the joint force to ensure that leaders understand and can effectively employ technologies to fight and win our nation's wars?**

Yes, our PME curricula are continuously adapted to stay current with changes in law, strategic guidance, and emerging technologies that enable joint/service warfighting concepts with the intent to develop practical warfighting skills. Our Air Force schools have significantly emphasized strategic competition, including creating research task forces with STEM-focused topics and classified lecture series on topics such as Cyber. We have expanded our PME fellowship opportunities with think tanks and civilian institutions focusing on emerging technology and innovation research. Outside of PME, we are also increasing our STEM footprint with approximately 300 other developmental opportunities each year to meet the requirements/needs of the DAF. Our Education with Industry program helps develop leaders capable of impacting the implementation of innovative ideas within the DAF by learning industry partner best practices and bringing those ideas back to the Air Force. We also partnered with Digital University (a consortium of virtual learning opportunities) to grow digital literacy competencies and scale training and education in cyber fluency, communications, and information technology advances.

**198) In your view, is there a role for Air Force PME in developing basic product management skills across the joint force to ensure that military leaders are proficient in the employment of software and automation in warfighting?**

Yes, Air Force leaders must be equipped to incorporate new technology more rapidly and effectively than our competitors. Development of these leaders requires them to be more versed in digital language and how to apply that in warfighting. We expanded wargaming during PME to ensure we sustain and advance military superiority through innovation and technology. PME students conduct wargaming throughout the academic year, including a wargame involving all-domain, globally integrated operations in WestPac and Central Europe. Our students at Air War College participate in the Joint Land Air & Sea Strategic Exercise to expand collaboration between the services and enhance experiential learning. Analytical rigorous wargaming is key to the robust analysis that the Secretary of Defense and Service Secretaries rely on to inform strategic decisions on policy, risk management, and options for the future force.

### **The Air Force Civilian Personnel Workforce**

**DOD is the federal government's largest employer of civilian personnel. The vast majority of DOD and Air Force civilian personnel policies comport with requirements set forth in title 5 of the U.S. Code, and corresponding regulations under the purview of the Office of Personnel Management. Over the years, the annual defense bill has included numerous extraordinary hiring and management authorities applicable to specific segments of the DOD and Air Force civilian workforces.**



**199) In your judgment, what is the biggest challenge facing the Department of the Air Force in effectively and efficiently managing its civilian workforce?**

The Department of Air Force boasts a skilled and committed workforce. However, the prevailing personnel system is archaic and reflects the needs of the Federal workforce six decades ago. This system fails to recognize the transformation of the workforce from being primarily industrial and clerical to more professional. Additionally, it is not nimble or adaptable enough to compete with the private sector, particularly in critical domains like hiring, on-boarding, and career development.

While the Department of Defense and the DAF are grateful for the multiple hiring and remuneration flexibilities and authorities that Congress has granted over time, managing a plethora of specialized solutions adds to the complexity of workforce management.

Essentially, the Department requires a personnel system for all civilian Airmen and Guardians, one which integrates the flexibility needed to effectively compete with the private sector's recruitment and compensation strategies, which is dynamic and highly proficient in attracting talent across various stages of career development in diverse fields.

With sustained support from Congress and the Department of Defense, I am optimistic that we will continue to make progress. If confirmed, I am committed to further evolving the workforce to be well-equipped for the future challenges.

**200) In your view, do Air Force supervisors have adequate authorities to divest of a civilian employee whose performance of duty fails to meet standards or who engages in misconduct? If so, are Air Force civilian and military supervisors adequately trained to exercise of such authorities? If not, what additional authorities or training do Air Force supervisors require?**

First, I want to stress my appreciation for our 170,000 strong civilian force that works side-by-side with our military at all echelons, across the globe, supporting and executing the mission of defending our Nation. Our employees are dedicated, committed and valued members of our force. With respect to the question at hand, I do believe that the Department and our military and civilian supervisors have the necessary authorities to address performance and misconduct issues. We also offer a variety of training including newly appointed supervisors (military and civilian) of civilian employees take New Supervisor Training within the first year of appointment and retake supervisory training every 3 years. The training provides supervisors with adequate tools and training to handle misconduct and poor performance. Additionally, our Employee Management Relation Specialists are properly trained to assist supervisors with misconduct and performance-related matters. I am unaware of any additional authorities needed at this point, but we will continue to reinforce training, our standards and enforcement of the high expectations that the vast majority of our force meets every day.

## Congressional Oversight

**In order to exercise legislative and oversight responsibilities, it is important that this committee, its subcommittees, and other appropriate committees of Congress receive timely testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information from the executive branch.**

**201) Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, and on request, to appear and testify before this committee, its subcommittees, and other appropriate committees of Congress? Please answer yes or no.**

Yes.

**202) Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, and when asked before this committee, its subcommittees, or other appropriate committees of Congress to give your personal views, even if those views differ from the position of the Administration? Please answer yes or no.**

Yes.

**203) Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to provide this committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate committees of Congress, and their respective staffs such witnesses and briefers, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information, as may be requested of you, and to do so in a timely manner? Please answer yes or no.**

Yes.

**204) Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to consult with this committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate committees of Congress, and their respective staffs, regarding your basis for any delay or denial in providing testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information requested of you? Please answer yes or no.**

Yes.

**205) Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to keep this committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate committees of Congress, and their respective staffs apprised of new information that materially impacts the accuracy of testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information you or your organization previously provided? Please answer yes or no.**

Yes.

**206) Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, and on request, to provide this committee and its subcommittees with records and other information within their oversight jurisdiction, even absent a formal Committee request? Please answer yes or no.**

Yes.

**207) Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to respond timely to letters to, and/or inquiries and other requests of you or your organization from individual Senators who are members of this committee? Please answer yes or no.**

Yes.

**208) Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to ensure that you and other members of your organization protect from retaliation any military member, federal employee, or contractor employee who testifies before, or communicates with this committee, its subcommittees, and any other appropriate committee of Congress? Please answer yes or no.**

Yes.