

**Senate Armed Services Committee**  
**Advance Policy Questions for Ms. Meredith Berger**  
**Nominee for Appointment as Assistant Secretary of the Navy for**  
**Energy, Installations, and Environment**

**Duties and Qualifications**

- 1. What is your understanding of the duties and responsibilities of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Energy, Installations, and Environment (ASN(EI&E))?**

The ASN(EI&E) leads policy for Navy and Marine Corps energy programs, real property, installation resilience, environmental protection afloat and ashore, safety and occupational health, and housing. In addition, the position is responsible for overseeing closures and realignments of installations as directed by Congress.

- 2. What background and experience do you possess that qualify you to perform the duties and functions of the ASN(EI&E)?**

I have served in various positions in State and Federal government, including positions in the Department of Defense, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Office of the Florida Chief Financial Officer. Currently, I work in industry, at Microsoft with the Defending Democracy Program. I have also worked at the Mabus group, and with Harvard's Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs. I am very familiar with the Department of the Navy (DON), its mission and processes, having previously served as the Deputy Chief of Staff to the Secretary of the Navy, advising him on the formulation, prioritization, and execution of Department-wide strategies, policies, plans, and standards. I have also worked specifically on environmental matters, environmental justice, climate, energy, housing, and finance in my previously-listed positions.

- 3. In particular, what management and leadership experience do you possess that you would apply to your service as ASN(EI&E), if confirmed?**

Having served in both the Department of Defense (DOD) and the Department of the Navy (DON) in policy positions, I understand the management and leadership required of senior leaders, the importance of effective communication and collaboration, and the necessity of setting and meeting measurable goals. Many years of serving as a manager and leader in government at both the State and Federal level, and in private industry have given me the opportunity to lead large organizations and observe the leadership of others in similar capacities. If confirmed, I will lead as a hands-on contemplative Assistant Secretary, one that works collaboratively within the Department and externally to advance the energy, installations, safety, and environmental needs of the Department, its personnel, their families, and the communities that support it.

- 4. Do you believe that there are actions you need to take to enhance your ability to serve as the ASN(EI&E)?**

I am confident I possess the requisite management experience, analytical skills, and leadership qualities required to be the ASN(EI&E). I have always educated myself on the specific duties and issues associated with each new position I have held in order to carry out my responsibilities more effectively. If confirmed, I will dedicate myself to leading the ASN(EI&E) organization, working closely with the civilian and military leadership within the DOD, and incorporating the collective knowledge and experience of the dedicated professionals who work in the Office of the ASN(EI&E) and subordinate commands. I will also continue to build and enhance working relationships with members of other Government Agencies, Congress and their staffs, private industry, academia, civil society, local communities, and Tribes.

**5. If confirmed, what actions would you take to develop and sustain an open, transparent, and productive relationship between your office and Congress, and the Senate Armed Services Committee, in particular?**

If confirmed, I will continue to promote open and frequent dialog with Congress and the Senate Members as well as the professional staffers who support the Senate Armed Services Committee.

**Major Challenges**

**6. In your view, what are the major challenges that confront the ASN(EI&E)?**

In general, the major challenges facing the ASN(EI&E) are ensuring the resiliency of our installations, ensuring effective, environmentally-protective, and safe areas in which to test and train, and providing the necessary infrastructure to support military members and their families.

**7. If confirmed, specifically what actions would you take, in what order of priority, and on what timeline—to address each of these challenges?**

If confirmed, I will work closely with Congress, the Acting Secretary of the Navy, the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) and the Commandant of the Marine Corps (CMC), and the Office of the Secretary of Defense to prioritize and proactively undertake the actions necessary to meet Departmental challenges.

**Civilian Control of the Military**

**In its 2018 report, *Providing for the Common Defense*, the National Defense Strategy Commission cautioned, “there is an imbalance in civil-military relations on critical issues of strategy development and implementation. Civilian voices appear relatively muted on issues at the center of U.S. defense and national security policy.”**

**8. Do you agree with this assessment?**

I am not in a position to agree or disagree with the specifics of this assessment as it relates to the DON. I understand and support the concept of civilian control of the armed forces and the subordination of military power to civil authorities. I also understand the value of appropriately balanced civilian and military advice on the formulation of U.S. defense and national security policy.

**9. If confirmed, how would you ensure inclusion of the ASN(EI&E) in the discussion, debate, and resolution of Department of the Navy, defense, and national security issues?**

I'd immediately seek to establish a positive working relationship with my fellow Assistant Secretaries of the Navy, the Under Secretary of the Navy, the CNO and the CMC, and the Secretary of the Navy. In addition, I'd look for ways to partner with counterparts within the United States Air Force and Army, and I would maintain frequent and transparent communications between my office and our OSD counterparts.

**10. If confirmed, specifically what would you do to ensure that your tenure as ASN(EI&E) epitomizes the fundamental requirement for civilian control of the Armed Forces embedded in the U.S. Constitution and other laws?**

If confirmed, I will diligently and arduously fulfill my Constitutional and statutory responsibilities to exercise control and oversight over the policies and duties of the ASN(EI&E) portfolio.

**2018 National Defense Strategy**

**The 2018 National Defense Strategy (NDS) outlines that the United States faces a rising China, an aggressive Russia, and the continued threat from rogue regimes and global terrorism.**

**11. In your view, does the 2018 NDS accurately assess the current strategic environment, including the most critical and enduring threats to the national security of the United States and its allies? Please explain your answer.**

I expect a forthcoming new defense strategy will modify the lines of effort in the 2018 National Defense Strategy to align with the administration's Interim National Security Strategic Guidance. However, we know peer and near-peer strategic competitors such as China and Russia continue to be critical and enduring threats in the global security environment, while still contending with threats from Iran, North Korea and terrorist organizations. We also know that climate-related disasters are especially costly to our defense budgets and have degraded the DoD's ability to operate and train at and from some installations. At the same time, climate change is opening up the Arctic Region to competition. These climate related issues, and opportunities, are critical to our national defense in the current strategic environment.

**12. How do you believe the Office of the ASN(EI&E) directly supports the NDS?**

The readiness of our installations and infrastructure directly support our operational forces' ability to compete and prevail in great power competition. Our Navy ships, submarines and aircraft as well as our Marine Corps forces train from our bases, deploy from our bases, and resupply from our bases. Additionally, our installations provide support to military family members, whether through housing, health care, and childcare; or, through employment assistance training and transition services.

**13. What are the key areas in which the Navy and Marine Corps must improve to provide the necessary capabilities and capacity to the Joint Force to prevail in great power competition and potential conflict with China?**

The rapid pace of China's military modernization and expansion, as well as their increasing aggression in the INDO-PACIFIC region and ability to threaten our homeland, are challenges we must face straight on. If confirmed, I will work with the Navy and Marine Corps Installations teams to ensure our networks of bases are ready to support the operational and Joint Force across the spectrum from competition to potential conflict with China. If confirmed, ensuring our installations have the required capacity and capabilities our warfighters need will be a top priority. We know the United States needs more resilient and distributed posture in the Indo-Pacific Area of Operations to counter China. If confirmed, I would work with the Navy and Marine Corps teams to review current posture to support logistical and infrastructure requirements to determine where strategic investments will be needed in the future and what our installations teams can do to support capacity building and cooperation with allies and partners.

**14. What Department of the Navy infrastructure and military construction investments would be required, in your view, to achieve these improvements?**

The DON uses strategy-driven and resource-informed defense planning. While I cannot provide an informed assessment yet, if confirmed, I would continuously assess the requirements for new or additional infrastructure and military construction investments to ensure our installations support existing and future operational capabilities and have the capacity needed to compete and prevail in potential conflict with China.

**15. What are the key areas in which the Navy and Marine Corps must improve to provide the necessary capabilities and capacity to the Joint Force to prevail in great power competition and potential conflict with Russia?**

As we have seen recently in the news, cyber-attacks on critical infrastructure attributed to Russian hackers continue to increase in scope and severity. We must continue to proactively improve cybersecurity and mission assurance at our installations and ensure critical infrastructure is resilient. There are logistics challenges in the European theater as well, related to competition with Russia. This is an area where Congress has provided significant European Deterrence Initiative funding to address deficiencies and gaps. If confirmed, I would conduct a more detailed review of where our Navy and Marine Corps installations and energy team could assist the broader departmental efforts in this area.

**16. What Department of the Navy infrastructure and military construction investments would be required, in your view, to achieve these improvements?**

While I cannot provide a fully informed assessment on this at present, future investments in infrastructure will surely be needed to combat increased cyberattacks. If confirmed, this is one area I would want to assess for valid requirements related to future investments.

## Safety

**The Department of the Navy continues to experience non-combat related injuries, fatalities, and mishaps that undermine its ability to execute mission-critical taskings, even when its Sailors and Marines are successfully trained.**

**17. What are your ideas for improving mishap, hazard, and near-miss reporting and tracking?**

If confirmed, I will continue to leverage the solid safety and occupational health framework that has been established through collaboration with the Naval Safety Center and U.S. Marine Corps Safety Division. This teamwork and partnership extends to the Fleets, Echelon II and Type commands, and I will take full advantage of this synergy to further enhance the Safety and Occupational Health portfolio. Further, the DON fielded the Risk Management Information (RMI) System in August 2020 through a partnership with the Air Force. If confirmed, I will continue to enable this capability through effective Streamlined Incident Reporting, advanced Analysis and Dissemination and solid Safety Program Management.

**18. What specific steps would you take, if confirmed, to ensure that all Department of the Navy personnel are protected from coercion, discrimination, or reprisal for reporting mishaps, hazards, and near misses?**

If confirmed, I would continue to emphasize an environment where reporting of near miss events, hazards and mishaps is encouraged. The identification and mitigation of safety and occupational health hazards before unplanned outcomes occur cultivates effective risk management, and this detailed information facilitates a more proactive safety and occupational health program by addressing areas of concern proactively. Additionally, if confirmed, I would continue to emphasize and promote SECNAV Safety Awareness Campaign Themes that highlight the importance of reporting to ensure we are addressing issues at the onset. I would ensure that all members of the Navy and Marine Corps comply with the requirements in the Secretary of the Navy instruction for Military Whistleblower protection.

**19. In your view, how can available data, current systems, and technology be applied to predict safety risks, particularly as regards Sailor and Marine off-duty behavior and activities?**

The Department is focusing on safety education, tracking and oversight to reduce both mishaps and non-combat fatalities, including those occurring off-duty. I understand the Department recently deployed a new mishap reporting system, Risk Management Information Streamlined Incident Reporting that supports better capturing of information and data analysis to identify trends for corrective action.

**20. If confirmed, by what principles would you be guided in executing the ASN(EI&E)'s role as Program Decision Principal Advisor for Safety for Acquisition Program Decision Meetings, Program Reviews, and Gate**

## **Reviews?**

Safety in acquisition is vital to ensuring protection of our personnel, the environment and material assets through the entire acquisition lifecycle – from initial design to disposal. If confirmed, I will work closely with ASN(RD&A) to ensure that safety is not sacrificed for the sake of expediency of the acquisition process. This would be accomplished by addressing barriers and investigating opportunities for streamlining and resolving system safety and environmental challenges.

## **Defense Policy Review Initiative (DPRI)**

**First launched by the United States and Japan in 2002, the Defense Policy Review Initiative (DPRI) aimed to adapt the U.S.-Japan alliance to the dramatically changed threat in the security environment of the 21st century.**

### **21. What is your understanding of the status of the Department of the Navy's implementation of DPRI?**

My understanding is that overall, the program is moving forward well and construction has recently increased along with many recent contract awards this fiscal year. I believe that the goal for Okinawa-based Marines to relocate to Guam is on track and will begin in the first half of 2025. I understand that the program is still on track to meet the Department of Defense goal to improve the Indo-Pacific defense posture.

### **22. If confirmed to be ASN(EI&E), what would be your role in DPRI implementation and execution?**

If confirmed, my role in DPRI implementation will be to oversee the progress of the program and to update Department of Navy policies as needed to keep the program on schedule. To support this effort, I will review current infrastructure planning and design efforts, construction progress and procedures, and the implementation of policies regarding environmental and cultural resources.

### **23. If confirmed, what specific actions would you take to address munitions of explosive concern on Guam and in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) to mitigate adverse effects to DPRI-related construction cost and schedule impacts?**

My understanding is that the Department of Navy has made significant progress in discovering and safely removing remaining unexploded ordnance from World War II in Guam and CNMI. Continuing this effort is of the utmost importance. If confirmed, I will continue to ensure that the discovery and removal of unexploded ordnance on Guam and CNMI is completed safely while keeping the DPRI program on track for completion.

### **24. What is your understanding of current situation as it pertains to cost overruns and delays?**

My understanding is that there have been schedule delays and cost increases due to various items including unexploded ordnance clearance, COVID-19 impacts to construction, workforce employment, environmental concerns, and preservation of cultural resources. While I do not have specifics on every project yet, I know the Department of Navy met a major milestone with the recent establishment of Marine Corps Base Camp Blaz in October 2020, and construction is still on track to start moving Marines from Okinawa to Guam in the first half of 2025 to honor the United States agreement with the Government of Japan. If confirmed, I will create policy that mitigates delays and cost increases to ensure the program remains on schedule in a manner that respects the agreement with Japan, and the people of Guam and CNMI.

### **Military Housing Privatization Initiative**

**In the FY 1996 NDAA, Congress established the Military Housing Privatization Initiative (MHPI), providing DOD with the authority to obtain private-sector financing and management to repair, renovate, construct, and operate military housing. DOD has since privatized 99 percent of its domestic housing. In 2019, the Senate Armed Services Committee held three hearings to address concerns voiced by military families living in privatized housing that the program had been grossly mismanaged by certain of the private partners, that military and chain of command oversight were non-existent, and that in speaking out about the appalling condition of the quarters in which they lived, they were opening themselves and their military sponsor to reprisal.**

**25. What are your impressions of the overall quality and sufficiency of Navy and Marine Corps family housing, both in the United States and overseas?**

I have read testimony and news articles describing poor quality and experiences in privatized housing. However, I have not had any recent personal experience with Department of Navy privatized housing. If confirmed, I will prioritize safe, quality, well-maintained housing and fair treatment from Military Housing Privatization Initiative (MHPI) companies for our Sailors, Marines, and their families.

**26. What is your view of the current goals and structure of the Department of the Navy's military housing privatization program?**

Military members and their families deserve safe, quality, well-maintained housing and fair treatment from Military Housing Privatization Initiative (MHPI) companies.

**27. What have the Navy and Marine Corps done to address Sailor, Marine, and family member concerns regarding the untenable living conditions prevalent in certain privatized housing locales?**

The Department of Navy has increased the number of government personnel overseeing privatized housing, introduced online work order tracking tools, strengthened the involvement of the installation commander in housing oversight, and worked with the Military Housing Privatization Initiative (MHPI) companies to make the Tenant Bill of Rights available to our Sailors, Marines, and their families.

**28. If confirmed as the ASN(EI&E), what specifically would you do to ensure accountability in Navy and Marine Corps leaders for oversight of the privatized housing program?**

If confirmed, I will work to ensure Navy and Marine Corps installation commanding officers have the staff, resources and authorities they need in order to advocate for military families who live in privatized housing.

**29. If confirmed, what specifically would you do to improve applicable business operations constructs and vest accountability in MHPI contractors for strict compliance with the terms of their public-private partnership agreements with the Department of the Navy?**

If confirmed, I would review the Department's business agreements with the MHPI companies to determine the appropriate business operations construct.

**30. What are your views of the efficacy of the MHPI reforms enacted in the FY 2020NDAA, as amended by the NDAA for FY 2021?**

At this time, I do not have the information needed to give my views of the efficacy of the NDAA reforms. However, I have read the Department of Defense's June 4 announcement on the Tenant Bill of Rights, and I am pleased the Department expects all 18 tenant rights to be fully available at all installations with privatized housing by the end of FY 2021.

**31. What do you believe to be the root causes of the MHPI crisis?**

At this time, I have not had access to the information necessary to identify the root causes of the MHPI crisis. If confirmed, I will work with the ASN(EI&E) staff and senior Navy and Marine Corps leadership to determine where the program has fallen short and work to address those shortfalls.

**32. Do you believe the Navy has rectified these problems, notwithstanding Congress's continued receipt of complaints from military families?**

I believe the Department has worked tirelessly to improve privatized housing for our military families over the last few years. But there is still much more work to be done.

**33. If not, what would you do differently to address this issue, if confirmed?**

If confirmed, I would continue to seek ways for Department leadership to advocate for military families and to give installation commanding officers the tools they need to provide oversight of MHPI companies.

**34. What role would you establish for yourself, if confirmed to be the ASN(EI&E), in ensuring that the Department of the Navy's use of direct hire authority to fill vacancies in military installation housing offices results in the timely hire of highly qualified individuals to perform these critical duties?**

If confirmed, I will advocate for direct hire authority and other tools that will enable better oversight of privatized housing.



**35. If confirmed, how would you view and order your relationship with the private contractors who own and manage the privatized housing agreements with the Navy?**

If confirmed, I will review the Navy's business agreements to understand the ASN(EI&E)'s relationship with the MHPI companies.

**36. What do you view as your obligations to the "partners"?**

I believe the Department's obligations are codified in the business agreements with MHPI companies. If confirmed, I will review the business agreements to better understand the specific obligations the Department and the office of ASN(EI&E) has.

**37. What do you view as your obligations to the Sailors, Marines, and family members who reside in military housing?**

Military members and their families deserve safe, quality, well-maintained housing and fair treatment from Military Housing Privatization Initiative (MHPI) companies.

**38. If confirmed to be the ASN(EI&E), how would you order your relationship with DOD's Chief Housing Officer?**

If confirmed, I would seek to establish a healthy partnership with regular meetings with the DOD Chief Housing Officer.

**39. What are your views on establishing command accountability by having MHPI issues become part of the performance evaluations of base commanders and their senior enlisted counterparts?**

Installation and Command leadership have a responsibility to their people and families. If confirmed, I will consult with Navy and Marine Corps leadership to determine how this command accountability can be best implemented at the base commander and senior enlisted leadership level.

**40. Given the challenges associated with the MHPI, do you support the further privatization of Military Service lodging facilities?**

If confirmed, I would seek the advice from Navy experts on the feasibility and advisability of additional housing and lodging privatization projects. We must leverage lessons learned from MHPI.

### **Base Realignment and Closure**

**In past years, DOD has requested Congressional authorization to conduct another Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) round.**

**41. Do you believe another BRAC round is necessary? If so, why?**

If confirmed, I will consult with Navy and Marine Corps leadership to determine if the Department of Navy would benefit from an additional BRAC round.

**42. Were Congress to authorize another BRAC round, what is your understanding of the responsibilities that would be assigned to the ASN(EI&E) for formulating BRAC recommendations?**

If confirmed, and if another BRAC round is authorized, I, as the ASN(EI&E), would be responsible for carrying out the requirements of the BRAC authorizing language and executing BRAC recommendations. If confirmed, I would be the primary liaison with Congress, State and local community leaders regarding BRAC actions in their jurisdictions.

**43. How would you undertake to execute these responsibilities?**

If confirmed, I would look to leverage the Department of Navy personnel who are recognized subject matter experts and have experience with prior BRAC rounds.

**It has been noted repeatedly that the 2005 BRAC round resulted in significant unanticipated implementation costs and saved far less money than originally estimated.**

**44. Do you believe such issues could be anticipated and addressed suitably in a future BRAC round, and if so, how?**

I do not have first-hand knowledge of the 2005 BRAC round. However, I believe that robust management and oversight controls, paired with active communication with Congress and other stakeholders, is vital to the success of an initiative like BRAC.

**45. What steps has the Department of the Navy taken to share with the other Military Departments and Services its “lessons learned” from environmental remediation in support of the redevelopment of military bases closed under BRAC—particularly as regards the remediation of emerging contaminants?**

I understand the Department of Navy has a robust environmental restoration program and participates in several DOD working groups, along with the other Services, to share lessons learned regarding environmental remediation successes and challenges.

**Installation Modernization and Resilience**

**Decades of underinvestment in Department of Defense installations has led to substantial backlogs in facilities maintenance, while making it more difficult for DOD to leverage new technologies that could enhance installation efficiency and productivity. Yet, the quality of installation resilience directly impacts the entire spectrum of military operations—from force development through power projection, interoperability with partner nations, and force sustainment—while providing an appropriate quality of life for Sailors, Marines, and their families.**

**46. In your view, does the Department of the Navy receive adequate funding for its installations? Please explain your answer.**

I understand that the Department of Navy has routinely funded facilities sustainment below the Department of Defense’s model. Additionally, the Navy and Marine Corps is compelled to balance investment in current and future infrastructure with today’s urgent readiness needs, future force requirements and business reforms. At this time, I do not have detailed information on the Department’s specific infrastructure requirements and associated funding requirements. If confirmed, I will meet with the

commanders of the Navy and Marine Corps' installations commands to better understand any infrastructure funding shortfalls.

**47. Do you have any specific plans to leverage infrastructure modernization to improve the quality of life for Navy and Marine Corps service members and their families?**

At this time, I do not have a specific plan to leverage infrastructure modernization to improve the quality of life of military personnel and their families. If confirmed, I will consult with Navy and Marine Corps senior leaders to identify specific quality of life shortfalls and develop solutions to meet the needs of our Sailors, Marines, and their families.

**Military Construction (MILCON) accounts have failed to see the same amount of growth over the last several years compared to other accounts such as procurement and research and development.**

**48. If confirmed, what arguments would you advance to advocate for additional MILCON dollars during budget builds?**

If confirmed, I would seek to strengthen the relationship of Navy and Marine Corps installations to the lethality and warfighting readiness of maritime forces. Our installations are the platforms from which we project and sustain our forces. We need modern, resilient, and sustainable facilities able to withstand the effects of deliberate and directed attacks from our adversaries along with the consequential effects of events such as climate change, pandemics, and extreme weather.

**The results of past underinvestment in infrastructure is particularly acute in naval shipyard facilities. According to the Navy's shipyard modernization plan, it may take roughly \$1 billion per year for 20 years.**

**49. If confirmed, how would you prioritize the resourcing of Navy shipyard modernization going forward, in light of other competing priorities?**

If confirmed, I would partner with the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development and Acquisition (ASN(RDA)) to ensure the Department is dedicating the resources and oversight necessary to improve naval maintenance production through dry dock recapitalization, facility layout and optimization, and capital equipment and modernization.

**50. In your view, has the Shipyard Infrastructure Optimization Program achieved its objective of streamlining local project reviews, resulting in more predictable timelines and solutions for shipyard projects?**

It is my understanding that the Department has established a Program Office to ensure the integration of all elements of the SIOP plan. I have not had the opportunity to study the specific elements of the Shipyard Infrastructure Optimization Program, but I will do so if confirmed.

**51. If not, how would you adjust the Shipyard Infrastructure Optimization Program, if confirmed, to achieve these paramount objectives?**

My understanding is the Department is currently studying to see how much additional funding would be needed to accelerate the program to meet the needs of a modernized fleet. If confirmed, I would consult with the experts in the SIOP program office to advocate for adjustments to the program and necessary funding to ensure the Department meets its SIOP goals to sustain our current and future fleets.

**The Department of the Navy defines “installation resilience” as the ability of the platforms from which it generates and projects naval power to accomplish their missions, despite actions by adversaries or other events to deny, disrupt, exploit, or destroy installation-based capabilities. The range of threats against which a military installation must maintain resiliency: cyber threats, physical attacks, political influence, and extreme weather events, is ever-growing.**

**52. Given the 2018 NDS, what priority in the Navy program would you accord the survivability of Navy and Marine Corps expeditionary advanced bases, forward operating bases, and other locations?**

If confirmed, I would accord a high priority on ensuring the survivability of our Navy and Marine Corps Installations – both enduring installations within the continental United States and overseas – and our expeditionary advance bases, forward operation bases, and other locations. The Department must continue to work with Congress, industry, and community leaders to evaluate and validate installation resiliency risks across multiple technical domains and incorporate solutions into budgetary planning processes in order to mitigate risks and ensure mission survivability and functionality of the Shore Enterprise.

**53. What are the Navy and Marine Corps doing to assess and prioritize facility requirements for prepositioned forward fuel, stocks, and munitions, as well as to generate options for non-commercially dependent distributed logistics and maintenance—all to ensure logistics sustainment in the face of persistent multi-domain attack?**

This is a complex issue, and one that I do not yet have enough information on to make an evaluation. If confirmed, I will work with the Navy and Marine Corps Installation staffs to determine what actions have already been taken, what planning is underway and how I can assist moving forward to ensure logistics sustainment in the face of persistent multi-domain attacks.

**Extreme Weather Events**

**President Biden has declared that climate change is an essential element of national security and foreign policy. Secretary Austin has stated that DOD will include the security implications of climate change in risk analyses, strategy development and planning guidance. If confirmed, you would sit on the Secretary's Climate Working Group and your**

**portfolio would oversee energy resilience and environmental threats to military installations. Thus, you would have a major role in implementing this guidance.**

**54. What is your understanding of the ways in which climate change poses a risk to national security and the Department's responsibility to prepare for its impacts?**

Climate change is a global crisis and working to both mitigate it and ensure resilience to climate change impacts must be an essential element of U.S. national security. The changing climate poses immediate and long-term impacts to the global security environment and the operations of the Department of Defense, and the readiness of the force. Partnering with internal Department of Defense organizations and external federal agencies and stakeholders, the Department of Navy will prepare for and mitigate the negative impacts that climate change poses to the Department's operations and infrastructure worldwide.

**55. How do you believe the Department should be incorporating climate change into its risk analyses, strategy development, and planning guidance?**

The Department should incorporate climate change into its operations, planning activities, risk analysis and decision-making processes. If confirmed, I would support Secretary Austin's direction to establish a Department of Defense Climate working group as the primary form to coordinate the Department's tackling of the Climate Crisis. It is vital for the senior military and civilian leadership across the department be personally engaged and to work together to track implementation of climate and energy-related actions and progress toward goals.

**56. How should readiness and budget concerns factor into these assessments?**

The Department of Navy readiness and budget analyses should incorporate consideration of climate risk and enable the deployment of new solutions to strengthen resilience of key capabilities.

**57. Section 2801 of the FY 2020 NDAA required each major military installation to include military installation resilience in each installation's master plan. If confirmed, do you commit to ensuring these plans are completed and shared with this Committee?**

If confirmed, yes, I will commit to integrate resilience into each installations master plan and to share them with the committee upon request.

### **Energy Resilience**

**It is essential that the Department of the Navy maintain capability to sustain critical operations in the event of intentional and unintentional grid outages.**

**58. If confirmed, specifically what would you do to inculcate energy resilience as a mission assurance priority for the Department of the Navy?**

It is my understanding that energy resilience is already part of the mission assurance process, but, if confirmed, I would work with Navy and Marine Corps leadership to

incorporate energy resilience into existing exercises and wargames to ensure resilience during grid outages.

**59. When do you envision the work of the Energy Mission Integration Group will manifest in actual projects (MILCON or non-DOD funded) to fill gaps in individualized Installation Energy Plans and to identify and remediate resilience gaps both on- and off- Navy and Marine Corps installations?**

It is my understanding that, starting in FY 2021, energy security gaps identified through mission assurance assessments and prioritized by the respective Navy and Marine Corps governance processes are reflected in third-party financing efforts, the Energy Resilience and Conservation Investment Program, Military Construction, and installation-funded projects.

**60. How can the Department of the Navy better integrate energy security and resilience as standard components of its MILCON projects and programs?**

It is my understanding that, over the last several years, the Navy has been steadily incorporating resiliency planning into all aspects of the facilities management lifecycle, from installation master planning to the design of new construction and major renovation projects. Region and installation facility planners are utilizing updated Unified Facilities Criteria, Department of Defense Sea Level Rise studies, the Department of Defense Coastal Risk Management tool and the new Navy Climate Change Installation Planning Handbook to mitigate risks to shore infrastructure. The Department is also incorporating new design criteria and the latest industry standards to help mitigate the impact of extreme weather and a changing climate.

**61. How can Naval and Joint Force training exercises and wargames better incorporate real-world scenarios regarding energy-related threats and constraints—such as less rosy assumptions about availability of fuel in the Pacific and assessing black start ability in response to a cyberattack on commercial electric grids?**

Wargaming and training exercises are critical to testing how the Department's people, process and equipment will actually operate in real-world scenarios. I am aware that the Marine Corps and Navy have both completed table top exercises and participated in a recent wargames focused on the Pacific area of operation. MCAS Miramar completed a full scale black start exercise demonstrating the ability to maintain mission critical operations during a planned grid outage with San Diego Gas and Electric. Similarly, the Navy is developing an Energy Resilience Readiness Exercise program built on multiple phases beginning with table top exercises and culminating with "pull the plug" events. If confirmed, I will continue to incorporate exercises that measure an installation's resilience to conduct critical and essential missions while disconnected from the commercial power grid.

**62. Given the Department of the Navy's dependence on non-DOD energy sources, how can the public and private sectors best be integrated in installation**

**resilience plans and programs to reduce vulnerabilities, add redundancy, or improve energy management?**

It is my understanding that the Department has a long history of successful partnering with local communities, utility service providers, and experts in the private sector to collaborate on initiatives to reduce vulnerabilities, add redundancy, or improve energy management. If confirmed, I will continue to maintain and pursue such partnerships.

**63. In your view, is the use of stationary micro-reactors a workable option to provide long-term energy resiliency to U.S.-based Department of the Navy installations?**

I do not currently have the information to make an informed opinion on the viability of stationary micro-reactors as a long-term energy resiliency strategy for installations. If confirmed, I learn more about this technology and how Navy and Marine Corps installations can leverage it.

**64. What initiatives is the Department of the Navy undertaking in regard to development of long duration grid batteries for use on bases?**

I understand that the Department of Navy continues to partner with industry to pursue new energy technologies. I am not aware of specific initiatives related to long-duration grid batteries on Navy and Marine Corps installations.

**Authorities to Improve Energy Resilience**

**DOD and the Military Departments can use any number of authorities and mechanisms to pursue distributed energy projects that improve installation resilience, increase readiness and mission assurance, and offer long-term cost savings. These include: Inter-Government Support Agreements, Other Transaction Authority, Utility Privatization, Energy Savings Performance Contracts, Utility Energy Service Contracts, Enhanced Use Leases, and the Defense Community Infrastructure Program. The Navy faces a litany of challenges to fund its infrastructure. If contracts are written properly, non-DOD funded mechanisms are excellent ways to lock in cost savings for 25 years, increase resilience, modernize infrastructure, and diversify energy sources.**

**65. If confirmed, what steps would you take to streamline the process of writing and awarding contracts that will improve mission assurance through the Navy's Energy Security Programs Office?**

If confirmed, I would partner with Congress and the ASN(RDA) to ensure the Department of Navy is resourced and empowered to leverage the authorities granted by Congress to continue to execute Intergovernmental Support Agreements, Other Transaction Authority, Utility Privatization, Energy Savings Performance Contracts, Utility Energy Service Contracts, Enhanced Use Leases and the Defense Community Infrastructure Program.

**66. In your view, how can the Department of the Navy use one or more of the above mentioned authorities to secure access to advanced energy-related technologies and concepts, including cyber-secure microgrids?**

It is my understanding that the Department has already used a combination of these authorities to great success. The Department has used enhanced use lease authority to site secure a microgrid at Marine Corps Air Station Yuma and Naval Weapons Station Seal Beach and install a cutting-edge battery energy storage system at Pacific Missile Range Facility Kauai, Hawaii and a fuel cell at Naval Submarine Base, New London, Connecticut. If confirmed, I would build upon this momentum and ensure energy-related technology is prioritized and pursued.

**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. As early as 2004, General Mattis cautioned that “units would be faced with unacceptable limitations because of their dependence on fuel” and that resupply efforts “made us vulnerable in ways that would be exploited by the enemy.” On the battlefield of the future, warfighters will need exponentially more energy with rapid recharge and resupply over longer operating distances. The quality of electricity will matter too—the Navy’s vehicles, sensors, robots, cyber forces, directed energy weapons, and artificial intelligence will be controlled by systems sensitive to fluctuations in voltage or frequency.**

**67. If confirmed, what priorities would you establish for Department of the Navy investments in operational energy technologies to increase warfighter combat capabilities and reduce logistical burdens?**

Although operational energy responsibilities are executed by the ASN(RDA), I believe that the Department is focused on the opportunity for energy technologies to increase warfighting capability like more time-on-station and silent watch while reducing logistics burdens is enabled by hybridization and electrification, advanced battery, and energy efficiency technologies.

**68. In what specific areas do you believe the Department of the Navy needs to improve the incorporation of operational energy considerations and distributed energy resources into the strategic planning processes?**

I believe that DON should account for energy in budget, program, and operational planning and if confirmed, I will work to ensure that the Department does so.

**69. How can Department of the Navy acquisition systems better address requirements related to the use of energy in military platforms to decrease risks to warfighters?**

If confirmed, I will pursue opportunities to reduce risk through the integration of energy requirements across platforms such as ships, airplanes, and ground combat systems, which would create efficiencies and redundancies to support the deployment of those platforms out of our many bases and stations.



**70. Further, in your view, how can energy supportability that reduces contested logistics vulnerabilities become key factors in the requirements process?**

Improving commanders' visibility of fuel and energy consumption by their forces is essential to reducing logistics requirements, vulnerabilities, and costs.

**71. Specifically, how can the Navy broadly include operational energy improvements in its ships, such as hybrid electric drives, stern flaps, and bow bulbs, to reduce fuel costs and extend combat range in multiple classes of ships?**

Technology improvements often translate between platforms. Successes in that space include stern flaps and other energy efficiency technologies that are already providing improvements to Naval capability. If confirmed, I will ensure that the Navy continues to evaluate, invest in and expand energy improvements across and between as many platforms as possible.

**72. In your view, how can the Department of the Navy better leverage advancements in data analytics and associated technologies to improve commanders' visibility of fuel consumption by the force?**

If confirmed, I would like to work with the Navy and Marine Corps to incorporate advanced data analytics in operational energy. Under this approach there is an opportunity to collect real time information to support data-driven decision making on the part of Navy and Marine Corps as well as capture metrics. In order to do that, we will need to meter and monitor our platforms, our bases, and our stations.

### **Energy Conservation**

**73. What do you perceive to be the core elements of an effective energy conservation strategy for the Department of the Navy?**

One of the three pillars of the Department of Navy's energy security strategy is energy efficiency, which is aimed at reducing the demand and cost of utilities through metering, demand response, audits, energy intensity reduction, use of renewal energy, and data analytics.

**74. What do you perceive to be the most achievable and realistic energy conservation goals for the Department of the Navy?**

The Department of Navy's energy conservation goals are centered around the energy management requirements and federal building energy efficiency standards codified in 42 USC 8253 and 6834, respectively. These standards set the foundation upon which the Department must build our energy conservation efforts.

**75. What do you consider to be a "stretch goal" for Department of the Navy energy conservation?**

If confirmed, I would collaborate with the ASN(EI&E) staff and the Navy's and Marine Corps' senior military leadership to identify new stretch goals for energy conservation.

**76. If confirmed, what specific actions would you take to reach these goals, and how would you measure your progress toward both?**

If confirmed, I would work with the Navy's and Marine Corps' senior military leadership to create meaningful, measurable benchmarks and set achievable goals together and encourage the innovations needed to meet these goals.

**77. In your view, what is the impact of the current Department of the Navy energy conservation goals for the Navy or Marine Corps? Please explain your answer.**

The Navy and Marine Corps have reaped the benefits of energy conservation in increased operational flexibility and mission assurance as well as the associated cost savings. In addition to the tangible benefits of energy conservation, the Navy and Marine Corps have cultivated a culture of energy conservation that can be augmented and magnified with additional leadership focus on energy conservation. I am aware of examples of this conservation in action at Naval Air Station Pensacola and Marine Corps Recruit Depot Paris Island, and understand there are dozens of success stories across the Department that, if confirmed, I would strive to build upon.

## **Water Resilience**

**A secure and reliable supply of water is essential to the Department of Defense's ability to perform its critical missions on installations and in support of operational deployments.**

**78. If confirmed, how would you lead the Department of the Navy in developing a comprehensive water strategy that addresses research, acquisition, training, and organizational issues?**

If confirmed, I would partner with the Navy Secretariat leadership as well as senior Navy and Marine Corps leaders to develop a comprehensive water strategy that addresses all facets of Department operations, including research, acquisition, training and organizational roles and responsibility. From an ASN(EI&E) perspective, if confirmed, I would continue the Department's work on cooperative regional management action plans and a review of water rights to mutually benefit the Department and local communities.

**79. What actions has the Department of the Navy already undertaken to improve access to sustainable water sources in drought-prone areas across the United States and the globe, and with what result?**

To improve water conservation, the Department promotes policies that minimize potable water use for non-core mission functions like irrigation, and engages with industry leaders to improve water conveyance and treatment systems. For example, Camp Pendleton has improved water security, expanding reclaimed water conveyance by installing new 'recycled water' lines, and new reservoirs for base irrigation and aquifer recharge. The use of recycled water helps to conserve potable water for core mission functions, and increases the health and sustainability of the aquifer basin for the greater San Diego area.

**80. What progress is the Department of the Navy making in developing and implementing a technology roadmap to address capability gaps for water production, treatment, and purification?**

Water resilience is critical to mission success. The Department has incorporated water resilience into its Energy Mission Integration Group (EMIG) process to identify water resilience gaps and prioritize investments against other commodities. In FY 2020, the EMIG tested water resilience criteria for Navy Region Southwest and prioritized necessary water resilience projects at Naval Base Coronado and Naval Air Station Lemoore. In 2021, the EMIG opened the analysis of water resilience to the entire enterprise and are currently developing eight projects to address mission-critical gaps. The identified solutions for the Department's water resilience gaps range from utilities privatization to the Energy Resilience and Conservation Investment Program (ERCIP).

**81. What actions has the Department of the Navy undertaken to improve water conveyance systems to reduce loss, recapitalize aging infrastructure, and meet installation mission requirements?**

The Department includes water systems in its annual military construction and facility restoration and modernization prioritization process. Additionally, it is my understanding that the Department of Navy is in the process of reinvigorating its utility privatization program through several pilots at installations to evaluate the business case analysis and the ability to improve reliable, resilient and efficient energy for the priority missions on those installations.

**Emerging Contaminants**

**The environmental and health effects associated with exposure to Per- and Poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) have long been a major concern for Congress, DOD, military families, and communities in the vicinity of military installations.**

**82. If confirmed, what role would you establish for the ASN(EI&E) in addressing potential PFAS contamination at Navy and Marine Corps bases, installations, and operational platforms?**

If confirmed, I would actively pursue my role as the Department of Navy representative on the Department of Defense PFAS Task Force.

**83. In your view, what role should the Navy and Marine Corps take in funding and overseeing PFAS-related environmental cleanup and restoration activities at Reserve locations and in communities adjacent to or near military bases, installations, and operational platforms?**

As a first step, the Department should identify the locations where PFAS released by the Department may have migrated to off-installation drinking water sources. The Department should test public and private drinking water wells in these areas for PFAS. Where EPA lifetime health advisory levels are exceeded, the Department should provide a short-term solution of alternate water for drinking and cooking

purposes and follow up to implement long-term solutions. Once these initial actions are taken to protect public health, the Department should follow through with investigations and response actions in accordance with the Federal cleanup law to ensure protection of human health and the environment.

**84. If confirmed, what would be your approach to addressing public health concerns—including the concerns of increased transparency to service members and their families—regarding alleged exposures to potentially harmful contaminants on or deriving from Navy and Marine Corps bases?**

If confirmed, I will promote early, meaningful, two-way communication with service members, their families and members of the public.

**The FY 2020 NDAA required the Department of Defense to phase out the current aqueous film forming foam (AF3) containing PFAS by 2024, with an exception for ships and submarines.**

**85. What is your understanding of the current progress made to date in finding a replacement for Aqueous Film Forming Foam?**

I believe the Department of Navy is actively supporting the Department of Defense's research and development effort to identify suitable replacements to transition to a PFAS-free firefighting alternative on installations. To date, I do not believe there is an accepted alternative that meets the Navy's requirements; once an alternative is identified, the Department will have a short timeframe to convert all fixed and mobile systems to this new product at a yet unknown cost.

**The current Navy-owned military specification for AF3 is largely based on the need to extinguish fires on ships and submarines within 30 seconds from contact. Recently tested non-PFAS alternatives can extinguish fires in roughly 39 seconds and some Jet-A fires in 21 seconds or less.**

**86. Given that the required phase out of PFAS in AF3 does not apply to ship and submarines, what do you view as the effects of more than one specification going forward: one for ships and submarines, and another for bases where AF3 cannot contain PFAS?**

I believe the DON has a capable supply chain system to ensure that the correct firefighting agents are provided to ships, submarines, and shore installations. If confirmed, I will verify this is the case and take actions if needed to make it so.

**Resilience to Extreme Weather Events**

**In 2018 alone, extreme weather caused roughly \$9 billion in damage at military bases across the United States, Camp Lejeune among them. In the aftermath of the July 2019 earthquakes that struck outside Ridgecrest, California, the Navy was required to recover and restore critical weapons system test and development capabilities at Naval Air Weapons Station China Lake.**

**87. How would you assess the readiness and resource impacts on the Department of the Navy from recent extreme weather events?**

If confirmed, I would work with Navy and Marine Corps installation management commands to ensure Naval installations have the tools and resources they need to plan, prepare, adapt, and recover. These solutions would need to consider a range of threats, from natural disasters and climate change, to adversarial risks to energy, water supplies and industrial cyber controls.

**88. In your view, how can the Navy and Marine Corps best mitigate risks to Department missions and infrastructure associated with extreme weather events?**

Navy and Marine Corps installations must incorporate installation resilience into all aspects of installation management, from emergency action plans and continuity of operations, to the installation master planning process and facility siting, design and construction. Installations must also continue to partner and collaborate with local communities, utility service providers, and in the private sector.

**89. If confirmed to be the ASN(EI&E), how would you update the DOD Building Requirements Unified Facilities Criteria (UFC) to incorporate designs more resilient to the effects of extreme weather events to ensure that MILCON-funded structures exist and remain fully functional for their intended lifecycles?**

If confirmed, I would support the Chief Engineer of Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command as the Department of Navy's representative for the Unified Facility Criteria. It is my understanding that this group has proactively updated DOD standards to be on par or exceed current industry standards and meet congressional requirements.

**Environmental Compliance**

**The Department of the Navy has implemented a robust environmental compliance program to ensure the Navy and Marine Corps can meet their title 10 responsibilities, in balance with the need for environmental stewardship and conservation.**

**90. If confirmed to be the ASN(EI&E), what policies and programs would you enable to educate Navy and Marine Corps leaders and the force about the imperative of complying with laws and regulations addressing environmental matters and the substantive tenets of same?**

If confirmed, I would ensure the Department of Navy promulgates robust and clear policies and instructions to Navy and Marine Corps leaders on the integration of environmental protection, natural resources and cultural resources into all operations and activities.

**91. If confirmed, how would you work with the Department of Interior and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to ensure military readiness, while protecting the environment on and around Navy and Marine Corps installations, bases, and ranges?**

If confirmed, I would support and leverage the ongoing work by the DOD and DON to forge partnerships with the Department of the Interior, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, other government agencies and non-governmental organizations to ensure military readiness while protecting the environment.

**92. What are your ideas as to how the process associated with generating an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) could be streamlined, with a view to completing any future EIS in two years or less, from start to finish?**

If confirmed, I would consult with the environmental subject matter experts within the Navy and Marine Corps, and the Council on Environmental Quality, to determine how the EIS process could be improved and streamlined while fully complying with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process.

### **Environmental Restoration**

**Funding for the Department of the Navy's environmental restoration program remains a significant part of the Navy's overall environmental program budget.**

**93. What do you see as the main priorities for environmental cleanup and restoration in the context of the Department of the Navy program?**

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances are clearly at the forefront of the many chemicals of emerging concern across the nation. The Department must continue identifying, evaluating and addressing PFAS releases resulting from our activities, and take proactive action to identify and mitigate the impacts of PFAS releases to human health and the environment.

**94. If confirmed, what specific steps would you take to ensure that the Department of the Navy continues to program, budget, and execute adequate funding to permit cleanups under the Installation Restoration and Military Munitions Remediation Programs to continue apace?**

If confirmed, I will continue the Department's practice of prioritizing Environmental Restoration sites by risk to human health and the environment. I will also ensure the Department conducts relative risk evaluations in consultation with regulatory agency partners and community stakeholders, and then sequences funding and projects for assessment and mitigation of the highest risk sites first. I believe the majority of the highest risk sites have been mitigated and most of the remainder of the Department's environmental response program is focused on completing long-term cleanup remedies that will span several more decades to fully achieve.

### **Encroachment on Military Installations**

**Competition for space and other forms of encroachment continue to challenge the resiliency of DOD ranges and amplify the need for larger hazard areas to execute training, testing, and operations to meet NDS requirements. Encroachment on military installations by commercial and residential development can negatively impact ongoing operations and**

**significantly delay or halt the construction of new testing and training facilities vital to generating readiness going forward.**

**95. In your view, how might virtual testing and training solutions contribute to the Department of the Navy's ability to meet capability requirements and mitigate the adverse effects of encroachment?**

If confirmed, I would work to ensure the Department has what it needs to conduct realistic and effective test and training activities. The Department must assess new and emerging technology to determine how virtual or other innovative methods can supplement our training needs.

**96. If confirmed, how would you lead the Department of the Navy in projecting future operations, testing, and training range requirements?**

If confirmed, I would work with Navy and Marine Corps uniformed leadership to ensure the Department's forces have the right facilities to train, fight, and win, even as various land, sea, and airspace demands reduce the available area for military training.

**97. How would you structure your role as the ASN(EI&E), if confirmed, with regard to engaging with communities surrounding Navy and Marine Corps ranges, to address and resolve concerns, while ensuring the resilience of range capabilities?**

If confirmed, I would encourage communication with residential communities, state and local governments, and non-governmental organizations. For energy projects, I would also work closely with the DOD Military Aviation and Installation Assurance Siting Clearinghouse as the single point of contact for working with stakeholders to resolve mission compatibility issues.

**One significant tool the Department of the Navy can use to mitigate impacts to base encroachment and preserve natural habitat buffers to bases, is the Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration (REPI) Program. Another avenue to mitigate potential conflicts between base radar and energy development is software updates and the modernization of radars, which are often paid for by energy developers.**

**98. If confirmed, what new ideas would you propose as objectives and means for addressing this issue?**

If confirmed, I would partner with installation commanders, operational leadership, local communities, conservation organizations, and industry to develop solutions that benefit the community and the Department's critical national defense mission.

**99. If confirmed, what policies or steps would you take to balance the trade-off between energy development, radar modernization, and impact on operations and training?**

If confirmed, I would take deliberate and informed steps to support energy development that minimizes impacts to military operations and training. If confirmed, I will keep Congress informed on the Department's progress in this area.

## **Department of the Navy Laboratory and Test Center Recapitalization**

**Historically, Department of the Navy technical centers, laboratories, and test centers do not appear to have fared well in the internal Department competition for limited military construction and facility sustainment funds; as many facilities in these categories approach the mid-point or near-end of their life cycles, recapitalization has become a concern.**

- 100. What is your view of the importance of technical centers, laboratories, and test centers to the ability of the Department of the Navy to accomplish its mission now and into the future?**

The Department of Navy's Research, Development, Testing and Evaluation community provide weapons, systems, and platforms for the Navy and Marine Corps that give a technological edge over the United States' adversaries. The Department's technical centers, laboratories, and test centers are uniquely positioned to develop and accelerate warfighting technology, capabilities and rapidly deliver advantages to the current and future Naval force.

- 101. What metrics would you use to assess and determine the appropriate level of investment in the recapitalization of Department of the Navy technical centers, laboratories, and test centers?**

If confirmed, I would work closely with the Department's Research, Development, Testing and Evaluation community to develop a strategy to recapitalize infrastructure at technical centers, labs and test centers. This holistic strategy would define metrics and identify innovative funding recommendations and partnership opportunities.

- 102. If confirmed, how would you work with the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development, and Acquisition and other stakeholders to ensure that the Department of the Navy technical centers, laboratories, and test centers are properly recapitalized?**

If confirmed, I would partner with other leaders at the Navy Secretariat level and leaders at all levels of the Department of Navy's robust Research, Development, Testing and Evaluation community to understand the unique infrastructure requirements of the Department's warfare centers and labs as well as all available funding solutions.

## **Command Climate Survey**

- 103. If confirmed, would you plan to administer a command climate survey to the workforce under your leadership and management?**

If confirmed, I will administer a command climate survey across the ASN(EI&E) workforce within the first 100 days of taking office.

## **Sexual Harassment**



**In responding to the 2018 DOD Civilian Employee Workplace and Gender Relations survey, 17.7 percent of female and 5.8 percent of male DOD employees indicated that they had experienced sexual harassment and/or gender discrimination by “someone at work” in the 12 months prior to completing the survey.**

**104. What is your assessment of the current climate regarding sexual harassment and gender discrimination in the Department of the Navy?**

I have reviewed the Navy and Marine Corps Fiscal Year 2020 Annual Report on Sexual Assault in the Military, which was publically released earlier this year. The Department of Navy has a comprehensive approach to sexual assault prevention and response. Yet there were still more than 2,800 reported assaults in the Navy and Marine Corps in FY 2020. No level of sexual assault and harassment is tolerable. There is clearly more work to be done to foster a culture where respect is the foundation for all interactions and where all Sailors, Marines and Civilians have the opportunity to thrive.

**105. If confirmed, what actions would you take were you to receive or become aware of a complaint of sexual harassment or discrimination from an employee of the Office of the ASN(EI&E)?**

Sexual assault undermines trust that our Sailors, Marines and Civilians place in each other and in their leaders, and it threatens the lethality of the Navy and the Marine Corps. If confirmed, I would vigorously adhere to DOD and DON policies to ensure that complaints of sexual harassment or discrimination are acted upon expeditiously and appropriately while protecting the victim.

### **Congressional Oversight**

**In order to exercise its legislative and oversight responsibilities, it is important that this Committee and other appropriate committees of Congress are able to receive testimony, briefings, reports, records (including documents and electronic communications) and other information from the Department.**

**106. 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 with a simple yes or no.**

Yes.

**107. 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 with a simple yes or no.**

Yes.

**108. 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 with a simple yes or no.**

Yes.

**109. 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 with a simple yes or no.**

Yes.

**110. 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 with a simple yes or no.**

Yes.

**111. 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 with a simple yes or no.**

Yes.

**112. 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 with a simple yes or no.**

Yes.