

Advance Policy Questions for Gabriel Camarillo
Nominee for Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Manpower and Reserve Affairs

Defense Reforms

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

What modifications to Goldwater-Nichols Act provisions, if any, do you believe are necessary for the readiness of the armed forces?

Goldwater-Nichols constituted a historic and important effort to modernize the military for the late 20th century comprised of an all-volunteer force. It is also an excellent example of Congress' important role in overseeing the Department of Defense and promoting reform as means to ensure our national security. As the threats the nation faces continue to evolve, however, it is important to continually reassess our organizational structure and processes to ensure we are best prepared to defend the country from these threats. Accordingly, if confirmed, I am fully committed to working with Air Force leadership, my counterparts throughout the Department of Defense and Congress to evaluate the success of Goldwater Nichols and whether any modifications are prudent.

Duties

Section 8016 of title 10, United States Code, provides that the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Manpower and Reserve Affairs shall have “as his principal duty the overall supervision of manpower and reserve component affairs of the Department of the Air Force.”

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

As you have indicated, the principal duties of the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force are to support and execute the tasks assigned by the Secretary of the Air Force. It is my understanding that these duties include providing guidance, direction, and oversight for Air Force military and civilian manpower/personnel programs; medical readiness and health care; and Reserve Component affairs. The Assistant Secretary is also responsible for oversight of the operation of the Air Force Review Boards Agency and its component boards. If confirmed, I will work hard to execute these duties to the best of my abilities, as well as any other duties or tasks assigned to me by the Secretary.

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What actions will you take to enhance your ability to perform the duties of the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Manpower and Reserve Affairs?

If confirmed, I will conduct a thorough review of current Air Force organizations, programs and personnel dedicated to the support of Airmen and their families to better understand the specific challenges, resources and efforts needed to support the Total Force. If confirmed, I will seek input from a broad array of internal and external stakeholders committed to the well-being of our Airmen, to include Congress, and work to maintain open and continuous engagement regarding matters affected by my performance of the duties associated with this office.

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

The Secretary of the Air Force

If confirmed, I will maintain regular communication and engagement with the Secretary of the Air Force. I will provide the Secretary with my honest assessment and advice and support the Secretary in the implementation of her decisions and policy.

The Under Secretary of the Air Force

If confirmed, I will work closely with the Under Secretary, including communication on a regular basis.

The other Assistant Secretaries of the Air Force

If confirmed, I will establish and maintain close and professional relationships with each of the Assistant Secretaries and seek to foster collaboration, working together to support Airmen and their families in the day-to-day management and long-range planning efforts of the Air Force.

The General Counsel of the Air Force

The Air Force General Counsel has a significant role to play in virtually all policy decisions in the Air Force. If confirmed, I expect to have a strong relationship with the General Counsel to obtain consistent and sound legal advice in the execution of my duties as an Assistant Secretary.

The Inspector General of the Air Force

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If confirmed, I will establish and maintain a constructive relationship with the Inspector General as this office has an important role in inquiring into and reporting on matters that directly affect Air Force readiness (such as efficiency, training, discipline, and morale).

The Chief of Legislative Liaison of the Department of the Air Force

If confirmed, I will establish and maintain a close and professional relationship with the Director of Legislative Liaison who to help the Director ensure that the Air Force maintains positive relations with Congress while coordinating the Air Force's legislative strategy.

The Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness

If confirmed, I intend to maintain a productive and effective working relationship with the civilian leadership in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, including the Undersecretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness. I will communicate openly and directly with the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness to articulate the views of the Department of the Air Force, the needs of Airmen and their families, and their impact on readiness.

The Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness

If confirmed, I would maintain the same productive and effective relationship with the Principal Deputy that I intend to establish with the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness.

The Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower and Reserve Affairs

If confirmed, I would expect to establish the same productive and effective relationship with the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower and Reserve Affairs that I intend to establish with all civilian leadership in the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

The Assistant Secretary of Defense for Readiness

If confirmed, I would expect to establish the same type of harmonious relationship with the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Readiness that I intend to establish with all civilian leadership in the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

The Chief of Staff of the Air Force

The Chief of Staff of the Air Force, except as otherwise prescribed by law, performs his duties under the authority, direction and control of the Secretary of

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the Air Force and is directly responsible to the Secretary. If confirmed as the senior civilian charged with supervision and direction of policy for manpower and reserve affairs, I would work closely with the Chief of Staff to carry out the duties prescribed by the Secretary of the Air Force.

The Deputy Chief of Staff of the Air Force for Manpower and Reserve Affairs

I understand that many of the functions and operations relating to Air Force personnel are executed by the Deputy Chief of Staff for Manpower, Personnel, and Services. If confirmed, I would work in concert with the Deputy Chief of Staff for Manpower and Reserve Affairs to ensure that such execution is consistent with policies approved by the Office of the Secretary of the Air Force.

The Surgeon General of the Air Force

If confirmed, I will work closely with the Surgeon General of the Air Force to ensure the Air Force medical system supports a medically ready force and strives to maintain quality medical support to Airmen.

The Chief, National Guard Bureau

If confirmed, I expect to maintain a close working relationship with the Chief of the National Guard Bureau on matters relating to the National Guard and the Air National Guard. Among my priorities, if confirmed, will be ensuring that our National Guard is capable of meeting mission requirements. .

The Director of the Air National Guard

If confirmed, I would maintain close collaboration and clear communication with the Air National Guard. The Reserve Components are a critical part of the Total Force and contribute significantly to Air Force mission success. If confirmed, one of my priorities will be to work hard to understand and address Air National Guard issues and challenges.

The Chief of Air Force Reserve

If confirmed, I expect to also maintain close collaboration and clear communication with the Chief of Air Force Reserve. I recognize, however, that due to the Title 10 mission associated with the Air Force Reserve, the specific issues and concerns would be distinct.

Airmen and their families

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Airmen and their families form the backbone of Air Force readiness and are therefore essential to the success of its missions. If confirmed, my top priority will be to promote the interests and well-being of Airmen and their families in the development of policies, programs and procedures under the purview of the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Manpower and Reserve Affairs.

Qualifications

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

I believe that my combined policy, business and management experience, including the past five and half years in the Department of Defense, has prepared me to contribute directly to the success of the Air Force through the development of policies, programs and processes to address the needs of Airmen and their families.

In my current position as Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army (Acquisition, Logistics & Technology), I help oversee the acquisition functions of the Army, including research and development, procurement, logistics and sustainment across a significant investment portfolio that spans over 600 programs and \$72 billion in contracting actions for goods and services in FY15. This position has provided me keen expertise regarding the Department's programming, budgeting and execution processes, the impacts of equipment training and readiness on Title 10 missions, the significant challenges associated with talent management and retention as it relates to the Army acquisition workforce, and the equipping needs of the Army National Guard.

I have also proudly committed much of the rest of my career to public service, having previously served as legislative staff in the House of Representatives, as a civil servant in local government, and for five and a half years as a civilian appointee in the Department of Defense. The needs of our Service men and women have shaped virtually every position I held in public service, to include support for quality of life programs and base housing at Lemoore Naval Air Station while I worked for Rep. Calvin Dooley, the impact of Fort Bliss and Army Soldiers on the local economy of El Paso, TX, and the equipping needs of Soldiers for nearly six years in the Department of the Army. During my career, I've gained a deeper appreciation for the needs of Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines and the vital mission they fulfill in defense of our Nation.

Moreover, as a lawyer in the private sector, I have been involved in the development and management of personnel policies and have been active in the recruiting, mentoring and talent management efforts. If confirmed as Assistant Secretary of the Air Force, I look forward to applying this experience in support of the Air Force, Airmen and their families, and Total Force readiness.

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Major Challenges

In your view, what are the major challenges confronting the next Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Manpower and Reserve Affairs?

In my view, the most significant challenge facing the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Manpower and Reserve Affairs is ensuring that the Air Force continues to recruit, train, develop and retain talented professionals. In a rapidly changing world that presents unique challenges to the Department of Defense and our Armed Forces, the foundation of success for the Air Force is and will continue to be the Airmen—active duty, guard, reserve, civilians and civil air patrol—that carry out the Air Force’s many missions. Making sure the Air Force continues to recruit, develop, and retain the best of our Nation’s diverse talent is critical for the future and a major focus for the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Manpower and Reserve Affairs.

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

If confirmed, I would look to build on the Air Force’s Total Force construct to explore innovative approaches to attracting and developing talented professionals in the Air Force.

Similarly, if confirmed, I would consider new approaches to recruit, attract and retain an All-Volunteer Force of agile and inclusive Airmen. Today’s labor market dynamics require flexible, modern approaches to make sure the Air Force of the future has the numbers, talents, and diversity to needed to remain the best Air Force in the world.

Also, if confirmed, I would carefully review the many current and proposed authorities the Services have for managing and developing the tremendous talent across the force to make sure they provide maximum capability for the Air Force to continue developing and retaining the Airmen needed for the future.

Systems and Support for Wounded Soldiers

What is your assessment of the progress made by the Air Force to improve the care, management, and transition of seriously ill and injured airmen?

It is my understanding there has been steady progress improving the care of Wounded, Ill and Injured (WII) Airmen as result of combined efforts across the Air Force. My understanding is that the Air Force has established Care Management Teams to guide WII Airmen through their recovery and transition and to ensure they have appropriate primary, specialty and mental health care by monitoring their access and utilizing clinical case managers. I understand that the Air Force currently evaluates WII Airmen through

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the Disability Evaluation System (DES) to ensure those unable to continue serving receive their full benefits.

If confirmed, are there additional strategies and resources that you would pursue to increase the Air Force's support for wounded airmen, and to monitor their progress in returning to duty or to civilian life?

If confirmed, I will assess the effectiveness of these programs and their resources to determine which adjustments or strategies are needed to ensure that wounded Airmen receive the best support and care possible.

Officer Management Issues

As the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Manpower and Reserve Affairs you would have significant responsibilities with regard to officer management policies, the promotion system, and recommending officers for nomination to positions of authority and responsibility.

If confirmed, what modifications would you make to provide the Air Force the force management tools necessary to meet the needs of the 21st century joint, all-volunteer force?

A strong emphasis on force management is critically important to the long-term development of a Total Force capable of meeting current and future Air Force missions and requirements. If confirmed, I would review the set of management tools applied toward this critical function and develop strategies to address any needed changes, as appropriate.

Do you believe the current Air Force procedures and practices for reviewing the records of officers pending nomination by the President are sufficient to ensure the Secretary of the Air Force, the Secretary of Defense, and the President can make informed decisions?

I have not had the opportunity to conduct a detailed review of the processes and procedures used in the Air Force to review officer records prior to nomination. If confirmed, I would conduct a review of these procedures to ensure that they facilitate informed decisions regarding the best qualified officers selected for promotion.

In your view, are these procedures and practices fair and reasonable for the officers involved?

If I am confirmed, it is my understanding that one of my responsibilities, delegated by the Secretary of the Air Force, would be to interview Board Presidents, members and

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recorders to ensure boards follow all applicable laws, instructions and administrative directives. If confirmed, this will provide me a great opportunity to interact with individuals directly involved with these procedures and practices and directly assess their effectiveness and impacts.

What modifications, if any, to the requirements for joint officer qualifications are necessary to ensure that military officers are able to attain meaningful joint and service-specific leadership experience and professional development?

It is my understanding that the requirements for joint officer qualifications are currently under review. If confirmed, I will carefully evaluate the results to determine their effect on the Air Force.

In your view, what is the impact of joint qualification requirements on the ability of the services to select the best qualified officers for promotion and to enable officer assignments that will satisfy service-specific officer professional development requirements?

I believe there are benefits to joint qualifications and assignments as officers develop experience that is useful for broad professional development and future service assignments. I have not had a chance to make an assessment of any impacts associated with joint assignments on Air Force officer professional development. It is my understanding that the Air Force is currently undertaking a review of joint officer qualifications and if confirmed, I will study this review when completed and engage with the Secretary of the Air Force on any changes or modifications deemed appropriate in the area of professional development.

Do you recommend changes to the Defense Officer Personnel Management Act (DOPMA) to recruit and retain the best and brightest Air Force officers?

My understanding is our talent management systems may need to be more permeable to attract and retain the Force of the Future. I look forward to Secretary Carter's announcement on the Force of the Future initiatives. If confirmed, I will assess these initiatives and recommendations before engaging with Secretary James on any potential changes for the Air Force.

Do you agree with recent testimony before the Committee that the military services should significantly reduce the size and number of the officer corps?

If confirmed, I will work with Air Force senior leadership to review and ensure that our force (Active and Reserve Components), our military (officer and enlisted) and civilians, as well as contracted support, are sized both effectively and efficiently to meet Air Force requirements and missions.

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Technical Training and Assignment of General Officers

In your view, do a sufficient number of general officers have advanced training and degrees in scientific and technical disciplines?

Although I cannot answer this question definitively at this time, if confirmed, I will be in a better position to assess the Air Force's needs regarding advanced training and degrees in scientific and technical disciplines for general officers.

Are the career paths for officers with technical skills appropriate to ensure that the services can execute complex acquisition programs, adapt to a rapidly changing technological threat environment, and make informed investment decisions on DOD and Air Force resources? If not, what will you do to address this deficiency?

I understand that the Air Force goes to great lengths to manage its officer corps to ensure it develops a talented, professional acquisition workforce to manage investment in critical warfighting capabilities for the Air Force. One of my priorities as Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army has been to ensure that talent management and training in the Army acquisition workforce enables us to respond to a rapidly evolving threat environment calling for expertise in key technical areas. If confirmed, I will work with Air Force leadership to assess the needs of the Air Force acquisition workforce and work collaboratively to address any needed changes in policies or programs.

In your view do current general officer assignment policies provide and incentivize qualified officers to serve in acquisition programs? Do tour lengths for those assignments enable and empower such officers to effectively manage acquisition programs? If not, what changes do you believe are necessary to improve the effectiveness of senior officers assigned those duties?

I have not had an opportunity to review the effect of current Air Force officer assignment policies on the management of Air Force acquisition programs. If confirmed, this is certainly an area I will review in collaboration with Air Force leadership.

General Officer Nominations

Under DOD Instruction 1320.4, adverse and alleged adverse information pertaining to general officers must be evaluated by senior leaders in the Services and in the Office of the Secretary of Defense prior to nomination.

If confirmed, what role would you play in the officer promotion system, particularly in reviewing general officer nominations?

I have been informed that both the Secretary of the Air Force and the Chief of Staff are directly involved in the General Officer nomination process. If confirmed, I look forward

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to supporting them through the duties assigned to the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Manpower and Reserve Affairs.

What is your assessment of the ability of the Services to timely document credible information of an adverse nature for evaluation by promotion selection boards and military and civilian leaders?

My understanding is that the Department of the Air Force gathers information from multiple organizations to document and present adverse information to promotion selection boards. If confirmed, I will be in a better position to assess the timeliness of this process and its effect on promotion selection boards.

If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure that only the best qualified officers are nominated for promotion to general officer rank?

As previously stated, both the Secretary of the Air Force and the Chief of Staff are involved in this matter. If confirmed, I will provide my best advice and counsel to the Secretary of the Air Force to ensure the Air Force continues to nominate the best and most qualified officers for promotion to the rank of General Officer.

Crewing for Remotely Piloted Aircraft Squadrons

The Air Force has been experiencing problems with manning its fleet of remotely piloted aircraft (RPA), specifically Predators and Reapers. A recent internal Air Force email from the head of Air Combat Command to the Air Force Chief of Staff said these fleets are being strained to the breaking point because of overstressing air crews in trying to maintain 65 RPA orbits. This has been continuing issue since demand for UAV services has outstripped capacity to produce aircrews from the beginning of UAV deployments.

Air Force budget documents indicate that the Air Force is planning to add 434 personnel authorizations to the MQ-9 force structure in FY 16. Increased authorizations, however, do not equate to additional personnel in the squadrons. The Air Force has proposed increases to the RPA community in the past that did not result in the similar increases in air crews.

We understand that the fiscal year 2017 Department of Defense (DOD) budget request will increase the demand for RPA orbits well beyond 65 orbits, although the Air Force will not be asked to shoulder the responsibility for the additional orbits.

What steps do you believe the Air Force and DOD should take to improve the Air Force's ability to sustain the current force?

I have been informed that in response to the current shortage of remotely piloted aircraft pilots, the United States Air Force has launched several initiatives to improve total

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manning to 100% within the existing organizational construct. I understand that these initiatives will require some time to accomplish and utilize Active Duty, Reserve, Guard, Department of the Air Force Civilians, and where appropriate, contracted support, operational, training, and mission support functions throughout the Intelligence Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) Enterprise.

The RPA Enterprise has grown exponentially, while conducting surge operations, over the past 15 years of conflict to support warfighter demands. The resourcing for this critical enterprise has occurred within the existing personnel and programming constraints of the AF which has limited the ability to develop a fully sustainable weapon system. If confirmed, I will conduct a review of current and planned efforts to address the manning requirements for RPA aircrews and work with the Secretary of the Air Force to address any additional steps required to meet this demand.

How would the Air Force deal with additional demand if it had to provide aircrews for the additional orbits?

My understanding is that the Air Force will continue to provide Combatant Commanders with ISR, situational awareness and strike capability. I have been informed that the Air Force would prioritize warfighter requirements and explore a range of options to meet the additional demand with a mix of Total Force resources, to include potential Reserve and Guard mobilization. If confirmed, I would review and assess the effect of these strategies before determining whether any additional or modified approaches are necessary or appropriate.

Do you see a need for any changes in legislation to enable the Department to solve these RPA crew problems?

It is my understanding the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016, Congress included flight, bonus and incentive pay provisions for RPA aircrew personnel. If confirmed, I would assess the effect of these statutory authorities before making any recommendations for additional legislative action.

Air Force End Strength Reductions

In the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016, Congress authorized an active-duty end strength for the Air Force of 320,715.

In your view, can the Air Force meet national defense objectives at this strength level?

Based on information I have received, it is my understanding that an Active-Duty workforce of approximately 321,000 would likely be sufficient to meet today's national

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defense objectives and operational requirements. If confirmed, however, I look forward to conducting a review and assessment of the Air Force's end strength requirements in coordination with the Air Force leadership.

If budget caps effective in current law remain in place, how will the Air Force's active- and reserve component end strengths be impacted?

My understanding is that budget caps will drive the Air Force to evaluate/re-prioritize its various programs and missions and those choices will directly influence Air Force end-strength requirements. It is likely that the Air Force would be required to divest or trim back missions and explore a corresponding reduction in our Total Force workforce. That said, if confirmed, I will have an opportunity to further assess the Air Force Total Force requirements and will advocate for an active-reserve force mix of the future that remains both effective and efficient.

What is your understanding of the need for additional force shaping tools requiring legislation beyond what Congress has provided the past three years?

I have not yet had an opportunity to review the effects of current force shaping tools available to the Air Force. If confirmed, I would conduct an assessment of all force shaping tools available to the Air Force, including recent authorities provided by the Congress, and make recommendations for additional force shaping tools as necessary.

In your view, should the number of general officers in the Air Force be reduced commensurate with the drawdown of total Air Force end strength?

I have not had the opportunity to review the processes and analysis used by the Air Force to right-size the General Officer corps. I am aware that the Air Force has implemented reductions required across the Department of Defense consistent with the Air Force drawdown. If confirmed, I would review these efforts and work with the Secretary of the Air Force to determine whether further efforts are required.

Lessons Learned

What do you believe are the major personnel lessons learned from the last fifteen years of sustained combat operations which you would seek to address if confirmed as Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Manpower and Reserve Affairs?

Prolonged combat operations have taken a significant toll on Airmen, who continue to meet unplanned mission requirements creating a normalized surge environment while resources continue to decrease. Having the resources to maintain a deliberate and steady force structure and end-strength that can adapt to emerging threats is imperative to success. The unique skills grown through military

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service need a steady and consistent budgeting process to maintain readiness as well as the modernization of weapon systems to carry out the mission. A stable and predictable balance of investment between readiness, modernization and manpower is required to allow the Air Force to adequately train, develop, and equip Airmen to meet the demands of a complex security environment.

National Guard Organization, Equipment, and Readiness

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

How do you assess the changes in the role and authorities of the Chief of the National Guard Bureau?

From my perspective, the changes to the roles, mission and authorities of the Chief of the National Guard Bureau elevated the National Guard to a level of visibility needed to ensure it is properly equipped and resourced to carry out its dual-role mission.

How do you assess the changes in the roles and mission of the Air National Guard?

The Air National Guard is engaged across all Air Force mission sets. Like the Regular Air Force, they have undergone significant transformation to increase their roles in cyber, space, remotely piloted aircraft and other emerging missions our combatant commanders need for today's operating environment. While I have not been involved in the recent analysis efforts the Air Force has undertaken regarding the mission mix between components, I look forward to participating and engaging in that effort.

In your view, do the current Air Force processes for planning, programming, and budgeting sufficiently address the requirements of the Air National Guard? What is the appropriate role of the Chief of the National Guard Bureau and the Director of the Air National Guard in this regard?

My understanding is that the Air Force planning, programming and budgeting process is managed as a Total Force activity with full participation from the Air National Guard and the Air Force Reserve. The Director of the Air National Guard, as a full member of the CNGB staff plays a dual role of participating in the overall Air Staff budgeting process while concurrently keeping the CNGB apprised of relevant issues. If confirmed, I look forward to engaging with the Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve to ensure that a Total Force approach is maintained.

In your view, what should be the Chief of the National Guard Bureau's role, if any, in the assignment of Directors and Deputy Directors of the Air National Guard?

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It is my understanding the Directors and Deputy Directors of the ANG are appointed by the Secretary of the Air Force in consultation with the Chief of Staff of the Air Force and the Chief of the National Guard Bureau. I believe this consultative role played by the CNGB is appropriate.

Suicide Prevention

The numbers of suicides in each of the services continue to be of great concern to the Committee.

If confirmed, what role would you play in shaping suicide prevention programs and policies for the Department of the Air Force to prevent suicides and increase the resiliency of airmen and their families?

Even one suicide in the Air Force is too many, and I understand that the Air Force has responded to this problem through a comprehensive approach focusing on Airmen fitness, resiliency, care and support. It is my understanding that the Air Force Suicide Prevention Program employs evidence-based methods and consists of a leadership-driven, Coordinated Community Approach. I fully support this strategy as consistent with a Comprehensive Airman Fitness and Wingman Culture. Airmen are impressively resilient but are also subject to many challenges. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that the Air Force continues to provide a wide range of quality services to support Airmen and families while firmly establishing a culture of positive support where Airmen seeking assistance is seen as a sign of strength. If confirmed, I will also work with the Secretary of the Air Force to implement efforts to reduce suicides by providing oversight and assuring that this issue is appropriately prioritized and addressed. I will work collaboratively with our sister Services, DoD, VA and other stakeholders to optimize our effectiveness, promote resilience and ensure that our Airman and families receive the best medical and support services.

Family Readiness and Support

Airmen and their families in both the active and reserve components have made, and continue to make, tremendous sacrifices in support of operational deployments. Senior military leaders have warned of concerns among military families as a result of the stress of deployments and the separations that go with them.

What do you consider to be the most important family readiness issues for airmen and their families, and, if confirmed, how would you ensure that family readiness needs are addressed and adequately resourced, especially in light of current fiscal constraints?

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Taking care of people is the Air Force's number one priority. The most important family readiness issues for Airmen and their families is investment in Airmen and Family programs and the MWR Portfolio. MWR and family programs have a direct impact to retention, resiliency, and readiness. These programs contribute directly to building a "community" of Airmen and families. Support for Airmen family readiness is one of my priorities, as it is vital to the long-term success of the Air Force. If confirmed, I look forward to reviewing and identifying any needs in this area.

Morale, Welfare, and Recreation

If confirmed, what challenges do you foresee in sustaining Air Force MWR programs in the future fiscal environment of the Air Force?

Robust and successful MWR programs contribute significantly to mission success while reinforcing the sense of community among Airmen and their families. Constrained resources present tough challenges to the Air Force's efforts to sustain MWR programs. I understand that the Air Force leadership recognized the importance of MWR programs and recommended funding in the FY16 budget and out-years consistent with this priority. In the coming years, retaining adequate resources for these programs in an uncertain fiscal environment presents the greatest challenge. MWR Programs are the right investment for Airmen and their families; even in times of scarce resources as they are directly tied to resilience, morale and ultimately readiness/mission performance.

Military Health Care

In your view, what should the Air Force Medical Service do to improve access to care in its medical facilities?

In my view, to improve access for our Airmen and their families, the Air Force Medical Service must identify, validate, standardize and implement the best access-related practices from across the Air Force, the military health system, as well as civilian medicine. Additionally, the enhanced care delivery venues the Air Force Medical Service already employs should continue to be developed and leveraged to ensure that patients receive the right care from the right provider, at the right time and in the right setting.

If confirmed, how would you work with the Surgeon General of the Air Force to improve the healthcare experience for Airmen and their families?

Providing excellent healthcare to Airmen and their families is a paramount objective and if confirmed, I will work with the Surgeon General to review current and planned efforts to maintain and improve the highest quality and safest care possible.

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Sexual Assault Prevention and Response

In 2014, there was what the Department described as an “unprecedented 53% increase in victim reports of sexual assault. In fiscal year 2014, victims made 4,660 Unrestricted Reports and 1,840 initial Restricted Reports of sexual assault. Also in fiscal year 2014, the Department saw the number of victims who converted Restricted Reports to Unrestricted Reports increase from an average of 15% to 20%. According to the 2014 RAND Military Workplace Study approximately 72% of service member victims who indicated they made a sexual assault report said they would make the same decision to make a report if they had to do it over again. The Rand Study also indicated the percentages of active duty personnel who experienced unwanted sexual assault declined in 2014, from 6.1% to 4.3% for women and from 1.2% to 0.9% for men. The Department also concluded the estimated gap between reporting and prevalence of sexual assaults was at the narrowest point since the Department began tracking this data.

What is your assessment of the Air Force’s sexual assault prevention and response program?

It is my understanding the Air Force is making progress in preventing and responding to this crime with support and funding from Congress. Since FY12, reports of sexual assault in the Air Force have risen, while estimated prevalence trends have fallen, indicating the program’s progress in both preventing sexual assault and increasing Airmen’s confidence in the program. Another indication of Airmen’s confidence is the increase in the percentage of unrestricted reports,

However, the emphasis on these and other Air Force-wide efforts must continue and there is still much work to be done. For example, I’ve been informed the Air Force will introduce newly enhanced service-wide prevention training in January 2016 to continue to further combat the problem of sexual assault in our service. If confirmed, improving the Air Force’s prevention and response efforts will be one of my top priorities and I eagerly look forward to the opportunity to work with Air Force leadership to further address this crime.

What is your view of the provision for restricted and unrestricted reporting of sexual assaults?

I believe giving victims the ability to choose between filing a restricted or unrestricted report allows access to services that are unmatched in the civilian community. In addition, this allows victims to seek care confidentially, if they prefer, and to mitigate concerns regarding career impact or retaliation. A victim may need care, but be reluctant to report an assault because they do not want a formal investigation. Until the Air Force instituted restricted reporting, these victims were unable to see a SARC and obtain the services they so desperately needed to heal. Now victims are able to start the healing

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process and engage in all the support SARC and the Air Force provide without being required to participate in a formal investigation. This also allows the Air Force to preserve evidence from victims who come forward to support future investigations, should they later decide to change their report to unrestricted.

What is your view about the role of the chain of command in providing necessary support to the victims of sexual assault?

Commanders actively support sexual assault prevention and response programs and are responsible for supporting victims, as well as for conducting the criminal justice procedures that enable the accused to be held appropriately accountable. Commanders notified of a sexual assault must take immediate steps to ensure the physical safety, emotional security and medical treatment needs of a victim are met, and that the appropriate investigative agency and sexual assault response coordinator is notified. Furthermore, the commander's role is to protect sexual assault victims, witnesses, bystanders, first responders and other parties to the incident from coercion, ostracism, maltreatment, discrimination, reprisal and retaliation.

It is my understanding that every commander in the Air Force is provided training prior to taking command to ensure that he or she is fully informed of all the available resources to support a victim of sexual assault. Through their training and support from their sexual assault response coordinator, a commander is made aware of the array of personnel actions, to include expedited transfers, which are available and may be appropriate.

What is your understanding of the adequacy of Air Force resources and programs to provide victims of sexual assault the medical, psychological, and legal help they need?

I understand that the Air Force provides a multitude of resources to assist victims of sexual assault. Regarding legal support, the Special Victims' Counsel (SCS) program provides holistic legal representation to victims, ranging from advising victims on all aspects of the military justice process to traditional legal assistance. Victims who do not desire SVC representation can still seek traditional legal assistance at the legal office for issues that may stem from a sexual assault, such as breaking a lease, divorce or other personal legal matters. Further, Victim Witness Assistance Program personnel in the legal office assist victims and witnesses through the military justice process and assist Sexual Assault Prevention and Response personnel and SVCs in providing care to victims.

My understanding is that victims also have a variety of medical and psychological resources available to them. The Air Force Medical Service has trained Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners available to every Military Treatment Facility to serve as the medical point of contact post-assault when medical care for the purposes of collecting forensic evidence or assessing and treating medically-related injuries is necessary. Victims are

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offered mental health support by providers who are expertly trained to deliver both crisis-counseling services and ongoing care often needed when overcoming trauma events.

If confirmed, I look forward to the opportunity to closely review these programs and resources to determine whether any modifications or augmentations are needed or appropriate.

What is your view of the Air Force's Special Victim Counsel Program?

I've been informed that since the Program's groundbreaking establishment in 2013, the Air Force's Special Victims' Counsel Program has served 2005 clients, including 58 child clients. In my view, the Program has been successful assisting victims of sexual assault navigate the military justice process and resolve legal issues associated with their sexual assault, to include retaliation and privacy concerns. If confirmed, I look forward to supporting the Special Victim Counsel program as part of the Air Force's comprehensive efforts to address and prevent sexual assault.

What is your view of the steps the Air Force has taken to prevent additional sexual assaults both at home station and deployed locations?

In my view, the decrease in prevalence and the increase in reporting are strong indicators that the Air Force's efforts are making progress. I understand that the Air Force has built a robust response system that's unmatched in the civilian community and will continue expanding its prevention strategy designed to eliminate sexual assault from its ranks. If confirmed, I am committed to supporting these efforts.

What is your view of the adequacy of the training and resources Air Force has in place to investigate and prosecute allegations of sexual assault?

I have not yet had an opportunity to assess the adequacy of training and resources employed by the Air Force for investigation and prosecution of cases. I am aware that the Air Force established a worldwide special victim's investigation and prosecution capability. These prosecutors and investigators received specialized training in investigating and prosecuting sexual assault cases and currently assist other agents and judge advocates across the Air Force in the investigation and prosecution of sexual assault cases. If confirmed, I will assess the adequacy of these programs and their required resources to determine whether any recommended changes are needed.

What is your view about the role of the chain of command in changing the military culture in which these sexual assaults occur?

I believe that the chain of command is vital in creating and maintaining a professional and respectful climate in every military unit. The ability to set standards and enforce

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them through judicial and non-judicial punishment is critical to ensuring that all Airmen reflect Air Force values and standards of conduct.

Surveys report that up to 62 percent of victims who report a sexual assault perceive professional or social retaliation for reporting. If confirmed, what will you do to address the issue of retaliation for reporting a sexual assault?

Addressing fears of retaliation is critical to any efforts to encourage greater reporting of sexual assault and providing care for victims. Climate surveys and other research indicate, Airmen have a high level of trust and confidence in their commanders. What is becoming more apparent is that the “retaliation” that is often discussed is in the form of negative responses or a perceived stigma from their fellow Airmen.

Retaliation not only harms the lives and careers of victims, bystanders, witnesses and first responders, but it also undermines military readiness and weakens the culture of dignity and respect. Without question, retaliation has no place in the Air Force. If confirmed, I intend to work closely with the prevention and response professionals to institute education for commanders and Airmen at all levels about the impact of sexual assault on an individual and proper ways to care for one another.

As part of these efforts, Commanders must be prepared and trained to understand the immense trauma that accompanies any sexual assault, to include the behavioral and mental health issues that may arise in connection with these crimes. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that in-depth training and guidance on sexual assault trauma assists Commanders in their efforts to support victims in recovery.

Additionally, I understand that a recent change to Air Force policy requires Airmen be advised of their right to request review by a general officer if they believe the Commander’s recommendation for involuntary (administrative) discharge was initiated in retaliation for having made an unrestricted report of sexual assault within the previous twelve months. I look forward to further reviewing the effects of these and other policies and programs if confirmed.

Sexual assault is a significantly underreported crime in our society and in the military. If confirmed, what will you do to increase reporting of sexual assaults by military victims?

I believe the key to increased reporting is a two part message: First we must continue to emphasize that sexual assault and sexual harassment have no place in the Air Force. However, should a sexual assault occur, we should encourage victims to select a reporting option and get the care they need. To sustain these efforts, we must properly resource efforts across the spectrum of reporting, response and prevention.

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The most under-reporting group in the Air Force is male victims. In the last year, the Air Force specifically focused on the subject of “male victimization” during annual Sexual Assault Prevention and Response training. In a further effort to increase reporting, the Air Force led the DoD by offering Sexual Assault Prevention and Response services to civilian employees. This important effort has opened the door for ALL Airmen to be treated with dignity and respect, and to be empowered to start down the path of healing as valued members of the service. If confirmed, I will continue to look for ways to better serve victims of this crime.

In your view, what would be the impact of requiring a judge advocate outside the chain of command, instead of a military commander in the grade of O-6 or above as is currently the Department’s policy, to determine whether allegations of sexual assault should be prosecuted?

The commander and the judge advocate must continue to play a significant role in the effective prosecution of this crime. Continuing the strong partnership between commanders and their legal advisors is critical to address the needs of victims and to hold alleged offenders appropriately accountable. If confirmed, I would closely review the current policies and procedures in place to ensure that we foster an environment in which victims feel safe and comfortable in reporting such crimes, as we continue to work toward eradication of sexual assault from the Air Force.

What additional steps would you take, if confirmed, to address the problem of sexual assaults in the Air Force?

If confirmed, I will work to ensure that the Air Force continues to apply the necessary leadership, resources and manpower toward the goal of eliminating sexual assault from the Air Force. I believe the Air Force is making progress in these efforts, and the new five-year prevention and response strategy General Welsh recently signed will help to build on this success. A continued emphasis on a comprehensive approach with an emphasis on prevention will help the Air Force achieve this goal.

Religious Guidelines

American military personnel routinely deploy to locations around the world where they must engage and work effectively with allies and with host-country nationals whose faiths and beliefs may be different than their own. For many other cultures, religious faith is not a purely personal and private matter; it is the foundation of their culture and society. Learning to respect the different faiths and beliefs of others, and to understand how accommodating different views can contribute to a diverse force is, some would argue, an essential skill to operational effectiveness.

In your view, do policies concerning religious accommodation in the military appropriately accommodate the free exercise of religion and other beliefs, including

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individual expressions of belief, without impinging on those who have different beliefs, including no religious belief?

I fully support the Constitutional principles protecting the free exercise of an individual's religious views and the freedom from established religious practices within the workplace. It is my understanding that Air Force policy supports the rights of every Airman to practice the religion of their choice or subscribe to no religious belief at all. I have not, however, had the opportunity to observe the implementation of these policies throughout the Air Force. If confirmed, I would continue the Air Force's commitment to upholding the Constitutional tenets of the "free exercise" and "establishment" clauses, and review policies as necessary to assure continued compliance with the First Amendment.

Under current law and policy, are individual expressions of belief accommodated so long as they do not impact unit cohesion and good order and discipline?

I understand that Air Force policy is aligned with the law and OSD policy supporting an individual's right to express and request accommodation for their sincerely held beliefs unless their expressions of belief impacts military readiness, unit cohesion, good order, discipline, health and safety or mission accomplishment. If confirmed, I will review these policies as required.

In your view, does a military climate that welcomes and respects open and candid discussions about personal religious faith and beliefs in a garrison environment contribute in a positive way to preparing U.S. forces to be effective in overseas assignments?

I believe that Airmen should confidently express their own beliefs while respecting and being sensitive to the viewpoints of others who differ from their own. Open, respectful and candid discussions will help prepare our Airmen to respect the different faiths and beliefs of others throughout the world.

Would a policy that discourages open discussions about personal faith and beliefs be more or less effective at preparing service members to work and operate in a pluralistic environment?

I have not had an opportunity to review the impact such discussions have on preparing Airmen for missions, but I believe that any policy discouraging Airmen from exercising their Constitutional rights would be less effective at preparing Service members to work in a pluralistic environment.

In your view, when performing official military duties outside a worship service, should military chaplains be encouraged to express their personal religious beliefs

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and tenets of their faith freely, or must they avoid making statements based on their religious beliefs?

Chaplains should be provided the same opportunities as all Airmen to respectfully express their personal religious beliefs without fear of any adverse personnel action. I understand that chaplains are trusted to serve Airman and to understand when it is appropriate to engage in discussions of faith, religion, or spirituality to encourage personal and family health and to enhance Airman resiliency. I also understand that Chaplains are trained and expected to be sensitive to the needs and beliefs of a pluralistic Air Force reflecting a diversity of beliefs.

Do you believe chaplains should be tasked with conducting non-religious training in front of mandatory formations, even if they may be uniquely qualified to speak on the particular topic, such as suicide prevention or substance abuse? If so, do you believe guidance provided to those chaplains on what they should and should not say with respect to their faith is adequate?

I understand that Chaplains are professionals trained to provide their expertise at these events in an appropriate manner. I have not had an opportunity to review in depth the Air Force's policy concerning the use of Chaplains in non-religious training. If confirmed, I will study this issue to determine if changes in policy are necessary.

Officer Accessions

What, in your view, is the appropriate relative distribution from the sources of commission to meet the Air Force's officer accessions requirements and sustain the viability of the Air Force Academy, Reserve Officer Training Corps, and the Officer Candidate School?

I understand that the Air Force employs a balance among three officer accession sources to develop high quality officers reflecting a diversity of education, thought, and background. I understand that the Air Force projects approximately 4,447 officer accessions in FY18 to meet required end strength, which will require a balanced mix of officers from these sources. If confirmed, I will review the processes and analysis employed to determine the relative distribution of accessions and work to ensure that a balanced approach is maintained to achieve a talented and diverse group of officers.

As force levels for all the services continue to be impacted by both the rising cost of personnel and budget caps, how would you, if confirmed, evaluate and make adjustments, if any, to the relative distribution among sources of commissioning to meet potentially lower officer accession requirements?

My understanding is that current approach employed by the Air Force affords flexibility to meet changing end strength requirements.

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What is your assessment of the ability of the Department to restore end strength if required in response to an emerging national security threat?

I have not yet had an opportunity to assess the efficacy of current tools and processes to restore Air Force end strength in response to urgent threats and operational needs. I understand that the Air Force utilizes accession capacity to maintain the ability and flexibility to help surge the Air Force in response to any emerging national security threat. If confirmed, I would review these processes to determine whether any changes or adjustments are required.

In your view, does the Defense Officer Personnel Management Act need to be updated to support Air Force Officer accessions?

I have not had sufficient time to review the process for conducting Air Force Officer accessions to determine whether DOPMA reforms are needed. I am aware that as part of the Department of Defense current Force of the Future study, several DOPMA reforms are being considered. Several modified approaches to DOPMA could help in retaining individual Airmen in specific cases and support the management of niche or technical career fields where current up-or-out models restrict progression, prohibit permeability, and limit retention of some key talent. Given the wide reaching effects of such changes, I would first undertake a thorough review of the impacts on the Air Force and the grounds for legislative reform. .

United States Air Force Academy

What is your assessment of the policies and procedures at the United States Air Force Academy to prevent and respond appropriately to sexual assaults and sexual harassment and to ensure essential oversight?

I have not yet had a chance to review the specific policies and procedures in place at the Air Force Academy. If confirmed, I would expect the Air Force Academy to be in full compliance with OSD and AF-wide policy.

What is your assessment of the policies and procedures at the United States Air Force Academy to ensure religious tolerance and respect?

I have not yet had a chance to review the policies and procedures in effect at the Air Force Academy. I believe that common standards and policies throughout the Air Force, including the Air Force Academy, contribute to a culture of religious tolerance and respect for diversity. If confirmed, I would expect the Air Force Academy to remain in full compliance with OSD and Air Force-wide policy.

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Assignment Policies for Women in the Military

The Department of Defense, in January, 2013, rescinded the policy restricting the assignment of women to certain units which have the primary mission of engaging in direct ground combat operations, and gave the military services until January 1, 2016, to open all positions currently closed to women, or to request an exception to policy to keep a position closed beyond that date, an exception that must be approved by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Secretary of Defense. The services are working now to develop gender-free physical and mental standards for all military occupations, presumably with the goal of allowing individuals, regardless of gender, to serve in those positions if they can meet those standards.

If confirmed, what role will you play in the development and implementation of these standards?

It is my understanding the Air Force has already developed and validated their mental and physical standards as being gender neutral and in-compliance with public law. As Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, my role would be to ensure the Air Force implements and maintains these physical and mental standards in compliance with these laws. If confirmed, I will help ensure the Air Force Inspector General is also engaged to validate the physical and mental occupational standards and to ensure that our implementing methodologies are in compliance with applicable statutes.

If confirmed, will you ensure that the standards are realistic and preserve, or enhance, military readiness and mission capability?

Yes. My understanding is that current Air Force policy supports the view that operational effectiveness and success results from having Airmen who are well trained and well led, with the key component being Airmen who meet the individual physical and mental standards regardless of gender.

Do you believe that decisions to open positions should be based on bona fide military requirements? If so, what steps would you take to ensure that such decisions are made on this basis?

I believe decisions to open positions should be based not solely on bona fide military requirements, but should take into account unit readiness, cohesion, morale, maintaining the best quality and most qualified people, and having a viable career path.

My understanding is that the Air Force has undertaken several studies related to the review of open positions that included 1) validation of the physical occupational standards associated with the six closed career fields; 2) a re-validation of the physical entry standards currently in use for all of our currently open career fields; and 3) a re-validation of the mental entry standards for all our career fields. If confirmed, I would

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review these assessments and associated criteria before determining whether any adjustments are needed.

If an exception to policy is requested, what criteria should be used to determine whether to grant or deny that exception?

I have not had a sufficient opportunity to review cases where exceptions to policy would be required. I believe criteria used to evaluate such requests would likely take into account impacts on unit readiness and talent management among others. If confirmed, I will review Air Force career fields to confirm whether such cases exist and the factors used in determining whether an exception is warranted. .

Legislative Fellowship Program

Each year, the Services assign mid-career officers to the offices of Members of Congress under the Legislative Fellows Program. Upon completion of their legislative fellowships, officers are required to be assigned to follow-on positions in their services in which they effectively use the experience and knowledge they gained during their fellowships.

What is your assessment of the process for the recruitment, selection, preparation, and assignment to Members of Air Force officers in the Legislative Fellows program?

My understanding is the Air Force has a robust vetting, placement and follow on process for officers in the Legislative Fellows program. I look forward to learning more about it if confirmed.

What is your assessment of the value of the Legislative Fellows program to the Air Force and the utilization of officers who have served as legislative fellows?

My understanding is the Legislative Fellows Program is part of the Professional Military Education portfolio and is very competitive. Again, I look forward to learning more about it if confirmed.

Management and Development of the Senior Executive Service

What is your vision for the management and development of the Air Force senior executive workforce, especially in the critically important areas of acquisition, financial management, and the scientific and technical fields?

Having served as Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology, I have significant experience in senior executive talent management in the acquisition workforce and the need for expertise in scientific,

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engineering and technical career fields. I believe that a successful talent management strategy across all career fields requires several key elements. First, success in developing executive talent begins at the earliest stages of an individual's career, where mentorship, leader development, retention efforts and career broadening experience are all critical in identifying the pool of future senior executives. Second, efforts must be made to cultivate diversity within the population of senior executives, with a range of experience and skills that contribute to mission success. Finally, I believe that current executives often benefit from continued leadership training and broadening assignments to further develop their individual careers.

In acquisition, engineering and scientific career fields, career civilian employees should receive career path counseling early and often in their careers. Civilian career opportunities that provide growth and responsibility over time are critical to Department-wide goals to retain talented professionals in these career fields. In all these areas, we must recognize, attract and retain talent to meet the needs of a 21st century security environment. If confirmed, I look forward to supporting the Secretary of the Air Force in these efforts.

Manpower and Personnel Sufficiency

The Air Force has faced challenges to its manpower and personnel sufficiency to successfully navigate looming major force structure efficiencies in a budget constrained environment, particularly with its ISR combat air patrol crew ratios, F-35 Joint Strike Fighter program, and RAP community.

If confirmed, will you commit to monitoring the Air Force's progress towards developing a sufficient manpower and personnel program to address these challenges?

Yes, I will.

How do you plan on addressing the manpower shortage in the RAP community and making the RAP career path a more attractive option for future Airmen?

The innovation that the Air Force has delivered since the early 2000's in the realm of remotely piloted vehicles and ISR is truly amazing. Continuing to ensure our Air Force can innovate and deliver in this career field will be one of my top priorities. I look forward to working with others in the Department as well as the Congress to ensure that the Air Force meets these critical requirements.

Balance Between Civilian Employees and Contractor Employees

The Air Force employs many contractors and civilian employees. In many cases, contractor employees work in the same offices, serve on the same projects and task forces,

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and perform many of the same functions as federal employees. Both contractors and civilians make up an integral part of the Department's total workforce.

Do you believe that the current balance between civilian employees and contractor employees is in the best interests of the Air Force?

As noted above, the Department of Defense, including the Air Force, currently relies on a total workforce comprised of military, civilian employees and contracted support to meet missions and requirements. If confirmed, I would work with the Secretary of the Air Force, and leaders across the Air Force to assess the current mix of military civilians and contracted support against current and projected resources and missions while ensuring that the Air Force remains compliant with all applicable statutes and policies across the Department.

In your view, has the Air Force utilized contractors to perform basic functions in an appropriate manner?

I have not yet had an opportunity to review the roles and functions assigned to contractors across the Air Force. If confirmed, I would work with the Secretary of the Air Force, and leaders across the Air Force to assess this matter so as to ensure compliance with the law and with OSD policy.

Do you believe that the Air Force should continuously assess "inherently governmental functions" and other critical government functions, and how they are performed?

Yes, I do.

What should be the primary factor in determining the allocation of work between the civilian and contractor workforces?

The primary factor should be compliance with rules regarding inherently governmental functions. Consideration of the duties and functions that should reside within the government must be a primary consideration in allocating any work between a civilian workforce and contracted support.

If confirmed, will you work with other appropriate officials in the Air Force to review the contractor and civilian force mix for cost and mission effectiveness?

If confirmed, I would support all efforts to ensure compliance with the law, and if modifications are determined to be necessary, to work with Congress as necessary.

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Would you agree that the balance between civilian employees and contractor employees in performing Air Force functions should be determined by the best interests of the Air Force and its mission requirements?

Yes, I agree.

If confirmed, will you work to remove any artificial constraints placed on the size of the Air Force's civilian and contractor workforce, so that the Air Force can hire the number and type of employees most appropriate to accomplish its mission?

If confirmed, I will work with Air Force leaders to ensure compliance with all applicable statutes regarding the civilian-contractor force mix. I would also review the current and projected force mix against mission requirements and recommend adjustments as appropriate.

The Air Force submitted a reprogramming request to the congressional defense committees this summer to address civilian personnel cost underestimations resulting from a budgeting error and indicated that the same issue exists for the fiscal year 2016 budget. The Air Force further indicated that had Congress not supported the reprogramming request, some civilian employees would have been furloughed.

What steps has the Air Force taken to remedy the budget shortfall for fiscal year 2016?

I have not yet had an opportunity to review the circumstances that gave rise to the reprogramming request in question. I understand that the Air Force is currently working to identify resources to meet these requirements from other programs and sources. If confirmed I will work closely with the Secretary of the Air Force and leaders across the Air Force to fully source civilian pay requirements for fiscal year 2016 and to prevent similar issues in the future, provided that such shortfalls can be identified and addressed earlier.

If confirmed, what steps would you take to ensure this personnel management problem is corrected and does not reoccur?

If confirmed I will ensure that the Air Force remains committed to sourcing the civilian pay funds needed to sustain our workforce and that our future budget submissions accurately depict civilian workforce resource requirements.

Headquarters Reductions

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The Department of Defense is currently under a mandate to reduce its headquarters staff by 20%. This mandate included guidance from Secretary Carter, who was Deputy Secretary of Defense at the time, to strive for a goal of a 20-percent reduction in government civilian staff by eliminating activities and to not grow subordinate headquarters.

To this date, how many Air Force civilians have been divested as a result of this 20% reduction?

My understanding is the Air Force FY 2016 budget submission included a reduction of 790 management headquarters and ~600 non-management headquarters civilian positions.

What financial options were offered to those employees who were divested? Was ERA/VSIP used?

My understanding is that VERA/VSIP was offered in FY15.

How many have been retrained and moved into other jobs within the Air Force?

It's been explained to me that all remaining reductions or outplacements will be made by the end of FY16.

How many of the positions "reduced" were cuts to unencumbered billeted positions?

Of the these 1,400 positions reduced from headquarters, administrative, and support activities, about 500 were unencumbered as a result of prior sequestration driven hiring controls.

How many military billets were cut as a result of the 20% reduction?

The Air Force FY 2016 budget submission included a reduction of 2,200 military positions.

Provide examples of functions and activities that were eliminated as a result of the Air Force's 20% headquarters reduction.

One of the ways the Air Force met this reduction was to consolidate installation management support at multiple headquarters locations into a single staff.

Was the reduction met through a 20% reduction in government civilian staff as directed by Secretary Carter, or was it met through a combination of civilian and military billets? Provide the percentages for each type of manpower reduced.

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I haven't been briefed in detail on this topic, but I will explore it deeper if confirmed.

How many billets, military and civilian, were moved from management headquarters to subordinate commands and detachments, specifically the Twenty Fifth Air Force and the Installation Mission Support Center?

Again, I haven't been briefed in detail on this topic, but am committed to understanding how and why the Air Force took this course of action to meet the 20% reduction target.

Acquisition and Technology Workforce

The Department of Defense is in a global competition for the highest quality STEM professionals at the entry-level, mid-career, and senior levels. These individuals are charged with managing billions of dollars' worth of taxpayer resources in complex acquisition programs, directly providing technical support to military operations, supporting the development of technically informed policies and regulations in areas ranging from cybersecurity to use of drones; and performing world class research and engineering functions in in house labs and centers.

Do you feel that the Air Force can currently compete with the private sector for the highest quality technical performers at the early career, mid-career, and senior levels?

Despite the intensifying domestic and international demand for STEM professionals, I believe the Air Force competes well with the private sector in attracting, recruiting and retaining our Nation's best and brightest. As Secretary Carter recently stated, our Airmen have the opportunity to work with the most cutting-edge technologies spanning everything from robotics to biomedical engineering. I believe that the Air Force mission affords opportunities to STEM professionals unlike any other outside of the Department of Defense. My experience in Army acquisition is consistent. However, the combination of emerging threats and the rapid pace of technological change call for further efforts to attract, train and develop talented professionals in the acquisition workforce. If confirmed, I will work with Air Force leadership continue and build upon efforts to ensure we can attract, recruit and retain the highest quality technical workforce necessary to keep our technological edge.

How will you work to enhance policies and flexibilities necessary to allow the Air Force to compete with the private sector for this talent?

Over the last several years, the Congress has provided the Department of Defense with expanded personnel authorities for our technical workforce. Other authorities, such as broadened and expedited civilian hiring and compensation authorities, will help the Air Force continue to compete with the private sector for the best talent. If confirmed, I will

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review the Air Force's implementation of these authorities and tools and ensure that the Air Force adopts the necessary policies to fully implement the provided authorities.

Congressional Oversight

In order to exercise its legislative and oversight responsibilities, it is important that this Committee and other appropriate committees of the Congress are able to receive testimony, briefings, and other communications of information.

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

Yes.

Do you agree, if confirmed, to appear before this Committee, or designated members of this Committee, and provide information, subject to appropriate and necessary security protection, with respect to your responsibilities as the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Manpower and Reserve Affairs?

Yes.

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

Yes.

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

Yes.