

Senate Armed Services Committee
Advance Policy Questions for Ms. Cara L. Abercrombie
Nominee for Assistant Secretary of Defense for Acquisition

Qualifications

The Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment (USD(A&S)) has been designated as the Chief Acquisition and Sustainment Officer of the Department of Defense (DOD). If confirmed, in supporting the USD(A&S), you will be responsible for establishing policy and conducting oversight of an acquisition system through which the Department spends more than \$500 billion each year.

1. What background or experience do you have that qualifies you for this position?

My two decades of federal service have prepared me well for the position of Assistant Secretary of Defense for Acquisition. If confirmed, I will bring a fresh perspective to acquisition policy, grounded in a deep understanding of defense policy and strategy, DoD strategic objectives, and the outcomes our acquisition policy needs to achieve for the warfighter. I have demonstrated throughout my career my willingness to make hard decisions, take risks and challenge the status quo, and work across the Department to achieve desired outcomes. I have extensive experience building and leading high performing teams that consistently meet mission objectives. I am a quick learner, able to enter a new organization, change culture, and drive performance. Notably, as the first President of the Defense Security Cooperation University, I moved a congressionally-mandated security cooperation workforce certification program from concept to pilot program within one year. As Acting Deputy Director of the Defense Security Cooperation Agency, managing an 800-person organization, I routinely engaged with the Services, Service program offices, as well as industry, to monitor progress in allied and partner foreign military sales cases.

2. What background or experience, if any, do you have in executing programs to acquire products and/or services in both government and industry?

In successive roles in the Department of Defense, I have applied the types of management approaches that are essential to the successful execution of programs. This includes scoping requirements and expectations up front, setting target deadlines and milestone reviews to assess progress and holding personnel accountable.

3. What background or experience, if any, do you have in overseeing the execution of programs to acquire products and/or services in both government and industry?

As the first President of the Defense Security Cooperation University, I oversaw the acquisition of software systems to support university management and workforce certification program compliance.

4. What background or experience, if any, do you have in managing portfolios of programs in both government and industry?

As a leader in the Department of Defense and at the National Security Council, my role has been to set the vision for my teams, along with clear objectives, put in place the management

structure with feedback loops to drive and monitor execution, and facilitate the training and tools that enable the workforce to achieve objectives.

- 5. What background or experience, if any, do you have in developing policy and processes for programs to acquire products and/or services, as well as policies and processes for oversight of such programs?**

During my tenure as President of the Defense Security Cooperation University, I set clear guidance for the leadership team to pursue automated software solutions where possible to reduce manpower requirements to implement the new Security Cooperation Workforce certification program. I established clear milestones across multiple lines of effort to ensure the University would meet the target opening date, and launch date of the pilot certification program. I built in feedback loops with stakeholders across the Department to allow iterative adjustments to the program structure and content during the pilot period.

- 6. What qualifications, if any, do you have using modern data approaches, tools, and methods that prepare you to maintain visibility of, analyze, and manage data on the volume, variety, and complexity of the inventory of acquisition initiatives and programs in the Department?**

I have consistently pursued use of modern data approaches and tools to support organizational and program management. As President of the Defense Security Cooperation University (DSCU) I worked with the Services to begin the process of linking their manpower databases to the DSCU learning management system, in order to create an automated system by which individuals in positions requiring security cooperation workforce certification will be able to automatically track their certification requirements and progress on the DSCU website, while DSCU program managers and the individuals' supervisors will track their compliance with program requirements. I understand the completion of this process is projected for Fiscal Year 2024.

- 7. What background or experience, if any, do you have in managing contracts for services?**

Throughout my career in federal service, I have had responsibility for overseeing contracting officer representatives managing a variety of contracts. As Acting Deputy Director of the Defense Security Cooperation Agency, I was the chief operating officer of an agency responsible for management oversight of hundreds of billions of dollars in foreign military sales.

Relations with Congress

- 8. What are your views on the state of the relationship between the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Acquisition (ASD(A)) and the Senate Armed Services Committee in particular, and with Congress in general?**

In my view, it is imperative that the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Acquisition work in partnership with the Senate Armed Services Committee in particular,

and with Congress in general, so that the Department of Defense has the acquisition authorities it needs to provide capability to the warfighter, while ensuring necessary oversight, accountability, and value for the taxpayer. If confirmed, I look forward to strengthening that partnership.

9. If confirmed, what actions would you take to sustain a productive and mutually beneficial relationship between Congress and the Office of the ASD(A)?

If confirmed, I would maintain open and transparent communications with Members of Congress and professional staff, and promptly respond to requests for information. I would proactively engage Congress regarding new initiatives or significant programmatic developments.

Priorities and Challenges

10. If confirmed, what are the top priorities you would plan to focus on during your tenure as the ASD(A)? What would be your plans for achieving these priorities?

If confirmed as the ASD(A), I plan to focus on three overarching priorities: increasing the speed of acquisition; reducing barriers to attract non-traditional suppliers; and workforce development. The acquisition community must work to get capability into the hands of the war fighter at the speed of relevance. To do this, we must aim to quickly move from prototyping to production at scale, and ensure the workforce is fully leveraging new, flexible authorities like Middle-Tier Acquisition and Other Transaction Authorities effectively. Attracting non-traditional providers helps ensure the Department accesses the latest technological innovations and fosters competition. We must reduce barriers to entry for small businesses and non-traditional suppliers while maintaining rigor and necessary oversight. Finally, we must ensure we can recruit, train, and retain an acquisition workforce that has the skills and expertise to meet the warfighter needs of the future. If confirmed, I would draw on best practices in the private and public sector for recruitment and training models to bring top talent into the acquisition community, and ensure they have the tools they need to thrive.

11. In your opinion, what are the greatest challenges facing the DOD's acquisition community? What would be your plans for addressing these challenges, if confirmed?

The Department of Defense acquisition community faces many of the same challenges as the broader federal government. An aging workforce, and generational changes in the expectations of the labor force present recruitment and retention challenges. Additionally, the technical nature of Defense acquisition requires a highly trained workforce with practical experience to effectively meet acquisition objectives. If confirmed, I would build on the recent workforce initiatives like back-to-basics, and the Defense Civilian Training Corps pilot, and pursue practical, innovative approaches to recruiting, and ensuring training is fit to purpose.

12. If confirmed, by what metrics will you measure your progress towards achieving these priorities and addressing these challenges?

If confirmed, I would establish clear metrics for measuring progress across priority lines of effort. Where necessary, I would establish new data collection requirements. Specifically, I would seek to track metrics such as the length of time it takes to go from prototype to contract, the frequency with which certain pathways are utilized, by component, or the number of contracts going to non-traditional suppliers. Similarly, I would work with the Services to track acquisition workforce data to identify trends. I would also seek subjective feedback from stakeholders in the Department, in industry, and Congress on whether policy changes are having the desired effect, or whether course corrections may be required.

Implementation of Acquisition Reforms

13. If confirmed, what steps would you take to ensure the Department continues its progress in implementing Congressionally mandated and Department-driven reforms to the acquisition system?

If confirmed, I will seek to continue the momentum generated by the reforms to the defense acquisition system and I look forward to partnering with Congress going forward to implement, institutionalize, and ensure the continued success of these reforms.

14. In your view, are there any Congressionally mandated or Department-driven reforms that you would recommend be modified or suspended? If so, why?

If confirmed, I will work with leaders throughout the Department, the Congress, and our industry partners to ensure that ongoing efforts are effectively implementing the reforms and consider modification to legislation or Department policy as appropriate.

15. In your view, of the Congressionally mandated or Department-driven reforms, which specifically have been the most successful and impactful acquisition reform initiatives of the past decade?

The Department recently established a new Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Acquisition Integration and Interoperability (DASD(AI2)) with the intent to address the joint acquisition management gap and to enable truly joint capabilities being delivered to the warfighter. Also, The Deputy Secretary of Defense tasked USD(A&S) with executing the Competitive Advantage Pathfinder (CAP) initiative that is aimed at identifying critical process barriers in the “Big A” acquisition system and institutionalizing the necessary reforms to deliver impactful warfighter capabilities at speed and at scale. If confirmed, I will work to deliver on this effort and coordinate between the requirements, resourcing, and acquisition communities to find other pathfinder efforts to speed delivery and inform the acquisition enterprise of lessons learned on how to reduce roadblocks.

16. If confirmed, what additional acquisition reforms, if any, would you recommend?

If confirmed, I look forward to reviewing the reform of the Defense Acquisition System. I understand that the major acquisition reform efforts implemented several years ago are now at a point where we can measure, analyze, and collect data on those reforms and use that knowledge to improve upon them and pursue further reforms.

17. The Middle Tier Acquisition (MTA) pathway was established in the Fiscal Year 2016 National Defense Authorization Act to enable rapid prototyping and fielding of capabilities. Now that the first series of programs has reached the five-year transition period, what are your observations about MTAs?

I believe that the development of the Adaptive Acquisition Framework has allowed for the speed of development and fielding of new capabilities to the warfighter. If confirmed, I would continue to expand this effort to coordinate between the requirements, resourcing, and acquisition communities to continue efforts to further speed delivery and inform the acquisition enterprise of lessons learned on how get new products to the warfighter. Additionally, I understand smaller programs are becoming more comfortable with the flexibility of the MTA pathway and the ability to expeditiously prototype without required documents from the JCIDS process that can slow down a program initiation. Through collaboration with the Components, the Department is gaining greater insight into the methodology behind selection of the MTA pathway and how it can update guidance to better facilitate MTA program success.

18. What types of capabilities do you believe are best suited to the MTA pathway, and what capabilities should use the Major Capability Acquisition pathway?

I understand that the MTA pathway is suited for rapid prototyping before a larger investment is made into a more sustainable program. Rapid prototyping allows for the development of greater technical maturity, along with increasing a program's test readiness level before entering production to ensure successful operation. Use of the MTA rapid fielding pathway allows for programs to begin development within six months of program start, assists with the purchase of long lead items, and rapid production of already developed capabilities to accelerate delivery to the warfighter. Emerging capabilities that are immediately needed for the warfighter are best suited for the MTA pathway. The Major Capability Acquisition pathway is more suited for larger, longer-term production programs, and for acquiring and modernizing military-unique programs that provide enduring capabilities and is better suited for large dollar programs. If confirmed, I will work to ensure these pathways are being fully leveraged by the acquisition community to meet intent.

19. MTA was explicitly designed to be an alternative to the traditional acquisition and requirements processes. However, over time, additional oversight and certification requirements have been imposed on MTAs that discourage its use.

I understand that, while this is true, the Components have used the MTA pathway for approximately 216 MTA programs since enactment of the FY16 NDAA, and in the last fiscal year

alone there were approximately 76 new programs that entered the MTA pathway. While there has been some additional oversight added to the process, it has not discouraged usage of the MTA Pathway which the Components find an extremely useful tool. If confirmed, I will work to ensure the MTA pathway is used as intended.

20. If confirmed, what will you do to ensure MTA is a viable option that balances speed with oversight rigor?

If confirmed, I will review plans to update the DoDI 5000.80, since it has been almost four years since the policy was approved. This update will balance the benefits of the speed of an MTA program while continuing the acquisition oversight rigor already contained in the policy. I will also conduct reviews on programs that exceed the major defense acquisition program dollar threshold requesting use of the pathway, a waiver of the five-year limitation, and conduct bi-annual reviews with the Service Acquisition Executives on the portfolio of MTA programs.

The Software Acquisition Pathway (SWP) was established in the Fiscal Year 2020 National Defense Authorization Act to facilitate iterative delivery and user feedback for software solutions.

21. How do you compare metrics for large hardware systems to the value-assessments performed for the SWP pathway?

I understand that metrics for longer-running hardware programs are mostly focused on cost, schedule and performance and are based on a program's projected trajectory from a key decision point, such as Milestone B or Critical Design Review. Although hardware programs are becoming more adaptable to incorporate technology insertion, software-intensive programs have much greater opportunity to adapt as they capture and incorporate user feedback into the resulting solution. For programs on the software pathway, value assessments performed by users measure the actual trajectory of the program as it delivers value to the end user. Frequent engagement of both broadens awareness/understanding of modern software development practices and to establish feedback loops to identify what those customers/end-users of the SWP value and how to maximize its usage and value in the future. Therefore, whereas hardware program metrics compare expected progress against actual progress, which may not lead to a product in the short term that the user values, software program value assessments track actual value delivered.

22. If confirmed, how would you propose to work with the services to ensure the success of the SWP pathway?

If confirmed, I would work with the Service Acquisition Executives to mature how each organization employs modern software approaches to deliver results. The Department's software policy is relatively new and both OSD and the Services will need to share lessons learned and adapt policy accordingly. Furthermore, I would work to ensure that software acquisition professionals and their supervisors have access to the quality training they need through the Back-to-Basics initiative.

Key Relationships

Recent National Defense Authorization Acts have directed significant changes to the assignment of responsibilities within the defense acquisition system. For example, the Fiscal Year 2017 National Defense Authorization Act split the former Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics (USD(AT&L)) into the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment (USD(A&S)) and the Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering (USD(R&E)).

23. In your view, in what ways could you strengthen the collaborative working relationship between the acquisition and sustainment and the research and engineering communities?

If confirmed, I will work with OUSD(R&E) to address the broad challenges we face in accelerating innovation and more quickly fielding capability to the warfighter. I will be mindful of the challenges and risks as we transition emerging technologies from research and development programs into fielded capabilities. Open communication and a close working relationship between A&S and R&E and other stakeholders can reduce these challenges and risks to the benefit of the Department.

In recent years, considerable authority and responsibility for acquisition activities have been given to the Services through: (1) the Secretary's delegation of Milestone Decision Authority for most acquisition programs to the Service Acquisition Executives (SAEs) and (2) Congress' emphasis on the Service Chiefs' role in requirements development, resourcing discussions, and tradeoff decisions for major defense acquisition programs.

24. In your view, what are the advantages and disadvantages of delegating more responsibility for managing acquisition programs to the Services and away from the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD)?

It is my understanding that the delegation of much of the program management has provided OSD with the ability to focus on implementing reform efforts and transforming the defense acquisition system. It has also enabled OSD to strengthen its ability to perform portfolio-based oversight. One disadvantage is maintaining access to data on programs, which is vital to OSD oversight efforts. If confirmed, I will fully review the advantages and disadvantages of the delegation of authority and responsibility to the Services and make recommendations as appropriate to Congress.

25. In this construct, where more responsibility for managing acquisition programs has been delegated to the Services, what suggestions would you make for USD(A&S) to maintain oversight and insight into programs while reducing excess bureaucratic burden on the process?

It is my understanding that the Department must gain or maintain data access to programs that have been delegated to the Services in order to enable oversight, and if confirmed I will work with the Services to ensure this access without causing excess bureaucratic burden. This data-driven oversight reduces the amount of time that program managers must spend in providing information

to USD(A&S) and provides the OUSD(A&S) staff with a greater understanding of their portfolio and potential areas of risk.

26. If confirmed as the ASD(A), how would you structure your relationship with the SAEs and the Service Chiefs? Are there any programs for which Milestone Decision Authority should be moved to the OSD-level or, conversely, returned to the SAEs?

If confirmed, I will ensure that decision authority is aligned between OSD and the Services and maintained at the proper level to account for program complexity, dollar value, and technological maturity. I would work with the SAEs to understand their issues with executing efforts under the current Defense Acquisition System and, as warranted, make recommendations to change a programs milestone decision authority.

27. In your view, what should be the respective roles and responsibilities of the Secretary of Defense, USD(A&S), and the SAEs in ensuring acquisition programs deliver promised capabilities to the end user on time and on budget? In your view, how should the role of the ASD(A) support that?

I believe the role of the Secretary of Defense, the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment and the Service Acquisition Executives is to operate in partnership, consistent with their statutory responsibilities, to ensure the effective operation of the Defense Acquisition System. If confirmed as the ASD(A), I would work with my counterparts in the services to support the Under Secretary of Defense in delivering capabilities.

28. If confirmed as the ASD(A), how would you structure your relationship with the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Sustainment to ensure acquisition programs consider sustainment planning and costs so that systems are sustainable over their lifecycle?

If confirmed, I will work with my counterpart in ASD(S) to ensure open lines of communication between our offices. I will work to collaborate on sustainment and life cycle costs of acquisitions within DoD.

29. What further steps, if any, do you believe are necessary to properly align authority and accountability in the acquisition system?

If confirmed, I will make the assessment of the authorities and accountability a high priority. I will work with the USD(A&S) to ensure the authorities are appropriately aligned, as this is critical to ensure the effectiveness of the system.

30. The acquisition of information technology, ranging from embedded software in weapons systems to the procurement of commercial cloud computing services, is an increasingly important challenge for defense acquisition programs. If confirmed, what role will you have in developing acquisition strategies for information technology systems and services and how is that role different, in your view, from that of the Chief Information Officer?

If confirmed, I look forward to working with the USD(A&S), CIO, the Chief Digital and Artificial Intelligence Officer (CDAO), and the Components on information technology systems and service acquisition strategies. The Office of the USD(A&S) can provide oversight and guidance to ensure those systems and services are effectively and efficiently developed and integrated with hardware and service contracts.

31. If confirmed, what responsibilities related to policies for, and oversight of, the acquisition of information technology systems and services should be delegated to the Chief Information Officer?

If confirmed, I will help ensure an effective partnership between the USD(A&S), CIO and CDAO and determine an appropriate balance of technical, functional and acquisition oversight. Having properly supported SAEs is critical to successfully implementing acquisition programs.

32. If confirmed as the ASD(A), how would you structure your relationship with the Chief Digital and Artificial Intelligence Officer (CDAO)?

Data, Artificial Intelligence, and innovation must become the cornerstones of the Department's abilities to measure, monitor and transform. If confirmed, I would actively partner with CDAO, in pursuit of effectively leveraging CDAO efforts.

The acquisition system relies on the investment, development, and production of key strategic resources and components within the industrial base including rare earth minerals, microelectronics, and solid rocket motors, to name just a few. However, within the Department, the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Industrial Base Policy (ASD(IBP)) is responsible for coordinating DOD's industrial base policy, including providing support to industry through tools like the Defense Production Act.

33. If confirmed, how would you structure your relationship with the ASD(IBP) to ensure DOD has a coordinated industrial base policy to develop and protect key strategic materials and industries?

The Acquisition community needs the Defense Industrial Base (DIB) to execute its programs. As partners, we need a ready DIB to deliver the capabilities at the scale and speed the warfighter needs. If confirmed, I would work closely with my peers across the Acquisition and Sustainment Office, including ASD(IBP), to ensure the Defense Industrial Base is ready to support the delivery of critical capabilities.

34. If confirmed, what recommendations, if any, would you have for providing the Department additional statutory tools to enable better management of the defense industrial base?

The Acquisition community needs a strong and resilient Defense Industrial Base to execute its programs and support the warfighter. The Assistant Secretary of Defense for Industrial Base Policy (ASD(IBP)) is the principal advisor to the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and

Sustainment for developing DoD policies regarding the Defense Industrial Base. If confirmed, I will work closely with the ASD(IBP), USD(A&S), and Office of Management and Budget on assessing the need for additional statutory tools.

35. Small business programs and international cooperation activities also fall under the ASD(IBP) but are important elements of a comprehensive acquisitions approach. If confirmed, how would you better integrate small business and international cooperation considerations into your acquisition oversight activities?

Small business is critical to fostering innovation in our defense industrial base. In addition, developing greater industrial base cooperation among our close allies and partners is important to supporting supply chain resiliency. If confirmed, I would work with the ASD(IBP), as well as the Director for the Office of Small Business Programs and the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Industrial Base Development and International Engagements, who have direct oversight of small business programs and international cooperation activities, respectively, to ensure that their considerations and equities are incorporated into the Department's acquisition oversight activities.

Managing the Performance of the Defense Acquisition System

Many of the Department's major defense acquisition programs have established overly optimistic cost, schedule, and performance goals that they have subsequently struggled to achieve, resulting in cost growth and schedule delays.

36. If confirmed, what steps would you take to accelerate speed to fielding of capabilities users find most relevant in major warfighting and business system programs?

If confirmed, I will work with the Service Acquisition Executives to accelerate speed to fielding of capabilities relevant to warfighters. I will focus on the early phases of program and technology development to provide these programs with a solid foundation, and I will emphasize the need for innovation and data-driven decision making to ensure that we are pursuing all options at the speed of relevance.

37. What is your assessment of the Department's ability to estimate lifecycle costs for its programs and activities? If confirmed, what specific changes would you make to improve this ability?

If confirmed, I will work closely with ASD(Sustainment), CAPE, and the Service Acquisition Executives to develop and refine accurate lifecycle cost estimates. Both estimation and management of sustainment costs is a significant challenge, but I will utilize proven cost estimation methodologies to assist in making accurate assessments of lifecycle costs.

38. What is your understanding of the role the office of Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation (CAPE) plays in these areas of lifecycle cost estimation and program performance monitoring?

Estimating and managing sustainment costs is a significant challenge. If confirmed, I will work closely with the CAPE cost assessment group and the Service Acquisition Executives to understand the status of the Department's current lifecycle costing capabilities.

39. If confirmed, how would you structure your relationship with CAPE to best leverage their independence and expertise in these topics?

If confirmed, I would recognize CAPE's statutory equities in the acquisition process and ensure its views are considered in decisions related to the CAPE's responsibilities.

40. What is your assessment of the Department's ability to assess and appropriately manage programs based on the programs' technical maturity?

If confirmed, I will work closely with OUSD(R&E) and Service Acquisition Executives to assess the status of relevant data, its availability and accessibility, and use that data to inform decisions on managing programs. I will build on progress made to date to make data accessible and usable at all levels of the Department.

41. What is your assessment of the Department's ability to assess a program's health over its lifecycle, with respect to the availability of the necessary industrial base and supply chain?

If confirmed, I will work closely with the ASD for Industrial Base Policy to assess a program's health over its lifetime, with respect to the defense industrial base and supply chain risk management. Risks develop when our defense systems depend on outdated technologies with diminishing manufacturing sources or foreign sources of supplies. The Department's capabilities are dependent on a ready and reliable access to a robust supply chain.

42. Traditionally, acquisition programs are managed on a program-by-program basis. In your view, are there advantages in moving toward a more portfolio-based management approach? What would be the disadvantages of adopting such an approach?

We are now over five years beyond a transformative acquisition reform effort that, among other things, moved management of acquisition programs to a portfolio-based approach. If confirmed, I will work with the SAEs to determine lessons learned, best practices, and advantages and disadvantages they have found in the portfolio-management approach. I will welcome oversight by GAO and the IG and give full consideration to recommendations they may make on potential improvements.

43. In your view, what are the strengths and weaknesses of the current Adaptive Acquisition Framework?

If confirmed, I look forward to working with the USD(A&S)'s data driven review of the strengths and weaknesses of the Adaptive Acquisition Framework to capitalize and expand on our strengths and mitigate our weaknesses.

44. In your view, what further changes, if any, should be made to DOD's Adaptive Acquisition Framework?

As of now, I am not aware of the need for any significant changes. However, if confirmed, I will work with the SAEs, to use a data-driven review to continuously monitor and, as warranted, recommend ways to improve the performance of the Defense Acquisition System.

45. What is one major initiative you would like to accomplish, if confirmed, while serving as Assistant Secretary of Defense for Acquisition?

Acquisition policy has undergone significant change in recent years. If confirmed, I will work with the broader acquisition community to ensure policy changes and new authorities are being implemented as intended, and will recommend any improvements or adjustments that will further improve overall performance.

Acquisition Data

The production of Selected Acquisition Reports will sunset this year and will be replaced with a new reporting system. To implement a risk-based approach for managing acquisition programs, many experts believe that DOD needs to adopt modern tools and methods for collecting and analyzing large amounts of acquisition data. Congress has mandated that the new reporting system include acquisition data and metrics recommended by CAPE and is seeking more timely and useful reporting of programs' cost, schedule, and performance.

46. In your opinion, does the Department have sufficient and timely data to assess the full range of risks facing acquisition programs, including risks pertaining to development and sustainment costs, schedule, performance, integration, supply chains, and technical maturity, among others?

If confirmed, I will work to determine the status of access to relevant data and to prioritize availability, accessibility, and use of that data to inform decision-making within the Acquisition and Sustainment community and at all levels of the Department. I will prioritize engagement with Department, Congressional, Executive Branch, and Industry leaders to address any identified shortcomings.

47. What recommendations, if any, do you have for employing other metrics to measure the health and effectiveness of the acquisition system than those currently in use?

If confirmed, I will prioritize review of existing metrics for measuring the health and effectiveness of the Defense Acquisition System to determine their adequacy and identify potential improvements. I will work with the Services to make any needed changes and to prioritize collection of data required to achieve needed insight.

48. What specific steps would you take, if confirmed, to ensure the acquisition enterprise is collecting authoritative data, including data from industry partners and other DOD

organizations to effectively model risk, and using appropriate indicators of program and portfolio health?

Availability and use of authoritative data has long been a Department focus, with recent efforts focused on implementation of the CDAO's Advana platform. If confirmed, I will continue scaling these efforts with particular focus on policy and incentives to remove the cultural barriers to open sharing of the data required for risk modeling and program and portfolio health insight. I recognize that data from industry and other DoD organizations is critical to this kind of insight and will prioritize engagement across organizational and corporate boundaries to foster transparency and sharing and use of data to manage risk and improve acquisition.

49. In your view, what ways do you think the Department could better use the acquisition data it collects to improve decision making for both the acquisition and sustainment of systems and services in the Department?

I recognize the importance of considering both acquisition and sustainment of systems and services in assessing acquisition health and risk. If confirmed, I will work with USD(A&S) and ASD(S) to review the quality, accuracy, and timeliness of collected data and to improve its use for insight and decision-making. I will prioritize improvements in understanding acquisition program, sustainment system, and services interdependencies through portfolio analysis.

50. If confirmed, what suggestions, if any, do you have for the format, content, and tailoring of future Congressional reporting on acquisition programs?

My understanding is that dashboards for acquisition program (Major Capability Acquisition and Middle Tier of Acquisition) insight are now available to Congressional users. I also understand that OSD CAPE has identified data additions to the Selected Acquisition Reports. If confirmed, I will work to review the existing products and plans and adjust as appropriate with the goal of maintaining transparency while modernizing format.

Software and IT Acquisition

Software has become one of the most critical components of DOD systems, but recent studies by the Government Accountability Office (GAO), the Defense Innovation Board, and the Defense Science Board, among others, show the Department's software development practices have not kept up with leading industry practices. While DOD has taken significant steps in the last few years to improve program management, such as establishing a software acquisition pathway emphasizing rapid delivery and user engagement, programs have yet to consistently incorporate leading software development practices.

51. What do you believe are the major barriers to DOD fully adopting modern software development approaches and what additional steps would you take to drive their adoption throughout DOD?

If confirmed, I will coordinate with OSD, Joint Staff, the Services, and others to build on the Department's initial momentum, and modernize enterprise processes, strategies, and tools for rapid

digital capability delivery. I believe it is essential to tailor Department interoperability and requirements processes for software. Although the Department has made strides in adoption of modern software development approach with the software acquisition pathway policy, given that software is pervasive in almost all DoD systems, regardless of how they are acquired, and that must be taken into account across the other pathways.

52. What is your assessment of the current capabilities of the Defense Industrial Base (DIB) to properly execute agile software development?

If confirmed, I will work with the USD(A&S) to promote leading private-sector industry practices throughout DoD where delivery of capability is done iteratively and collaboratively with the government, which can reduce cycle times and be more responsive to changing technologies, operations, and threats.

53. In your view, how are initiatives like the Defense Digital Service and Software Factories helping or hindering the Department's progress in acquiring software intensive systems?

DoD is scaling its software production capabilities by adopting a framework that follows commercial industry's model for modern infrastructure and deploying digital products with security, reliability, and speed. DoD still has more to do to build on this momentum, and modernize its enterprise processes, strategies, and culture for rapid digital capability delivery, including improving transparency and understanding of the transition to scale.

If confirmed, I will work with DoD CIO, and the Chief Digital and Artificial Intelligence Officer to provide our programs the enterprise tools and processes they need to support more rapid and secure digital product delivery. While most companies in the Defense Industrial Base have started to adopt agile software development methodologies, it is important to ensure that DOD programs require agile methodologies in their Request for Proposals and evaluate the agile capabilities of the offerors. It is also important to ensure the capabilities of the acquisition program offices align with the agile ceremonies recommended for modern development processes.

54. In your view, are the training, education, and workforce development activities the Department has instituted helping to prepare the acquisition and development workforce to better absorb and adapt to these changes?

OUSD(A&S) has a leadership role over the Defense Acquisition University and shared chair responsibilities in the Digital Talent Management Forum. The Department has continued to develop specialized training for DoD software acquisition professionals and is also providing them access to commercial training outlets through partnerships managed by the Defense Acquisition University. While the opportunities are in place to support the workforce, it will be critically important for leaders and supervisors to emphasize the areas where our workforce members need to grow. If confirmed, I will work with the members of the acquisition Workforce Leadership Team to connect practitioners with the opportunities that will help them adapt to modern software approaches.

In recent years, U.S. Cyber Command (CYBERCOM) was granted acquisition authority for the cyber programs under its purview, and has been actively working to grow the workforce, processes, and capabilities necessary to be effective.

55. What is your assessment of CYBERCOM's progress in this respect?

USCYBERCOM is doing meaningful work, but faces many of the same challenges with workforce, processes, and capabilities as the broader DoD Acquisition community. I am aware of the enhanced budget control authority granted to the Commander of U.S. Cyber Command by Congress in the FY22 NDAA. If confirmed, I would work with The Principal Cyber Advisor and USCYBERCOM to ensure it is drawing from and sharing best practices and lessons learned with the broader acquisition community.

56. If confirmed, what do you see as your role in helping provide oversight during this formative stage in the development of these cyber programs?

If confirmed, I will provide oversight and guidance, in conjunction with The Principal Cyber Advisor, as USCYBERCOM works to identify any shortfalls and risk in organization, process, documentation, and capability development that limits the Cyberspace Operations Enterprise's capability and efficacy. This would include engagement and collaboration with The Principal Cyber Advisor, USCYBERCOM and other key stakeholders to advise on governance boards; leverage Integrated Acquisition Portfolio Reviews (IAPR) to identify broader portfolio interdependences, risks, and opportunities; and ensure associated directives and action items are executed accordingly.

57. In your view, what metrics or methodologies should the Department be using to better understand and measure the progress and maturity of the acquisition structure?

Cyberspace is a critical warfighting domain. As such, a balanced acquisition process executing at mission levels while retaining and reinforcing acquisition rigor and discipline should be the first and foremost measurement for DoD. If confirmed, I would work with The Principal Cyber Advisor and USCYBERCOM to introduce a process for measuring the progress and maturity of the acquisition structure.

Iterative Development Approaches

58. What is your opinion on ways DOD could incorporate iterative development approaches centered on fielding minimum viable capabilities?

In my view, DoD should work to embrace rapid, iterative product development that encourages innovation. If confirmed, I would look to draw from industry best practices in this area to reduce cycle times and be more responsive to changing technologies, operations, priorities, and threats. If confirmed, I will work to incorporate iterative product development to facilitate innovative capabilities.

59. To what extent do you believe DOD has broadly implemented commercial best practice agile development approaches adequately for software and hardware systems?

I believe DoD has made significant progress over the last few years enabling more modern agile development and acquisition practices, policies, pilots, and training thanks in large part to strong Congressional support. Congress's support enabled DoD to develop the new Software Acquisition Pathway to acquire and deliver software using modern, commercial software development practices including agile software development. If confirmed, I would work to ensure the Department builds on this momentum, and continues to modernize its enterprise processes, strategies, and culture for agility and rapid digital capability delivery.

Advanced Technology Adoption

The rapid pace at which our adversaries are fielding technological advancements demands the Department establish an acquisition system that can deliver capabilities that are responsive to new threats and emerging technological opportunities.

60. In your view, do the current policies and practices of the defense acquisition system sufficiently encourage and support the adoption of disruptive technologies in the Department's acquisition programs? If not, what changes would you recommend in support of these initiatives?

If confirmed, I will ensure we meet the imperative to offer a range of options to programs, such as applying new technologies and concepts. I believe we have improved flexibility in the Defense Acquisition System, but we must continue to evolve to become more agile and leverage these innovative technologies. I will also leverage the recent legislation that authorized the establishment of an Acquisition Innovation Research Center to research, model, and pilot innovative practices for adoption by the Department.

61. What do you believe are the specific technologies that will be critical to defeating a near-peer competitor?

The Department has many opportunities to leverage current and emerging technologies to ensure military superiority. If confirmed, I will work the Services, the Combatant Commanders, and USD(R&E) to ensure we are successful in converting those technologies into warfighting capabilities. I support Under Secretary Heidi Shyu's recent Technology Priorities memo that outlined 14 technologies across 3 major areas including hypersonics, directed energy weapons, and integrated sensor and cyber resiliency. If confirmed, I will place special attention on ensuring we can attract commercial industry partners in areas, such as AI, autonomy, and advanced computing so that the Department can obtain the most cutting-edge technology at the most affordable price.

62. In your opinion, how should the Department define and manage concepts like risk and failure so that program managers can try new technologies and acquisition practices, derive lessons learned and establish a common understanding of best practices, and more

quickly drive technological advancement in ongoing acquisition programs and into current fielded capabilities?

If confirmed, I will encourage acquisition decision makers at all levels to balance risk and reward when crafting technology development and fielding strategies. To achieve the desired outcomes and innovation, I believe that some failure is to be expected and accepted as part of the learning and discovery process. This learning will occur throughout the program lifecycle but with the appropriate application of prototyping and experimentation, major issues should be identified as early as possible. Embracing the concept of iterative development whereby a basic capability is delivered and improved over time will also reduce the number of risks a program has to manage, increase technology insertion opportunities, increase user feedback, and enable accelerated fielding.

63. What do you view as the major barriers to entry for new companies that want to do business with DOD? How would you address these barriers, if confirmed?

Non-traditional companies struggle with long timelines from DoD budgeting and contracting, concerns about intellectual property, and regulatory requirements. I understand the Deputy Secretary of Defense has established an Innovation Ecosystem initiative to address some of these challenges. If confirmed, I will work with the Deputy Secretary of Defense and USD(A&S) to address these barriers to include engaging with industry, working with the Services to simplify contract requirements, and maximizing usage of varied contracting mechanisms (e.g., Other Transactions and Commercial Solutions Openings).

DOD continues to struggle with the transition of new technologies into existing programs of record. The USD(R&E) enterprise has primary responsibility for the development of new advanced technologies, but the Acquisition and Sustainment enterprise must do its part to address the transition of technology development programs into procurement and fielding.

64. In your view, what impediments to technology transition do you see within the Department?

Technology transition continues to be a critical issue across the Department of Defense. In my view, there are a number of challenges that make this difficult: budgeting timelines and the PPBE process, outmoded requirements systems preventing programs from moving rapidly, and complex decision-making processes. If confirmed, I will work closely with USD (R&E) to address these issues, and will work to fully leverage the new Competitive Advantage Pathfinders (CAPs) managed by the new DASD for Acquisition Integration and Interoperability.

65. If confirmed, what steps would you take to increase the rate and frequency at which proven technologies developed by DOD, defense industry, international partners, or the commercial sector are transitioned into programs of record?

If confirmed, I will work closely with OUSD(R&E) to align acquisition programs with advances in the technology sector, such a building and delivering capabilities iteratively to reduce cycle

times that are more responsive to changing technologies, operations, and threats. This is particularly true for software which is central to every major DoD mission and weapon system. DoD should continue to employ modular, open systems approaches as well as commercial as-a-service models and invest in foundational enterprise infrastructure that allow rapid insertion of emerging technologies.

Other Transaction Authority (OTA)

66. If confirmed, what steps will you take to promote the appropriate use of OTAs to encourage the participation of new and non-traditional defense contractors in the defense industrial base?

If confirmed, I will champion appropriate use of OTAs as a means for the Department to access innovative solutions from the private sector. I will ensure the acquisition workforce has the necessary resources to effectively use this authority. I will ask the Principal Director of Defense Pricing and Contracting to advise me on the guidance, training, and tools that have been issued to address recent statutory changes and recommendations from the DoD Inspector General and Government Accountability Office.

67. In your view, what do you see as the benefits and downsides of using OTA consortium agreements?

In my view, the consortium model is beneficial to the Department because it helps stimulate innovation, attract Non-Traditional Defense Contractors (NDCs) to expand the defense industrial base, and deliver innovative technologies and capabilities to the warfighter. If confirmed, I will work to enhance transparency in other transaction agreements that are executed under the consortium approach.

Earned Value Management

The earned value management system (EVM) is used to assess the cost and schedule of major capability acquisitions for proactive course correction. However, the Section 809 Panel reported that EVM does not measure product quality and concluded, “EVM has been required on most large software programs but has not prevented cost, schedule, or performance issues.” In 2009, DOD reported to the committee that “a program could perform ahead of schedule and under cost according to EVM metrics but deliver a capability that is unusable by the customer” and stated the program manager should ensure that the EVM process measures the quality and technical maturity of technical work products instead of just the quantity and timeliness of work performed.

68. If confirmed, what steps would you take, if any, to re-evaluate the performance metrics collected by DOD of its contractors that correspond with leading practices?

If confirmed, I would work with colleagues across the Department to ensure DoD is continuously re-evaluating the metrics used by contractors to measure performance. Activities such as creating

a more robust structure to capture schedule risk assessments (SRA); developing metrics for technical baselines; and reducing the cost burden by reducing paper reporting and removing nonvalue analysis will allow for data collection while minimizing the impact of collection.

69. If confirmed, what steps would you take, if any, to require contractors that employ the DOD Digital Engineering (DE) Strategy to maintain valid information in the digital authoritative source of truth that is sufficient for program managers to make informed and timely decisions to manage the risk of achieving cost, schedule, and performance objectives?

Use of a DE strategy should be coupled with an overall program strategy that addresses all types of program risk and must look at the entire program life cycle from design and development through production and sustainment. These DE models are key in all aspects of the program and must be tightly coupled with the Intellectual Property strategy and the use of Modular Open System features. If confirmed, I will ensure that contractors maintain valid information in the digital authoritative source of truth in order to allow program managers to make informed and timely decisions.

Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Execution (PPBE)

The Department's acquisition process is closely linked with its PPBE process, and acquisition programs can move only as nimbly as the budget process can allocate resources that fund them. The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2022 established a Commission to examine and make recommendations for PPBE reform.

70. Are you aware of the Commission's interim report and its recommendations? If so, what are your views of those recommendations?

The PPBE process requires years of planning before finally getting funds appropriated, which is not conducive to the kind of responsiveness and agility necessary to counter adversaries who do not have to operate under similar constraints. I am aware of the Commission's interim report and understand that the team in ASD(A) is working closely with the Commission. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the PPBE Commission and stakeholders across the Department and in Congress to examine the system issues and develop proposals to address these challenges.

71. In your view, what other changes, if any, are needed to the PPBE process to ensure it can effectively support ongoing acquisition reforms, including by improving timeliness, reducing bureaucracy, and increasing flexibility?

Refining the PPBE process is important to realizing agile and timely procurement of key emerging technology. If confirmed, I will assess what changes, beyond those recommended by the PPBE commission may be necessary to improve the acquisition process.

72. In your view, what steps can the Department take under the current PPBE construct to ensure acquisition programs are appropriately resourced in a timely manner?

The Competitive Advantage Pathfinders (CAPs) initiative is aimed at identifying ways to align PPBE with the requirements and acquisition systems. To my understanding, the A&S team is also working closely with the PPBE Commission through the Acquisition Innovation Research Center and the DASD for Acquisition Integration and Interoperability. If confirmed, I will work partners in CAPE, the Comptroller, and Congress to apply lessons learned to accelerate acquisition of important technologies.

One of the major obstacles to successfully bringing emerging technologies into the Department's acquisition system is the so-called "valley of death," or the gap in funding between the development of a new technology and its transition into a program of record.

73. In your view, what changes are needed to the PPBE and other processes to help bridge the "valley of death"?

The Defense budget development and appropriation process can make it difficult to fund an unproven technology as an acquisition program. If confirmed, I will continually assess our processes to ensure transparency and security while balancing the imperative for speed. I would advocate for re-evaluating our decision processes to ensure we are event driven vice calendar driven, responsive to change, and incentivizing innovation.

74. In your view, to what extent should the role of the government's systems engineering commands (e.g., Naval Warfare Centers and the Air Force Research Laboratory), as the government's technical experts in particular technology areas, be used to help emerging technologies bridge the "valley of death"?

If confirmed, I will work diligently with my USD (R&E) counterparts to ensure the warfighter's' prioritized capability gaps are appropriately communicated and aligned with the efforts of our laboratories and industry partners, to include small businesses and venture capitalists. Organizations such as Warfare Centers and Research Labs provide great opportunities to engage with non-traditional companies and create long lasting partnerships and talent pipelines to form bridges over the "valley of death."

75. In your view, do the military departments and defense agencies have different results in transitioning technology developed "in-house," versus technology developed by others, such as DARPA, the Strategic Capabilities Office, or the commercial sector?

In my view, aligning the requirements, resources and development communities is critical to preserving the United States' technical advantage. The Military Departments have processes to align technology investments from within their own centers to acquisition partners. Defense agencies can look at needs in a different way and bring cross functional and joint requirements to the forefront of emerging technologies development. If confirmed, I will work with my counterparts in Comptroller, CAPE, Joint Staff, and the Services to identify the best way to transition technology and institutionalize those pathways into the Defense Acquisition System.

The Goldwater-Nichols Act (GNA) of 1986 was enacted just prior to the explosion in information technology. The GNA successfully instilled a "joint" culture in the Department's

warfighting operations, but the PPBE, requirements, and systems acquisition processes have remained service centric.

76. What are your views on how to address “jointness” in the acquisition and sustainment system?

If confirmed, I will work with colleagues across the Department to identify ways to increase interoperability, including by ensuring the recently established DASD for Acquisition Integration and Interoperability, can successfully identify and address portfolio capability gaps in the joint force .

77. As there are few options other than the military departments, Special Operations Command, and Cyber Command to field and maintain systems, do you believe consideration should be given to creating some joint acquisition and sustainment capabilities? Please explain your answer.

Ensuring acquisition and sustainment of joint capabilities is critical to meeting warfighter requirements. If confirmed, I would work with Department leaders to review the effects of previous joint efforts to understand the utility of applying those concepts to future efforts.

Requirements

The Joint Capabilities and Integration Development System (JCIDS) process was established nearly twenty years ago with the intention of addressing overlap and duplication in the Military Services’ acquisition programs.

78. With respect to driving the acquisition system to deliver capabilities that meet the national security needs of the nation, in your view, what do you see as the primary shortfalls of the current requirements building process?

The Joint Staff has made strides in the last few years to take a more strategic look at requirements through the Joint Warfighting Concept (JWC) and the Capability Portfolio Management Reviews (CPMRs). These efforts provide the acquisition community with a clear signal on the highest priority capabilities in the Department. If confirmed, I would work with my colleagues in the acquisition community and the Joint Staff to translate these capabilities into requirements documents.

79. If confirmed, how would you propose to reform the process?

I understand the Department recently introduced the Competitive Advantage Pathways process, which is focused on integrating the requirements, budgeting and acquisition processes to provide capabilities in a shorter time frame. If confirmed, I would assess the progress of this effort, and apply and lessons learned to the Defense Acquisition System.

The requirements process has often been incapable of developing requirements that consider technological advances made by DOD’s own research programs. In recent years,

DOD has also undertaken several initiatives to improve the Department's connectivity with commercial technology companies.

80. If confirmed, what changes would you suggest to ensure that emerging technologies from within DOD, defense industry, and the commercial sector are better accounted for and leveraged within the requirements process?

The Department has established two efforts, Rapid Defense Experimentation Reserve (RDER) and Competitive Advantage Pathways (CAPs), to find ways to accelerate the introduction of new capabilities to the warfighter. If confirmed, I would work with USD(R&E), and the Services to institute lessons learned from RDER and CAPs to identify how to transition capabilities rapidly and efficiently from prototype, to production, to fielding, into the hands of our warfighters.

Many requirements are established with technical goals that are unachievable at any reasonable cost or schedule.

81. If confirmed, what changes would you recommend to the requirements development process, including workforce changes, to support the development of requirements that allow for risk-informed tradeoffs that are technically feasible or commercially available at reasonable costs and schedules?

The Joint Warfighting Council (JWC) and Capability Portfolio Management Reviews (CPMRs) give the acquisition community an understanding of the capability gaps we much address to reverse the erosion of our technical edge. If confirmed, I would work with colleagues in the Office of USD(A&S), the Joint Staff, CAPE, and the Services to convert these capability gaps into requirements.

Joint Acquisition Programs

82. What are your views regarding the merit and feasibility of joint development and acquisition programs?

Every acquisition program is different, which necessitates a Defense Acquisition System that provides flexible tools and pathways for the acquisition workforce to use the right tools for the specific capability being acquired. To deliver integrated capabilities that span across Service domains, a joint acquisition program can make sense. However, it can take many forms as a joint program office, like F-35's fully staffed program office, or the Chem-Bio program that serves as an integrator. If confirmed, I will work across the Department to ensure the Acquisition workforce continues to have flexible tools and pathways available to deliver capability at speed and scale.

83. What programs would you consider to be candidates for joint development and acquisition?

If confirmed, I will work with the Services to ensure the workforce is using the right tools and pathways for the capability being delivered.

84. What are your views on joint, enabling or cross-cutting capabilities that may not be treated as acquisition programs, such as JADC2? In your view, does the Department or the individual services have sufficient authority to advocate or manage these capabilities to ensure there are no seams in planning or execution of such efforts?

I understand the USD(A&S) recently established the DASD for Acquisition Integration and Interoperability to address cross-cutting capabilities that may not be treated as individual acquisition programs. If confirmed, I will work ensure this office, which would report to me, is able to execute this mission effectively.

85. If confirmed, how would you facilitate processes for the services to empower acquisition professionals and reduce institutional policy barriers to enable cross service requirements development and capabilities discussions?

If confirmed, in addition to championing the Competitive Advantage Pathfinders effort, being managed by the office of the DASD for Acquisition Integration and Interoperability, I would work closely with the Services to identify other areas for reducing barriers to cross-service requirements development and capabilities discussions. I would also ensure the workforce has access to the tools and the training to effectively advance these objectives.

Test and Evaluation

Test and evaluation activities ensure that system performance meets specifications and requirements, and that deployed capabilities are operationally effective against threats.

86. In your opinion, what is the appropriate role of developmental, operational, and live-fire testing in the acquisition process?

In my opinion, realistic testing throughout all system lifecycle stages is critical to providing measures of effectiveness and performance of our systems and is a key to the success of the acquisition process. If confirmed, I will work with the Service Acquisition Executives, the Director of Operational Test and Evaluation, and the USD(R&E) to ensure the acquisitions process adequately accounts for necessary testing.

87. If confirmed, what steps would you take to ensure acquisition programs efficiently address issues and deficiencies identified through test and evaluation?

In my opinion, at each milestone and key knowledge point of a system's development, relevant test information must be available as one of the inputs to measure program maturity. It is necessary to identify issues during development so they can be corrected going forward. If confirmed, I will work with the Service Acquisition Executives, the Director of Operational Test and Evaluation and the USD(R&E) to address issues and deficiencies that arise in testing as part of acquisition policy and process.

88. Under what circumstances, if any, do you believe DOD should procure weapon systems that have not demonstrated, through test and evaluation, to be operationally effective and operationally suitable?

In my view, DoD must appropriately manage risks throughout all acquisition programs. As we deliver new capabilities that are in urgent need by our warfighters, we must do it right. If confirmed, I will work with my staff, the Service Acquisition Executives, the Director of Operational Test and Evaluation, the USD(R&E), and the warfighter to manage this risk calculus.

89. If confirmed, under what circumstances would you support accepting more risk in programs, specifically test failures, to accelerate the fielding of new systems and capabilities to counter an advanced threat?

In my opinion, we learn from every test and the knowledge gained from each test informs the ultimate risk versus benefit calculus that we must use to assess whether to accelerate a given capability in a given situation. If confirmed, I will coordinate with all stakeholders to weigh the risk to field an urgent need versus a delay for additional testing.

90. In recent years, the Department's test and evaluation community has sought to integrate aspects of developmental and operational testing and conduct such testing earlier in the acquisition process. In your view, what are the advantages and disadvantages of increasing the integration among the developmental, acquisition, and testing communities?

My understanding is that the Department's test and evaluation policy emphasizes integrated testing. Acquisition, development, and testing of a given system are intertwined throughout the program lifecycle. If these efforts are not integrated, they will impact the pace of development and the ultimate quality of the delivered system. If confirmed, I will work to ensure our requirements, engineering, test, and acquisition organizations work together.

91. What other reforms would you recommend improving the timeliness, efficiency, and effectiveness of the test and evaluation process to correct technical deficiencies more quickly in weapon systems?

If confirmed, I will assess the effectiveness of current policies to ensure they facilitate the acquisition community's ability to correct deficiencies identified in test and evaluation in an efficient and effective manner.

92. If confirmed, how would you work with USD(R&E), the developmental test and the modeling and simulation communities, the Director of Operational Test and Evaluation, and the Military Services to ensure the Department has the infrastructure, workforce, and other resources it needs to support the test and evaluation needs of current and future acquisition programs?

If confirmed, I will work with USD(R&E), the test community and the Services to ensure their organizational expertise is leveraged and integrated into the acquisition system. I will do this by

ensuring program data is freely accessible and transparent through system development, production, deployment and sustainment. I will ensure research, engineering, and test equities are heard at program reviews and decision gates for Military Service programs. If confirmed, I will assess the existing infrastructure, workforce, and other resources needed to support the test and evaluation of our acquisition programs.

Intellectual Property/Technical Data Rights

93. In your view, do you believe DOD has implemented intellectual property (IP) best practices sufficiently to ensure that the government has appropriate access to IP and technical data to give proper return on investments in federal research and development (R&D), retain the ability to re-compete programs to control costs or improve quality, and exercise better control over program sustainment costs?

In my view, the Department has taken important steps to better address the implementation of intellectual property (IP) best practices. Nevertheless, we must continue to focus on IP challenges as a strategic priority. This issue must be addressed to ensure sustainment costs are more affordable and that the DoD can take full advantage of industry's faster pace of technology innovation. If confirmed, I will work to ensure IP and technical rights are considered early in the acquisition process.

94. What is your understanding of how recommendations from the Intellectual Property Cadre have improved the Department's ability to negotiate appropriate IP data rights for contracts, or helped identify areas where additional focused training might improve negotiation outcomes?

I believe that the recent creation of the Intellectual Property (IP) Cadre office has resulted in expanded awareness of IP challenges and best practices in the Department and is an important step in helping the Department rise to meet these challenges. If confirmed, I would work to modernize IP acquisition regulations and related guidance, and to update and improve the delivery of IP training for the acquisition workforce. These activities are important to emphasize early planning for programs' long-term IP needs and negotiation of tailored, flexible, licenses that provide a more effective balance of DoD and industry interests.

95. If confirmed, what adjustments would you recommend to DOD's practices in negotiating IP and technical data rights for programs to improve DOD's ability to develop, procure, and sustain new systems and technologies affordably?

If confirmed, I would work to ensure the DoD acquisition workforce has the necessary training to take greater advantage of agile and flexible tools such as negotiating specialized licenses and fully implementing modular open systems approaches (MOSA) in DoD programs.

96. In your view, does DOD have appropriate access to technical data packages for weapons systems and software in development and sustainment?

I understand that many DoD programs consider IP to be a continuing challenge, especially for sustainment and upgrade activities happening later in the program life cycle. If confirmed, I will place greater emphasis on planning for data and software needs throughout the program life cycle, and will ensure such planning is happening earlier, most preferably during the competitive phases of a program.

97. In your view, is it worth spending more money on programs earlier to obtain technical data packages, and if so, how could a fair price be determined?

I believe that planning for, and taking concrete steps to acquire, technical data and computer software should occur early in the program life cycle. By doing so, the Department should be able to capture IP resulting more effectively from its investments in technology development, and to leverage the competitive environment to more affordably acquire preexisting IP that has been developed and funded privately by industry. Additionally, this proactive approach to acquiring IP will better enable the Department to apply its cost and pricing expertise to competitive offers that meet programs' long-term IP needs. If confirmed, I will ensure the Department has effective policies, guidance, and tools for planning and acquiring technical data and computer software earlier in the program life cycle.

98. In your view, what methods does DOD have available to obtain data rights or data delivery on existing systems while still protecting legitimate industry needs?

DoD should develop IP strategies that incorporate strategic planning for long term needs, negotiation of flexible and tailored licensing arrangements, and the application of modular open systems approaches. These methods and approaches can effectively balance the needs of the Government and industry's IP interests, considering the investments of both parties. If confirmed, I will place a greater emphasis on tools and resources to facilitate early and continuous acquisition and product support planning, most preferably during the competitive phases of a program.

99. In your view, how extensive is the issue of DOD inadequately performing data rights analysis, ordering, inspection, and performance, leading to improper limited rights assertions by industry?

I believe it is critical that the Department leverages its existing legal and contractual tools to ensure that IP is acquired and managed more effectively. If confirmed, I would seek to remove or mitigate impediments to doing so through a combination of improved workforce training and education, as well as addressing any needed changes to the governing regulations and DoD policies, as appropriate.

100. In your view, how will the use of open systems architectures and acquisition strategies improve the Department's ability to modernize and sustain its systems?

I believe the combined implementation of best practices in modular open systems approaches (MOSA) and IP strategic planning is critical to improve the Department's posture for competitive

and affordable sustainment and modernization of its systems. MOSA allows greater tailoring and flexibility when allocating IP rights to better balance DoD's and industry's return on investment in individual system components. Additionally, it is enabled more efficiently by best practices in digital engineering. If confirmed, I will identify and implement steps necessary to improve the Department's use of MOSA and execution of IP strategies in a manner that effectively balances the needs of DoD and industry.

101. In your view, does the Department need a different approach to access technical data when dealing with primarily commercial companies?

I understand that DoD policy is generally to acquire the same data, software deliverables, and license rights provided to commercial customers, except in cases when DoD's specialized national defense needs require additional or specialized arrangements. In those cases, the Department should negotiate with the commercial vendors to develop licensing arrangements that better balance the operational and business interests of both parties. If confirmed, I will ensure that Department continues to develop tools and resources for licensing arrangements that balance the needs of DoD and industry—for both commercial and noncommercial technologies.

Reform of the Protest Process

102. To what extent do you think that the time required to settle protests warrants reform to protect the interests of both industry and the government?

If confirmed, I will review the recent and relevant studies on protests to determine what, if any, additional changes should be made to protect the interests of both industry and the government.

103. If confirmed, what recommendations, if any, do you have to improve the protest process?

If confirmed, I will work with subject matter experts to gain a better understanding of challenges and opportunities that may improve the protest process for the Department and industry.

Small Business

104. If confirmed, what steps would you take to increase the participation of small businesses in the defense technology and industrial base?

If confirmed, I would work with the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Industrial Base Policy and the Director of the Office of Small Business Programs, who have direct oversight over the Department's small business activities, to support their programs to increase the participation of small businesses in the defense industrial base.

105. In your view, what are the biggest barriers that prevent small businesses from becoming prime contractors to the Department?

It is my understanding that some of the biggest barriers include difficulty navigating the defense acquisition process, navigating the complex structure of DoD, often lengthy procurement timelines from opportunity announcement to contract award, and limited access to information on upcoming procurement opportunities. If confirmed, I would work with the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Industrial Base Policy and the Director of the Office of Small Business Programs, who have direct oversight over the Department's small business activities, to help more small business become prime contractors to the Department.

106. Do you believe the Department is using all available authorities to provide small businesses the opportunity to subcontract with existing prime contractors to ensure programs of record have access to the most advanced and effective technologies?

My understanding is that the Department of Defense manages various small business programs that assist Small Businesses with opportunities to subcontract with existing prime contractors. If confirmed, I will work with the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Industrial Base Policy and the Director of the Office of Small Business Programs, who have direct oversight over the Department's small business activities, to help identify any improvements in the way that the Department can utilize its small business authorities.

107. If confirmed, what steps would you take to ensure that small businesses that provide goods and services to the Defense Logistics Agency are monitored and supported when facing financial pressures that challenge their viability?

I believe that the Department should do all it can to support small businesses facing undue financial pressures, while balancing the readiness and cash flow needs of the Department. If confirmed, I would work with the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Industrial Base Policy, who has oversight over the Department's small business programs, and the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Sustainment, who has oversight over the Defense Logistics Agency, to ensure that the Acquisition Community is doing its best to minimize undue financial burden on the small business community.

108. What do you see as the benefits of diversifying the defense industrial base through more engagement with small and disadvantaged businesses?

I believe small business participation in defense procurements as prime and subcontractors is vital to the defense mission, competition, and the health of the defense industrial base (DIB). Small businesses spur innovation, represent the majority of new entrants into the DIB, and, through their growth, create a pipeline of the next generation of suppliers with diverse capabilities to support the DoD mission. They are essential to the nation's economic prosperity as their ingenuity, agility, and capabilities are inextricably tied to the nation's national and economic security.

109. In confirmed, what role do you see for your office in identifying small businesses that should be monitored to ensure mergers and acquisitions involving those companies does not negatively impact competition and access in the commercial marketplace?

Defense industry mergers and acquisitions have a profound impact on the level of economic competition in the DIB. Competition within the DIB is critical to national and economic security, and increased competition is in the Department's best interest. If confirmed, I would work with the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Industrial Base Policy, who has direct oversight over the Department's merger and acquisitions monitoring program, to ensure that the Acquisition community best supports the Department's M&A objectives.

Acquisition Workforce Education and Training

A well-trained and empowered acquisition workforce is a critical enabler in the implementation of acquisition reform and in the management of acquisition programs.

110. What is your assessment of the Department's acquisition workforce, both in terms of its capacity and capability? Does the Department have enough acquisition professionals with the right skills?

I believe in the exceptional talent of the Defense Acquisition Workforce. Over the past few years, the Department has diligently dedicated itself to revitalizing and transforming the acquisition workforce and modernizing the execution of the Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act. Should I be confirmed, my priority will be to comprehensively evaluate the outcomes of these concerted efforts.

Furthermore, I am committed to closely examining the specialized knowledge, skills, and functions of acquisition that are essential for the Department to provide cutting-edge capabilities to our warfighters. This entails an analysis of how we can best leverage the expertise of our existing workforce and upskill where needed, as well as developing strategies for attracting and retaining top-tier talent.

If confirmed, I will conduct a rigorous assessment of targeted capacity requirements and skill prerequisites that ensure the Department maintains an ample bench of skilled acquisition professionals to enable the consistent delivery of superior capabilities to maintain a distinct advantage for our warfighters.

111. If confirmed, what steps would you take to ensure the acquisition workforce is fully trained on the new acquisition authorities and best practices, so that it can make informed decisions about when and how to use the different acquisition pathways and tools?

I believe close coordination with the Department's Acquisition Executives, functional leaders, and the Defense Acquisition University is key to ensuring the workforce is provided with an agile learning environment that meets the needs of today's workforce, including how to use different

acquisition pathways and tools. Through DAU, nearly 160,000 acquisition professionals across all Military Services and Defense agencies have access to career-long learning and support, through courses acquisition professionals need to achieve DAWIA certification and other skill enhancing tools and techniques. If confirmed, I will work with my counterparts across the Department to ensure the acquisition workforce is fully trained on new acquisition authorities and best practices.

112. If confirmed, what steps would you take to empower program managers to execute acquisition programs and hold them accountable for how their decisions contribute to program performance, including over the life of the system?

I believe program managers will be successful if they are empowered to execute their programs using all the available legal and policy authorities as well as functional support. This will enable them to meet the cost, schedule, and performance goals of their specific programs. If confirmed, I will exercise robust oversight to hold program managers accountable for program performance.

113. What is your assessment of the Department's training, education, certification, and credentialing programs for the acquisition workforce?

Training and learning in new and emerging areas and throughout one's career, not just in the first few years on the job, is essential to deliver necessary capability to the warfighter. Additionally, the Defense Acquisition Workforce must be able to adapt to a variety of new and rapidly evolving threats. It is my understanding that DAU, the Services, and Components have been collaborating to better meet the training needs of the workforce. If confirmed, I will review such efforts to make sure we have effective planning and investments.

114. In your view, should the Department look at ways to integrate commercially provided or academic credentials to complement and enhance DOD provided training?

I believe the Department should consider and, where applicable, offer commercially provided and academic credentials to the Defense Acquisition Workforce. To that end, DAU has already established formal agreements with multiple commercial and academic institutions, such as Coursera, LinkedIn Learning, Skillsoft Precipio, Harvard Business School, and others. DAU currently offers thousands of courses from these institutions to complement and enhance its own DoD-unique training resources to the acquisition workforce, at no cost. Integrating external credentials can help our workforce diversify their skillsets and adapt to emerging technologies and methodologies, ensuring they remain competitive and effective in their roles.

Integrating commercially provided or academic credentials to complement and enhance DOD-provided training is a prudent approach that can significantly benefit the Department of Defense, particularly in the acquisition domain. By leveraging partnerships with trusted providers and carefully managing the integration process, we can ensure our Defense Acquisition Workforce remains well-prepared and adaptable in an ever-evolving defense landscape. If confirmed, I would look to build upon these initiatives.

115. In your view, what role should the Department play in ensuring that there is an adequate supply of technical talent available for the Department and industry partners to meet the challenges of the future?

The Department's role in securing an ample supply of technical talent for future challenges is critical. If confirmed, I will work to achieve this by strategically planning our workforce needs, investing in education and training initiatives, fostering innovation through R&D, streamlining recruitment, and prioritizing retention and career development. Collaboration with industry, academia, and diverse talent pools are essential, as is a commitment to lifelong learning and adaptability. Additionally, I support opportunities, such as the Defense Civilian Training Corps, to develop the next generation of acquisition leadership. If confirmed, I will regularly assess and refine efforts to ensure alignment with our mission and evolving demands of the future. By doing so, the Department is positioned (as are our industry partners) for success in addressing the challenges ahead.

116. If confirmed, what steps would you take to fully staff the Software Cadre to support software modernization across the Department?

I believe the most important resource of any organization is its people. Our acquisition workforce must be flexible in leveraging new, evolving software capabilities and technologies. If confirmed, I will work with the Services and Components towards enabling a fully staffed Software Cadre that supports the Department's software modernization strategy, which provides the approach for achieving faster delivery of software capabilities to gain a competitive advantage.

117. What recommendations would you make, if confirmed, to improve the recruitment efforts of acquisition professionals by the Department?

If confirmed, I will work to enhance the recruitment efforts for acquisition professionals in the Department through a comprehensive approach that includes collaborating with educational institutions and leveraging digital platforms. Barriers to entry can be broken down to allow for flexible career paths, to foster collaboration, and to collect feedback for continual improvement. By implementing these measures, the Department can attract a skilled and diverse acquisition workforce, ensuring the success of our mission. If confirmed, I would continue to support for the Defense Civilian Training Corps (DCTC) that equips college scholars with the skills and knowledge necessary as a future DoD leader where they will innovate processes, policies, and methods to enable acquisition, adoption and transition new technologies into military capabilities.

118. If confirmed, what steps would you take to onboard more Highly Qualified Experts and scientific or professional personnel that have expertise in relevant technology fields to support DOD acquisition professionals?

If confirmed, I will prioritize the strategic recruitment of Highly Qualified Experts (HQE) in cyber and technology fields to strengthen the DoD's acquisition capabilities and support the National Defense Strategy. I will emphasize that talent can be found both within the Department, as well as identify industry leaders to help build the HQE cadre. Additionally, by streamlining recruitment, offering competitive compensation, promoting diversity, professional development, and strategic

partnerships, the Department can attract and retain top talent. In addition, to improve employee satisfaction, flexible work arrangements should be explored, feedback encouraged, and resources should be resourced appropriately.

119. If confirmed, what specific steps would you take to improve the effectiveness of the Defense Acquisition University?

If confirmed, I will evaluate DAU's ongoing efforts to transform its training content and delivery methods, while ensuring its products and services are aligned to the strategic needs of the acquisition workforce. It is my understanding that DAU is working to build enduring, productive relationships with the Services and Components as part of a modernized implementation of the Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act. The skills and abilities of the workforce are critical to ensuring our warfighters have necessary capabilities on the battlefield, and if confirmed, I will review the steps being taken to provide for upskilling and talent development.

120. In your view, how effective has the Department been in utilizing the Defense Acquisition Workforce Development Account (DAWDA) to support its overall talent management initiatives?

The Defense Acquisition Workforce Development Account is provided for the sole purpose of recruitment, training, development, and retention of qualified acquisition talent. It is a powerful tool in the competition for talent. DAWDA has effectively supported a wide-range of robust talent management initiatives across DoD since 2009 and can be credited for eliminating a gap of mid-career (10-20 years of experience) personnel.

If confirmed, I am committed to assessing the DAWDA's effectiveness in collaboration with Acquisition Executives. This assessment will help identify areas of success and improvement to better align the DAWDA with the Department's talent management goals. Optimizing use of DAWDA resources can support modern talent management and development tools and training for the acquisition workforce.

121. If confirmed, what specific steps would you take to assess and ensure the DAWDA is adequately resourced to meet the needs of the Department?

If confirmed, I will review the process to assess acquisition workforce requirements and ensure planned budget levels are requested to meet requirements to continue with modern talent development initiatives. I will also ensure DAWDA resources are prioritized and allocated to the greatest need.

122. If confirmed, how would you engage with the Congressionally mandated Acquisition Innovation Research Center (AIRC) to perform research on acquisition issues of interest, and to enhance a future workforce for defense acquisition?

DAU is a direct interface with the Defense Acquisition Workforce and the acquisition challenges they face. If confirmed, I will ensure DAU continues to collaborate with the AIRC to share information and identify research areas on issues of interest to the workforce. DAU and AIRC will

continue to co-produce Quarterly Research Forums where AIRC's principal investigators share their research with and receive feedback directly from the workforce.

Nunn-McCurdy Process

The Nunn-McCurdy process, as established by section 2433 of title 10, United States Code, has not been revisited since Congress and the Department began implementing significant acquisition reforms five years ago.

123. Given recent acquisition reforms, in your view, is the Nunn-McCurdy process still an appropriate and effective mechanism for reporting to Congress on troubled acquisition programs?

If confirmed, I will review the Nunn-McCurdy process and recommend changes, as appropriate. This process has been a significant and important process for Major Defense Acquisition Program reporting and accountability and is utilized for metrics and analysis within the Department.

124. In your view, are changes needed to the Nunn-McCurdy process, such as expanding its scope beyond major defense acquisition programs or adjusting the thresholds for significant and critical breaches?

If confirmed, I will review the Nunn-McCurdy process to determine if changes are necessary to expand the scope beyond MDAPs.

125. If confirmed, what principles would guide your thinking on whether to recommend terminating a program that has experienced significant or critical cost growth under Nunn-McCurdy?

If confirmed, I will use the principles of the Nunn-McCurdy law along with data driven analyses to inform my recommendation regarding termination. Program decisions must balance between delivering warfighter capability and controlling cost growth. Programs experiencing significant or critical cost breaches must present a credible plan to meet performance requirements at acceptable cost levels.

Foreign Military Sales

The Foreign Military Sales (FMS) process has long been criticized for being too slow and cumbersome to meet the needs of our allies and partners. There are ongoing efforts in Congress, the Defense Department, and the State Department to improve the process, especially considering the Ukraine conflict and reequipping our NATO allies, providing equipment for Taiwan, and the Trilateral Security Partnership Between Australia, the United Kingdom, and the U.S. (AUKUS).

126. In your opinion, what are the primary hurdles to streamlining the FMS process?
The Department of Defense Foreign Military Sales Tiger Team identified six broad areas for improvement in the phases of the Foreign Military Sales process: improving understanding of ally

and partner requirements; enabling efficient review of technology; providing allies and partners relevant priority capabilities; accelerating acquisition and contracting support; expanding defense industrial base capacity; and ensuring broad U.S. Government support. I fully concur with these findings.

127. If confirmed, what recommendations do you have to address these hurdles?

If confirmed, I would work with the FMS Continuous Process Improvement Board, established as part of the Department's Foreign Military Sales Tiger Team review, and the Department of State, which is the U.S. government's lead on Foreign Military Sales, to address any hurdles that the Acquisition community can help overcome.

128. In your view, what problems can DOD address on its own, and what problems require coordination with the State Department?

If confirmed, I would work with colleagues in OSD Policy and counterparts in the Services to address any deficiencies in the FMS process that the Acquisition community can help improve.

129. In your view, is there adequate data to be able to measure the time taken by the various steps in the FMS process to determine where there might be bottlenecks in the process?

I am aware that the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) maintains data on many aspects of the foreign military sales process. If confirmed, I would work closely with DSCA and the Services to ensure we are collecting the necessary data to monitor individual FMS cases, identify any patterns, and address bottlenecks.

International Armaments Cooperation

The Department conducts a number of activities that support International Armaments Cooperation (IAC) that are used to promote U.S. strategic goals. IAC is defined as cooperative research, development, test, and evaluation of defense technologies, systems, or equipment; joint production and follow-on support of defense articles or equipment; and procurement of foreign technology, equipment, systems, or logistics support. In addition to activities like information exchange agreements, defense trade, and cooperative logistics, the Department also funds activities that can be used to promote interoperability and joint development, such as the Defense Exportability Features (DEF) program, the Coalition Warfare Support Program, and the Foreign Comparative Test Program.

130. In your view, how effective have international armaments cooperation activities been in shaping and supporting broader DOD warfighting needs and priorities? Are there new approaches or activities we should consider to be more effective and strategic?

Across numerous positions in OSD Policy, and as Acting Deputy Director of the Defense Security Cooperation Agency, I have seen first-hand that IAC activities provide opportunities to share in

the identification, development and advancement of military capability that support coalition operations and enable our international partners to provide for their defense and create stability within key regions of the world. If confirmed, I will work with the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Industrial Base Policy, who has oversight over IAC activities, to ensure that the Acquisition community supports this important mission.

131. Based on current experiences with the conflict in Ukraine, what recommendations would you have, if confirmed, to help streamline or improve our security cooperation, foreign military sales, and cooperative logistics processes to be more responsive to rapidly changing security situations?

The Department of Defense has demonstrated incredible speed and agility in providing critical security cooperation to Ukraine to meet its requirements over the course of the conflict. If confirmed, I look forward to working with stakeholders across the Department of Defense and interagency to capture lessons learned from the Ukraine experience that we can apply to improve security cooperation and cooperative logistics processes moving forward.

132. In your view, how effective have newer initiatives like the Defense Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI) with India, the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (or Quad), or the AUKUS initiative been in supporting our defense posture, and are there recommendations for improving those activities that should be considered to make them more effective?

As the Director for South Asia policy in 2014, I worked with colleagues in the office of International Armaments Cooperation to establish the Defense Technology and Trade Initiative with India as a means to building habits of cooperation across our respective bureaucracies and industry partners. In my view, initiatives like DTTI, the Quad and AUKUS provide valuable opportunities to enhance international cooperation, strengthen alliances and partnerships, and improve industrial base cooperation. If confirmed, I look forward to exploring the details of the work underway and seek opportunities to enhance outcomes and identify new opportunities for partnership.

133. If confirmed, how would you manage your relationship with USD (Policy), the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA), and the Defense Technology Security Administration (DTSA) in structuring international cooperation activities?

I have worked in and with USD (Policy), DSCA, and DTSA throughout my career. If confirmed, I will leverage my close personal relationships with senior officials throughout those organizations, as well as my deep understanding of their roles and missions, to ensure ASD/A and the broader acquisition community is fully aligned and supportive of the Department's international cooperative activities.

134. If confirmed, do you see opportunities to streamline those relationships to reduce the time to get agreements in place so actual cooperative work can begin more quickly?

If confirmed, I will build bridges to OSD Policy, DSCA and DTSA to bring the Acquisition community into policy discussions of potential cooperation with allies and partners at the front end, so that the acquisition community is poised to provide robust and expeditious support to cooperative work.

Sexual Harassment

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

135. If confirmed, what actions would you take were you to receive or otherwise become aware of a complaint of sexual harassment or discrimination from an employee of the ASD(A)?

If confirmed, I would send a clear message to the workforce from the outset that there will be zero tolerance for sexual harassment or gender discrimination. I would further ensure employees are made aware of their rights, options for reporting, and the resources and recourse available to them should they experience sexual harassment or gender discrimination. I would reinforce this important message with my leadership team, and set a clear expectation of leaders throughout the organization to set a climate where such behavior is not tolerated. Should I become aware of any complaints within the organization, I would first ensure proper actions are taken through personnel processes. I would then undertake a more extensive messaging campaign, using direct communications and official correspondence to the workforce to reinforce the message that everyone deserves a safe and respectful work environment and behavior such as sexual harassment or discrimination will not be tolerated.

Congressional Oversight

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

136. 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

137. 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

138. 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**

139. 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**
140. 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**
141. 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**
142. 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**