

**Advance Policy Questions for Matthew Donovan**  
**Nominee for Under Secretary of the Air Force**

**Department of Defense Reforms**

**The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 included the most sweeping reforms since the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986.**

**Do you support these reforms?**

*Yes.*

**What other areas for defense reform do you believe might be appropriate for this Committee to address?**

*I have no recommendations for further reforms at this time. If I am confirmed and identify areas that merit reform, I will propose changes through the appropriate established process.*

**The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 also required that the Secretary of Defense establish cross-functional teams to address critical objectives of the Department.**

**What are your views on the potential focus areas and uses for future cross-functional teams?**

*I support the intent of the provision to better integrate Department of Defense efforts to better achieve the Secretary of Defense's objectives. Cross-functional teams can provide synergistic effects to more fully identify problem areas, enable more complete analysis from different perspectives, and provide a wider range of potential solutions. While I do not have any specific views on potential focus areas at this time, if confirmed I will work with the Secretary of Defense to identify appropriate uses of cross-functional teams to manage critical objectives and outputs of the Department of Defense.*

**Duties**

**Section 8015 of title 10, United States Code, states that the Under Secretary of the Air Force shall perform such duties and exercise such powers as the Secretary of the Air Force may prescribe.**

**What is your understanding of the duties and functions of the Under Secretary of the Air Force?**

*The position of the Under Secretary of the Air Force is established by law within the*

*Office of the Secretary of the Air Force. Subject to the Secretary of the Air Force's direction and control, the Under Secretary exercises the full authority of the Secretary to the conduct the affairs of the Department of the Air Force (except where limited by law, regulation, or limitations imposed by the Department of Defense or the Secretary of the Air Force). The Under Secretary also serves as the Chief Management Officer of the Air Force.*

**What recommendations, if any, do you have for changes in the duties and functions of the Under Secretary of the Air Force, as set forth in section 8015 of title 10, United States Code, or in Department of Defense regulations pertaining to functions of the Under Secretary of the Air Force?**

*At this time, I am not aware of any reason to change the duties and functions of the Under Secretary as prescribed in Title 10 and pertinent Department of Defense regulations. If confirmed, and I identify areas that I believe merit change, I will propose changes through the appropriate established process.*

**If confirmed, what additional duties, if any, do you expect will be prescribed for you?**

*If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Secretary of the Air Force to further her vision and goals for the Air Force. I expect the Secretary to prescribe duties for me relating to the Under Secretary of the Air Force's responsibilities, particularly in the role of Chief Management Officer.*

**Section 904(b) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 directs the Secretary of a military department to designate the Under Secretary of such military department to assume the primary management responsibility for business operations.**

**What is your understanding of the business operations responsibilities of the Under Secretary of the Air Force?**

*This area of responsibilities, as it relates to the Under Secretary of the Air Force, includes ensuring defense business system modernization principles are followed and the Air Force remains in compliance with enterprise architecture; implementing a comprehensive integrated management system for Air Force business operations; and executing an enterprise-wide business systems architecture to provide accurate and timely information to support Air Force business decisions. If confirmed, I will maintain close coordination with the DoD Deputy Chief Management Officer (DCMO), as well as the CMOs of the sister services, to identify and emplace best practices that enhance the entire Department of Defense's business operations.*

**How do you perceive your role in setting the agenda for the Air Force Deputy Chief Management Officer?**

*The Air Force Deputy Chief Management Officer (SAF/MG) plays a crucial role in alignment of acquisition, functional, infrastructure, and information technology investment portfolios. This is achieved by providing sound governance in collaboration with Air Force senior leaders, and using accurate and timely performance metrics to ensure the Air Force makes sound business system decisions. If confirmed, I will direct SAF/MG to regularly and comprehensively review business operations for opportunities to achieve reforms that can ultimately reallocate scarce resources to increase current readiness and the future lethality of the force. Additionally, I will ensure the Air Force replaces methods for continual oversight of business systems to minimize time required to achieve a clean audit opinion as it applies across the business system enterprise.*

**Qualifications**

**What background and experience do you have that qualify you for this position?**

*I have 40 years of professional and leadership experience garnered from a long career in the Air Force, on active duty and later as a Federal civilian employee, and currently as a professional staff member serving the U.S. Senate Committee on Armed Services. I also have a deep educational background as a master's level graduate of both the U.S. Air Force's and U.S. Army's premier advanced airpower and military strategy schools.*

*In my current position as Policy Director for the Senate Committee on Armed Services, I advise the Chairman of the Committee on broad policy matters related to national security, defense strategy and policy, organization, force structure, modernization, readiness, and regional issues. Previously, as a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee professional staff, I served as advisor to the Chairman of the Committee on matters relating to Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps tactical aviation programs, and Air Force bomber, mobility, and special mission aircraft, as well as research and development, aircraft procurement, and sustainment programs.*

*I possess broad Air Force operational and command experience, and deep knowledge of the DoD planning, programming, budgeting, and execution process, as well as the resource allocation process within the Department of the Air Force. Combined with my legislative, oversight, and budget experience on a defense committee in Congress, I am well prepared, if confirmed, to meet the challenges and complexities in assisting the Secretary of the Air Force to ensure the U.S. Air Force remains the world's preeminent air, space, and cyberspace force.*

**Major Challenges and Priorities**

**If confirmed, what broad priorities will you establish?**

*My priorities will align with those of the Secretary of the Air Force to support President Trump's National Security Strategy and Secretary Mattis' National Defense Strategy. In the face of an unstable and dangerous global security environment, the Air Force must restore readiness, emplace cost-effective modernization to increase the capacity and lethality of the force, drive innovation, develop exceptional leaders, and strengthen alliances. The nation expects us to ensure we have the most capable and lethal Air Force in the world while remaining good stewards of precious American taxpayer dollars.*

**In your view, what are the major challenges, if any, you would confront if confirmed?**

*I agree with Secretary Wilson's assessment of three critical challenges facing the Air Force today: 1) the global demand for Air Force capabilities from the joint warfighter and our allies is acute and will only increase in the future—both the Air Force's capacity and capabilities must be increased significantly to meet its obligations to the nation; 2) America's potential adversaries are modernizing their air and space forces faster than our Air Force...the overmatch we have enjoyed over our competitors is rapidly diminishing; and 3) twenty-six years of sustained deployed combat operations, combined with continued budgetary uncertainty and instability, have reduced the Air Force's ability to balance readiness, force structure, and modernization to meet the requirements of current and future threats.*

**If confirmed, what management actions and timelines would you establish to address these challenges?**

*If confirmed, I will assist the Secretary and Chief of Staff of the Air Force in the performance of their organize, train, and equip responsibilities by developing approaches to increase capacity and improve capabilities to meet current and future national security obligations. I will advocate for immediate actions that recover readiness while developing modernization plans that will responsibly grow the force and increase lethality across Air Force core mission areas. I will provide timely and unfiltered advice to the Secretary of the Air Force as we partner with the Congress and Department of Defense to enhance our joint warfighting capabilities. Together, we will vigorously support our Airmen and their families, and provide them with the best training, equipment, and leadership necessary to sustain our Air Force's preeminence.*

### **Relations with Congress**

**What are your views on the state of the Air Force's relationship with the Senate Armed Services Committee in particular, and with Congress in general?**

*The Air Force's relationships with the Senate Armed Services Committee and the Congress are greatly improving, and becoming much more collaborative. Secretary Wilson and General Goldfein have made it a priority to seek advice from the congressional defense committees prior to making significant decisions, and to receive*

*counsel on committee concerns and the potential implications of Air Force actions. Their efforts are resulting in greatly increased trust and cooperation between the two co-equal branches of government concerned with providing “for the common defence.”*

**If confirmed, what actions would you take to sustain a productive and mutually beneficial relationship between Congress and the Air Force?**

*If confirmed, I would seek to further mutual cooperation by initiating regular contact with committee chairmen, ranking members, and staff to exchange views, perspectives, and understanding.*

### **Torture and Enhanced Interrogation Techniques**

**Do you support the standards for detainee treatment specified in the revised Army Field Manual on Interrogations, FM 2-22.3, issued in September 2006, and in DOD Directive 2310.01E, the Department of Defense Detainee Program, dated August 19, 2014, and required by section 1045 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016 (Public Law 114-92)?**

*Yes.*

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

**Senior Air Force leaders have stated on many recent occasions that the Air Force is the smallest size in its history, it cannot get any smaller, and it has numerous manpower shortfalls, particularly in the maintenance and fighter pilot career fields. While the Air Force’s fiscal year 2017 budget submission did not request an increase in military end strength, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 authorized an increase in Air Force active end strength to 321,000. Subsequently, the Chief of Staff of the Air Force made statements that the Air Force’s active duty military end strength should be increased to 350,000.**

**In your view, can the Air Force meet national defense objectives at the end strength levels authorized in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017? Could the Air Force meet those objectives at end strength levels in fiscal year 2018 and beyond that would be necessary when a return to discretionary spending caps is mandated by the Budget Control Act of 2011?**

*As Secretary Wilson testified, and I concur, we have a mismatch between our strategic objectives and the military means we have available to meet those objectives. The Air Force can meet the objectives, but at higher risk in the form of significant operations tempo. The 321,000 airmen authorized in fiscal year 2017 was an initial step in the direction needed to restore the readiness of the force, and the further increase in the fiscal year 2018 budget request is also necessary to continue the climb toward full spectrum readiness. In the end, the Air Force estimates 350,000 airmen are required to*

*meet today's objectives at a sustainable operations tempo given the currently planned force structure.*

*The 2011 Budget Control Act's defense spending caps are having damaging effects on the Air Force and its ability to maintain required end strength and readiness levels necessary to meet national defense objectives. In my view, absent repeal of the Act or a significant upward adjustment in the spending caps, a return to Budget Control Act levels would precipitate the same injurious actions the Air Force was forced to take during the 2013 sequester, with similar long-term, negative consequences to readiness.*

**Do you believe the Air Force needs additional force shaping tools requiring legislation beyond those tools that Congress has provided the past few years, to include extending the numerous authorities that expire at the end of fiscal year 2018?**

*If confirmed, I will, in consultation with the Secretary, examine existing authorities to ensure we have the necessary tools and inherent flexibility needed to both retain and grow needed skill sets. If extensions to current authorities, or additional authorities, are deemed necessary, we will use available legislative proposal processes to request appropriate force shaping authorities.*

**What are your views on the appropriate size and mix of the active-duty Air Force, and the reserve components? What total force end strength should the Air Force field to support the National Military Strategy?**

*In general, assessment of threats and our national defense strategy to meet those threats drive force structure requirements, including the mix of active, Guard, and Reserve forces. Particularly for the Air Force, Guard and Reserve units are highly capable and vital to the Air Force for meeting combatant commander requirements. As General Goldfein has often stated, the Air Force simply couldn't meet our obligations to the combatant commanders without them.*

*I do not have sufficient information at this time to determine the optimal force mix for the active, Guard, and Reserve components. However, if confirmed, I will work with the Secretary and Chief of Staff to guide an evaluation of the force structure needed to support an updated national defense strategy.*

**How would you, year over year, increase the Air Force's end strength? How long would it take to build an Air Force of 350,000 regular Airmen, and what would be the cost?**

*I am informed the maximum responsible growth rate to recruit and train active duty Airmen with the skills and experience required is approximately 4,000 per year at current aggregate retention levels. This means achieving an active duty force of 350,000 Airmen would not occur until beyond the current Future Years Defense Plan.*

## **Total Air Force**

**What do you believe is the necessary mix between the active and reserve components in the Air Force to perform the mission?**

*I do not have sufficient information at this time to determine the optimal force mix for the active, Guard, and Reserve components. However, if confirmed, I will work with the Secretary and Chief of Staff to guide an evaluation of the force structure needed to support an updated national defense strategy.*

**Do you view the reserve component as an enabler or complement to the active component?**

*Both. The reserve component certainly complements the active component but is also an enabler of the active component's ability to meet warfighting requirements. With the Air Force's reduced overall capacity and the concurrent increase in operations tempo, the reserve components have been used as an operational reserve more than in any time in history. Because of this, we must be cognizant of the reasons our Airmen join the reserve component; location stability, civilian jobs, etc. If we increase the operations tempo to near that of the active duty, we could cause recruiting and retention problems for the reserve component.*

**Do you believe that most missions are better served by maintaining a combination of active and reserves assigned to those missions?**

*Yes. By identifying and implementing an optimum force mix of the active and reserve components, we will be able to maximize operational effectiveness, better optimize total force efficiencies, and provide a continuum of service that retains critical experience such as aircrew, cyber, and space professionals that may otherwise be lost to the civilian sector.*

**Do you believe there are missions where total responsibility for the mission should be assigned either to the active or reserve component?**

*No. In fact, if confirmed, I will work to eliminate barriers to further integration of the three Air Force components, and to look for innovative ways to integrate and leverage synergies. The important factor is the Total Force provides a seamless presentation of air, space, and cyber forces to combatant commanders with indistinguishable integration of all three components.*

**If so, what would be the primary benefits and shortcomings of making such an exclusive assignment?**

*The previous response negates this question.*

**What areas of total force integration do you believe need improvement?**

*There are still barriers that continue to constrain integration—some are contained in law, but others reside solely in service policy, tradition, and culture. For example, an integrated pay and personnel system would allow us to consolidate wings and return overhead to operational capacity caused by the separation of such systems today. Other legal and cultural barriers interfere with creating a continuum of service that allows us to retain those members that don't fit into the traditional service mold but still desire to serve. If confirmed, I will work with the Congress and Air Force leaders, including the Directors of the Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve, to remove these barriers and improve integration aspects of the components.*

**Air Force Recruiting and Retention**

**The recruitment and retention of quality Airmen, officer and enlisted, active duty and reserve, is vital to the Department of the Air Force.**

**How would you evaluate the effectiveness of the Air Force in successfully recruiting and retaining high caliber personnel during a sustained period of increasing or decreasing end strength?**

*It is my understanding that the Air Force continues to meet its recruiting targets in both numbers and quality, although I understand the Air National Guard is being challenged in its recruiting effort this year. Retention is at historic levels, however, retention of highly trained airmen in high demand career fields, is a challenge. This is particularly acute for pilots, but also in other specialties that are in increasing demand in the civilian sector.*

**What initiatives would you recommend to the Secretary of the Air Force, if confirmed, to further improve Air Force recruiting and retention, in both the active and reserve components?**

*I would need a more in-depth analysis of the current situation prior to making specific recommendations. However, if confirmed, I would continue current recruiting and retention best practices used by the Air Force, as well as study innovative ways to enhance the Air Force's recruiting and retention strategy. Additionally, I would continue to work with the Secretary of the Defense to leverage collective efforts to attract, recruit, and retain talent to meet military mission requirements. I would also work with the active and reserve components to review this area, and seek the support of Congress to ensure an appropriate blend of non-monetary and monetary recruiting and retention policies are employed to retain the most qualified active duty and reserve component Airmen.*



**What do you believe will be the impact, if any, of the new retirement system effective in fiscal year 2018 on recruiting and retention in the Air Force?**

*I am unaware of any documented impact at this time. However, if confirmed, I will ensure the intent of the law is followed closely, including the necessity to provide needed education and counsel so our Airmen will maximize their opportunity to reap the benefits of the new system.*

## **Retention**

**Anticipated increases in pilot hiring by commercial airlines are likely to apply pressure on aviator retention for all the services, but most acutely for the Air Force. The Chief of Staff of the Air Force has recently described this impending pilot shortage as a national problem, and not just limited to the armed forces. The U.S. Government is not likely to ever match the salaries of commercial airline companies, especially as shortages grow more acute and compensation increases to attract a shrinking pool of eligible pilots.**

**If confirmed, what immediate steps would you recommend to the Secretary of the Air Force to retain the necessary numbers of aviators in the Air Force?**

*If confirmed, I would continue pursuing the Air Force's current comprehensive approach that includes validating current rated requirements, increasing pilot production, business case-based monetary retention incentives, and enhancements to quality of life and quality of service that collectively will continue to improve retention.*

*The bottom line is this Air Force challenge, along with many others, has its roots in the Air Force's diminished capacity in combat aircraft, personnel, and funding. Increasing these capacities will produce a right-sized, sustainable, and ready force able to meet the needs of combatant commander demand signals for current and future operational environments.*

**If confirmed, do you agree to focus on remedying the pilot shortage?**

*Yes. Improvements in this area will require a multi-year, cross-functional approach. If confirmed, I will examine the problem comprehensively to ensure solutions are focused on making changes for maximum impact.*

**What do you think are the primary reasons that pilots are leaving the Air Force to fly for the commercial airlines?**

*My opinion is that after 26 years of continuous deployed combat operations, combined with steadily decreasing capacity in combat aircraft, personnel, and funding, pilots are leaving the Air Force to fly for the commercial airlines because the airlines offer them and their families stability, a higher quality of life, and higher pay.*

*High operations tempo combined with reduced capacity means even when aircrew are not deployed, they are not necessarily at home because of their many full spectrum training requirements that necessitate temporary duty locations. Aircrew that do stay at home station have a dearth of flying opportunities because home station sorties take a back seat to deployed operations due to lack of available aircraft and maintenance personnel to support the flying schedule. As General Goldfein often states, fliers who don't fly go somewhere where they can, and that most often is to civilian opportunities.*

**Should the Air Force be looking at reviving its warrant officer model and utilizing it as an option for dealing with the pilot retention crisis? Is the transition to using enlisted pilots for the remotely piloted aircraft (RPA) mission a good step in this direction?**

*I understand the Air Force is leaving all options on the table, which is the most appropriate approach. Whether through reviving a warrant officer program or through other mechanisms, there may be value in a flexible "technical track" options to help attract and retain talented aviators. If confirmed, I will aggressively pursue all potential options.*

**Do you believe there should be more permeability between the active and reserve components?**

*More mechanisms must exist that allow reserve component personnel to fill vacant active duty positions. However, fewer means are available to allow this "reverse flow" of manpower; they are limited in scope (tailored for temporary fighter pilot assignments), and are only as accessible as funds allow. By providing more modernized aircraft, equipment, and maintenance capability to the reserve component, the active component could associate more fully with reserve component units, allowing the active duty to access reserve component aircraft and to benefit from more experienced reserve component personnel.*

**Would this permeability assist in remedying the pilot retention crisis?**

*Potentially. Current programs do little to solve the pilot retention crisis, and are temporary solutions absent additional streamlining of statuses and authorities necessary to allow for a more free flow of personnel between the active and reserve components. If confirmed, I will work with the Congress to explore more flexible options to help ease the pilot shortfalls.*

**What is the mission-based case for increasing permeability?**

*The active component could benefit from accessing reserve operational capacity and reserve experience, and the reserve component would have access to career-broadening assignments for which they may not have otherwise had an opportunity to compete. In the end, increased permeability could facilitate a more integrated, experienced, and*

*effective force, with both active and reserve members better suited to leading in a Total Force.*

**What non-monetary culture changes can be made in the Air Force to alleviate the pilot shortage?**

*In my view, Air Force pilots, like all Airmen, decided to make certain sacrifices to respond to an inner calling to serve when they first joined. If they feel valued, if they continue to feel the draw of belonging to something “bigger than themselves,” they will better withstand those certain sacrifices, such as lower pay, time away from home, and long hours.*

*The Air Force has also struggled in the past during times when the major airlines have increased their hiring. Even during those periods the Air Force was not able to compete in terms of compensation. However, when the Air Force’s capacity was greater, it was better able to “ride it out.” In the current circumstance, factors have combined to create a sort of perfect storm; airlines are hiring at all-time highs with no end in sight, the Air Force is suffering from severely reduced capacity in aircraft, personnel, and funding, and the operations tempo is at historic levels in relation to the size of the Air Force.*

*In my view, Congress could send a very strong signal by providing sufficient funding to reverse the long decline in capacity. With uncertain defense budgets that never seem to get passed on time, and are at lower levels than our military leaders publicly state they need, it is difficult for all military members, not just Airmen, to see the light of improvement on a dark horizon.*

*Our Airmen do extraordinary things in extraordinary circumstances, if they feel valued and needed by their nation most of all, they will continue to undertake extraordinary achievements.*

**How soon could some of those changes be implemented?**

*The Air Force continues to need Congress's help to ensure needed resources are provided to meet operational requirements.*

**Do you believe the one- and two-year bonuses currently being offered by the Air Force will buy enough time for cultural changes to take place to regain the trust of some of the Air Force’s junior pilots?**

*I do. Simply by offering one- and two-year bonus options the Air Force has acknowledged the need to offer short-term options for aviators to retain them long enough for quality of life and quality of service efforts to take effect. Actions such as these begin to build trust with the Air Force’s junior rated officers that Air Force senior leaders are addressing their concerns.*

**Do you agree that aviation incentive pays and bonuses should be tailored to target communities experiencing shortfalls, and not uniformly offered to every pilot at the maximum rate, regardless of platform?**

*Yes. The aviation bonus should be tailored to target categories with the greatest need and as a tool to retain the experience and skills the Air Force requires to accomplish its missions. The bonus authority is an important tool in the Air Force's retention strategy, especially as the commercial airline industry continues to hire and pay at an unprecedented rate. If confirmed, I will ensure the Air Force fully complies with the Fiscal Year 2017 NDAA Aviation Bonus authority and implements a business case model to identify and improve areas the greatest retention needs.*

**What other long-term initiatives would you recommend to the Secretary of the Air Force to provide a more lasting solution to aviator retention in the Air Force?**

*If confirmed, I will work closely with the Secretary and Chief of Staff in developing a long-term comprehensive strategy to retain the best Airmen our nation needs. I would continue to focus efforts on three main areas that are within the Air Force's control, and continue to work with OSD and the Congress on those outside of the Air Force's control:*

- 1) Increase pilot production to meet future mission requirements*
- 2) Validate non-operational requirements to focus on readiness*
- 3) Balance non-monetary and monetary initiatives to enhance retention*

**Given the high cost of training new aviators, do you believe the Air Force is subsidizing the airline industry with a pipeline of ready-trained aviators at a fraction of the cost to the airline? How would you recommend addressing this dynamic?**

*The Air Force produces pilots to execute the operational requirements necessary to achieve national defense requirements. In return for the training they receive, Air Force pilots are required to provide more than a decade of service. At the conclusion of their service commitments, their technical skills, strong work ethic, and outstanding leadership abilities make them very attractive to both the U.S. civilian sector and the Air Force. Working with Congress, the Air Force is taking numerous steps to retain experienced pilots through improved quality of service, quality of life, and compensation efforts.*

*If confirmed, I will continue to support the Secretary and Chief of Staff in their efforts to explore innovative ways to work with the airline industry and educational institutions to arrive at mutually beneficial solutions.*

**The Air Force states their most critical pilot shortages are in the fighter aircraft career fields, where the Air Force is currently 950 fighter pilots short of requirements. The Air Force believes that shortfall could grow even more acute by the end of the decade. One of the challenges is that the Air Force no longer has a robust inventory of fighter cockpits**

**sufficient to train all of the newly graduated pilots that would be required to sustain an experienced and combat ready Air Force.**

**What initiatives would you recommend the Secretary of the Air Force pursue to address the lack of training opportunities that would mitigate fighter pilot manning shortfalls and help sustain a healthy fighter pilot inventory?**

*The problem is less a lack of training opportunities and more a lack of ability to train due to the small size of the force, combined with a high operations tempo. With 55 fighter squadrons and a shortfall of approximately 1,300 total force fighter pilots, the Air Force is unable to both support ongoing combat operations and, at the same time, effectively train to achieve full spectrum readiness.*

*We cannot assume the demand for fighter squadrons will decline in the near term, and very well could increase. If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary and Chief of Staff to increase end strength, grow aircraft capacity, ensure sufficient spare parts and maintenance personnel are accessible for increased aircraft availability, and finally, reduce additional duty requirements not related to flying to make as much time available as possible for mission training and readiness.*

**The Air Force is also experiencing critical shortages of aircraft maintenance personnel that has led to the Air Force's hiring of contractor teams to replace Air Force personnel.**

**Are there financial or cultural reasons why the Air Force is experiencing shortfalls of skilled maintenance personnel?**

*Financial. The passage of the 2011 Budget Control Act, with its greatly reduced defense funding caps and draconian sequestration enforcement tool, forced difficult decisions for Air Force leaders trying to maintain a healthy and ready force. These decisions included reductions in end strength in an attempt to balance available funding with the missions the Air Force needs to accomplish. While the Air Force has since increased accessions to put maintenance manpower numbers on a path to recovery by fiscal year 2019, experiencing that force will take an additional five to seven years.*

**If confirmed, what immediate steps would you recommend to the Secretary of the Air Force to retain the necessary numbers of skilled maintenance personnel in the Air Force?**

*I am aware the current plan to grow end strength was initiated in the fiscal year 2016 budget; the Air Force must adhere to this plan to get healthy from a maintenance manning perspective by fiscal year 2019. Maintenance manpower requires sufficient and predictable support to ensure experience and sustainability. Additive requirements such as fielding the F-35A will also require additional growth in end strength. The Air Force cannot afford to repeat the past with large cuts to end strength or accessions in a single year, as these reductions flow through the Air Force's personnel system for years as*

*experience “bathtubs,” taking many years to correct. If confirmed, I will continue to emphasize the importance of stable maintenance career field manning.*

## **Readiness**

**The Air Force Chief of Staff testified in March 2016, “Readiness remains both an imperative and a struggle for us. Less than half of our combat units are fully prepared...for a high-tech fight against a capable and well equipped force.”**

**What is your assessment of the current readiness of the Air Force to meet national security requirements across the full spectrum of military operations?**

*It is my understanding that currently less than 50 percent of the conventional air force is ready to conduct the full spectrum of combat operations. While the Air Force is able to conduct nuclear deterrent operations and support counterterrorism efforts, operations against a near-peer competitor requires a significant amount of training, proficiency, and currency. Increased deployed combat operations, paired with budget uncertainty and lower-than-planned top line funding, results in today’s Air Force situation as the smallest, oldest equipped, and least ready in history.*

*Accordingly, if confirmed, I will emphasize the continued focus on readiness shortfalls in five areas; critical personal skills, weapon systems sustainment, training resources, flying hours, and operations tempo. All five must be synchronized and balanced. Since development of human capital takes the longest to complete, we must first address personnel shortfalls in critical skills. The Air Force also need to stabilize weapon system sustainment and improve our training infrastructure. Finally, the Air Force will need to increase their available training hours to provide the time our airmen need to prepare for full spectrum operations. The last area, operations tempo, is largely beyond the Air Force’s control as it must continue to fill combatant commander demand signals. However, operational tempo areas within Air Force control such as reducing unrelated tasks, training requirements, and additional duties will help ease stressors on the force.*

**What is your assessment of Air Force readiness to conduct a mobilization in a national emergency?**

*I assess that, if required, the Air Force is postured to provide nearly 100% of its combat force in response to a major contingency. Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve forces are integral to the operational strength of the Total Force. The Air Force is prepared to mobilize its reserve component in accordance with the legal mobilization authorities approved by the Congress, the President, or the Secretary of Defense. Since September 2001, the Air Force’s reserve component has responded to national emergencies under both voluntary and involuntary mobilization authorities as prescribed in Title 10 of U.S. Code, sections 12301(d) and 12302.*

**What specifically would a fully-funded, whole, “ready” force look like, and how much time would it take to achieve?**

*The Air Force's readiness recovery strategy focuses on disciplined, synchronized investment in readiness accounts in sequential order. The first priority is also the longest-lead process, increasing active duty end strength—325,000 by the end of 2018—to eventually reach 350,000 in five to seven years. Next, increased investment in the training and sustainment enterprises, both of which require three to five years of lead time due to industrial and human processes. Finally, as combatant commander demand signals and rotational combat deployments permit, the Air Force will be ready to increase flying hour funding to facilitate more robust home-station training activities.*

**What readiness-related accounts is the Air Force currently executing at maximum capacity, and if you were given more funding today, what would be the top near-term priorities in which you would invest to restore full spectrum readiness as soon as possible?**

*Funding for the Air Force's fiscal year 2018 flying hour accounts was requested at levels it could execute, though still 12% below the minimum requirement due to manpower and aircraft availability issues. Higher execution rates are limited by shortfalls in appropriately trained critical personnel (primarily maintenance personnel), reduced availability of older legacy aircraft systems, and ongoing support to current combat operations. As a result, the Air Force does not recommend additional funding for flying hour program at this time that it will be unable to execute. However, the Air Force will require increases to flying hour program funding in the future.*

*As stated in the previous response, the top investment priority to begin restoring full spectrum readiness is increasing Air Force end strength. Additionally, increases in funding levels for weapon system sustainment, training resources, and infrastructure are all necessary for full spectrum readiness recovery.*

**The Air Force has difficulty articulating its readiness levels because of the diverse missions it accomplishes, as well as its large proportion of garrison-based capabilities such as space and nuclear missile forces.**

**If confirmed, what steps would you recommend to the Secretary of the Air Force to more accurately measure and articulate comprehensive Air Force readiness levels?**

*If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary and Chief of Staff of the Air Force, the commanders of the Service's major commands, and the Headquarters Air Force staff to identify the most urgent readiness concerns in the near-, mid-, and far-terms. We must assess readiness levels to reveal realistic assessments of the Service's ability to execute the defense strategy, coupled with a realistic assessment of the current fiscal environment. We must take these assessments into account during future program and budget planning.*

## Acquisition Issues

**The National Defense Authorization Acts for Fiscal Years 2016 and 2017 made many changes to defense acquisition processes, including reinserting service chief influence and accountability into acquisition processes.**

**Do you support these acquisition reform provisions?**

*Yes. I support both the spirit and intent of Congress' acquisition reform measures, and if confirmed, I look forward to assisting the Secretary and Chief of Staff in fully implementing these provisions on improving service acquisition processes.*

**What roles do you see for developmental planning, prototyping, and experimentation for fielding of future Air Force capabilities?**

*Developmental planning, experimentation, and prototyping are vital tools that must work synergistically to support fielding of future Air Force capabilities to support the joint warfighter. These tools help inform us of the military utility of new or innovative technologies and operational concepts. Additionally, if confirmed, I will encourage Air Force leaders to embrace a willingness to take measured risks, "fail fast" if necessary, and then harvest lessons learned as keys to innovation and more rapid fielding of required systems.*

**Do you agree the services should exploit non-developmental or commercial, off-the-shelf solutions to meet Air Force requirements? Would this help put capabilities into the hands of Airmen more quickly?**

*Yes. The Air Force must be able to access and integrate leading edge technologies, wherever they are produced, to ensure we maintain our technological and competitive advantages. While the Air Force continues long standing relationships with traditional DoD industry partners, it must also reach out to non-traditional industries. If confirmed, I will fully support industry outreach efforts and analyze acquisition practices to eliminate barriers.*

**How can the Department of Defense and the Air Force better access and integrate commercial and military technology to remain ahead of its potential adversaries?**

*With private sector research and development advances increasingly exceeding those in the military, we must be able to procure capabilities developed in the commercial sector. The Air Force must be able to access and integrate leading edge technologies, wherever they are produced, to ensure we maintain our technological and competitive advantages. If confirmed, I will ensure the Air Force acquisition team explores ways to leverage commercial products and services to get the best value for the Air Force, while capitalizing on recent Congressionally-provided acquisition authorities.*



**What additional acquisition-related reforms do you believe this Committee should consider?**

*If confirmed, I look forward to evaluating current acquisition processes and impacts of recent reform efforts on programs, and will advise the committee of needed acquisition reforms or authorities.*

**What is your assessment of the size and capability of the Air Force acquisition workforce?**

*If confirmed, I will support the Secretary's actions regarding the size and professional development of the acquisition workforce. The Air Force's acquisition enterprise is staffed by highly competent, well trained, and experienced leaders and workforce members. The Defense Acquisition Workforce Development fund is a critical authority, enabling exceptional workforce development programs across the Air Force acquisition enterprise, and significantly enhancing workforce capability.*

**If confirmed, what steps would you recommend to the Secretary of the Air Force to ensure the Department of the Air Force has an acquisition workforce of the size and capability needed to manage acquisition challenges?**

*If confirmed, I will work with Secretary Wilson and Air Force acquisition leaders to fully understand the strategic resource management initiatives focused on managing workforce risk and shaping the acquisition workforce requirement. I will also continue to be a proponent of the Defense Acquisition Workforce Development Fund as a critical tool for maintaining and expanding the professionalism of the acquisition workforce.*

### **Audit Readiness**

**The Department of Defense and the services remain unable to achieve a clean financial statement audit. The Department also remains on the Government Accountability Office's (GAO) list of high risk agencies and management systems for financial management and weapon system acquisition. Although audit readiness has been a goal of the Department for decades, it has repeatedly failed to meet numerous congressionally directed audit-readiness deadlines.**

**What is your understanding and assessment of the Air Force's efforts to achieve a clean financial statement audit in 2017?**

*It is my understanding the Air Force has achieved the significant milestones required to be ready for a full financial statement audit. If confirmed, I will support Under Secretary Norquist's stated intent to begin the audit process in fiscal year 2018. While achieving a clean audit opinion will likely take longer than a single audit cycle, we have reached a point of diminishing returns in attempting to achieve full audit readiness and need to get on with the actual audit and start the process of remediating identified material*

*weaknesses.*

**In your opinion, is the Department of the Air Force on track to achieve these objectives, particularly with regard to data quality, internal controls, and business process re-engineering?**

*I am aware the Air Force has achieved these milestones: demonstration of the ability to account for the Universe of Transactions; reconciliation of the Fund Balance with the Department of the Treasury; the ability to provide supporting documentation for all Journal Vouchers; the ability to account for Existence and Completeness of Assets; and Identification of liabilities for Environmental and Disposal Liabilities.*

**If not, what impediments may hinder the Air Force's ability to achieve this goal and how would you address them?**

*I am currently not aware of any impediments.*

**If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure the Air Force achieves these objectives without developing an unaffordable or unsustainable level of one-time fixes and manual work-arounds?**

*It is my understanding the Air Force is finalizing the full financial assertion memo for Secretary Wilson's signature to be submitted to Secretary Mattis in August, 2017. The award of the Air Force's Independent Public Accounting (IPA) contract is anticipated by the end of September 2017, with work commencing at the beginning of fiscal year 2018. The scope of the effort will include Audit Planning, Internal Control review, and Testing and Reporting of prior year balances and fiscal year 2018 activity. Although the Air Force anticipates a disclaimer from the first full financial statement audit, if confirmed, I will closely monitor the progress of these important steps toward achieving a clean audit opinion.*

## **Nuclear Enterprise**

**What are your views on the necessity of maintaining a nuclear triad?**

*I believe sustaining all three legs of our nuclear triad is essential to the security of the nation and our allies. Each leg of the triad works in concert to maintain strategic stability and collectively serve as a credible and effective nuclear deterrent.*

**What are your views on the condition of the ground-based leg of the nuclear triad, and the urgency of the need for its recapitalization?**

*Although multiple upgrades have been applied to the system since the deployment of the Minuteman III in 1970, further life extension is no longer feasible, and continuing to rely on it for the long term is not cost effective. If confirmed, I will closely monitor the*

*operational and sustainment issues influencing the timeline for replacing the Minuteman III.*

**What priority would you give to the following Air Force nuclear modernization programs within the overall Air Force acquisition budget over the next five to ten years: the Ground Based Strategic Deterrent, the Long Range Standoff Weapon, a nuclear-capable variant of the F-35, and modernization of the nuclear command and control infrastructure?**

*If confirmed, I will ensure nuclear enterprise modernization remains a top priority for the Air Force. I believe each of these modernization efforts is critical to preserving the credibility and effectiveness of the nation's nuclear deterrent, both at home and extended to our allies.*

**What are your views on the contracting strategy for the Ground Based Strategic Deterrent and the Long Range Standoff Weapon?**

*I am aware the Ground Based Strategic Deterrent program is pursuing a fair and open competition for the Technology Maturation and Risk Reduction (TMRR) phase contracts and is currently in source selection. This in accordance with the approved acquisition strategy to replace the legacy system.*

*I understand the Long Range Standoff Weapon program is also currently in source selection. The Air Force plans to award up to two Technology Maturation and Risk Reduction (TMRR) contracts in the fourth quarter of fiscal year 2017.*

**If confirmed, will you affirm that you will give priority attention to continued implementation of the recommendations of the 2014 Nuclear Enterprise Review, especially those recommendations concerning the training, readiness, and morale of service personnel assigned to the nuclear mission?**

*Yes.*

**Will you ensure that the Air Force support to the NATO nuclear mission and its infrastructure at these sites is maintained not only by the Air Force's contribution of personnel and equipment but also by the timeliness of the NATO contribution for replacing aging facilities?**

*Yes.*

### **Fighter Aircraft Inventory**

**As of May 1, 2017, the Air Force possessed 1,970 total fighter aircraft, including 1,145 primary mission aircraft, otherwise known as "combat-coded" fighter aircraft.**

**What is your assessment of the total fighter aircraft inventory required by the Air Force to execute the National Defense Strategy, establish sustainable fighter aircraft deployment rotations, and maintain adequate readiness rates across the combat air forces?**

*The Secretary and Chief of Staff of the Air Force have articulated a requirement for approximately 1,500 combat-coded aircraft in 70 combat squadrons to support the force structure indicated by the 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review Defense Strategy and most recent Defense Planning Guidance. To field 1,500 combat-coded fighter aircraft requires a total fighter inventory of 2,500 fighters, accounting for training, test and evaluation, and backup aircraft inventory and attrition reserve. If confirmed, I look forward to supporting any necessary additional assessments based on the requirements of an updated national defense strategy, currently under review in the Department of Defense.*

### **F-35 Joint Strike Fighter**

**The F-35 Joint Strike Fighter program, the largest and most expensive acquisition program in Department of Defense history, was formally initiated as a program of record in 2001, and subsequently adjusted to a total planned buy of 2,443 aircraft for the United States. The program has not yet completed the System Development and Demonstration (SDD) phase, now projected for an additional seven-month delay and an additional \$500 million in cost overruns. The full rate production decision is not due at least until 2019, 18 years after its inception. At currently projected annual procurement rates, the last delivery of the Air Force's F-35A is now planned for 2040.**

**The Senate Armed Services Committee report accompanying the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016, required the Secretary of Defense to assess the current requirement for the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter total program of record quantity, and then revalidate that quantity or identify a new requirement for the total number of F-35 aircraft the Department would ultimately procure. The Department provided an interim response that stated a reassessment of the total procurement quantity would be provided at a later date.**

**What is your assessment of the required number of F-35As?**

*The program of record currently remains at 1,763 total F-35A aircraft. If confirmed, I will ensure the Air Force continually assesses the appropriate mix and numbers of required fighter aircraft to meet the needs of the joint warfighter and postulated future threat environments.*

**If confirmed, what will be your role in a reassessment of the Air Force's F-35A total program procurement quantity, currently established at 1,763 aircraft?**

*If confirmed, I will ensure the Air Force continually assesses the appropriate mix and*

*numbers of required fighter aircraft to meet the needs of the joint warfighter and postulated future threat environments.*

**President Trump has stated, “Based on the tremendous cost and cost overruns of the Lockheed Martin F-35, I have asked Boeing to price out a comparable F-18 Super Hornet!”**

**In your view, what are the alternatives for the Air Force to purchasing 1,763 F-35As? Should the Air Force consider restarting the F-22 production line, purchasing advanced fourth generation fighters still in production such as enhanced F-15s, F-16s or F/A-18s, or developing a next generation fighter aircraft beyond the F-35A’s capabilities?**

*I am aware the Air Force continually assesses its requirement for the numbers and capabilities of its combat air forces, based on the requirements of the defense strategy and postulated threats.*

*While current fourth-generation aircraft like the F-16 and F-15 are very effective in lower threat environments, they are likely not sufficiently capable against the well defended targets and newer combat aircraft being developed and fielded by our competitors. Our potential adversaries are not standing still, greatly increasing their military capabilities and capacity, and there is cause for concern.*

*While the F-22 is without doubt the world’s premier air dominance fighter, and will hold that title for some time to come, it is a small fleet. The one thing it cannot do is be in two places at once. However, in my view and as referenced in a recent report to Congress, the billions of dollars it would cost to restart the F-22 production line to increase the fleet size of a fighter aircraft whose prototype first flew 27 years ago is not the best course of action.*

*Instead, it would be more prudent to invest in advanced air combat technologies that would augment and replace the remaining F-15Cs the F-22 was originally intended to replace, and eventually the F-22 itself. I understand the Air Force is conducting an ongoing analysis of alternatives that explores these advanced technologies for a capability that would be fielded in the next decade.*

*As part of the Air Force’s ongoing requirements review, any changes to procurement quantities for current programs of record such as the F-35A would likely not have to be decided upon within at least the next five years. Of more immediate importance is for the Joint Program Office to focus on completing the System Design and Demonstration and Initial Operational Test and Evaluation phases of the F-35 program as quickly as possible, get to a full rate production decision, and for the Air Force to procure the maximum annual rate possible of F-35As to quickly rebuild the Air Force’s combat aircraft capacity.*

*Going forward, in terms of major aircraft development programs, time represents both*

*money and rapidly fielded capability to the warfighter. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Secretary and Chief of Staff, as well as the appropriate Air Force senior leaders, to keep acquisition program milestones from conception to operational capability as close together as possible. The Air Force must maximize the advantages of developmental planning, prototyping, and experimentation, and if necessary, fail early and apply the lessons learned to follow-on programs. If the Air Force attempts to lock into gargantuan and long lead time acquisition programs, it will not be agile enough to stay out in front of competitors and potential adversaries.*

## **Bomber Inventory**

**In recent testimony before this Committee, in response to a question from Chairman McCain on how many bombers the Air Force needed to fulfill the national military strategy, General Goldfein stated, “We predict approximately 175 is what we are going to need.”**

**What is your assessment of the required number of bombers needed to fulfill the National Defense Strategy?**

*I understand the Air Force currently has a bomber fleet of 156 B-1s, B-52s, and B-2s today. I agree with General Goldfein that this number is insufficient to meet Defense Planning Guidance and nuclear requirements while sustaining current operational demands and maintaining sufficient training and readiness capacity.*

*The Air Force requires a fleet size that will ensure sustained dominance well into the future and it is my understanding that the Air Force intends to procure a minimum of 100 B-21s. As the B-21 begins to enter the inventory, the Air Force will evaluate which of the 19 remaining B-2, 62 remaining B-1, and 76 B-52 bombers should be considered for divestment.*

*If confirmed, I will ensure the Air Force continually reassesses these figures based on analysis of adversary capabilities and the requirements of the defense strategy.*

**Do you support a re-engine strategy for the B-52 to extend its service life?**

*I am aware the Air Force's B-52 re-engineering assessment is ongoing and expected to be completed later this calendar year. I understand the legacy TF-33 engines cannot continue to safely and reliably support the B-52 without some form of engine service life extension or enhancement initiative. If confirmed, I will ensure the Air Force evaluates engine replacement options comparing a service life extension program or engine enhancement program to determine the most effective and cost-effective approach. I will also work with the congressional defense committees to explore acceptable options that will address concerns of the Congress in this effort.*

**Are there other systems besides the radar that will need to be modernized or**

**replaced to extend the B-52's useful life to the 2040 timeframe?**

*The Air Force's B-52 fleet aircraft average more than 60 years old and requires a comprehensive modernization effort to ensure viability and relevancy to current and future warfighting requirements. In addition to re-engineering and radar modernization, required B-52 improvements include internal weapons bay and communications upgrades, and cryptographic modernization. These efforts both enhance the aircraft's capabilities and its sustainability going forward.*

### **B-21 Long Range Strike Bomber**

**On October 27, 2015, the Air Force announced the award of the engineering and manufacturing development (EMD) contract for the new B-21 bomber. The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 directed enhanced reporting of B-21 program cost, schedule, and performance data to GAO for more frequent assessments and focused oversight.**

**If confirmed, what will be your role in the management of the B-21 bomber program to ensure cost, schedule, and performance remain on track?**

*Stable, achievable, and affordable requirements are critical to the on time and on budget delivery of the B-21 Raider. If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary and Chief of Staff to closely monitor the progress of this critical national security capability.*

**The Air Force publicly released the adjusted average procurement unit cost (APUC) of \$511 million in fiscal year 2010 constant dollars, and \$3.5 billion FYDP funding reduction, both of which were adjusted downward due to the independent cost estimate based on the winning bid.**

**In your view, why would it be necessary for the Air Force to keep the total value of the B-21 EMD program contract award classified, despite the fact that the Air Force budget has included an unclassified request for the EMD phase each year since fiscal year 2012 and each fiscal year's actual expenditures are publicly available?**

*I understand there is a fine balance to be struck between public transparency on this critical national security program (to include releasing the EMD contract award value) and protecting information that our potential adversaries could use to our disadvantage. That said, I am also aware of senior government official responsibilities to assure the American taxpayer that their hard-earned tax dollars are being spent wisely and will achieve the required capabilities for the joint warfighter at the best possible value.*

*I can attest from my previous experience with this program that the Air Force has kept members and appropriately cleared staff of the congressional defense committees fully informed on all aspects of the B-21 program. The Air Force is also fully transparent with*

*Government Accountability Office oversight personnel embedded with the B-21 program team.*

*If confirmed, I will work closely with the Chief of Staff to frequently review security considerations and recommend release of pertinent information as quickly as prudence would dictate. I will also keep the congressional defense committees informed of progress on these reviews.*

**If confirmed, what actions will you take to ensure that the provisions of section 211 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013 are met?**

*If confirmed, my role will be to ensure the B-21 is capable of carrying strategic nuclear weapons when it achieves initial operational capability, and that it will be appropriately certified to employ strategic nuclear weapons not less than two years later.*

*I understand the program is on track to meet those requirements.*

**What is your assessment of the required number of B-21s the Air Force needs to fulfill the National Defense Strategy?**

*The Air Force requires a fleet size that will ensure sustained dominance well into the future, and it is my understanding the Air Force intends to procure a minimum of 100 B-21 bomber aircraft.*

### **Presidential Aircraft Replacement (PAR)**

**The Air Force's total cost estimate for PAR program development is \$4.3 billion in "then-year" dollars. After President Trump stated, "costs are out of control, more than \$4 billion," the Boeing CEO stated his company will, "get it done for less than that...we're going to make sure that he gets the best capability and that it's done affordably."**

**If confirmed, how will you ensure the Air Force will keep the development costs "less than that," especially as the Air Force plans to sign a development contract with a cost-plus reimbursement structure?**

*In January 2017, Secretary Mattis directed the Deputy Secretary of Defense to guide a review of PAR requirements in coordination with the White House Military Office with an aim to reduce program costs. This review resulted in the White House reaffirming the requirements baseline. The Air Force supports these requirements as the minimum necessary to support the Presidential mission.*

*If confirmed, I will work closely with Air Force acquisition leaders to ensure we meet the Administration's intent to provide the best taxpayer value for the executive airlift needs of the Office of the President.*



## **EC-130H Compass Call Recapitalization Program**

**The Air Force has plans to buy 10 business jet aircraft to replace the capabilities provided by the current EC-130H Compass Call aircraft. These plans include using some form of rapid acquisition procedures that would lead to selecting a particular airframe very quickly. This approach causes some concern because selecting an aircraft for this program could give the selected aircraft contractor a particular edge winning later competitions for modernization programs for other Air Force capabilities, such as programs to modernize the Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System (JSTARS), signals intelligence aircraft, and airborne warning and control aircraft.**

**How would you suggest the Air Force ensure that subsequent competitions are not unduly influenced by a near-term rapid acquisition?**

*I understand two vendors filed protests regarding the COMPASS CALL program that are currently under review by the Government Accountability Office. I have not been briefed on the bids or the protests.*

*If confirmed, I will work closely with Air Force acquisition leaders to ensure the most appropriate acquisition strategy for each program is used to achieve maximum capability at the best value for the American taxpayer.*

**If the Air Force cannot provide such assurances now, should the Air Force hold a broader competition now for aircraft that would reach beyond the more narrowly defined Compass Call modernization program?**

*I understand two vendors filed protests regarding the COMPASS CALL program that are currently under review by the Government Accountability Office. I have not been briefed on the bids or the protests.*

## **Replacement of the E-4B National Airborne Operations Center (NAOC)**

**The E-4B will be reaching end of life in the late 2020s. This is a unique asset for performing the full range of the Secretary of Defense's title 10 responsibilities, including nuclear command, control, and communications. There is concern that a possible split of the missions of the NAOC amongst separate future aircraft could cause a loss of functionality and interplay between the E-4B's current mission sets.**

**What are your views on the E-4B replacement program, and will you ensure that any replacement program ensures that the Air Force will retain the ability to perform the full E-4B mission set as required now and in the future?**

*I understand the Air Force is conducting an analysis of alternatives for the replacement of the National Airborne Operations Center, which will be co-led by the Navy to support*

*an E-6B replacement in the future. The analysis is due in Fiscal Year 2018. If confirmed, I will keep the committee informed on the results of this review.*

**If you have determined at any time that the acquisition of the E-4B replacement will not meet Joint Staff requirements, will you promptly inform the congressional defense committees of your determination?**

*Yes.*

## **Munitions**

**Air Force munitions inventories, particularly those of precision guided munitions, have declined significantly due to high operational usage, insufficient procurement, and a requirements system that does not adequately account for the ongoing need to transfer munitions to our allies and operations short of major combat, such as in the current operations in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria.**

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

*Over the past two and a half years, the Air Force has reportedly expended over 40,000 munitions in operations against ISIS. Congress has supported the Air Force by authorizing Overseas Contingency Operation funds to replenish these munitions.*

*It is my understanding the munitions industrial base is close to its maximum manufacturing limits in current industrial capacity for some munitions. If confirmed, I will work closely with acquisition leaders of the Air Force, the other services, and Office of the Secretary of Defense to explore opportunities to increase munitions manufacturing capacity.*

**How will the Air Force adapt to self-imposed Department of Defense restrictions on area attack and denial munitions in accordance with the Ottawa Treaty?**

*I am aware that with respect to area denial munitions, the Ottawa Convention on Anti-Personnel Landmines (APL) bans the development, production, acquisition, stockpiling, and retention of all anti-personnel landmines. The United States is not a signatory to the Ottawa Convention. However, there is a Presidential Policy Directive that restricts use of anti-personnel landmines. If confirmed, I will ensure the Air Force continues to work closely with the Army on alternatives to anti-personnel landmines.*

*Regarding area attack munitions, I am aware DoD policy restricts the use and sale of cluster munitions after 2018 that have a greater than one percent chance of leaving unexploded ordinance behind on the battlefield. It is my understanding that the Air Force currently has approximately 2,000 area attack and denial munitions that meet the DoD policy guidelines and will continue to be available for warfighter use after the*

*January 1, 2019 deadline. If confirmed, I will work closely with Air Force acquisition leaders to develop alternative munitions that will meet both the joint warfighter's area attack requirements and the DoD cluster munitions policy.*

## **Space**

**The Secretary of the Air Force was assigned new oversight responsibilities for space programs in the Department of Defense when the position was designated as the Principal DOD Space Advisor (PDSA).**

**If confirmed, would you propose any changes to national security space policy and programs?**

*I am aware the space enterprise is no longer simply an enabler to other operations, or a "utility" that provides services, like GPS, to vast numbers of users. Our policy and programs must address capability gaps associated with space as a key component of joint warfare. Current policy does not fully address deterrence, nor the requirements for actions in space to successfully fight and win should deterrence fail. If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary in her PDSA role, and the Chief of Staff, to develop and recommend policies that allow the Air Force to pursue and adapt innovative technologies and unique applications to provide the strategic advantage we must sustain in space.*

**There is growing concern about the vulnerability of our nation's space-based systems and its supporting architecture.**

**Do you agree, and, if so, what priorities would you recommend to the PDSA for addressing these vulnerabilities?**

*Yes, there is a concern about the vulnerability of our nation's space-based systems.*

*I am aware that maintaining space superiority is a core USAF mission. It is not only operationally important, it is also a strategic imperative for protecting U.S. and allied capabilities throughout a crisis or conflict. The nation must acknowledge the emergence of space as a warfighting domain; not because we desire it, but because our strategic competitors are preparing to make it so.*

*If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary in her PDSA role, and the Chief of Staff, in establishing priorities to ensure the Air Force can deter, and if necessary defeat any challenges to U.S. space-based capabilities.*

**What do you perceive as the threats to our national security space satellites?**

*Other nations have studied how the U.S. conducts warfare, and understand our national dependence on space-based capabilities. Those nations are actively developing, testing, and fielding capabilities to deny us the use of our space systems through a range of*

*effects from interference to physical destruction. These capabilities pose a tangible threat, as many of the space systems we as a nation depend upon were designed to operate in a largely benign space environment. If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary in her PDSA role, and the Chief of Staff, to continue to evolve the way space-based capabilities are developed, fielded, and operated so they remain viable in a contested space environment.*

**Do you support the development of offensive space control capabilities to counter those threats?**

*While offensive space control capabilities provide a means to protect our space systems, they must be precise, focused on the threat, and not cause undue harm to the space environment or the peaceful nations that operate there. It is imperative the Air Force, as the primary provider of space capabilities, take steps to protect and, if necessary, defend our space systems.*

**According to a recent study by GAO, fragmented leadership has undermined the Department of Defense's ability to deliver space capabilities to the warfighter on time and on budget. One repeated cause for concern has been fractured decision-making and many layers of bureaucracy.**

**Do you believe the existing space acquisition structure is sufficient? If not, what changes do you believe are appropriate?**

*If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary in her PDSA role to review the space acquisition structure to ensure we are obtaining needed capabilities at a good value, and will recommend improvements where applicable.*

**Do you support more competition in the launch of Department of Defense payloads?**

*I support free and open competition as a general principle and a way to ensure American taxpayers gain the best value for their tax dollars. I understand the Air Force is committed to space launch competition when there is more than one certified launch service provider capable of launching the payload.*

**The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 prohibits the use of Russian rocket engines after December 31, 2022. Are you committed to ending U.S. dependence on the use of Russian rocket engines as soon as possible, perhaps even before December 31, 2022?**

*Yes. If confirmed, I will support efforts to end U.S. dependence on the use of Russian engines as soon as possible.*

## **Space Organizational Issues**

**There has been no shortage of commentary on the issues confronting the space enterprise. GAO identified more than 60 stakeholder organizations that have undermined decision-making on space programs. The challenges are not new and are well documented yet the Air Force has consistently failed to adopt recommendations for addressing space organizational deficiencies. The conclusions from the Rumsfeld commission in 2001 remain just as true today as they were 17 years ago. The Department of Defense is “not yet arranged or focused to meet the national security space needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century” and that the expanding “opportunities from space are simply not reflected in the present institutional arrangements.”**

**How do you characterize the organizational problems with the national security space enterprise?**

*I am aware requirements for space capabilities and operations are generated from all of the Services, the combatant commands, the Joint Staff, the Intelligence Community, other civil organizations, allies and coalition partners, and senior policy-makers, and this is not a comprehensive list. Combined with each organizations’ management and governance processes, the complexity and cumbersome nature of the organizational challenges with the enterprise becomes apparent.*

**Are there any issues raised in prior studies like the Rumsfeld commission that you feel are incorrect?**

*I understand many of the initiatives in prior studies, particularly the Rumsfeld commission, focused on appointing a senior level advocate for space, while at the same time recommending the Air Force be assigned to organize, train, and equip for space, department-wide responsibility for planning, programming and acquisition, formal designation as the DoD executive agent for space (which since evolved to the PDSA), and designating the commander of Air Force Space Command as a four-star officer. The alignment of all of these roles and responsibilities to the Air Force results in an apparent de facto appointment as the senior level space advocate, and the Air Force’s position is it should be recognized as such.*

*If confirmed, I will work closely with the Secretary in her PDSA role, and the Chief of Staff, to examine observations, conclusions, and recommendations from previous studies, as well as the results of the Air Force’s ongoing study as directed in the Fiscal Year 2017 NDAA, to develop any further recommendations for her to make to Secretary Mattis and the Congress on improving the national security space enterprise.*

**Are there any issues you feel these studies may have missed?**

*I understand the paramount concern is ensuring the Department is sufficiently postured to prevail in a contested space domain, which is something not addressed in previous studies.*

**Do you support the development of a separate Space Corps similar to the Marine Corps?**

*Not at this time. I agree with Secretary Mattis, Secretary Wilson, and General Goldfein in their assessments that establishing a space corps now would be disruptive and add overhead bureaucracy at a time when Secretary Mattis is trying to reduce such overhead to increase the lethality of the Department of Defense. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Secretary in her PDSA role, the Chief of Staff, other senior leaders in the Department, and the Congress, to identify and recommend necessary improvements to the national security space enterprise.*

**Do you support making the Air Force Space Command a subordinate Unified Command of the U.S. Strategic Command with joint staffing?**

*I understand the Air Force is considering the establishment of a Sub-Unified Command for space under U.S. Strategic Command. This is part of their assessment of the full tradespace of space governance and organization, to include joint operations needs and impact of changes to the Unified Command Plan structure. I am aware the Air Force is also pursuing other joint efforts to build resiliency and agility in space operations, including Combined Space Operations, Multinational Space Collaboration, a Commercial Integration Cell, and civil space cooperation. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Secretary in her PDS role, and the Chief of Staff, to review and assess the benefits and potential drawbacks to such an arrangement.*

**Cyber and Electronic Warfare**

**Cyber is an issue that cuts across many departments and agencies of the Federal government, from the intelligence community to the Department of Defense, the FBI, Homeland Security, the State Department, the Justice Department, and so on. This fact, and the complexities associated with the cyber domain, severely challenges the ability of diverse agencies to integrate and collaborate effectively.**

**Do you believe the Air Force is organized and postured appropriately to address the full spectrum of cyber threats to the Air Force's air, space, and cyberspace operations?**

*While the Air Force is currently providing cyber forces to defend the Department of Defense Information Network (DoDIN), support the Defend the Nation mission, and support combatant commanders, the ubiquitous nature of communications, computers, networks, and the growing Internet of Things means it is likely no element of government or the private sector is postured for the full spectrum of cyber threats. If confirmed, I will place a priority on organizing, training, and equipping the Cyber Mission Force.*

**Do you have recommendations for improving inter-service and inter-agency orchestration of offensive and defense cyber capabilities?**

*Not at this time. I understand the Department is in the process of standing up 133 teams that make up the Cyber Mission Force and the Air Force is contributing its fair share of these teams. In addition, I understand the Air Force was recently designated the Executive Agent for Joint Cyber Command and Control and the Unified Platform. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Secretary and Chief of Staff, and other service and DoD leaders, to carry out the Air Force's responsibilities as an Executive Agent and provide key cyber capabilities to the Cyber Mission Force and the Combatant Commands.*

**In light of the Defense Department's recent release of its electronic warfare (EW) strategy, and considering the Air Force has relied upon Navy and Marine Corps EW capabilities since retiring the EF-111 Raven aircraft in 1998:**

**What should be the appropriate Air Force contribution to U.S. EW capabilities?**

*I understand the Air Force is part of the Joint Airborne Electronic Attack analysis of alternatives for future capabilities. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Chief of Staff, the other services, and OSD on future capabilities.*

**Because of the difficulty in determining and defining the point where cyber operations and electronic warfare operations merge, how you would organize, train, and equip the Air Force to minimize gaps and seams with regard to threat assessment, requirements determination, material solutions, and concept of operations development for these two critical mission areas?**

*I am aware the Air Force has co-located the divisions responsible for cyber operations, cyber requirements, and electronic warfare in Headquarters Air Force to allow for increased collaboration on requirements and programs. While both electronic warfare and cyber operations can have the similar effects of disabling an enemy's systems rather than physically destroying them, the methods, equipment and concepts of operations are quite different. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Air Force senior leaders to determine the way forward on integrating these capabilities.*

### **Air Force Information Technology Programs**

**The Air Force's Air Operations Center 10.2 system upgrade program recently experienced a Critical Change (Major Automated Information System equivalent to a Nunn-McCurdy critical program breach) that resulted in development costs doubling and a three-year delay.**

**What major improvements would you like to see made in the Air Force's development and deployment of major information technology (IT) systems?**

*I am aware of the DoD initiative to improve defense business system requirements and acquisition processes, known as the Business Capability Acquisition Cycle (BCAC). The most important BCAC benefit is the alignment of acquisition, functional, infrastructure*

*and IT investment governance to streamline decision-making, foster agile development, and move toward a process more appropriate for business capability initiatives. If confirmed, I will work with Air Force acquisition, CIO, and deputy chief management officer leaders and functional teams to create an integrated Air Force defense business lifecycle management process to rapidly deliver incremental business capabilities.*

*I will focus on achieving significant IT improvements through emphasizing accountable governance forums for evaluating cost, identifying schedule and functional tradeoffs across stakeholders, and addressing concerns across chains of command. This new process will enable the Air Force to establish decision rights and address end-to-end process ownership to drive improved decision-making.*

**How will you encourage process and cultural change in organizations so that they maximize the benefits that new enterprise IT systems can offer in terms of cost savings and efficiency?**

*I understand the Air Force's Total Force cyberspace workforce continues to transform under the leadership of the Air Force CIO. The Air Force also has several strategic initiatives underway, including formulating a cyber-aptitude test for recruitment, standing up a cyber innovation center at the Air Force Academy for workforce and new officer development, and leveraging the Defense Innovation Unit Experimental – DIUx for commercial technology infusion. If confirmed, I will continue to encourage such initiatives.*

*I will emphasize optimizing business processes to enable streamlined and standardized work, and maximize the use of commercial off-the-shelf software products. I will empower the Air Force Deputy Chief Management Officer (SAF/MG) to oversee business process re-engineering and development of a comprehensive implementation plan to establish information technology functional requirements. Several new Air Force enterprise information technology systems such as the Air Force Logistics Maintenance Repair and Overhaul Initiative and the Air Force Program Budget and Execution System will take advantage of reengineered processes to improve efficiency and reduce costs.*

**What is the relationship between Air Force efforts at implementing enterprise IT programs and supporting computing services and infrastructure to support Air Force missions, and efforts being undertaken by the Defense Information Systems Agency?**

*I am aware the Air Force is partnering with the Defense Information System Agency (DISA) to deliver modern information technology to ensure Air Force mission effectiveness. DISA's goal is to converge communications, computing, and enterprise services into a single joint platform that can be leveraged by all Services to support their missions. One of the first comprehensive efforts being deployed by DISA is the Joint Regional Security Stacks. So far, Air Force bases in the Northeast and Southeast regions have migrated to this single security architecture.*



*In addition, as DISA develops the requirements for a commercial cloud-based software as a service solution to email, chat, and collaboration, the Air Force was identified as the lead service in pathfinding the effort on behalf of the DoD. Procuring hosting services from DISA and commercial cloud providers will allow the Air Force to reduce costs, improve cybersecurity posture, and refocus the cyber workforce away from running data centers toward critical cyber operations. If confirmed, I intend to strengthen the interaction between the Air Force information technology enterprise and DISA.*

**How will you ensure that appropriate business process reengineering is undertaken and accomplished before initiating new business systems and IT program development, and deployment?**

*If confirmed, I will work with Air Force acquisition, CIO, and deputy chief management officer leaders to ensure sound business processes are used for all business systems. This will require the completion of key functional and acquisition milestones as well as establishing decision rights and addressing end-to-end process ownership to drive improved decision-making.*

**What role will the Air Force's research and testing enterprise play in the development and deployment of Air Force business IT systems?**

*I understand the Air Force's research and testing enterprise plays an important role in delivering business systems. The ability to test business systems prior to fielding ensures investments are interoperable and meet key performance parameters. If confirmed, I will review and assess the resources and capabilities of the test community to ensure they are organized and equipped effectively and efficiently to test and evaluate IT systems. Furthermore, in close consultation with process owners and the Air Force Deputy Chief Management Officer, I will ensure the research and testing enterprise is better integrated into business system lifecycles, and not become the long pole in delivering rapid and meaningful capabilities.*

**Air Force-Related Defense Industrial Base**

**What is your assessment of the systems and processes for identifying, evaluating, and managing risk in the Air Force's organic and commercial defense industrial base, including the munitions industrial base?**

*I understand the Air Force continually assesses the defense industrial base in relation to existing requirements and programs, and there are also DoD-wide efforts to ensure access to a robust defense industrial base. However, I have concerns over the long term effects of the top-tier consolidations of the defense industry over the past quarter century that may now be manifesting in reduced competitive and innovative behaviors. I am especially concerned with the DoD's ability to rapidly increase the output of the defense industrial base in the case of a national emergency requiring a full mobilization. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Air Force and DoD acquisition leaders on this*

issue.

**How should Air Force acquisition leaders consider impacts on the industrial base when addressing requirements for recapitalization or modernization of major defense weapons systems and munitions?**

*I am aware the Air Force considers industrial base impacts when planning major procurement and long term support for its weapons systems. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Air Force senior acquisition leaders in ensuring the maintenance of multiple sources for component supply, and maximizing commercial capability and capacity in the best interest of the taxpayer and the Air Force.*

**If confirmed, what changes, if any, would you recommend for systems and processes to improve identification, monitoring, assessment, and timely actions to ensure that risk in the Air Force-relevant sectors of the defense industrial base is adequately managed to develop, produce, and sustain technically superior, reliable, and affordable weapons systems and munitions?**

*I am aware of changes over the last several years to acquisition policy in DoD as well as acquisition reform from Congress. Many of those changes will improve risk calculations for maintaining Air Force-relevant sectors of the defense industrial base and inform acquisition decisions. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Air Force acquisition leaders on implications of recent changes and reforms, and identifying areas for improvement.*

## **Air Force Science and Technology**

**What is your understanding and assessment of the role Air Force science and technology programs have played and will play in developing capabilities for current and future Air Force systems?**

*Air Force science and technology programs are critically important to advancing capabilities to sustain America's technological overmatch in comparison to her potential adversaries. Rapid innovations quickly transitioned to the battlefield are necessary for success in both current and future conflicts. If confirmed, I will strongly support Secretary Wilson's focus area of research and development, as well find new ways to get new capabilities from the laboratory to the field faster.*

**How will you ensure that promising Air Force science and technology programs will successfully transition to operational warfighting capabilities?**

*I understand the Air Force continues to transform into an agile enterprise to maintain—and ultimately increase—its technological edge in the emerging strategic environment.*

*This is a prerequisite to bridging the gap between when a technology or concept is first developed and demonstrated, to when it can be successfully acquired and fielded as an operational capability. If confirmed, I will support the Air Force's reinvigoration of developmental planning, prototyping, and experimentation, as well as other rapid acquisition authorities, to more quickly deliver advanced capabilities to operational forces.*

**If confirmed, what metrics would you use to judge the value and the investment level in Air Force science and technology programs?**

*I am aware that operational success on the battlefield is not necessarily correlated to research and development metrics. With that said, if confirmed, I would be interested in tracking success rates of technologies traversing the technology transition "funding valley of death" and finding ways to incentivize program managers to transition more advanced technological capabilities into existing programs of record.*

*If confirmed, I will support Secretary Wilson's focus on invigorating Air Force research and development, while encouraging creativity and innovation toward increased capabilities for the joint warfighter.*

### **Religious Guidelines**

**In your view, do Department of Defense policies concerning religious accommodation in the military appropriately accommodate the free exercise of religion and other beliefs, including individual expressions of belief, without impinging on those who have different beliefs, including no religious belief?**

*Air Force commanders have a responsibility to ensure that the spiritual needs of all Airmen are met. This responsibility, unique to the military, is carried out through the Chaplain Corps. Commanders must avoid the official endorsement of any particular religion, while also being able to freely exercise their own religious beliefs. Air Force policy must continue to ensure that all Airmen are able to choose to practice their particular religion or subscribe to no religious belief at all.*

**Do you agree that the primary role of the military chaplaincy is to provide for the free exercise of religion by all service members and that military chaplains are sufficiently trained to perform or provide for this constitutional right in today's pluralistic military community? If not, why not?**

*The Air Force Chaplain Corps provides spiritual care and ensures that the spiritual needs of all Airmen and their families are met. A chaplain advises Air Force leaders on matters related to religious, spiritual, ethical, moral and morale concerns and advocates for the religious and spiritual needs of Airmen and their families.*

*The Chaplain is a valuable member of the military unit as Airmen deal with not only the*

*joys and pains of life that all of us experience, but also with the unique spiritual questions and pressures combatants face. In my experience on active duty, military chaplains at the unit level carry out these responsibilities well.*

**Do you believe it is the role of military chaplains to provide for the religious and spiritual well-being of all members of the armed forces, regardless of their faith beliefs?**

*Air Force Chaplains “provide” and “provide for” the spiritual needs of Airmen and their families. If the chaplain cannot personally “provide” for the need of the Airmen and their family due to tenets of their faith, they seek to “provide for” the need of the Airmen and the family. Chaplains provide religious worship and rites, pastoral care, counseling and spiritual care for Airmen. Chaplains will not perform duties incompatible with their faith and noncombatant status.*

**Do you believe that current policies provide sufficient guidance to military chaplains who conduct non-religious command training where attendance is required or encouraged to allow chaplains to discuss their religious faith anecdotally and respectfully in a pluralistic setting to support the training objectives?**

*It is my understanding that Air Force guidance makes clear that chaplains adhere to the tenets of their faith and are not required to participate in religious activities, including public prayer, which are inconsistent with their faith tradition.*

## **Sexual Assault Prevention and Response**

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

*First, I am aware the systems in place to support and respond to victims are more effective and more widely known.*

*Second, the education and training of Airmen toward sexual assault prevention is standard practice and widely deployed.*

*Third, commander accountability for their unit command climate has been reinforced, as well as responsibility for the thorough and impartial investigation of and response to allegations of assault.*

*I believe the true key to defeating this crime is to effectively prevent perpetration of it, while continuing to respond aggressively to victims of sexual assault. I am aware the Air Force established an office under the Deputy Chief of Staff for Manpower, Personnel and*

*Services with dedicated prevention subject matter expertise, and responsibility for developing the capacity to eliminate this personal violence, especially by focusing on scientifically proven, evidence-based prevention strategies.*

*It is the solemn responsibility of Air Force leaders to the mothers and fathers of America, that their sons and daughters will always be treated with dignity and respect, and feel safe and secure during their time in service to the nation. I have personal skin in this game, as my wife currently serves in the Air Force Reserve, and my own daughter and son will soon embark on careers with the Air Force.*

*If confirmed, I will ensure sexual assault and prevention and response remains a top focus area during my tenure.*

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

*If confirmed, I will strongly support Secretary Wilson's efforts toward reducing the incidence of sexual assault in the Air Force, to ensure victims receive the appropriate care, and to ensure perpetrators are appropriately punished and removed from the service.*

*I am cognizant the Air Force is seeking to get beyond "awareness" to implement prevention approaches that have proven results, particularly focused on providing life skills, interventions, bystander training, and positive unit culture.*

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

*From what I have observed, I believe the Air Force is on the right path to prevention. They recently instituted an annual program called Green Dot to instill culture change to reset norms in two ways: Interpersonal violence will not be tolerated; and, everyone is expected to do his/her part to prevent violence. It focuses on what Airmen can and will do rather than relying on what leaders tell them to do.*

*It's my understanding the Air Force has Special Victims Investigation and Prosecution teams available at bases to respond to sexual assault cases. These units receive comprehensive training to investigate and respond to allegations of sexual assault.*

*If confirmed, I will ensure sexual assault and prevention and response remains a top focus area during my tenure.*

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

*It is my understanding the Air Force has made improvements in training Air Force healthcare professionals who provide support to victims. I'm aware these professionals attend a two-week course specifically centered on supporting sexual assault victims.*

*I also understand all treatment facilities are manned with a minimum of one trained Sexual Assault Medical Manager who coordinate the initial care and ensure they receive necessary follow-up care.*

*My understanding is, once an investigation is initiated, a program liaison is assigned to help the victim to navigate the military justice system, use available military and civilian community resources, and facilitate access to legal assistance at no cost to the client.*

**What is your assessment of the Department of the Air Force Special Victims' Counsel program?**

*I am aware Special Victims' Counsels (SVC) have been, and remain, instrumental in building the victim's trust in the military justice process and empowering the victim with meaningful options regarding the disposition and resolution of their case.*

*It is my understanding that SVCs are completely integrated into the military justice system, frequently advocating for their clients' privacy rights in the investigative stage to assist victims to make informed decisions regarding their options during investigative interviews. They speak for the victim especially in instances where the victim's interests differ from those of either the defense or the government.*

*I believe SVCs provide specialized legal assistance tailored to the unique legal issues that face victims of sexual assault, such as expedited transfers, humanitarian reassignments, landlord-tenant issues, divorce matters, workplace issues, and performance report issues. The goal is to remove much of the anxiety that a victim otherwise would face when seeking legal advice on a personal matter related to his or her sexual assault.*

*I also understand that feedback indicates victims truly believe they have a strong advocate in their corner, and continue to overwhelmingly recommend other victims request SVC assistance.*

**What is your assessment of the potential impact, if any, of proposals to remove the disposition authority from military commanders over violations of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, including sexual assaults?**

*I believe the foundation of military discipline is the commander's authority to set standards, to require Airmen to meet those standards, and to hold Airmen appropriately accountable when they fail to meet standards. As a two-time former commander, I can attest to the fact the military justice system is the commander's ultimate tool to ensure a disciplined force with a worldwide mission. Removing the commander's disposition authority undermines the effectiveness of the military justice*

system.

*Commanders do not and cannot make their decisions in a legal vacuum. Instead, every commander is informed and advised by his or her staff judge advocate throughout the life of a case, from report and investigation, through disposition and adjudication. The military justice system depends on both a judge advocate who advises a commander and the commander who then decides what happens with a case. This system best ensures fairness, justice, and discipline and keeps the commander responsible and accountable for the climate, training, prevention, and response to infractions in the unit.*

*The primary objective remains to reduce the incidence of sexual assault. Command responsibility is vital to the success of that effort.*

**What is your assessment of the Air Force's protections against retaliation or reprisal for reporting sexual assault?**

*I strongly believe all reports of sexual assault, as well as all reports of retaliation or reprisal for reporting sexual assault, or any crime, must be investigated. Substantiated allegations must be referred for appropriate command action.*

*Recognizing the importance of issues surrounding retaliation, I am aware the Air Force has already taken significant steps to prevent and respond to retaliation, especially related to reports of sexual assault.*

*Sexual Assault Response Coordinators, Victim Advocates, and Special Victims' Counsel are able to identify victims' concerns about retaliation and address them early and effectively through the installation Case Management Group -- the support system led by commanders.*

*Complaints about retaliation can also be reported to and investigated by the Air Force Office of Special Investigations, the staff judge advocate, the inspector general, or the Equal Opportunity office.*

**Child Abuse in Military Families**

**Recent press reports indicate that the number of incidents of child abuse in military families has increased.**

**What is your understanding of the extent of this issue in the Air Force, and if confirmed, what actions will you take to address it?**

*I am aware the rate of child maltreatment in the Air Force has remained stable over the last decade, but regardless, even one case of child abuse is unacceptable to me. If confirmed, one of my top priorities will be to support and protect Air Force families. I understand the Air Force Family Advocacy Program convenes an annual Air Force Domestic Violence and Child Maltreatment Fatality Review Board in accordance with*

*DoD policy. This board reviews each family maltreatment case related death, drafts a report for Department of Defense Family Advocacy Program, and incorporates lessons learned into Air Force and DoD policy.*

*The Air Force Family Advocacy Program provides clinical services, safety planning, risk management, prevention services, and advocacy to military families. Early identification and reporting to Family Advocacy is the key to keeping children and families safe. If confirmed, I will continually assess the effectiveness of these programs.*

## **Military Health Care**

**Section 702 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 transferred oversight and management of military hospitals and clinics from the military services to the Defense Health Agency (DHA).**

**How would you ensure a rapid and efficient transfer of the operations of Air Force medical facilities to the DHA?**

*I understand the Air Force is actively engaged with the Defense Health Agency (DHA) and other Service medical components to develop the fiscal year 2017 NDAA Section 702 plan associated with the administration of military treatment facilities (MTFs). An efficient transfer of operations must mitigate disruption to the ready medical force and their ability to support combatant commander requirements; ensure our beneficiaries continue to receive quality, safe and accessible health care; and position the DHA to be fully successful in assuming their new authorities and responsibilities. If confirmed, I will closely monitor the development and execution of the timely transfer of operations the section 702 plan will address.*

**If confirmed, what would you recommend to the Secretary of the Air Force to ensure the Air Force reduces its medical headquarters staffs and infrastructure to reflect the changing scope and size of its mission?**

*I understand the Air Force is actively engaged with the Defense Health Agency (DHA) and the other Service medical components to develop the fiscal year 2017 NDAA Section 702 plan associated with the administration of military treatment facilities. This plan will transfer certain functions from the Air Force to the DHA along with the associated resources. If confirmed, I will recommend the Secretary of the Air Force direct the reduction of its medical headquarters and infrastructure as the plan is fully developed and the specific functions and assets identified for transfer to the DHA are defined. I will also keep the congressional defense committees informed as to the progress of the plan development.*

*The Air Force Surgeon General (AF/SG) will serve as my principal advisor on all health and medical matters including strategic planning and policy development related to military health readiness through recruiting, organizing, training, and equipping medical*



*personnel of the Air Force. Therefore, AF/SG should be assigned appropriate staff at the headquarters level to perform those responsibilities. A systematic approach will be used to ensure readiness missions—a medically ready force and ready medical force—can be accomplished without duplicating functions assigned to the DHA.*

**What is your assessment of the quality of health care and access to health care provided to Air Force military personnel and their families?**

*I am aware the quality of health care delivered at Air Force military treatment facilities has consistently scored over 95%, with the military health system goal being 90%. Satisfaction with inpatient care has consistently been between the 75th and 90th percentile, and satisfaction with care when needed has consistently averaged 90%.*

*Quality of care is also measured in terms of patient safety. There has also been an increase in reporting of events that could have caused patient harm, but were caught and corrected before they reached a patient. Reporting of these events allows for lessons-learned to be shared with the other treatment facilities. With regard to access to health care, the Air Force can still improve, and the Air Force Medical Service is dedicated to seeing every patient when they need to be seen. To improve health care access, the Air Force has implemented policies to increase the number of same-day appointments. If confirmed, I will ensure the Air Force Medical Service remains forward-focused and continually seeking new ways to increase patient care and satisfaction.*

**If confirmed, how would you work with the Air Force Surgeon General and the DHA to improve the health care experience for Air Force military personnel and their families?**

*If confirmed, I will work with the Air Force Surgeon General to focus on continually improving care for Airmen, their families, and veterans. I understand the Air Force Medical Service has implemented numerous initiatives to improve patient safety, quality, and access, and has adopted the principles of High Reliability to reduce variability and improve performance. Its focus on zero harm and the promise of Trusted Care is robust, and has resulted in improved quality and safer patient care. Since 2015, more than 600 Air Force leaders have been educated in safety science and their engagement in patient safety is high.*

*Improving Air Force families' experience requires access to healthcare and a robust feedback loop. The Air Force Medical Service is focused on using the new Tri-Service Joint Outpatient Experience Survey to collect experience feedback. The Air Force Surgeon General's focus on Trusted Care requires a culture that is consistently improving the patient experience through continuous process improvements and development of performance management metrics. If confirmed, I will ensure the continued use of feedback collected at all levels to improve the healthcare experience.*

**Suicide Prevention**

**What is your assessment of the Air Force’s suicide prevention program?**

*I am aware suicide prevention remains a top priority for Air Force leaders. The current program is multi-faceted and comprehensive, focusing on both resilience and prevention. In addition to the 11 core elements of the Air Force Suicide Prevention Program emphasizing leadership, community education, and support to Airmen and their families, they have emplaced six coordinated lines of effort. These include: integration of prevention, an optimized Airman culture, strength-based messaging, civilian support services, targeted outreach, and enhanced clinical care.*

*The Air Force is also fully networked with subject matter experts from the CDC, National Institute of Mental Health, VA, DoD, and academic partners to share knowledge and data and optimize effectiveness and management of resources. If confirmed, I will ensure Air Force leaders at all levels remain fully engaged and committed to preventing suicides and promoting resilience in the total force, as well as continue to address prevention of interpersonal and self-directed violence in all its forms.*

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

*I am aware the Air Force views suicide prevention first and foremost as a leadership issue. If confirmed, my role, in conjunction with the Air Force senior leadership team, will be to promote early help-seeking as a sign of strength by aggressively addressing barriers and stigma related to medical and mental health care. The Air Force should continue to pursue innovative solutions, including integrated operational support to maximize our responsiveness to our operational Airmen. Additionally, the Air Force should continue to conduct cutting-edge research and resource exceptional medical and support programs. Finally, I will ensure the Air Force continues to reinforce a “Wingman” culture through leadership and mentorship to sustain an environment where all Airmen support one another and cope effectively, allowing them to succeed and thrive—both while deployed and at home station.*

**Senior Military and Civilian Accountability**

**While representative of a small number of individuals in the Defense Department, reports of abuses of rank and authority by senior military and civilian leaders and failures to perform up to accepted standards are frequently received. Whistleblowers and victims of such abuses often report that they felt that no one would pay attention to or believe their complaints. Accusations of unduly lenient treatment of senior officers and senior officials against whom accusations have been substantiated are also frequently heard.**

**What are your views regarding the appropriate standard of accountability for senior civilian and military leaders of the Department of the Air Force?**

*If confirmed, I would expect our senior leaders to uphold the highest standards of behavior, and insist the Air Force take all allegations of inappropriate conduct very seriously. Airmen at every level should be held accountable, but it must start at the top.*

**If confirmed, what steps would you take to assist the Secretary of the Air Force in ensuring senior leaders of the Air Force are held accountable for their actions and performance?**

*If confirmed, I will support the Secretary's efforts to ensure allegations are promptly investigated, and that substantiated allegations are referred for appropriate command action.*

### **Base Closures and Realignment**

**The Department of Defense has repeatedly requested a Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) round.**

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

*Yes. Only through the BRAC process are the Services able to perform a holistic review of our installations, strategically align the right weapons systems with the right missions at the right locations, and effectively reduce excess infrastructure where warranted.*

**If you are confirmed, and if Congress were to authorize another BRAC round, how would you recommend the Secretary of the Air Force set priorities for infrastructure reduction and consolidation within the Department of the Air Force?**

*If confirmed, and if Congress were to authorize a DoD BRAC round, I would recommend the Secretary direct the department to evaluate the operational needs of the Air Force to defend our nation. BRAC analysis should focus first on the infrastructure footprint, including ranges and air space, that the Air Force will need to retain, factoring in projected needs based on emerging technologies and evolving warfighting strategies. Only after the Air Force considers what it needs to preserve, can the Air Force begin to identify installations that are truly excess to projected needs, and that can be consolidated so that the Air Force can repurpose its limited budget toward higher priority mission and quality of life requirements.*

**What is your understanding of the responsibilities of the Air Force in working with local communities with respect to property disposal if Congress were to authorize another BRAC round?**

*Air Force installations and personnel rely heavily on their local communities to sustain our missions, and I take the Air Force's responsibility to those communities very seriously. Through past BRAC actions, the Air Force has had many great successes*

*working with communities to convey our bases to local redevelopment authorities. These have resulted in many successful redevelopments into trade ports, industrial, recreational, and residential areas, and forming significant tax basis for local jurisdictions. If confirmed, and if the Air Force were to close bases in the future, I would work to continue the tradition of positioning communities for success, and ensure the Air Force addresses environmental cleanup requirements that may be necessary before property can be transferred.*

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

**What is your understanding of why such cost growth and lower realized savings occurred?**

*It is my understanding that BRAC 2005 costs grew due to deliberate decisions to transform DoD through realignment, to upgrade DoD infrastructure to enable the return of force structure from overseas, and to bring medical and research facilities up to modern standards. Many of the BRAC 2005 actions were focused on these transformational and modernization actions, and not the elimination of excess infrastructure and generation of savings that had been the focus of the prior BRAC rounds.*

**How do you believe such issues could be addressed in a future BRAC round?**

*If confirmed, and another BRAC round were authorized, I would insist on rigorous data-driven analysis that comprehensively factors in all the costs of a future realignment or closure. The Air Force should prioritize recommendations that reduce excess infrastructure and generate savings that can be reinvested in higher priority mission areas, while ensuring the preservation of sufficient infrastructure and airspace for future needs.*

## **Operational Energy**

**In his responses to the advance policy questions from this Committee, Secretary Mattis talked about his time in Iraq, and how he called upon the Department of Defense to “unleash us from the tether of fuel.” He stated that “units would be faced with unacceptable limitations because of their dependence on fuel” and resupply efforts “made us vulnerable in ways that were exploited by the enemy.”**

**Do you believe this issue remains a challenge for the Department of Defense?**

*Yes, unleashing U.S. forces from the tether of fuel remains an important operational challenge and goal of Secretary Mattis. I understand the Air Force is actively working on solutions.*

**If confirmed, what specific steps will you recommend to the Secretary of the Air Force to unleash the Air Force from the tether of fuel?**

*If confirmed, I will work closely with the Secretary and Chief of Staff to improve combat capabilities by emphasizing energy efficiency initiatives associated with flying operations, and improving installation energy resiliency at U.S., overseas, and forward operating bases.*

*This would include emphasizing flying operations fuel savings through more efficient mission planning, upgrading range equipment, and reducing engine idle times, as well as optimizing demand, assuring supply, and improving resiliency of the installation energy that powers Air Force installations.*

**If confirmed, what priorities would you recommend to the Secretary of the Air Force for defense investments in and deployment of operational energy technologies to increase the combat capabilities of warfighters, reduce logistical burdens, and enhance mission assurance on our installations?**

*If confirmed, I would recommend the Secretary continue current investments in a range of materiel and non-materiel initiatives to address aircraft fuel consumption, ranging through new propulsion technologies, composite materials and structures, aircraft design, and operational tools designed to improve performance in flight. I would also recommend evaluation of the feasibility, operational benefit and business case for near term engine upgrades, as well as longer term propulsion and power management systems offering more dramatic improvements in the range and endurance of combat aircraft. To enhance mission assurance through energy assurance on our installations,*

*Finally, I would recommend continued direct and third-party investments to improve energy resiliency, optimize demand, and assure our energy supplies. Efforts like these provide the Air Force with the ability to continue operations, recover from energy interruptions, and enable mission accomplishment.*

**If confirmed, how will you consider operational forces' energy needs and vulnerabilities during training exercises, operational plans, and war games?**

*I understand the Air Force is developing better tools and processes to analyze energy vulnerabilities at all levels: base, mission, campaign, and operations. If confirmed, I will continue to consider the impact energy has on all Air Force missions; including the aggregate impact of increased consumption by the joint force. Additionally, adversary attacks on fuel storage and resupply systems should be factored into training exercises, operational plans, and wargames.*

*If confirmed I will ensure the entire battlefield energy ecosystem will be looked at as a system of systems to fully recognize energy-related risks on operational plans. On the installation side, I will support Air Force participation in service and national level wargames, to examine how long-term disruptions to the nation's electrical grid would*

*impact the Air Force's critical infrastructure and potentially jeopardize its ability to accomplish its missions.*

### **Energy and Acquisition**

**How can our acquisition systems better incorporate the use of energy in military platforms, and how, if at all, are assessments of future requirements taking into account energy needs as a key performance parameter?**

*Energy use should be a key consideration from the beginning of the requirements development process through the full acquisition lifecycle. If confirmed, I will ensure Air Force capability planners incorporate energy as a design criteria as described in Air Force strategy, instructions, policy directives, and guidebooks which reinforce the Joint Capability Integration and Development System mandate.*

### **Energy Resiliency in the Fight Against the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS)**

**Back in July 2016 after a coup attempt, the Turkish government cut off power to Incirlik Air Base, which is the primary platform for launching coalition airstrikes in the fight against ISIS. For roughly a week, deployed units had to operate off backup generators, which is expensive and is certainly not the preferred method of operation given the demanding tempo of sorties against ISIS. Recently, the Air Force described an incident (via open source) in which an RPA mission based in the United States was flying a targeting mission overseas. Because of a power outage stateside, the RPA feed temporarily lost visual and the target was able to get “away and is able to continue plotting against the United States and our allies.”**

**If confirmed, how would you recommend the Secretary of the Air Force address and make energy resiliency and mission assurance a priority for the Air Force, to including acquiring and deploying sustainable and renewable energy assets to improve combat capability for deployed units on our military installations and forward operating bases?**

*Ensuring the Air Force has the energy it requires where and when needed is critical to mission assurance. I am aware the Air Force recently issued its overarching policy for energy projects. One of the priorities is to make sure critical missions and capabilities continue to have the energy needed to function. If confirmed, I will continue to support this effort.*

**Do you support the J-4's enforcement of the energy supportability key performance parameter in the requirements process?**

*I understand the energy key performance parameter is mandated by statute and Defense Department directive for all new acquisition programs that have an operational energy*

*impact. If confirmed, I will ensure the Air Force complies with this requirement.*

**Section 2805 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 gave the Department new authority to plan and fund military construction projects directly related to energy resiliency and mission assurance, and to help address and mitigate against incidents like Incirlik, not to mention secure micro-grids to help prevent cyber-attacks.**

**If confirmed, will you commit to use section 2805 to support mission critical functions, and address known energy vulnerabilities with projects that are resilient and renewable?**

*Yes.*

### **Environment**

**If confirmed, will you comply with environmental regulations, laws, and guidance from the Environmental Protection Agency?**

*Yes.*

**If confirmed, will you make the same level of investment for the Department of Defense's Environmental Research Programs?**

*I understand the future year's defense plan projects level funding for environmental research. While I do not yet have the details of the focus and results of the environmental research program, in general and in agreement with Secretary Wilson, it is my perception the Air Force should increase its research and development efforts.*

**If confirmed, will you work with the Department of Interior and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to find cooperative ways to ensure military readiness and protect the environment on and around U.S. military installations?**

*Yes.*

### **Management and Development of the Senior Executive Service (SES)**

**What will be your recommendations to the Secretary of the Air Force for the management and development of the Air Force senior executive workforce, especially in the critically important areas of acquisition, financial management, and the scientific and technical fields?**

*If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary to assess the current Senior Executive Talent Management and Development processes and ensure our executives are equipped to lead and manage the Air Force. In particular, I will focus on senior executive development in the acquisition, financial management, and scientific and technical fields, as well as*

*review current leader development plans to ensure we have the right people, properly prepared, and in the right positions to support mission accomplishment.*

**Do you believe that the Air Force has the number of senior executives it needs, with the proper skills to manage the Department into the future?**

*If confirmed, I will, in consultation with the Secretary, evaluate if the Air Force has the appropriate number of Senior Executives and if they have the skills required to successfully lead the Air Force.*

### **Congressional Oversight**

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

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

*Yes.*

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

*Yes.*

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

*Yes.*

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

*Yes.*

**Do you agree to answer letters and requests for information from individual Senators who are members of this Committee?**

*Yes.*



**If confirmed, do you agree to provide to this Committee relevant information within the jurisdictional oversight of the Committee when requested by the Committee, even in the absence of the formality of a letter from the Chairman?**

*Yes.*