

**Advance Policy Questions for Lieutenant General Stephen Lyons, Army
Nominee for Commander, U.S. Transportation Command**

Department of Defense Reforms

The Senate Armed Services Committee has initiated an intensive review of the organization of the Department of Defense—both military and civilian, including the elements created by the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986—in order to enhance the effectiveness of the Department of Defense in the execution of the National Defense Strategy going forward.

Based on your experiences as a senior officer, what challenges have you observed with the current organizational structure, with particular focus on warfighting capabilities, and what modifications, if any, do you think are necessary to the current organizational structure including any Goldwater-Nichols Act provisions?

I am aware of the extensive reforms, both enacted and currently proposed in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019, and I am reviewing their impact on processes and personnel. These reforms deserve the Department of Defense's (DoD) full attention, assessment, and feedback to the Committee. If confirmed I will comply with the current laws set forth by Congress and deliver any additional reform recommendations I deem critical to our national defense and warfighting capability to the appropriate committee.

Duties and Qualifications

What is your understanding of the duties and functions of the Commander, U.S. Transportation Command?

The Commander, United States Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM), is responsible for providing air, land and sea transportation for the DoD, in peace, crisis and war. USTRANSCOM depends on three component commands and two subordinate commands to accomplish this mission: Air Mobility Command (AMC), Military Sealift Command (MSC), and the Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command (SDDC) as well as the Joint Transportation Reserve Unit (JTRU) and the Joint Enabling Capabilities Command (JECC). The Commander is assigned multiple responsibilities in the Unified Command Plan (UCP) to include: the Mobility Joint Force Provider; DoD single manager for transportation; the Joint Deployment and Distribution Coordinator (JDDC); DoD single manager for patient movement; and Joint Enabling Capabilities provider.

What background and experience do you possess that qualify you to perform these duties?

I am very familiar with the Command's mission as I was the previous Deputy Commander for USTRANSCOM from August of 2015 through July 2017. As the current Joint Staff Director for Logistics, I work closely with USTRANSCOM, and all of the combatant commands, assuring the integration of logistics planning and execution in support of joint force readiness, and advise the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff on logistics matters.

Do you believe that there are any steps that you need to take to enhance your expertise to perform the duties of the Commander, U.S. Transportation Command?

As the current Joint Staff Director for Logistics, I am aware of the breadth of USTRANSCOM's worldwide responsibilities. If confirmed, I will engage with all of USTRANSCOM's component commands, DoD agencies, and our commercial partners to ensure I fully understand the range of challenges they face in order to accomplish USTRANSCOM's crucial mission.

Relationships

If confirmed, what will be your relationship with:

The Secretary of Defense

The Commander, US Transportation Command performs his duties under the authority, direction, and control of the Secretary of Defense. Commander, USTRANSCOM is directly responsible to the Secretary of Defense to carry out the command's missions.

The Deputy Secretary of Defense

The Deputy Secretary of Defense has the authority to act for the Secretary of Defense when serving as his designated representative in the Secretary's absence. As such, the USTRANSCOM Commander will report to and through the Deputy Secretary when serving in that capacity.

The Under Secretaries of Defense

Under Secretaries of Defense coordinate and exchange information with DoD components, including Combatant Commands, which have collateral or related functions. In practice, this coordination and exchange is normally routed through the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Additionally, the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment provides logistics policy for the Department. If confirmed as a combatant commander, I look forward to the continuing these relationships.

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

As specified in title 10, the Chairman is the principal military advisor to the President, the National Security Council, the Homeland Security Council and Secretary of Defense. The Chairman is not, by law, in the chain of command, which runs from the President through the Secretary to each Combatant Commander. However, in his role as Global Integrator, the CJCS plays an important role in a full range of security matters on behalf of the Secretary of Defense. If confirmed, I will keep the Chairman fully informed regarding USTRANSCOM matters.

The Service Secretaries and Service Chiefs

Each Service Secretary is responsible for equipping, training, maintaining ready forces belonging to that Service. Close coordination with each Service Secretary providing forces to

USTRANSCOM is essential to ensure the Joint Deployment and Distribution Enterprise (JDDE) remains ready to meet national security requirements. In addition, USTRANSCOM is responsible to deliver service-provided forces to combatant commanders. If confirmed, as Commander USTRANSCOM, I will continue my predecessors' productive dialogue with the Service Chiefs and the Commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard.

The other combatant commanders

USTRANSCOM's primary mission is to support each of the Combatant Commanders in accomplishing the responsibilities they are assigned in the Unified Command Plan. Given the complexity of today's security environment, it is essential that all the Combatant Commanders work together to execute U.S. national security policy. If confirmed, I will continue to build upon the trust and mutual support my predecessors have fostered with the other Combatant Commanders.

The Director of the Defense Logistics Agency

The Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) manages the global supply chain for the DoD, other federal agencies, and partner and allied nations. USTRANSCOM maintains a strong strategic partnership with DLA. During my time as the deputy at USTRANSCOM, the relationship with DLA was strong and growing stronger. We included their director in our semi-annual Component Commanders conferences and if confirmed I have every intention of continuing to develop this relationship. USTRANSCOM and DLA have ongoing transformational efforts to improve the JDDE operational outcomes and lay the groundwork for data-related initiatives.

Major Challenges and Priorities

In your view, what are the major challenges confronting the next Commander, U.S. Transportation Command?

The Command's number one priority is warfighting readiness and maintaining the capability, capacity, and comprehensive readiness to project decisive military power. The NDS describes an emerging Joint Operating Environment of great power competition that requires USTRANSCOM to respond with a decisive force despite the likelihood of long and contested lines of communication. The next Commander of USTRANSCOM will need to ensure the JDDE remains capable of projecting decisive military power at the end of long and contested lines of communication. Two challenges requiring near term attention are cyber mission assurance and recapitalization of the sealift fleet. If confirmed, I am prepared to conduct a comprehensive end-to-end evaluation of the JDDE's ability to successfully execute the range of global war plans.

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

If confirmed, I will work with my fellow Combatant Commanders, Service Chiefs, Defense Agency, Joint Staff and OSD partners to assess risk and collaboratively develop mitigation strategies to address agreed upon challenges. I will continue the Command's efforts to advance

its cyber defenses and partner with the commercial sector to improve the JDDE cyber security. In addition, USTRANSCOM will continue to seek necessary authorities from Congress to recapitalize the organic sealift fleet.

If confirmed, what broad priorities would you establish?

If confirmed, my #1 priority will be warfighting readiness to meet the demands laid out in NDS 2018. To enable warfighting readiness I would continue to pursue mission assurance across the cyber domain, investments in IT and data related initiatives like data analytics and machine learning, and workforce development initiatives to highlight a few.

What do you consider to be the most serious problems in the performance of the functions of the Commander, U.S. Transportation Command?

The National Defense Strategy (NDS) outlines the emergence of great power competition that will challenge our ability to respond globally with decisive military force. It is incumbent upon USTRANSCOM to mitigate the full range of vulnerabilities to the JDDE in order to preserve multiple options for our nation's leadership and present multiple dilemma for our potential adversaries.

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

If confirmed, I am committed to conduct an end-to-end assessment of the JDDE to accomplish the family of global war plans to include consideration of adversary actions and other attempts to degrade output of the mobility enterprise.

Relations with Congress

What are your views on the state of U.S. Transportation Command's relationship with the Senate Armed Services Committee in particular, and with Congress in general?

USTRANSCOM has established a good working relationship with the Committee and Congress in general. As the previous USTRANSCOM Deputy Commander, I am confident the command is responsive to Congress' requests and aggressively worked to meet any suspense set by Congress; whether it be for requests for information, briefings, office calls, or hearings.

If confirmed, what actions would you take to sustain a productive and mutually beneficial relationship between Congress and U.S. Transportation Command?

If confirmed, I will continue the current working relationships already maintained by USTRANSCOM. I will make myself available to Congress, provide my personal view when asked and ensure we continue to strive to meet any and all deadlines established by Congress on requests to USTRANSCOM.

National Defense Strategy (NDS)

The NDS refers to the return of great power competition.

What capabilities do you believe the Joint Force needs from the U.S. Transportation Command to prevail in competition with great power adversaries?

The primary purpose of the JDDE is to project military power globally at the time and place of our nation's choosing. The JDDE is an independent system of systems consisting of multiple routes, nodes, modes, military and commercial capabilities, enabled by political access, global mission command and globally integrated processes in order to synchronize scarce resources against priority requirements. It is the job of USTRANSCOM to ensure the JDDE remains ready to deliver an immediate force tonight and a decisive force when needed.

The NDS's Global Operating Model and Dynamic Force Employment concepts emphasize sustaining capabilities for major combat, while "providing options for proactive and scalable employment of the Joint Force."

In your assessment, how will this differ from current models of employment of force?

The Dynamic Force Employment (DFE) model emphasizes the need to be strategically predictable but operationally unpredictable in the employment of joint force capabilities. In my judgement, the current global mobility posture is well suited to support the tenants of Dynamic Force Employment. However, if confirmed, I will remain committed to continuously assess the JDDE posture and capabilities to ensure USTRANSCOM can meet the force employment strategies described in the NDS.

How do you intend to work with the Services to implement these concepts while balancing the need to rebuild readiness?

As force providers, the Services are at the heart of our nation's military readiness. Our ability to rapidly shift combat power to address an emerging threat or global crisis is at the heart of DFE. If confirmed, I am committed to ensure that USTRANSCOM will continue to deliver and project our nation's forces as the command has for the past 30 years.

As part of its focus on near peer competitors, the NDS disputes the decades-long assumption that the U.S. military will have uncontested access to international airspace and sea lanes. Given this new threat:

What areas of operations will be more challenging for the joint distribution and deployment enterprise, and what mitigations is U.S. Transportation Command planning for those areas?

As accurately described in the NDS, we must anticipate and be prepared to operate in contested environments across all warfighting domains (air, land, sea, space and cyberspace). It is undeniable that the homeland and strategic military logistics are no longer a sanctuary. The

reemergence of strategic competition amongst great powers will require a continuous assessment of the JDDE's ability to meet national security objectives in order to preserve our comparative advantage to project military forces trans-oceanic distances. If confirmed, I am committed to assess vulnerabilities and appropriate mitigation to preserve our ability to project military power globally.

Do these challenges require the Services to generate more capabilities to deal with A2/AD environments, where we could face greater enemy mine or ISR capabilities?

DoD has a robust mobility enterprise that strives to operate efficiently. In many instances, our efforts to operate efficiently come at the expense of resiliency. Large, fixed bases, consolidated facilities, centralized stocks of fuel and munitions, and associated automation systems can make good targets. DoD is in the process of modifying the way we think about mobility operations. To better understand the investment trades required to preserve our ability to project military power globally. If confirmed, I am fully committed to continue this important effort.

In such circumstances, who has responsibility for ensuring that the needed materiel is delivered to the point of employment—U.S. Transportation Command or the Services? What responsibilities do host nations have?

As the current Joint Staff J-4, I am keenly aware that it takes the Services, DLA, USTRANSCOM, and our commercial partners, all working in close coordination to provide the unity of effort needed to move and sustain the force. As the JDDC, USTRANSCOM has responsibility to support the movement of materiel from the point of origin to the point of employment. The Global Distribution Network that DoD relies on to deliver materiel is a complex, interdependent enterprise of public, private, US government and host nation owned infrastructure, systems, processes and people.

The last tactical mile of that global network is the responsibility of the geographic combatant commander and the Service component; however, USTRANSCOM will help that tactical piece of global distribution in any way possible to ensure the warfighter receives what they need when and where they need it. USTRANSCOM has the responsibility to lead collaborative planning efforts to align and synchronize logistics functions and recommend sequencing of logistics actions across the JDDE.

Logistical support depends on mutual cooperation, treaties, agreements and host nation support assistance. Host nation support is codified in agreements for the provision of adequate resources to support forces during peace, crisis and conflict. US Forces and host nations both derive enhanced combat readiness benefits from the civil and military assistance rendered in peace, crisis, and war.

USTRANSCOM proactively assesses en-route infrastructure, distribution capabilities and regional support plans to identify capability gaps. If confirmed as Commander, US Transportation Command, I will use my JDDC authority to collaborate, through the geographic combatant commanders, which course of action is best to sustain distribution network access to project and sustain power.

What capability and/or capacity shortfalls in the current Joint Force present the most significant challenge to supporting U.S. Transportation Command operations in these contested environments?

The full capacity of the JDDE relies upon timely access to the Reserve Components as well as emergency preparedness programs like the Civil Reserve Air Fleet (CRAF) and Voluntary Intermodal Sealift Agreement (VISA) that leverage commercial industry augmentation. The NDAA-18 directed Mobility Capability Requirements Study is intended to assess the adequacy of JDDE capacity relative to the current NDS. The study will consider the implications of contested environments on degraded mobility outputs. In addition, the CJCS has directed the Joint Staff to develop an analytic approach to strategic mobility wargaming. If confirmed, I will review all findings and recommendations and pursue appropriate mitigation measures.

Which programs, in your assessment, are the highest priorities for mitigating current and emerging warfighting capability and/or capacity shortfalls in the Joint Force?

If confirmed, I'm committed to conduct an end-to-end assessment of the JDDE to ensure the DoD mobility enterprise is prepared to meet current and future requirements consistent with the joint operating environment described in the NDS. In my current role as the Director, Joint Staff J-4, I am aware that these priorities may include enhanced cyber mission assurance, increases in ballistic missile defense at key nodes, increased mobility capacity in critical areas like aerial refueling and port operations, as well as the need to address U.S. Navy sealift recapitalization.

U.S. Military Capabilities and Force Posture

Dave Ochmanek of the RAND Corporation testified before this Committee in November 2017 that "U.S. forces could, under plausible assumptions, lose the next war they are called upon to fight."

Do you agree with this assessment when it comes to a potential conflict with China?

The most far-reaching objective in the NDS is to set the military relationship between China and United States on a path of transparency and non-aggression. The United States is committed to a secure and prosperous Asia, based upon shared interests and values of freedom, free markets, and vibrant economic partnerships to benefit all nations, including China. However, we can not ignore that China is leveraging its military modernization to exert influence and has established predatory economic policies to coerce neighboring countries to reorder the Indo-Pacific region to their advantage and undercut principles of international order. The United States and our alliances and partnerships must remain prepared to deter aggression, maintain stability, and ensure free access to common domains. As Secretary of Defense Mattis frequently points out "America has no god-given right to victory on the battlefield." This underscores the importance of DoD's mission to provide a combat-credible joint force to deter war, should deterrence fail, respond rapidly and win decisively.

What are the most significant strategic and operational factors that have led you to either support or disagree with such an assessment?

For decades, the U.S. has enjoyed dominance in every operating domain. We could generally deploy our forces when we wanted, assemble them where we wanted, and operate how we wanted. Today, every domain is contested, air, land, sea, space and cyberspace. The reemergence of great power competition and rapidly changing character of warfare means that we will face an ever more lethal and disruptive battlefield across all domains and extending to our homeland. It is now undeniable that the homeland is no longer a sanctuary. This underscores the imperative to develop a joint force designed to match this new reality which will require sustained and predictable investment to modernize our military to make it fit for our time.

Experience in Managing Logistics Operations

You have served as the Director for Logistics (J-4) on the Joint Staff.

What steps do you believe you need to take to achieve a more complete understanding of the logistics operations of the component commands of the U.S. Transportation Command?

Having served as the USTRANSCOM Deputy Commander, I am aware of the logistics operations of the component commands and the capabilities they bring to bear to accomplish the command's global mission. If confirmed, I will engage with the USTRANSCOM components and subordinate command, as well as sister agencies and commercial partners to enhance my understanding of the capability and challenges they face in their execution of that global mission.

Civil Reserve Air Fleet

The military services rely heavily on the Civil Reserve Air Fleet (CRAF) to supplement organic airlift in order to meet its wartime and peacetime transportation requirements.

What is your assessment of the CRAF's ability to meet requirements to transport any equipment, materials, or commodities for the use of U.S. military operations and respond to a humanitarian disaster?

Today, the CRAF program is fully subscribed by 25 carriers to meet anticipated DoD needs in crisis. It should be noted that the employment of CRAF capabilities requires a permissive (wartime) environment. If confirmed, I will continue to work with our CRAF partners to ensure they remain committed and ready to support DoD requirements when need.

How much should we be relying on CRAF to meet our peacetime and wartime airlift requirements?

Consistent with our National Airlift Policy, CRAF is designed to leverage the commercial air carrier industry to provide capability beyond that available in the organic military airlift fleet. The NDAA 18 directed OSD to conduct a Mobility Capability and Requirements Study to

reassess our reliance on the CRAF program in the light of the new NDS. Those initial study results are due in October 2018.

What changes, if any, do you think need to be made to CRAF—authorities, requirements, composition—to ensure that CRAF can continue to meet our needs?

Any changes to CRAF should be informed by the ongoing Mobility Capability and Requirements Study. If confirmed, I acknowledge the need to continually assess all facets of the CRAF program to ensure it meets our needs and supports the NDS.

Sealift

When the United States goes to war, U.S. Transportation Command moves approximately 90% of its cargo requirements with the strategic sealift fleet, which consists of government-owned ships augmented by the commercial U.S.-flagged fleet.

What is your assessment of current and planned organic strategic sealift capacity?

Department of Defense mobility studies over the past two decades have validated the requirement for approximately twenty million square feet of Roll-on/Roll-off sealift capacity, of which the organic fleet provides approximately three-fourths of the capacity and the remainder is sourced commercially through VISA. The USN organic fleet is rapidly approaching end of useful life. It is important to execute the Navy's recapitalization plan, to include its new vessel construction program. Today, we have sufficient capacity to respond to war, but we must take steps now to ensure that we maintain that capability. Those steps include supporting new construction, acquiring used and properly managing service life extensions.

What do you believe is the appropriate mix of new construction, used ship purchasing, and service life extensions that the Department should employ in the Ready Reserve Force recapitalization plan?

I differ to the U.S. Navy within the context of their Service responsibilities to retain a viable surge sealift capacity to deliver the decisive force. The U.S. Navy's sealift recapitalization plan has three components: new construction, acquiring used commercial vessels, and extending service life of existing fleet. New construction at U.S. shipyards is the long-term solution to sealift recapitalization. Acquiring used vessels is a way to fill the gap until a new construction program can deliver. I am aware of some estimates that recommend the procurement of up to 26 used vessels to prevent a gap in aging sealift capacity. The exact mix would be dependent upon congressional funding, authority, and timing. Extending service-life beyond 50 years is also feasible, but it exacerbates the challenge of maintaining older vessels with obsolete equipment and scarce spare parts. The USN sealift recapitalization strategy addresses near-term needs while establishing a long-term new shipbuilding construction program.

What is your view of the importance of maintaining U.S.-flagged vessels to participate in strategic sealift, including through the Voluntary Intermodal Sealift Agreement and Maritime Security Program?

The U.S. has long been a maritime nation. I believe it is critically important to maintain a viable U.S. flagged sealift capability to support DoD needs. The vessels within the VISA and the Maritime Security Program (MSP) provide approximately twenty-five percent of the Department's force deployment capacity, and the majority of its sustainment capacity. Additionally, our commercial sealift partners maintain a pool of trained and ready U.S. Merchant Mariners needed to crew the organic U.S. Navy strategic sealift fleet when it transitions from reduced operating status to fully operational status.

What is your assessment of the adequacy of the current and qualified, licensed merchant mariner population who would be available to crew strategic sealift vessels to meet surge and protracted U.S. Transportation Command requirements?

In accordance with Presidential Directives and National Policy, USTRANSCOM relies on the Maritime Administration to determine whether adequate manpower is available to support the operation of reserve ships during a crisis. The current Department of Transportation/Maritime Administration assessment, expressed this year in the Maritime Workforce Working Group Report to Congress, estimates there are sufficient Mariners to activate the surge fleet but would be challenged to concurrently sustain both the organic and commercial fleets through a crew rotation. Any additional losses in the U.S. Merchant Marine will put the ability to surge the fleet at risk.

Cybersecurity

Much of the rest of the critical communications and operations of the Defense Department can be conducted over the classified internet service of the Department, which is not connected to the public internet and is therefore much more protected against eavesdropping, espionage, and/or disruption by computer network attacks. U.S. Transportation Command, however, must communicate over the unclassified internet with many private-sector entities that are essential to the Defense Department's force generation and deployment operations in the transportation and shipping industries in particular.

What actions do you plan to take, if confirmed, to ensure that the Department reduces the risk of cyber intrusions that would affect U.S. Transportation Command's operations?

If confirmed, I am committed to making cyber mission assurance a top priority for the command. This requires a continuous mission assurance approach to ensure we are making the appropriate investments to protect those C2 / IT systems and infrastructure that are most consequential to mission success. In addition, USTRANSCOM must have sufficient resiliency across the JDDE to operate in a denied, and or degraded cyber environment. If confirmed, I look forward to working with CYBERCOM and other stakeholders to preserve a capable joint deployment capacity to meet our national security objectives.

Do you believe that the current posture of U.S. Transportation Command and the Department is sufficient to deal with adversaries in cyberspace?

Cyber vulnerabilities to strategic logistics and associated commercial industry partners pose a serious threat to U.S. national security. Although military defenses on the DoDIN are relatively formidable, adversaries have demonstrated the capability and willingness to target and gain access to DoD-connected commercial industry. Cyber is a warfighting domain. As such, it is dynamic as adversaries and other actors attempt to counter our defensive measures. Today, we are challenged to visualize our key cyber terrain, understand the capabilities and intent of our adversaries, and develop a realistic estimate regarding to provide cyber mission assurance across the mobility enterprise. If confirmed I will continue to make this a high priority and I look forward to working closely with CYBERCOM, DHS, and the full range of stakeholders on this important topic.

What do you believe are the critical needs of U.S. Transportation Command for operating in the presence of cybersecurity threats?

The Joint Deployment and Distribution Enterprise that includes a wide range of commercial dependencies represents a large cyber-attack surface for potential adversaries. USTRANSCOM must continuously develop an understanding of adversary cyber capabilities and intentions, and take actions to protect critical infrastructure and key cyber terrain essential for mission success. Cyber is a rapidly changing domain that requires dynamic counter-measures. USTRANSCOM must also ensure there is sufficient resiliency across the JDDE to enable continued operations in a denied or degraded cyber environment. If confirmed, I will continuously work to protect critical domains, advocate to hire the right talent to defend cyber infrastructure and introduce technologies to bolster analytical capabilities.

How important is it that U.S. Transportation Command be aware of cyber intrusions by advanced persistent threat (APT) actors into the networks of airlines, shippers, and other defense contractors that enable the Command's operations?

A significant portion of USTRANSCOM's capacity resides with the commercial industry. As a result, it is extremely important that USTRANSCOM is aware of cyber intrusions by APT actors to rapidly assess impacts to global operations.

When U.S. Transportation Command becomes aware of an APT intrusion into an operationally-critical contractor, what steps should the Command take to determine whether operational plans should be adjusted to mitigate the risk of the intrusion affecting military operations?

Prior to changing an operational plan, USTRANSCOM would implement a mission risk assessment process that enables them to consider appropriate operational and technical mitigation actions based on the threat, vulnerabilities, and potential mission impact. I am aware that USTRANSCOM has specified contractual language requiring all commercial partners to meet National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) cybersecurity standards. If confirmed, I am committed to contractual compliance and information sharing with our

commercial partners, and seeking new ways to ensure mission assurance across the JDDE cyber domain.

Relationship with the Military Departments

U.S. Transportation Command relies on the Services to make strategic acquisition planning decisions, such as the KC-46 tanker for refueling and the Rough Terrain Container Handler for port loading.

How is U.S. Transportation Command involved in this process, and do you believe the Command's needs are taken into account?

As a combatant command, USTRANSCOM is responsible to define the joint deployment capability and capacity requirements to meet the NDS. The Services are responsible to provide a trained and ready capability consistent with war plans. If confirmed, I am committed to working closely with the military departments to ensure there is a common understanding of capability requirements and potential risk associated with investments or lack thereof.

Peacetime-Wartime Logistics Management

Our transportation and logistics systems have been significantly altered over time to reduce organic military air and sealift capacity and rely on commercial aircraft and sealift as well as commercial supply chains to deliver spare parts to deployed forces. This was done to reduce costs and increase buying power and flexibility for the military.

Is there increased risk from this approach? If so, what is the nature of that increased risk?

Our commercial providers are both a strength and potential vulnerability. There is inherent risk regarding the level of responsiveness in relying on U.S. industry partners to meet wartime deployment and sustainment requirements when these companies are engaged daily in domestic and international commerce moving people and goods across the globe. That risk is mitigated by maintaining a balance of organic and commercial capabilities within the portfolio. Additionally, commercial providers help mitigate geographic access challenges through their ability to leverage existing intermodal networks to deliver military materiel.

How should U.S. Transportation Command plan for dealing with the risk inherent in such operations (e.g., providing equipment and logistics to deployed forces thousands of miles away in potential combat zones)?

USTRANSCOM, in coordination with OSD, is updating the mobility analysis in response to the NDS. The Mobility Capabilities Requirements Study 2018 will seek to address the department's ability to meet future combatant commander deployment and sustainment requirements. As in past studies, the mobility analysis considers both organic and commercial capabilities to ensure outside capacity exists to meet war plan requirements. This ongoing study will also consider attrition and contested environments likely to be encountered in future operations.

How does the nature of the relationship between U.S. Transportation Command and commercial partners change in a wartime environment?

Our commercial partners are an integral part of providing global assets and capabilities to support military operations anywhere in the world. This integration of the sometimes called ‘fourth component’ into our operations is fostered through time-tested relationships built on mutual trust and respect. These relationships are nurtured by regular engagements in peacetime to ensure lasting support in wartime. If confirmed, I will continue to work with our commercial partners to ensure the business relationships remain solid and the contracts continue to support DoD requirements.

If confirmed, how do you plan to find the appropriate balance for logistics capacity between commercial and military logistics systems?

Today, our ability to project military power is inextricably linked to commercial industry. It is important to strike the right balance between commercial capabilities such that DoD is not overly dependent on commercial capability for mission success. The NDAA 2018 Mobility Capability and Requirements Study will include an assessment of the reliance on commercial transportation capacity in support of joint deployment requirements. Future operations in contested environments will require greater effort to ensure we minimize the threats our commercial providers face when transporting military cargo and personnel in non-permissive (wartime) environments. If confirmed, I will work with commercial industry, Department of Transportation, and other stakeholders to ensure commercial capacity is sufficient and appropriate to meet future demands.

The military relies on an extensive network of logistics facilities overseas to support our deployed forces. These overseas depots enable our deployed forces to remain on station longer without having to be supported directly from CONUS. These depots are in host nations, which are U.S. friends and allies.

What is the resiliency of these overseas depots, particularly in places near ongoing political instability?

USTRANSCOM does not own or operate overseas depots. However, as the JDDC, USTRANSCOM does collaborate closely with Geographic Combatant Commands, Military Services, DLA, and other strategic partners to develop and maintain an agile, secure and resilient distribution network to support and sustain overseas depots. We constantly monitor the operational environment and respond to challenges, as appropriate, with the use of alternate distribution routes and logistics nodes to ensure the continued viability of those depots.

Emerging Technology

U.S. Transportation Command’s uniquely complex and data-heavy mission could present an opportunity to take greater advantage of emerging technology like data analytics or machine learning.

Do you believe U.S. Transportation Command can most effectively leverage emerging technology for improved performance?

Yes, the men and women of USTRANSCOM are in a distinctly unique position to leverage emerging big data, machine learning, and artificial intelligence technology to optimize global transportation networks in support of our national security objectives. I am aware that USTRANSCOM is leading a DoD level prototype to employ an cloud based Enterprise Data Environment, and if confirmed, I will continue to support this effort.

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, 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 Commander of U.S. Transportation Command?

Yes

Do you agree, when asked, to give your personal views, even if those views differ from the Administration in power?

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 the 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