

Senate Armed Services Committee
Advance Policy Questions for Mr. Lucas N. Polakowski
Nominee to be Assistant Secretary of Defense for
Nuclear, Chemical, and Biological Defense Programs

Duties

Section 138 of Title 10, U.S. Code, provides that the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Nuclear, Chemical, and Biological Defense Programs (ASD(NCB)) shall advise the Secretary of Defense on nuclear energy, nuclear weapons, and chemical and biological defense and serve as the Staff Director of the Nuclear Weapons Council.

- 1) What is your understanding of the duties and functions of the ASD(NCB)?

The ASD(NCB) is the principal advisor to the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of Defense and the USD(A&S) on nuclear energy, nuclear weapons, and chemical and biological defense acquisition and sustainment. The ASD(NCB) is the principal advisor to the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of Defense and the USD(A&S) for ensuring the U.S. Nuclear Deterrent is safe, secure and effective; developing and sustaining capabilities to counter improvised and weapons of mass destruction threats, effects, and proliferation; and ensuring DoD compliance with nuclear, chemical, and biological treaties and agreements.

Qualifications

- 2) What background and experience do you possess that qualify you for this position?

I have over 36 years of military service principally involving nuclear, chemical, and biological defense matters in both key staff and command assignments. Early in my career I obtained a wide-ranging technical grounding in the areas of nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons through technical training and junior officer assignments involving nuclear weapons, chemical weapons, and biological defense materials. My subsequent years of managerial and leadership assignments allowed me to leverage my technical grounding to lead and improve the organizations I both interfaced with, and led. My defense-related background and experience has been augmented by my in-depth hazardous materials, safety, and intelligence community knowledge and experience.

- 3) Specifically, what leadership and management experience do you possess that you would apply to your service as ASD(NCB), if confirmed?

During my last military duty assignment, I was a senior US STRATCOM leader reporting directly to the US STRATCOM commander and the Director of the US STRATCOM Center for Combating WMD/DTRA. I worked closely with key members of the US STRATCOM staff, Joint Staff, OSD, Interagency counterparts, and our close allies on both strategic and operational matters involving the full range of nuclear, chemical, and biological defense areas. Directly preceding that assignment, I was the first senior leader assigned as Deputy Director for Force

Protection & Counter WMD on the Joint Staff. In that assignment I directed the Joint Requirements Office for CBRN Defense, led the POM build for the Chemical Biological Defense Program, co-chaired the domestic CBRNE Response Enterprise Senior Steering Group, and validated all key WMD related joint military requirements involving both materiel and non-materiel solutions. I preceded those Joint assignments by consecutively commanding and serving in key WMD related staff positions within both the US Army and the Joint Force. I have successfully led both people and organizations throughout my career and, if confirmed, would apply those experiences to service as ASD(NCB).

- 4) Are there any actions you would take to enhance your ability to perform the duties and exercise the powers of the ASD(NCB)?

I believe that leading and empowering an organization's personnel is the single most important action to take to both increase mission accomplishment and engender personnel satisfaction. If confirmed, I plan to seek input from the ASD(NCB) team, the USD(A&S), and other key stakeholders and leaders, on other potential enhancements that would further accomplishing both the ASD(NCB) mission and exercising the office's powers.

- 5) What other duties do you anticipate the Secretary of Defense or the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment would assign to you, if confirmed, particularly in light of the National Defense Strategy?

At this time, I am not aware of any. However, if confirmed, I plan to assess the duties of the office to determine what, if any, adjustments may be indicated, particularly in light of the National Defense Strategy and other strategic guidance.

Major Challenges and Priorities

- 6) If confirmed, what broad priorities will you establish?

First and foremost, I will, if confirmed, continue to drive efforts to modernize and sustain our Nation's nuclear forces in support of the Department of Defense's highest priority defense mission.

If confirmed, I would prioritize building additional capacity in biological surveillance, and personal protective equipment (PPE) development, availability, and distribution; and supporting rapid development of medical countermeasures.

If confirmed, I would also prioritize the need to balance force readiness and modernization of defensive capabilities, so that the Joint Force can operate with full lethality and win in a contaminated environment across the full spectrum of operations.

- 7) What do you consider to be the most significant challenges you would face if confirmed as the ASD(NCB)?

I believe the most significant challenge I will face is helping both the DoD and the Department of Energy/National Nuclear Security Administration (DOE/NNSA) align and resource the programs needed to maintain our Nation's nuclear deterrent forces effectiveness. I believe those modernization and recapitalization programs are well worth the cost to develop and field, when compared to the potential costs to our country and to the world.

- 8) If confirmed, specifically what actions would you take, in what order of priority, and on what timeline—to address each of these challenges?

Consistent with the Secretary's priorities, if confirmed, I would fully support the Department's response to the current global COVID-19 pandemic to ensure the safety and security of our warfighters and Nation.

An additional priority, if confirmed, will be to work with my staff and counterparts across the Nuclear Enterprise to evaluate our most critical needs for advancing the modernization of our nuclear forces and the recapitalization of the DOE/NNSA nuclear weapons design and production infrastructure. I also look forward to discussing legislative opportunities for addressing the associated challenges with Congress.

If confirmed, one of my top priorities for chemical and biological defense would be to ensure that we proactively address emerging threats and the future needs of our warfighters to maintain lethality in chemical and biological threat environments.

Nuclear Weapons Council

Section 179 of Title 10, U.S. Code, designates the ASD(NCB) as the Staff Director of the Nuclear Weapons Council.

- 9) What is your understanding of this role?

Current law prescribes the DoD and the DOE/NNSA provide subject matter experts to serve as the NWC staff. Since its inception, the ASD(NCB) has served as the NWC's executive secretary, in addition to its statutory staff director position. As executive secretary, the ASD(NCB) sets NWC agendas and facilitates all related activities. As staff director, the ASD(NCB) also retains oversight responsibilities for the NWC staff, including its subordinate organizations.

- 10) If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure that the duties and responsibilities of the Nuclear Weapons Council are effectively executed?

If confirmed and acting as the staff director and executive secretary of the Nuclear Weapons Council (NWC), I would understand the importance of decisively addressing the issues facing our nuclear program managers and controlling the costs of weapon systems and warhead development programs included within our programs of record. I will work hand-in-hand with the NWC, its subordinate bodies, and its members to oversee major nuclear acquisition

programs, and work to ensure the fulfillment of NWC annual reporting requirements in an accurate and timely manner.

- 11) Are there any changes that you would recommend to the membership, organization, structure, or responsibilities of the Nuclear Weapons Council?

If confirmed, in support of the NWC Chairperson, I will review the operations of the NWC and make recommendations for appropriate changes.

- 12) What do you see as the challenges that the Nuclear Weapons Council will face over the next few years, and what would you do to address these challenges, if confirmed?

The Departments of Defense and Energy have ongoing efforts to modernize the Nation's nuclear enterprise. If confirmed, I will work closely with the NWC, Military Department/Service Components, DOE/NNSA, and other relevant OSD Components, to ensure we effectively and efficiently execute our planned nuclear modernization efforts and address emerging threats so as to deter adversaries and assure allies.

The nuclear security enterprise is facing an increase in the number and scope of programs necessary to sustain and modernize the Nation's nuclear weapons stockpile for addressing current and future threats. The NWC's primary challenge in the years to come will be ensuring these crucial stockpile programs are executed in a timely, cost-effective, and sustainable manner that fulfills military requirements.

- 13) In your view, has the Nuclear Weapons Council served to effectively coordinate budget and program development between DOD components and the National Nuclear Security Administration? If not, how do you believe this coordination could be improved?

Yes; the NWC has served as an effective interface between the DoD and DOE/NNSA, and will continue to play an integral role as we move forward into future nuclear modernization efforts.

- 14) Do you believe that the current system adequately connects military requirements to budgeting, acquisitions and procurement? To technical expertise and production?

Yes; the current system prioritizes, balances, and aligns budgeting, acquisition, and procurement decisions with the tailored requirements of the Joint Force.

I believe that the NWC is an effective mechanism for evaluating these factors and for aligning resources across both Departments to achieve the military requirements needed for deterring the most severe threats to our Nation. If confirmed, I will work to identify and champion opportunities for improving the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of the programs and processes for maintaining the U.S. nuclear weapons stockpile.

- 15) Do you have any recommendations for improving the functions of this enterprise?

At this time, I do not. However, if confirmed, I will review our enterprise's functions to ensure that we are operating in the most effective and efficient manner, while remaining aligned with Joint Force requirements. If there is an appropriate need for change, I will work with the USD(A&S) and other entities as necessary, to identify and implement practical solutions that promote cost effective measures aimed at enhancing the strength, security, and credibility of our Nation's strategic deterrent.

Nuclear Modernization

- 16) Do you support and intend to advocate for the modernization of all legs of the triad of nuclear delivery vehicles? Please explain your answer.

Yes; I fully support both Departments' ongoing efforts to modernize the Nation's nuclear weapons stockpile, their associated delivery systems, and the supporting Nuclear Command, Control, and Communications architecture. Maintaining a triad is essential to the functioning of our nuclear deterrent and achievement of U.S. deterrent objectives. Each leg of the triad provides unique and complementary attributes that help ensure that no adversary believes it could launch a strategic attack that eliminates the ability of the United States to respond and inflict unacceptable damage for any reason, under any circumstances.

- 17) Do you support and intend to advocate for the funding, development, and fielding of the Ground-Based Strategic Deterrent? Please explain your answer.

Yes; I support the Ground-Based Strategic Deterrent (GBSD) program as I understand it. When the Minuteman III intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) is finally retired in 2030, it will be the longest serving ICBM in history.

- 18) Do you support and intend to advocate for the funding, development, and fielding of the Long-Range Stand-Off Weapon? Please explain your answer.

Yes; the modernization of all elements of the triad are necessary and overdue. Our Nation has maintained a nuclear cruise missile capability for decades, and the flexibility it provides to the bomber force continues to be an essential element of our deterrent capability.

- 19) Do you support and intend to advocate for all components of this program?

Yes; I fully support the DOE/NNSA efforts to sustain and modernize the Nation's nuclear weapons stockpile, and recapitalize the associated design and production infrastructure. If confirmed, I will work with the NWC, the Air Force, the Navy, and DOE/NNSA to ensure we successfully execute planned modernization and recapitalization efforts to maintain a safe, secure, and effective stockpile to deter 21st-century threats and assure our allies and partners.

- 20) Do you agree that programs to modernize and replace the critical infrastructure of the National Nuclear Security Administration are national security priorities that should be addressed in a timely manner?

The modernization and recapitalization of the DOE/NNSA design and production infrastructure is necessary and overdue. If confirmed, I will work with my counterparts in DOE/NNSA to advance these efforts as one of my primary focus areas.

- 21) In your opinion, are the multiple components of the nuclear modernization plan appropriately sequenced and scoped in order to meet the operational needs of the commander of U.S. Strategic Command?

I have not been briefed on the specifics of the Commander's operational needs. If confirmed, I will work with US STRATCOM, the Navy, the Air Force, the DOE/NNSA, and my DoD acquisition counterparts to identify any opportunities for better aligning our efforts to meet military requirements.

- 22) How do you intend to ensure the health of the specialized industrial base needed to produce certain components of the delivery systems currently being modernized?

The challenges of maintaining an adequately-sized industrial base with the range of capabilities needed are not unique to the nuclear weapons community, but reflect a much broader concern across the entire DoD, as well as the DOE/NNSA.

If confirmed, I will work with my colleagues in DoD and DOE/NNSA to identify any opportunities for aligning our efforts in a manner that supports a healthy Defense Industrial Base (DIB), and I will support the USD(A&S) in the efforts to address this problem in a broader sense across the acquisition community.

Navy Shipbuilding

In the 1970s and 1980s, the United States procured the current *Ohio*-class submarines within the Navy's shipbuilding (SCN) account. In 2015, Congress created a special fund, the National Sea-Based Deterrence Fund for procurement of *Columbia*-class SSBNs, the replacements for the *Ohio*-class SSBNs.

- 23) Do you have a view on how the cost of *Columbia*-class SSBNs should be funded—solely from Navy resources, from a combination of Navy and other-than-Navy (e.g., OMB and other Defense) sources, or with a different approach? If so, please explain.

If confirmed, I will work with my OSD colleagues and the U.S. Navy to ensure that proper resourcing is provided for the Columbia-class SSBNs. This is a critical capability in support of our Nation's nuclear deterrent. It is the Nation's responsibility to provide the appropriate funds, regardless of the mechanism used.

Stockpile Stewardship Program

- 24) Have you reviewed the elements of the Stockpile Stewardship Program, and do you support it? Please explain your answer.

Yes, and I support the program as I understand it. Through this program, the DOE/NNSA ensures the Nation maintains a safe, secure, and effective nuclear deterrent through the application of science, technology, engineering, and manufacturing

- 25) In your view, are there any additional capabilities that the Stockpile Stewardship Program should develop?

Since 1995, there has been a requirement to conduct an annual stockpile assessment to evaluate the safety, performance, and reliability of the stockpile without nuclear explosive testing. My understanding is that this review is based on physics and engineering analyses, experiments, and computer simulations. These reviews drive changes into the NNSA Stockpile Stewardship program and new capabilities are planned appropriately. I am not familiar with the details of the assessments to date and the recommendations for new capabilities. If confirmed, I will review the results of the annual stockpile assessment with my partners and make, if appropriate, recommendations on new capabilities.

- 26) As materials and designs age, what is your opinion on whether modeling, simulation, and experimentation will continue to suffice in place of underground testing in ensuring the safety and reliability of the nuclear weapons stockpile?

I am not familiar with the details of the reviews and assessment of the adequacies of the modeling and simulation capabilities. If confirmed, I will review the results of the annual stockpile assessment process with my staff and counterparts and make, if appropriate, recommendations on the adequacy of modeling and simulation capabilities to underpin the certification of the stockpile.

- 27) If the technical conclusions and data from the Stockpile Stewardship Program could no longer confidently support the annual certification of the stockpile as safe, secure, and reliable, what would your recommendation be?

Since 1995, there has been a requirement to conduct an annual review of the stockpile to evaluate its safety, performance, and reliability without nuclear explosive testing. My understanding is this review is based on physics and engineering analyses, experiments, and computer simulations. The Directors of the three DOE nuclear weapons laboratories—Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL), Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL), and Sandia National Laboratories (SNL)—are required to complete annual assessments of the safety, reliability, and performance of each weapon type in the nuclear weapons stockpile. In addition, the Commander of US STRATCOM provides an assessment of the military effectiveness of the stockpile. These assessments also include a determination as to whether it is necessary to conduct an underground nuclear test to resolve any identified issues. The Secretaries of Energy and Defense are required to submit these reports unaltered to the President, along with any conclusions the Secretaries consider appropriate. If confirmed, I would review the results of the annual stockpile assessment results with my partners and make appropriate recommendations.

Chemical and Biological Defense Matters

Section 138 of title 10, United States Code, states that the ASD(NCB) shall advise the Secretary of Defense on chemical and biological defense in addition to nuclear matters.

- 28) What is your understanding of your roles and responsibilities with respect to chemical and biological defense matters?

The ASD(NCB) is the principal advisor to the Secretary, Deputy Secretary of Defense, and the USD(A&S) for defense capabilities to counter current and emerging WMD threats, including all matters related to the Research, Development, and Acquisition of chemical and biological defense capabilities. In this capacity (if confirmed), I would provide oversight for the development of acquisition policies, provide advice, and make recommendations for chemical and biological defense related to medical and non-medical defensive capabilities, as well as the safety and security of chemical and biological agents used to research capabilities to protect the force and deliver modernized capabilities.

- 29) How do these roles and responsibilities relate to those of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction, in your view?

The ASD(NCB) is the lead for research and development of the DoD's CWMD capabilities. The ASD for Homeland Defense and Global Security (ASD((HD&GS)), through the DASD(CWMD), is the DoD lead for CWMD policy and strategy. The ASD(NCB) also works closely with the DASD for Homeland Defense Integration and Defense Support of Civil Authorities (DASD(HDI&DSCA)) to ensure coordination for homeland defense and DSCA activities. Synchronization of CWMD policy and capability development requires our offices to coordinate very closely.

To facilitate this coordination and synchronization, I will, if confirmed, continue to engage fully and fulfill the ASD(NCB) Vice Chair role in the Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction Unity of Effort Council (CWMD-UoE), partnered with the ASD(HD&GS) and the Joint Staff Director for Strategy, Plans and Policy, J-5, to identify shortfalls in the Department's CWMD approach and bring together all stakeholders to drive towards solutions.

Coordination between DASD(CWMD) and the NCB components (NCB/NM, NCB/TRAC, NCB/CBD, and DTRA) is critical to the Department's efforts to counter WMD.

- 30) What is your assessment of the threat posed by chemical and biological agents to the security interests of the United States and our partners? Where are these threats most acute?

I see a trend of increased WMD development and chemical weapons use, and assess a need to take a broad approach to the threat space. The availability and diversity of pharmaceutical-based agents (PBAs), increasing global knowledge of Fourth-Generation Agents following the attack in the UK, and the use of traditional agents in Syria, and in Malaysia (by North Korea), indicate that the chemical threat is still a current and near-term threat. However, the convergence of the rapid advances in sciences, technologies, and artificial intelligence are

opening up new frontiers in both the biological and chemical threat space that we must address now before it is too late. Many other nations are also expanding their efforts in these areas, and that leads to a complex threat environment.

- 31) What do you believe to be the principal challenges in chemical and biological defense, and what would be your priorities for the Department of Defense's Chemical and Biological Defense Program?

The global norms that have previously protected civilians and security forces are being challenged while technological advancements and the ease of proliferation are lowering or eliminating barriers to those who wish to obtain WMD and increasing the capability of those who already have access to WMD.

Within the CBDP, a principal challenge is changing the strategic direction and culture to ensure we can more proactively address future threats, while also meeting the readiness and modernization needs of the Joint Force for the National Defense Strategy.

I will seek to coordinate with our partners to create the space and opportunity to address this rapidly evolving threat.

Interaction with Other Federal Agencies on Chemical and Biological Defense Matters

The Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Health and Human Services play important roles in planning and implementing U.S. policy and programs for protecting the United States against biological and chemical threats, including the development and stockpiling of vaccines and therapeutic products.

- 32) If confirmed, how would you work with these agencies to ensure the effective coordination and collaboration of efforts to improve U.S. security against biological and chemical threats?

To achieve WMD threat reduction outcomes, and protect the United States from biological and chemical threats, it is necessary to have a coordinated USG approach for confronting the myriad of challenges. Although the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) both have domestic authorities for coordinating and implementing programs to protect the U.S. homeland, DoD CWMD programs typically are authorized to be conducted outside the United States, or a focus on protecting U.S. forces and U.S. interests abroad, that reduce the threat of WMD proliferation to the United States. This domestic and international coordination is vital in holistically addressing and tackling WMD challenges. If confirmed, I will place a high priority on ensuring this coordination continues by engaging with my counterparts in those organizations.

- 33) Do you believe that these relationships are adequate in light of the challenges posed by COVID-19 pandemic? What changes, if any, would you recommend?

My understanding is that the interactions between DoD and its interagency partners have spanned the full spectrum of DoD capabilities. No matter how efficient a process, however, there is always room for improvement. As such, I will seek to build on the solid foundation that exists and work to increase DoD's ability to anticipate the needs of both DoD and its interagency partners to mitigate the impacts of future biological events.

Chemical Demilitarization

The United States is a party to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and, under the terms of the treaty, was obligated to destroy its chemical weapons stockpile by no later than the extended deadline of April 2012.

- 34) Do you agree that the Department of Defense and the U.S. Government should be in compliance with the terms and obligations of the CWC and the Biological Warfare Convention, including the deadline for destruction of the U.S. chemical weapons stockpile under the CWC?

Yes, I agree that the Department of Defense and the U.S. Government should fulfill its obligations. If confirmed, I will work to support and implement these requirements.

- 35) If confirmed, specifically how would you lead the Department in taking the steps needed to minimize the time to complete destruction of the U.S. chemical weapons stockpile, without sacrificing safety or security?

If confirmed, I will ensure that the Department continues to evaluate options to accelerate the destruction schedules and safely complete destruction of the U.S. chemical weapons stockpile by the congressionally mandated deadline of December 31, 2023.

- 36) If confirmed, what actions would you take to ensure adequate funding is requested to permit the most expeditious destruction of the U.S. chemical weapons stockpile, consistent with the legal requirement to protect public health, safety, and the environment?

The destruction of the U.S. chemical weapons stockpile is a priority within the Department. If confirmed, I will work with the Comptroller and members of Congress to obtain the fiscal resources required to complete the destruction of the U.S. chemical weapons stockpile while protecting public health, safety, and the environment.

- 37) Do you see the need for any changes in the structure, organization, or reporting relationships within the chemical demilitarization program?

If confirmed, I will review the program's organization and management structure as well as the reporting requirements and make changes as appropriate.

COVID-19 and Pandemic Preparedness

- 38) What is the appropriate role of the Department of Defense in preparing for and responding to a pandemic?

The prime mission of the Department of Defense (DoD) is to provide the military forces needed to deter war and to protect the security of our country. However, DoD has immense resources that that can support – and have supported -- the requirements of the HHS (in particular the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR)), which is the lead Federal agency, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), which is the lead Federal coordinating agency, for the Federal Government’s COVID-19 response. As such, DoD investments in technologies and infrastructure that protect the warfighter from biological weapons uniquely positions the DoD to support the ASPR. Those DoD technology investments have uniquely positioned DoD to support the domestic response to pandemics and also enable DoD to assist partner nations, should the need arise.

- 39) Do you assess that the Department of Defense is appropriately organized and resourced to effectively fulfill this role? What changes, if any, would you recommend?

If confirmed, I will assess this question and make recommendations as appropriate.

- 40) What lessons should the Department of Defense learn from the COVID-19 pandemic?

DoD’s COVID-19 response revealed many tremendous capabilities that the DoD has at its disposal. If confirmed, I will apply any lessons learned as applicable to my portfolio.

- 41) How will these lessons inform your approach, if confirmed, to ensuring the Department of Defense is appropriately postured to address biological threats to the United States and our partners?

If confirmed, I will work to anticipate the technologies, infrastructure, and key nodes of communication required to rapidly introduce disruptive capabilities into the fight against infectious diseases, regardless of whether they are naturally occurring or deliberately employed.

Cooperative Threat Reduction

- 42) Do you support the Cooperative Threat Reduction Program?

Yes, I support the Cooperative Threat Reduction Program. The DoD Cooperative Threat Reduction’s primary mission is reducing weapons of mass destruction (WMD) threats against U.S. interests, through working cooperatively with foreign partners to dismantle and destroy WMD, prevent the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, and detect and

report outbreaks of diseases caused by dangerous pathogens, such as COVID-19. Having foreign partners able to mitigate, prevent, interdict, and detect WMD and WMD related material – at the source – helps protect U.S. Armed Forces and the Homeland. CTR's multi-year funding structure, rapid elimination capabilities, and its flexible authorities to work directly with our foreign partners' civilian and military establishments make it an efficient and effective tool to counter WMD threats. Through targeted prioritization, the DoD CTR Program achieves strategic WMD proliferation outcomes, reflects a return on investment, and positions the United States to be a CWMD partner of choice.

- 43) What is your understanding as to your responsibilities with respect to the Cooperative Threat Reduction Program?

For the CTR program, my responsibilities (if confirmed) include acquisition oversight, ensuring the program has viable metrics to achieve WMD threat reduction objectives, and providing strategic implementation guidance consistent with OSD Policy-directed strategic policy priorities. These roles and responsibilities are defined in DoD instructions and charters. If confirmed, I look forward to working with OSD Policy and DTRA leadership to ensure the program continues to deliver WMD threat reduction results.

- 44) If confirmed, what would be your priority regions and programs for Cooperative Threat Reduction?

If confirmed, I will support OSD Policy in its role to provide strategic guidance on CTR Program outcomes and partnerships; and with DTRA in its responsibilities to implement CTR activities. WMD threats vary by region and country; and our ability to execute CTR activities is based on many factors (a partner's political will, capacity to absorb assistance, and ability to sustain capabilities and training). I will prioritize countries and regions based on Policy guidance and where we can expect to get threat reduction returns on CTR investments.

Consequence Management of CBRNE Incidents

The Department of Defense has a mission of providing support to civil authorities for consequence management of domestic chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, or high-yield explosive (CBRNE) incidents, if directed by the President or the Secretary of Defense. Since 2002, the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense & Global Security and the Commander of U.S. Northern Command have had responsibilities for planning and executing that mission.

- 45) If confirmed, how would you expect to work with the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense & Global Security and the Commander of U.S. Northern Command on issues related to the Department's capabilities to provide support to civil authorities for CBRNE consequence management, as well their homeland defense missions related to nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons or materials?

If confirmed, I anticipate working closely with the ASD(HD&GS) and Commander, U.S. Northern Command (USNORTHCOM) in several important areas. The ASD(NCB) serves as Vice Chair of the CWMD Unity of Effort (UoE) Council, which addresses issues that are important to achieving Countering WMD strategic goals. Specifically, the ASD(NCB) co-chairs the CWMD Unity of Effort (UoE) Council Capabilities Subcommittee which develops recommendations for mitigating or resolving CWMD capability gaps.

If confirmed, I will work closely with the ASD(HD&GS) and the Commander, USNORTHCOM in the area of Defense Support of Civil Authorities and Homeland Defense activities. My understanding is that the DASD(CBD) participates in the quarterly CBRN Response Enterprise (CRE) Senior Steering Group meetings; NCB is providing support to the 10-year CRE Assessment; and the Chemical and Biological Defense Program provides the CBRN defense capabilities used by the CRE warfighters.

- 46) If confirmed, what relationship would you expect to have with the Department of Homeland Security and its component entities?

My understanding is that the Department of Homeland Security also plays a critical role with international capacity-building efforts. If confirmed, I plan to maintain close collaboration with DHS and its component entities across the broad range of chemical and biological defense matters. Such collaboration is particularly essential to ensure information on proliferation and threats to the homeland are detected and mitigated.

- 47) What do you believe is the appropriate role for the Department of Defense in providing support to civil authorities for CBRNE consequence management?

There are well-established policies, procedures, and command relationships for DoD support to civilian authorities. DoD routinely trains with civilian agencies through USNORTHCOM and their Service Component exercises and, when authorized, deploys capabilities in support of Federal departments and agencies for high threat events, such as National Special Security Events.

- 48) If confirmed, what role would you expect to have in regard to the oversight of Department of Defense capabilities related to consequence management of CBRNE incidents?

The CBRN defense equipment used in a CBRN response is primarily developed and fielded under the DoD Chemical and Biological Defense Program. I don't envision any change to the current oversight responsibilities.

If confirmed, I would work closely with the ASD for Homeland Defense and Global Security Affairs and the Combatant Commands to identify the highest CBRN vulnerabilities and examine what level of resources are needed to appropriately reduce the threat.

Reporting Chain

Section 138 of Title 10, U.S. Code, provides that the ASD(NCB) may communicate views on issues directly to the Secretary of Defense and the Deputy Secretary of Defense without obtaining the approval or concurrence of any other official within the Department.

49) What is your understanding of why this direct access is necessary?

Maintaining direct access to the Secretary or the Deputy Secretary is required to allow the ASD(NCB) to advise the DoD leadership on the very technical matters pertaining to the programs under the ASD(NCB)'s purview.

The unique nature of nuclear weapons, unlike many other military capabilities, means that any significant concerns with the safety, security, or reliability of these weapons could result in events of national or international significance. As the primary Senate-confirmed official within the Office of the Secretary of Defense directly charged with responsibility for the health of the nuclear enterprise, the ASD(NCB) represents the most direct link for the Secretary and Deputy Secretary on these issues.

50) What is your understanding of how this process has functioned in the past?

For the past several years, the ASD(NCB) has gone through the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment for matters requiring interactions with the Secretary or Deputy Secretary.

In my understanding, the ASD(NCB) has always had the required access to the Secretary of Defense on all issues under its purview.

51) If confirmed, would you expect to have direct and timely access to the Secretary of Defense for matters pertaining to the safety, security, and reliability of nuclear weapons?

Absolutely. Section 138(b)(4) of Title 10, U.S. Code, states that the ASD(NCB) "may communicate views on issues within the responsibility of the Assistant Secretary directly to the Secretary of Defense and the Deputy Secretary of Defense without obtaining the approval or concurrence of any other official within the Department of Defense." This discretionary authority is essential to ensuring the safety, security, and reliability of our nuclear arsenal.

Notification of Congress

52) If confirmed, what would be your approach to communicating with Congress with regard to significant issues in the safety, security, or reliability of the nuclear weapons stockpile?

Congress needs timely and accurate information in order to make effective legislative decisions, especially when those decisions affect our strategic deterrence. If confirmed, and once equipped

with all necessary facts, I will commit to promptly doing so to further Congress's legislative mandate.

Relations with Congress

- 53) What are your views on the state of the relationship between the Office of the ASD(NCB) and the Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC) in particular, and with Congress in general?

Responsiveness to the SASC and to Congress writ large is essential so representatives can make informed legislative decisions on behalf of our Nation.

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

I would ensure the continued two way communications between the Office of the ASD(NCB) and the Congress to ensure the security of the Nation.

Congressional Oversight

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

- 55) Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, and on request, to appear and testify before this committee, its subcommittees, and other appropriate committees of Congress? Please answer yes or no.

Yes; in accordance with applicable laws and long-standing Department and Executive Branch practice.

- 56) Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to provide this committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate committees of Congress, and their respective staffs such witnesses and briefers, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information, as may be requested of you, and to do so in a timely manner? Please answer yes or no.

Yes; in accordance with applicable laws and long-standing Department and Executive Branch practice.

- 57) Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to consult with this committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate committees of Congress, and their respective staffs, regarding your basis for any delay or denial in providing testimony, briefings, reports,

records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information requested of you? Please answer yes or no.

Yes; in accordance with applicable laws and long-standing Department and Executive Branch practice.

- 58) Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to keep this committee, its subcommittees, other appropriate committees of Congress, and their respective staffs apprised of new information that materially impacts the accuracy of testimony, briefings, reports, records—including documents and electronic communications, and other information you or your organization previously provided? Please answer yes or no.

Yes; in accordance with applicable laws and long-standing Department and Executive Branch practice.

- 59) Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, and on request, to provide this committee and its subcommittees with records and other information within their oversight jurisdiction, even absent a formal Committee request? Please answer yes or no.

Yes; in accordance with applicable laws and long-standing Department and Executive Branch practice.

- 60) Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to respond timely to letters to, and/or inquiries and other requests of you or your organization from individual Senators who are members of this committee? Please answer yes or no.

Yes; in accordance with applicable laws and long-standing Department and Executive Branch practice.

- 61) Do you agree, without qualification, if confirmed, to ensure that you and other members of your organization protect from retaliation any military member, federal employee, or contractor employee who testifies before, or communicates with this committee, its subcommittees, and any other appropriate committee of Congress? Please answer yes or no.

Yes; I agree to protect DoD personnel from unlawful retaliation.