

Advance Policy Questions for Erin C. Conaton
Nominee for Under Secretary of the Air Force

Defense Reforms

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

Do you see the need for modifications of any Goldwater Nichols Act provisions?

I believe strongly that Goldwater Nichols has had major and positive impacts on United States military operations and authorities. My view has been informed by my years at the House Armed Services Committee in oversight of this law and its implications for the current force. At this time I am not aware of any reason to amend the Goldwater-Nichols Act. If I am confirmed, I will be mindful of the need to periodically review organizational and management frameworks to ensure their continued validity and consistency with the provisions of Goldwater-Nichols.

If so, what areas do you believe might be appropriate to address in these modifications?

If I identify areas that I believe merit changes, I will propose those changes through the appropriate established process.

Qualifications

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

If confirmed I will bring over a decade of broad experience in national security policy and programs to this position. In my experience on the House Armed Services Committee since 2001, I have been involved in shaping legislation and conducting oversight of the choices and challenges facing our military since 9/11 and through the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, including the issues facing the United States Air Force. I have worked closely with the military services, the national security interagency community, and a variety of oversight committees in the Congress. I have also helped the Chairman and members of the House Armed Services Committee to grapple with tough fiscally-constrained trade-offs among programs and to consider the implications of changes in defense law and policy. Finally, I bring the experience of managing a highly experienced, professional staff in support of the members of the Committee and the United States

military. I believe I could use these skills and my experience to benefit the Air Force and the broader Department of Defense if I am confirmed.

Duties

Section 8015 of title 10, United States Code, states 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 conduct the affairs of the Department of the Air Force (except as 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 pursuant to section 904 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, and, if designated by the Secretary of the Air Force, as the Department of Defense Executive Agent for Space.

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 3015 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 unaware of any reason to change the duties and functions of the Under Secretary as set out in Title 10 and pertinent Department of Defense regulations. If I am confirmed and I identify areas that I believe merit changes, I will propose those changes through the appropriate established processes.

Assuming you are 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 understand his vision and how I can best support him and his goals for the Air Force. I expect the Secretary to prescribe for me duties 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 have the primary management responsibility for business operations. Previously the Under Secretary of the Air Force had special responsibilities for space programs including the acquisition responsibility for space programs.

If confirmed, will you be responsible for acquisition of Air Force space programs in addition to the business operations responsibilities?

Currently the organization and management of space issues within the Air Force headquarters is under internal review, as well as through the Quadrennial Defense Review and Space Posture Review processes. These reviews and studies will inform and assist the Air Force in developing the way ahead, to include lines of authority and organizational structures. If confirmed, I would expect to be a major participant in these ongoing processes and would look forward to working with this Committee to understand any new organizational construct or responsibilities that result from these reviews.

Relationships

If confirmed, what would be your working relationship with:

The Secretary of Defense.

The Secretary of Defense is responsible for all matters within the Department of Defense. The Secretary of the Air Force is subject to the authority, direction and control of the Secretary of Defense, and the Under Secretary of the Air Force works for the Secretary of the Air Force. From 2002-2007, the Secretary of the Air Force designated the Under Secretary of the Air Force to perform the duties of the Department of Defense Executive Agent for Space. In this role, the Under Secretary developed, coordinated and integrated policy, plans and programs for space systems and major defense space acquisitions. If confirmed and designated by the Secretary of the Air Force to perform the duties of the Department of Defense Executive Agent for Space, I would look forward to working closely with the Secretary of Defense on space-related matters.

The Deputy Secretary of Defense.

The Deputy Secretary of Defense assists the Secretary of Defense in carrying out his duties and responsibilities and performs those duties assigned by the Secretary of Defense or by law. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Deputy Secretary of Defense on a range of matters. In particular, I would look forward to working with and supporting the Deputy Secretary of Defense in his role as Chief Management Officer of the Department of Defense.

The Deputy Chief Management Officer of the Department of Defense.

The Deputy Chief Management Officer of the Department of Defense is the senior official responsible for assisting the Secretary of Defense and the Deputy Secretary of Defense, acting as the Chief Management Officer, to effectively and efficiently organize the business operations of the Department of Defense. The Office of the Deputy Chief Management Officer supervises and oversees the Defense Business Transformation Agency and the Department of Defense Performance Improvement Officer. If confirmed, I would look forward to developing an effective working relationship with the Deputy Chief Management Officer, particularly in my capacity as the Air Force Chief Management Officer.

The Director of the Business Transformation Agency.

The Director of the Business Transformation Agency heads an organization which is responsible for guiding the Department's business operations modernization. The Director reports to the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Business Transformation (AT&L). The Business Transformation Agency fosters transformational business operations in order to support American warfighters and seeks to provide accountability by systematically improving business processes, enterprise resource planning systems and investment governance. If confirmed, I anticipate working very closely with the Director of the Business Transformation Agency on matters affecting the Air Force, pursuant to section 908 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2009 and other applicable laws.

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is the principal military advisor to the President, the National Security Council, and the Secretary of Defense. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Chairman through the Chief of Staff of the Air Force on appropriate matters affecting the Air Force.

The Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

The Vice Chairman has the same statutory authorities and obligations of the other members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Vice Chairman through the Chief of Staff of the Air Force on appropriate matters affecting the Air Force.

The Secretary of the Air Force.

Subject to the authority, direction and control of the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of the Air Force is responsible for and has the authority necessary to conduct all affairs of the Department of the Air Force. The Under Secretary of the Air Force is subject to the authority, direction and control of the Secretary of the Air Force. If confirmed, I expect to be assigned a wide range of duties and responsibilities by the Secretary involving, but not limited to, organizing, supplying, equipping, training, maintaining and administering the Air Force. I look forward to working closely with the Secretary as his deputy and principal assistant.

The Chief of Staff of the Air Force.

The Chief of Staff of the Air Force is subject to the authority, direction and control of the Secretary of the Air Force, presides over the Air Staff, and is a principal advisor to the Secretary. In addition, he is a military adviser to the President, the National Security Council, and the Secretary of Defense. If confirmed, I would foster a close working relationship with the Chief of Staff to ensure that policies and resources are appropriate to meet the needs of the Air Force and respect his additional responsibilities as a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

The Assistant Secretaries of the Air Force.

If confirmed, I will assist the Secretary in building a close relationship with the Assistant Secretaries of the Air Force to carry out the goals and priorities of the Department. I understand the importance of teamwork and information sharing and will make this a top priority. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Assistant Secretaries to further the Secretary's vision for the Air Force.

The General Counsel of the Air Force.

As the Chief Legal Officer of the Air Force, the General Counsel of the Air Force is the senior civilian legal advisor to Air Force senior leaders and all officers and agencies of the Department of the Air Force. If confirmed, I would look forward to developing a good working relationship with the General Counsel.

The Inspector General of the Air Force.

The Inspector General of the Air Force is a general officer who is detailed to the position by the Secretary of the Air Force. When directed, the Inspector General inquires into and reports on matters affecting the discipline, efficiency and economy of the Air Force. He also proposes programs of inspections and investigations as appropriate. If confirmed, I would look forward to developing a good working relationship with the Inspector General.

The Surgeon General of the Air Force.

The Surgeon General of the Air Force is the functional manager of the Air Force Medical Service and provides direction, guidance and technical management of Air Force medical personnel at facilities worldwide. The Surgeon General advises the Secretary of the Air Force and Air Force Chief of Staff, as well as the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs, on matters pertaining to the medical aspects of the air expeditionary force and the health of Air Force personnel. If confirmed, I would look forward to developing a good working relationship with the Surgeon General.

The Air Force Business Transformation Office.

The Air Force Business Transformation Office is responsible for assisting the Under Secretary of the Air Force in performing the duties of Air Force Chief Management Officer as they relate to improving the effectiveness and efficiency of Air Force business operations. The Air Force Deputy Chief Management Officer has been designated as the Director of the Air Force Business Transformation Office. The office advises Air Force senior leadership on establishment of strategic performance goals, management of Air Force-wide cross functional activities to meet those goals and implementation of continuous process improvement initiatives. If confirmed, I anticipate a very active and involved role with the Air Force Business Transformation Office on matters affecting the Air Force-wide business operations.

The Judge Advocate General of the Air Force.

The Judge Advocate General of the Air Force is the senior uniformed legal advisor to Air Force senior leaders and all officers and agencies of the Department of the Air Force and provides professional supervision over The Judge Advocate General's Corps in the performance of their duties. If confirmed, I would look forward to developing a good working relationship with The Judge Advocate General.

The Chief of the National Guard Bureau.

The Chief of the National Guard Bureau is the senior uniformed National Guard officer responsible for formulating, developing and coordinating all policies, programs and plans affecting Army and Air National Guard personnel. Appointed by the President, he serves as principal adviser to the Secretary of Defense through the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff on National Guard matters. He is also the principal adviser to the Secretary and Chief of Staff of the Air Force on all National Guard issues and serves as the department's official channel of communication with the Governors and Adjutants General. If confirmed, I will look forward to developing a good working relationship with the chief of the National Guard Bureau on appropriate matters affecting the Air Force.

The Under Secretaries of the military services

If I am confirmed, I will work diligently to foster a close working relationship with the Under Secretaries of the Army and Navy. I look forward to sharing information and expertise that will assist in the management of the Department of the Air Force and our coordination with the other Services on matters of mutual interest, particularly in our capacities as Chief Management Officers for our respective services.

Major Challenges and Priorities

In your view, what are the major challenges, if any, that you would confront if confirmed as Under Secretary of the Air Force?

This is a time of great challenges, for the Department of Defense generally and for the Air Force in particular. Current strategic reviews, ranging from the QDR to the Nuclear and Space Posture Reviews, will reassess the strategic environment within which the military is operating, presumably with attendant implications for the missions, force structure, and operations of the joint force. The Air Force has come through a period of challenge with regards to its nuclear enterprise and its acquisition processes. The service also must contend with balancing the need to support the joint warfighter in the current conflict while ensuring we can prevail in the next fight, whatever that may be. There is a need to balance modernization of current platforms and to continue to invest in new capabilities that will be needed in future conflicts. The Air Force must also ensure that it can continue to recruit, train, deploy and retain highly skilled Airmen and to support those Airmen and their families. At a time of great fiscal challenge for our nation, these

challenges will continue to pose hard choices for the service in its overall budget, particularly in the investment accounts.

If confirmed, I look forward to understanding these challenges more clearly and to working closely with DoD and Air Force leadership, along with this Committee, to develop strategies for addressing the major challenges facing the Air Force.

If confirmed, how would you prioritize and what plans would you have, if any, for addressing these challenges?

In my view, the Secretary and Chief of Staff have laid out clear priorities—reinvigorating the nuclear enterprise; partnering with the joint and coalition team to win today’s fight; developing and caring for Airmen and their families; modernizing air and space inventories, organizations, and training; and recapturing acquisition excellence. Since the Secretary and Chief were confirmed last year, the Air Force has made much progress. If confirmed, I look forward to working with senior DoD and Air Force leadership—as well as this Committee—to ensure continued progress is made. All of these priorities will require sustained leadership and effort with an eye toward ensuring the best support for the warfighter and the wise use of taxpayer resources.

Management of Space Activities

The Under Secretary of the Air Force is traditionally designated as the Department of Defense Executive Agent for Space. In this role, the Under Secretary develops, coordinates, and integrates policy, plans and programs for space systems and major defense space acquisitions.

Will you be designated as the DOD Executive Agent for Space?

If confirmed, I will be assigned a wide range of duties and responsibilities subject to the authority, direction and control of the Secretary of the Air Force. Recently, the Under Secretary of the Air Force has also served as the DoD Executive Agent for Space. The roles and responsibilities for the Air Force in space policy and programs are currently under review both by DoD and the Air Force. Based on that review, I expect the Secretary of the Air Force to make a judgment about the best organizational construct for accomplishing the Air Force’s space mission. I anticipate being an active participant in those deliberations and to serving in whatever capacity for space policy and programs that the Secretary finds most appropriate and beneficial to the Air Force. Beyond this specific area, I look forward to working as the Secretary’s deputy and principal assistant across the range of his responsibilities.

As the DOD Executive Agent for Space, how will you ensure that each of the military services remains fully engaged in and knowledgeable about space programs and the advantages that such programs can bring to the warfighter?

If confirmed and designated by the Secretary of the Air Force as the DoD Executive Agent for Space, I would foster a close working relationship with the Under Secretaries of the Army and Navy, as well as the appropriate Under and Assistant Secretaries of Defense and the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), to ensure space acquisition planning, programming and budgeting are synchronized to continue to deliver the best space capability to the warfighter.

What is your view of the relationship of the Under Secretary of the Air Force, as the Executive Agent for Space, to the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, and the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Networks and Information Integration with regard to space policy and systems?

If confirmed and designated by the Secretary of the Air Force as DoD Executive Agent for Space, I would work collaboratively with both these individuals and their organizations to shape space policy to maintain continuity of existing space services while improving how the department acquires new space systems. The Executive Agent for Space responsibilities can most successfully be accomplished with close coordination with these organizations for the development of space policy and the integration of space systems into broader departmental efforts.

In your view, what are the authorities of the Executive Agent for Space regarding: (1) the budgets, programs, and plans of the various Service and Defense Agency space programs; and (2) milestone decisions for space acquisition programs of the various Services and Defense Agencies?

With respect to planning, budgeting, and programming, I view the authorities of the DoD Executive Agent for Space as an integration function across the entire department and space communities. If confirmed, I view the synchronization of space budgets between the Services and the coordination of space and non-space acquisitions as paramount to delivering fully integrated weapon systems to the battlefield. If designated by the Secretary of the Air Force as the Executive Agent for Space, I would communicate our progress annually in the National Security Space Plan, which is an assessment of space plans and architectures of the DoD Components developed in coordination with several other Federal agencies.

Currently, the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics has milestone decision authority for space acquisition programs. If confirmed, I look forward to assisting the Under Secretary in managing and delivering space capabilities to the warfighter.

Operationally Responsive Space

The Congress established an Office for Operationally Responsive Space (ORS) to explore the concept of providing military commanders the capability to rapidly launch

rockets with small satellites designed to support a specific area of operations with communications and other sensors and to reconstitute space based capabilities if lost.

What is your view of the goals and current capabilities of ORS and the status of efforts to develop and acquire small satellite capability?

While I am familiar with the Congressional goals of ORS, if confirmed, I will need to familiarize myself more deeply to evaluate the current status and progress the ORS Office has made toward these goals. The nation continues to need the ability to rapidly reconstitute and augment warfighters' space capabilities with solutions that can be delivered in operationally relevant timelines. If confirmed and appropriate to the responsibilities assigned to me by the Secretary, I will work closely with the other Services, members of the Intelligence Community, and the larger space enterprise to develop a responsive space capability to address emerging needs of our Theater Commanders.

Space Launch

On May 2, 2005, Boeing and Lockheed Martin announced plans to merge the production, engineering, test, and launch operations associated with providing Evolved Expendable Launch Vehicle (EELV) services to the U.S. government. The companies believed the merger could save \$100-150 million per year for the U.S. government while continuing to provide assured access to space.

These cost savings have not yet materialized and it appears as if the cost of an individual launch is in fact increasing.

If confirmed how would you ensure that this merger does in fact result in cost savings to the U.S. Government?

It is my understanding that, per congressional direction, the OSD Cost Analysis and Program Evaluation office is conducting a validation of the savings brought about by the merger. The Air Force is supporting this effort, and is partnering with industry as the consolidation of workforce and facilities proceeds. If confirmed, I would plan to become more familiar with these efforts to evaluate the actual cost savings and other benefits of the merger.

Maintaining assured access to launch has been the national security goal of the Air Force. In your view is that goal achieved with the EELV vehicles or is there a need for alternative launch options?

I firmly believe in the continued national security need for assured launch access. It is my understanding that by maintaining the Atlas V and Delta IV families of launch vehicles, the EELV program achieves assured access to space as laid out in the administration's current Space Transportation Policy (NSPD-40). If confirmed and consistent with the duties assigned to me by the Secretary, I plan to develop a more

informed answer to this question and to understand more fully the Committee's concerns on this issue.

The increasing pace of space launches has stressed the launch processing capability of the ranges. What in your view is needed to increase the launch throughput at the East and West Coast ranges?

I am not yet informed enough on this specific question to give a complete answer. If confirmed and consistent with the duties assigned to me by the Secretary, I plan to develop a more informed answer to this question and to understand more fully the Committee's concerns on this issue.

Military Space Acquisition Policy

The present generation of military space systems are being modernized in virtually every mission area, including: (1) strategic missile warning; (2) assured communications; (3) navigation; and (4) intelligence and surveillance. At the same time, virtually every one of these modernization programs has suffered substantial problems with regard to cost, schedule, and technical performance. As a result of the budgetary pressure on future space programs, the most recent space acquisition programs, the Space Radar and Transformational Satellite (TSAT) programs were cancelled.

In your view what are the key execution problems that have caused the schedule delays and budgetary increases in space development programs?

Over the past decade and a half the Air Force has attempted to adapt to the changing landscape of the industrial base, the force structure, and the increasing requirement needs of the warfighter—resulting in increased complexity and the pursuit, in several cases, of not yet mature technologies. I think the Air Force needs to focus on stabilizing requirements, ensuring technical maturity, instilling fiscal discipline and on improving and increasing the acquisition workforce.

If confirmed, what steps would you take to correct problems in the space acquisition process?

It is my view that the Air Force needs to focus on increasing the size and capabilities of the acquisition workforce, stabilizing requirements, and instilling fiscal discipline. If confirmed, I will work with Air Force and Department of Defense leadership and this Committee to ensure the Air Force acquisition process is held to the highest standards and executed with professionalism and integrity, and in the best interest of the taxpayer.

Next Generation Military Communications Capabilities

The demand for military communications capabilities continues to grow at a rapid

pace.

With the cancellation of the TSAT program what are your thoughts on how the Air Force can meet the growing demand for communications and increased bandwidth requirements?

With the cancellation of the Transformational Satellite Communications System (TSAT), there is a need to maintain the Advanced Extremely High Frequency (AEHF) for protected communications and Wideband Global SATCOM (WGS) systems for wideband communications to ensure continuity of service to our warfighters. If confirmed and consistent with the duties assigned to me by the Secretary, I will familiarize myself more deeply with the details of these programs, looking for ways to leverage the significant technology investment with TSAT and for opportunities to field some of those capability advances into other systems.

Aircraft Recapitalization

If confirmed, what role would you plan in efforts to recapitalize the Air Force aircraft inventory and how would you prioritize the recapitalization effort?

If confirmed, my role in the recapitalization would be to support the ongoing efforts of the Secretary and Chief of Staff. One of the Air Force's five priorities is to "modernize our aging air and space inventories." To accomplish this effort, I would continue to focus on the Air Force's top procurement priorities included in the fiscal year 2010 presidential budget request: specifically, the KC-X tanker program, the Joint Strike Fighter (F-35), the MQ-9 Reaper, and space programs working closely with the Air Force and OSD senior leadership.

Long Range Bombers

The B-1s, B-2s and B-52s will begin to be retired in the 2030 time frame.

Do you believe that the United States needs to develop a new manned bomber?

I believe that the Air Force must ensure that it can continue to provide long-range persistent strike capabilities to the President in his role as Commander-in-Chief. Given the anticipated life expectancy of the current force, now is an appropriate time for the Department of Defense and the Air Force to consider what options are available to continue to provide such capability. The bomber force provides a broad-based set of options across the spectrum of national security challenges: from the assurance they provide to our regional allies, to their deterrent effect on potential adversaries, through the full spectrum of conventional warfare, and as a critical component of our nation's nuclear triad.

It is my understanding that options for a future long-range persistent strike aircraft—whether manned or unmanned—are under consideration in the context of the Quadrennial Defense Review. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the senior DoD and Air Force leadership on the consideration of these options.

What role do you see for unmanned bombers?

This is a critical question confronting the Department of Defense and the Air Force. While I am familiar with some of the debate on this issue from my role to date on a Congressional oversight committee, I would look forward, if confirmed, to understanding better the considerations and challenges for the Air Force, including the benefits and military utility of "the man or woman in the cockpit" for the future bomber force.

More generally, we have enjoyed great success in the current fights with unmanned aerial systems (UASs) in the mission sets of intelligence/surveillance/reconnaissance and light attack in permissive environments where we are unchallenged in the air, space, and cyber domains. If confirmed, I will continue the Air Force's development of UASs and the unmanned aerial systems roadmap to ensure we expand UAS mission areas commensurate with industry's ability to develop reliable, effective systems that support the needs of the Combatant Commanders.

When, in your view, must a decision on this issue be made?

I think our first step on a decision should be made as an outcome of the ongoing Quadrennial Defense Review and Nuclear Posture Review, as Secretary Gates has stated. If confirmed, I will work closely with Secretary Donley to ensure the Air Force provides its best analysis of the current and projected state of global power capabilities and its best options to the Secretary of Defense.

Prompt Global Strike

What, in your view, is the definition of prompt global strike?

It is my view that Prompt Global Strike is the capability to provide rapid, precise conventional strikes for anti-access and high value targets anywhere in the world. Prompt Global Strike enables the United States to deter and/or strike global targets conventionally with timeframes reduced from days to hours.

What steps do you believe are needed to achieve the goal of prompt global strike?

My current view is that there are several steps needed to achieve the goal of prompt global strike. First, we need to have a high fidelity intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance. Next, we must have a robust command and control network that enables rapid decision making and that provides safeguards to assure other nations of our intent. Finally, we need the capability to provide rapid, precise global strike even in the absence

of forward presence. If confirmed, I would look at this area in more depth to familiarize myself with the Air Force's current thinking and plans.

Duties and Responsibilities as Chief Management Officer

Section 904 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 designates the Under Secretary of the Air Force as the Air Force's Chief Management Officer (CMO). Section 908 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2009 requires the CMO of each of the military departments to carry out a comprehensive business transformation initiative, with the support of a new Business Transformation Office.

What is your understanding of the duties and responsibilities of the Under Secretary as the CMO of the Department of the Air Force?

It is my understanding that the responsibilities of the Chief Management Officer, consistent with Section 904 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, include the following: ensuring the Air Force's capability to carry out the Department of Defense's strategic plan in support of national security objectives; ensuring the core business missions of the Department of the Air Force are optimally aligned to support the Department's warfighting mission; establishing performance goals and measures for improving and evaluating overall economy, efficiency, and effectiveness and monitoring and measuring this progress; and working with DoD's Chief Management Officer to develop and maintain a strategic plan for business reform. Under section 908 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2009, the Chief Management Officer is also responsible for carrying out an initiative for business transformation for the Air Force. If confirmed, I will ensure the core function and missions of the Air Force are optimally aligned to support the joint warfighting mission. I intend to fulfill the requirements of the law by establishing performance goals and measures for improving and evaluating the overall economy, efficiency, and effectiveness of Air Force programs.

What background and expertise do you possess that you believe qualify you to perform these duties and responsibilities?

During my time as Staff Director of the House Armed Services Committee, I was involved in the hearings and deliberations that resulted in the Fiscal Year 2008 and 2009 NDAA. I believe that this background, along with my oversight of both acquisition policy and national military policy generally, will position me well to help improve Air Force business and mission transformation to support of COCOMs and joint/coalition partners. If confirmed, I would look forward to the challenge of helping the Air Force meet the intent of these important laws.

Do you believe that the CMO and the Business Transformation Office have the resources and authority needed to carry out the business transformation of the

Department of the Air Force?

While I have not yet had an opportunity to conduct an in-depth review of these authorities, I have favorable first impressions. If, upon further analysis, I become convinced more resources are required to affect transformation, I would work closely with the Secretary to ensure the Air Force is applying sufficient effort to this important issue.

What role do you believe the CMO and the Business Transformation Office should play in the planning, development, and implementation of specific business systems by the military departments?

Consistent with the laws that established them, the CMO and the Business Transformation Office should work with the Secretary and Chief to set transformation priorities aligned to DoD and Air Force needs. They should work to ensure business systems solutions make economic sense and are feasible; build on or replace existing systems; and enforce sound execution through application of the DoD certification process, pursuant to the FY05 NDAA and amplified in the FY10 NDAA, that requires all business systems over one million dollars in modernization cost be certified as meeting a mission need and supported by a business case.

What changes, if any, would you recommend to the statutory provisions establishing the position of CMO and creating the Business Transformation Office?

I am not yet familiar enough with the functioning of the Air Force office to make recommendations at this time. If confirmed, I will continue to assess the requirement for additional or modified authorities and look forward to working with this Committee to ensure that the objectives of the CMO, as intended by Congress, are met.

Section 2222 of Title 10, United States Code, requires that the Secretary of Defense develop a comprehensive business enterprise architecture and transition plan to guide the development of its business systems and processes. The Department has chosen to implement the requirement for an enterprise architecture and transition plan through a “federated” approach in which the Business Transformation Agency has developed the top level architecture while leaving it to the military departments to fill in most of the detail. The Air Force’s business systems, like those of the other military departments, remain incapable of providing timely, reliable financial data to support management decisions. In particular, the Government Accountability Office has reported that the Air Force has not yet followed DOD’s lead in establishing new governance structures to address business transformation; has not yet developed comprehensive enterprise architecture and transition plan that plug into DOD’s federated architecture in a manner that meets statutory requirements; and instead continues to rely upon old, stovepiped structures to implement piecemeal reforms.

If confirmed, what steps, if any, would you take to ensure that the Air Force develops the business systems and processes it needs to appropriately manage funds

in the best interest of the taxpayer and the national defense?

If confirmed, I will work with the Air Force comptroller to ensure that Air Force funding execution is more visible in real time to senior leaders. While I have not yet been briefed in detail on the status and challenges for Air Force systems, I would work to ensure that our systems and processes achieve the outcome of enhancing our ability to manage funds; ensure a detailed schedule is put in place and managed to achieve that outcome; and ensure audits are conducted to validate performance.

Do you believe that a comprehensive, integrated, enterprise-wide architecture and transition plan is essential to the successful transformation of the Air Force's business systems?

Yes, I do.

What steps would you take, if confirmed, to ensure that the Air Force's enterprise architecture and transition plan meet the requirements of section 2222?

If confirmed, I will engage the business transformation staff in a detailed review of how the Air Force is developing and using its business enterprise architecture to manage transformation. I would make it a priority to meet very early on with the Deputy CMO and Business Transformation staff to validate the current state of the Air Force business enterprise architecture and its alignment to the DoD architecture. I would focus our review on how the architecture is being applied within the Air Force governance process, and would direct and implement any needed improvements.

What are your views on the importance and role of timely and accurate financial and business information in managing operations and holding managers accountable?

I think timely financial information is critical in managing the operations of large organizations. I understand the frustration of many at the difficulty in achieving audits of Department of Defense financial statements and appreciate Congressional efforts, through section 1003 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010, to motivate the Department to move more expeditiously to producing auditable statements. If confirmed, I will be active in supporting the Secretary of the Air Force's continued focus on financial issues within the department.

How would you address a situation in which you found that reliable, useful, and timely financial and business information was not routinely available for these purposes?

If confirmed, I would use that situation as an opportunity to improve the process of providing such financial and business information. I would make this area a priority, especially if it aligns to the major strategic mission priorities of the organization, and assign actions with accountability for corrections. Finally, I would provide active follow-

up to ensure the needed results were achieved.

What role do you envision playing, if confirmed, in managing or providing oversight over the improvement of the financial and business information available to Air Force managers?

If confirmed, I will focus on establishing the priorities for business performance improvements on behalf of the Secretary of the Air Force and report on progress toward achieving these goals. As the CMO, I would expect to be an active and key member of the Air Force governance process, enforcing Department priorities in decisions regarding programs, organizations and processes across the functional staff and Air Force Major Commands.

Acquisition Issues

What are your views regarding the need to reform the process by which the Department of the Air Force acquires major weapons systems?

Reforming the acquisition process for major weapons systems is a critical issue for the Air Force, as well as for the Department of Defense more broadly. I am familiar with some of the past challenges in this area, as well as many of the concerns that motivated Congressional action through the Weapons System Acquisition Reform Act of 2009. My initial impression is that the Air Force has taken focused actions to reform its acquisition processes and is continuing to work to make further improvements. If confirmed, I would expect to learn more about the challenges facing Air Force acquisition and to help the leadership team take further steps to keep requirements in check and improve cost, schedule, and performance measures.

What steps would you recommend to improve that process?

If confirmed, I would continue the acquisition improvements begun by the Secretary of the Air Force and the Chief of Staff in May 2009. As I understand it, these improvements seek to address the major acquisition improvement areas laid out in the Weapons Systems Acquisition Reform Act of 2009. Specifically, I believe the Air Force should continue to improve the size and training of the workforce; control requirements; create financial and budget stability in major defense programs; improving major source selection processes; and address clear lines of acquisition authority and accountability across the Air Force.

If confirmed, what role do you expect to play in the major defense acquisition programs of the Department of the Air Force?

If confirmed, I will assist the Secretary of the Air Force in his goal of recapturing acquisition excellence. His initiative includes efforts to revitalize the Air Force acquisition workforce, improve the requirements generation process, instill budget and

financial discipline, improve Air Force major systems source selections, and establish clear lines of authority and accountability within our acquisition organizations. I would look forward to helping the Secretary to achieve his acquisition goals in whatever capacity he believes I am best suited to serve.

Department-wide, nearly half of the Department of Defense’s 95 largest acquisition programs have exceeded the so-called “Nunn-McCurdy” cost growth standards established in section 2433 of title 10, United States Code. The cost overruns on these major defense acquisition programs now total \$295 billion over the original program estimates, even though the Department has cut unit quantities and reduced performance expectations on many programs in an effort to hold costs down. Many of those programs are being executed by the Department of the Air Force.

What steps, if any and if confirmed, would you take to address the out-of-control cost growth on the Department of the Air Force’s major defense acquisition programs?

I am in support of the principles that motivated the Weapons Acquisition Reform Act of 2009. I think that law lays out both the drivers of program challenges and the need to take very seriously any critical breaches of Nunn-McCurdy thresholds. As such and if confirmed, my analysis of the Air Force’s acquisition programs would focus on the assumptions used in establishing program baselines. Such baselines must be based on realistic schedule and technical assumptions and accurate cost estimates. If confirmed, I will place an emphasis on realistic budgeting based on improved program cost estimates.

What principles will guide your thinking on whether to recommend terminating a program that has experienced “critical” cost growth under Nunn-McCurdy?

The direction provided by Nunn–McCurdy and by the Weapon Systems Acquisition Reform Act of 2009 is essential in determining whether to terminate or continue a program that has experienced a critical cost growth. I agree with the new law that, when such breaches occur, we must understand what the root cause of that breach is. I further agree with the presumption for termination that must guide one’s analysis and also the requirement that, if a program is restructured, it should be required to receive new milestone approval before proceeding. While there are programs that will be essential to national security, I believe the Department must undertake hard analysis in looking at the alternatives in such a case.

Many experts have acknowledged that the Department of Defense may have gone too far in reducing its acquisition work force, resulting in undermining of its ability to provide needed oversight in the acquisition process.

Do you agree with this assessment?

Yes.

If so, what steps do you believe the Department of the Air Force should take to address this problem?

If confirmed, I will continue Air Force's efforts to increase the size of and improve the training of the acquisition workforce.

Section 852 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 establishes a Defense Acquisition Workforce Development Fund (DAWDF) to provide the resources needed to begin rebuilding the Department's corps of acquisition professionals.

Do you believe that a properly sized workforce of appropriately trained acquisition professionals is essential if the Air Force is going to get good value for the expenditure of public resources?

Yes.

What steps do you expect to take, if confirmed, to ensure that the Air Force makes appropriate use of the funds made available pursuant to the DAWDF?

If confirmed, I will join the Service Acquisition Executives in monitoring and guiding the use of DAWDF against the Air Force plan and provide course corrections if Air Force needs dictate and as may be required by OSD direction, congressional guidance, and acquisition law.

Would you agree that shortened tours as program managers can lead to difficulties in acquisition programs? If so, what steps would you propose to take, if confirmed, to provide for stability in program management?

Yes, I believe program management tenure is important to program stability. If confirmed, I will support the Air Force's commitment to add rigor in the management of tenure.

Major defense acquisition programs in the Department of the Air Force and the other military departments continue to be subject to funding and requirements instability.

Do you believe that instability in funding and requirements drives up program costs and leads to delays in the fielding of major weapon systems?

Yes.

What steps, if any, do you believe the Air Force should take to address funding and requirements instability?

Emphasis needs to be placed on realistic budgeting based on improved program cost estimates. In my view, there is a need to stabilize program funding and to improve the requirements generation process to minimize changes during the weapons system's

development process. If confirmed, I look forward to understanding the Air Force's existing situation in more depth and to identifying any additional steps that should be taken.

The Comptroller General has found that DOD programs often move forward with unrealistic program cost and schedule estimates, lack clearly defined and stable requirements, include immature technologies that unnecessarily raise program costs and delay development and production, and fail to solidify design and manufacturing processes at appropriate junctures in the development process.

Do you agree with the Comptroller General's assessment?

Yes.

If so, what steps do you believe the Department of the Air Force should take to address these problems?

I believe the acquisition reform steps recently put in place by the Congress, OSD and the Air Force will have a beneficial impact toward improving the acquisition process. It is critical to continue the revitalization of the Air Force acquisition workforce, improve the requirements generation process, instill budget and financial discipline, improve Air Force major systems source selections, and establish clear lines of authority and accountability within acquisition organizations. The Weapon Systems Acquisition Reform Act (WSARA) and regulations require preliminary design review prior to engineering and manufacturing development, giving more credibility to program cost baselines.

By some estimates, the Department of Defense now spends more money every year for the acquisition of services than it does for the acquisition of products, including major weapon systems. Yet, the Department places far less emphasis on staffing, training, and managing the acquisition of services than it does on the acquisition of products.

What steps, if any, do you believe the Air Force should take to improve the staffing, training, and management of its acquisition of services?

It is my understanding the Air Force has implemented a multi-functional team approach to services acquisition both pre- and post-award; engaged general officers and senior executive leaders in oversight and management in each major command across the Air Force; and developed training courses now run out of DAU. If confirmed, I will seek to become more knowledgeable about ongoing Air Force initiatives.

Do you agree that the Air Force should develop processes and systems to provide managers with access to information needed to conduct comprehensive spending analyses of services contracts on an ongoing basis?

I agree the Air Force needs such processes and systems and that they should be consistent

with Defense Department expectations. As of yet, there is not a single system across DoD that has this capability. Having clear OSD expectations would be critical in the development of such a system. In the interim, it is my understanding that the Air Force is using existing data systems such as Federal Procurement Data System – Next Generation (FPDS-NG) and Contract Business Information System (CBIS). If confirmed, I will work with DoD to encourage development of consistent expectations across DoD.

Recent Congressional and Department of Defense initiatives have attempted to reduce technical and performance risks associated with developing and producing major defense acquisition programs, including ships, so as to minimize the need for cost-reimbursable contracts.

Do you think that the Air Force should move towards more fixed price-type contracting in developing or procuring major defense acquisition programs? Why or why not?

I believe that fixed price-type contracting should be used to the greatest degree appropriate. However, each contract has to be evaluated on a case by case basis to determine the appropriateness of this contract type. Its use would be appropriate when technologies are mature enough to enable accurate cost and schedule estimates by the industry offerors competing for a contract. The use of a fixed-price type contract, where appropriate, permits an equitable and sensible allocation of program risk between the Government and the contractor. I will certainly keep this consideration in mind, if confirmed, in considering options for future contracts. This recent focus on increased use of fixed price and fixed price incentive contract types is consistent with recent USD (AT&L) emphasis in this area.

Section 811 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 amended section 2306b of title 10, United States Code to ensure that the Department of Defense enters multiyear contracts only in cases where stable design and stable requirements reduce risk, and only in cases where substantial savings are expected. The statement of managers accompanying the conference report addressed the requirements for buying major defense systems under multiyear contracts as follows: “The conferees agree that ‘substantial savings’ under section 2306b(a)(1) of title 10, United States Code, means savings that exceed 10 percent of the total costs of carrying out the program through annual contracts, except that multiyear contracts for major systems providing savings estimated at less than 10 percent should only be considered if the Department presents an exceptionally strong case that the proposal meets the other requirements of section 2306b(a), as amended. The conferees agree with a Government Accountability Office finding that any major system that is at the end of its production line is unlikely to meet these standards and therefore would be a poor candidate for a multiyear procurement contract.”

If confirmed, will you ensure that the Air Force fully complies with the requirements of section 2306b of title 10, United States Code, as amended by section

811 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (Public Law 110-181) with respect to programs that are forwarded for authorization under a multiyear procurement contract?

Yes.

If confirmed, under what circumstances, if any, do you anticipate that you would support a multiyear contract with expected savings of less than 10 percent?

In my opinion, 10 percent savings is a reasonable target for the “substantial savings” threshold. Based on what I know at this point, there is no specific Air Force program that I am aware of that would justify a multiyear contract with projected savings of less than 10 percent. Approval of multiyear procurement authority has historically depended on the ability to obtain significant savings, a sufficiently stable weapon system design, an adequately validated requirement, and a commitment to stable funding over the life of the contract.

If confirmed, under what circumstances, if any, would you support a multiyear contract for a major system at the end of its production line?

I am aware of the statement of manager’s language that accompanied section 811 in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008. This language endorsed the finding of the Government Accountability Office “that any major system that is at the end of its production line is unlikely to meet these standards and therefore would be a poor candidate for a multiyear procurement contract.” I agree with this conclusion. There are no specific circumstances I can imagine at this point that would argue for an exception to this general argument against the use of a multiyear contract at the end of a production line.

What is your understanding of the new requirements regarding the timing of any Air Force request for legislative authorization of a multiyear procurement contract for a particular program?

My understanding is that by no later than 1 March of the year in which the Secretary requests legislative authority to enter into a multiyear contract for a particular program, the Secretary must determine that each of the requirements laid out in section 811 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 have been met by the contract and provide the basis for such determination to the congressional defense committees.

Air Force Science and Technology

What do you see as the role that Air Force science and technology programs will play in continuing to develop capabilities for current and future Air Force systems?

If confirmed, this is an area on which I would need to increase my familiarity, but I see

the goal of Air Force science and technology programs continuing to be support of the warfighter with superior systems. I would expect the Air Force Science and Technology program to continue to focus on the Air Force strategic priorities - winning today's fight, modernizing our air and space inventories, and recapturing acquisition excellence.

What in your view have been the greatest contributions of Air Force science and technology programs to current operations?

One of the enduring strengths of the Air Force has been the continual stream of advanced technologies and capabilities that have flowed out of the laboratory and gone into the development centers and Programs of Record with eventual transition to the warfighter. For example, the contributions of the Global Positioning System, smart weapons, and new technologies to help identify battlefield targets have had a profound impact on current operations.

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

Based on my current knowledge and without a deep understanding of the Air Force's efforts in this area, I believe the ultimate metric is to assess what has been transitioned into operational use. If confirmed, I will be guided by Air Force strategic priorities - to win today's fight, modernize our air and space inventories, and recapture acquisition excellence, and specifically, the goal to bolster intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR), cyber and advanced conventional weapons support to the joint warfighter.

Air Force Laboratories and Research, Development and Engineering Centers (RDEC)

What role should Air Force laboratories play in supporting current operations and in developing new capabilities to support Air Force missions?

It is my view that the Air Force S&T program—including the labs—should continue to develop and transition innovative and relevant technologies; build and nurture a technically skilled, highly educated and adaptive workforce able to provide effective solutions for today's issues; and conduct innovative research to maintain our technological edge over potential adversaries.

If confirmed, how will you ensure that the Air Force laboratories and R&D centers have the highest quality workforce, laboratory infrastructure, resources, and management, so that they can continue to support deployed warfighters and develop next generation capabilities?

If confirmed, I will spend time educating myself on the details of the Air Force's current initiatives in this area. The quality of the workforce is a critical consideration. In that regard, I would expect to work closely with the Air Force leadership to ensure the service

is taking full advantage of the expedited hiring authorities to rebuild the workforce with the highest quality talent available and appropriately using all authorities for training these individuals. I will rely on and support the senior leadership of the acquisition community to assess and invest in infrastructure, including workforce, research facilities and funds necessary to support the future technology needs of the Air Force. It is my understanding that the results of the assessment of laboratory health and infrastructure required by the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010 will form the basis for decisions on required infrastructure investments.

Do you support the full utilization of authorities established by Congress under the Laboratory Personnel Demonstration program that is currently being run in many Air Force RDECs?

I fully support the intent behind the Lab Demo program - to improve recruitment and retention of high-quality employees and to shape the laboratory work force into a more flexible structure that can effectively respond to rapid changes in the technology market place. If confirmed, I will work with the laboratory leadership to monitor the Lab Demo program to ensure it remains effective for its primary purpose and propose changes to the program as they become required.

Do you believe that all RDECs in the Air Force's Research, Development and Engineering Command (RDECOM) need enhanced personnel authorities in order to attract and retain the finest technical workforce? Would you support expansion of the Laboratory Personnel Demonstration authorities to all of RDECOM's laboratories and engineering centers?

Yes, I believe the Lab Demo project has helped the Air Force recruiting and retention of highly qualified scientists and engineers. I don't yet have sufficient knowledge of the implications of expanding the program, but if confirmed, I look forward to being briefed in greater detail on potential expansion.

Do you believe that the Air Force's laboratories and engineering centers should have a separate, dynamic personnel system, uniquely tailored to support laboratory directors' requirements to attract and retain the highest quality scientific and engineering talent?

If confirmed, I look forward to learning more about and addressing this issue, looking carefully at the Air Force's experience with the Lab Demo program.

How will you assess the quality of Air Force laboratory infrastructure and the adequacy of investments being made in new military construction and sustainment of that infrastructure?

I am aware that a provision in the FY 2010 NDAA directs the Secretary of Defense to report to the Congress on the health of the Department's laboratory infrastructure. A Joint Assessment team, including representatives from the Air Force, has been formed to

collect data and perform the analysis as required by the Act. If confirmed, I will work closely with the leadership of the acquisition community to ensure that the Air Force Research Laboratory continues to have adequate infrastructure for meeting the Air Force technology requirements and warfighter needs.

Air Force Information Technology Programs

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

If confirmed, this is an area I would want to explore in greater depth. My current view, however, is that major information technology systems should be developed and deployed in conjunction with other DoD components to the maximum extent possible. A major information technology system would likely have applicability to organizations other than just the Air Force. Therefore, the Air Force should be partnering with those organizations to ensure unity of effort in development and sustainment of non stove-piped solutions.

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

Again, this is an area in which I look forward to becoming more expert, if confirmed. In order to maximize the benefits of new enterprise information technology, the Air Force should couple its existing process improvement program with IT systems that can effectively meet the requirements of those processes. I see great benefit in reducing the time Airmen spend on administrative work and using that time to focus on operational requirements. If confirmed, I will strive to make that happen.

What is the relationship between Air Force efforts at implementing enterprise information technology programs and supporting computing services and infrastructure to support Air Force missions and efforts being undertaken by the Defense Information Systems Agency and the Assistant Secretary of defense for Networks and Information Integration?

The Air Force and DISA have always had a strong relationship. It is my understanding that the Air Force has already taken steps to move computing services to the DISA Defense Enterprise Computing Centers (DECCs). A pilot program is underway and the Air Force will use the results of this program to plan for the future migration of services across the country. If confirmed, I will continue to foster that relationship.

Housing Privatization

The Department of Defense has been engaged in the privatization of many of its support functions. Among the most significant privatization efforts is military family

housing units and utility systems.

In your view, what challenges does the Air Force face in implementing housing privatization and, if confirmed, how would you propose addressing those challenges?

I believe that such housing privatization efforts can be beneficial for the Department as they leverage private sector resources for the betterment of the force. I think it is important to ensure that any private investment is providing a quality product for our Airmen and their families. I do not know of any specific challenges with Air Force housing privatization. If confirmed, I plan on learning more about the Air Force's experiences and challenges. Once I am more familiar with the specifics of the Air Force program, I look forward to working with this Committee on any specific areas that raise concern. It is critical that the Air Force remains committed to providing high quality housing to Airmen and their families.

What adjustments, if any, would you anticipate as a result of the current lending environment?

From my limited exposure to this area, the current credit market is delaying closure of some of the Air Forces' privatization deals. If confirmed, I will work with current and future privatization project owners to evaluate what adjustments, if any, need to be made in order to ensure success of this important program.

What actions would you propose, if any, to accommodate installations where there are housing shortfalls beyond the ability of the current privatization agreement?

Quality housing communities are critical to Air Force members and their families. I understand the Air Force is currently determining on-base housing requirements. If confirmed, I will work with Air Force leadership, local community leaders, and privatization partners to ensure Air Force housing privatization deals are agile enough to accommodate unforeseen housing shortfalls. I am committed to ensuring our military members and their families are provided access to safe, quality and affordable housing.

What are your views regarding barracks privatization?

If confirmed, I will make access to quality housing for unaccompanied Airmen a priority. I will work with the Air Force's senior military leadership to review and determine the most beneficial means to provide housing within the dormitory system, whether acquisition is pursued through traditional military construction avenues or privatization will have to be determined to meet the goals of the department as well as the expectations of our service men and women.

Investment in Infrastructure

Witnesses appearing before the Committee in recent years have testified that the military services under-invest in their facilities compared to private industry standards. Decades of under-investment in our installations have led to increasing backlogs of facility maintenance needs, created substandard living and working conditions, and made it harder to take advantage of new technologies that could increase productivity.

What is your assessment of Air Force infrastructure investment?

If confirmed, I will review the current and future requirements for our infrastructure, to ensure that the Air Force can support its mission requirements and the Secretary of the Air Force's priorities.

If confirmed, what actions, if any, would you propose to increase resources to reduce the backlog and improve Air Force facilities?

If a thorough review of infrastructure investment indicates the Air Force is taking too much risk, then if confirmed, I will work closely with Air Force leadership to make appropriate fiscal adjustments to reduce the backlog and improve facilities.

Implementation of Base Closures and Realignment

The Defense Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process has resulted in the required closure or realignment of numerous major Air Force installations. The DOD installation closure process resulting from BRAC decisions has historically included close cooperation with the affected local community in order to allow these communities an active role in the reuse of property.

If confirmed, would you change any of the existing efforts to assist affected communities with economic development, revitalization, and re-use planning of property received as a result of the BRAC process?

Close cooperation between military installations is vital during the BRAC closure process. If confirmed, I will review Air Force efforts at BRAC-impacted communities to ensure the Air Force is meeting the full spirit and intent of BRAC by allowing communities an active role in determining reuse of properties.

What, in your view, are the advantages or disadvantages, if any, of the use of no cost Economic Development Conveyances as a means of early property transfers under BRAC as opposed to seeking for full fair market value?

I understand the debate that exists on the use of no cost EDCs. If confirmed, I would want to understand more fully the Air Force's historical experience and their view of the specific advantages and disadvantages of economic development conveyances.

Systems and Support for Wounded Warriors

Air Force personnel who are wounded and injured performing duties in Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom deserve the highest priority from the Air Force for support services, healing and recuperation, rehabilitation, evaluation for return to duty, successful transition from active duty if required, and continuing support beyond retirement or discharge.

What is your assessment of the progress made to date by the Air Force and the Department of Defense to improve the care, management, and transition of seriously ill and injured Air Force personnel and their families?

I believe that the Department of Defense and the Air Force are committed to providing our Wounded Warriors the best care possible. I have been advised that the Air Force has increased its number of Recovery Care Coordinators, and it has modified promotion, evaluation, and retention policies that previously put combat wounded Airmen at a disadvantage. I believe that wounded Airmen who wish to continue to serve should be given every opportunity to do so. If confirmed, I would continue the Air Force's commitment to review and assess all efforts ensuring that we are meeting the needs of our wounded Airmen and their families.

What are the strengths upon which continued progress should be based?

It is my understanding that the recovery care coordinator program is the key to ensuring Airmen receive full-spectrum care, and I have been advised that the Air Force plans to convert contract positions to civil service to provide a more stable workforce of trained professionals providing a high level of personalized care.

What are the weaknesses that need to be corrected?

It is my understanding that the Air Force wants to improve the program by earlier identification of wounded Airmen's abilities and capabilities. If confirmed, I will join the Air Force's effort to evaluate the current process and do what is necessary to insert the identification of abilities and capabilities sooner in the process, to help wounded Airmen make more timely career decisions.

What is your assessment of the need to streamline and improve the disability evaluation system?

I support the attention that has been given to the Disability Evaluation System (DES) Pilot Program by the Department of Defense and Department of Veteran Affairs at 27 military installations across the United States. This is an area that will continue to need attention and aggressive efforts at streamlining and improvement. If confirmed, I would look forward to working with DoD and Air Force leadership to continue such improvements.

If confirmed, are there additional strategies and resources that you would pursue to

increase support for wounded Air Force personnel and their families, and to monitor their progress in returning to duty or to civilian life?

If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary of the Air Force to continue to assess the efficiency and appropriateness of the Air Force's Warrior and Survivor Care Program to ensure the Air Force meets the needs of our wounded Airmen.

Homosexual Conduct Policy

The current homosexual conduct policy, commonly referred to as "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," went into effect in February 1994 after months of congressional hearings and debate resulting in the enactment of a Federal statute. Although there have been some changes in how this policy has been implemented, the basic policy has not changed. President Obama has made it clear that he intends to work with the military and with Congress to repeal the policy.

What is your view on repealing or changing this policy?

The President has stated an intent to work with Congress to repeal this policy. It is my understanding that he has entered into a dialogue with the Secretary of Defense and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff about how to best proceed in this effort. I further understand that the Department of Defense intends to follow the law in this matter as it currently exists and to follow it however it may be changed. I support the Department's commitment to the law and to working with the Congress on a way forward as regards this policy.

In your view, would changing this policy have an adverse impact on unit cohesion and good order and discipline in the Air Force?

I understand that the Air Force is committed to maintaining good order and discipline, and ensuring a climate of mutual respect. If confirmed, I would work to understand the view of the senior leadership of the service as to whether there would be any possible impact on unit cohesion, as well as good order and discipline.

If confirmed, what role would you play in efforts to repeal or change this policy?

If confirmed, I will work closely with the Secretary of the Air Force to assess, advise and support him throughout review of the current policy.

If the policy is changed by Congress, would you recommend a phase-in period for implementation of the new policy?

If confirmed, I would advise development of a thorough, complete and deliberate plan to implement any new policy, giving careful attention to the counsel of military leaders.

If confirmed, what role will you play in implementing a new policy?

If confirmed, I will work closely with the Secretary of the Air Force to assess, advise and support him in the implementing any new policy.

Sexual Assault Prevention and Response

The Department has in recent years developed comprehensive policies and procedures to improve the prevention of and response to incidents of sexual assaults, including providing appropriate resources and care for victims of sexual assault. However, numerous incidents of sexual misconduct involving military personnel in Iraq, Kuwait, and Afghanistan are still being reported. Victims and their advocates claim that they are victimized twice: first by attackers in their own ranks and then by unresponsive or inadequate treatment for the victim. They assert that their command fails to respond appropriately with basic medical services and with an adequate investigation of their charges followed by a failure to hold assailants accountable.

Do you consider the current sexual assault policies and procedures, particularly those on confidential reporting, to be effective?

I am advised that the Department of Defense and Air Force leadership have assertively developed and executed policies that have led to an improved environment for all Airmen. I am also advised that the combined aspects of the revised sexual assault prevention and care program, including a confidential reporting process, appear to be serving Air Force personnel well. This is a critical issue. Those who serve must know that they can come forward confidentially to report a crime and that such reporting will be taken seriously. If confirmed, I will give this issue careful attention and work for constant improvement.

What problems, if any, are you aware of in the manner in which this new confidential reporting procedure has been put into operation?

I am not aware of specific changes that are needed at this time. If confirmed, I will ensure I understand the current status of this effort in the Air Force and work with the Secretary on any areas identified for improvement.

What is your view of the steps the Air Force has taken to prevent sexual assaults in combat zones?

I understand that the Air Force deploys a fully trained Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC) to each of our Air Expeditionary Wings and intends to support an additional location. I believe it is vital to have a robust sexual assault training and awareness program in a deployed environment to ensure all personnel, regardless of military branch, know that the SARC is there to support them.

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

I have been informed that since 2006, all Airmen entering Basic Training and all pre-commissioning programs are educated about sexual assault, their reporting options, and how to seek assistance if they have been a victim of this crime. I also understand that additional education and training courses are ready to implement across the Air Force this year to reach Airmen throughout their time in the Air Force regardless of the length of their service. If confirmed, I will assess whether additional steps should be taken to support victims and hold offenders accountable.

If confirmed, what actions will you take to ensure senior level direction and oversight of efforts to prevent and respond to sexual assaults?

If confirmed, I will fully support the Secretary's oversight of the Air Force's Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Program. This is a problem though that does not affect the Air Force alone. In that regard, I would greatly support sustained partnerships with the Department of Defense and Congress, and with national subject matter experts and advocacy groups to get it right. Senior leadership must send a clear message that sexual assault is a criminal action and cannot and will not be tolerated in the Air Force. All servicemembers must have confidence that senior leaders will take any accusation seriously and that any evidence of a crime will result in prosecution.

Religious Guidelines

What is your understanding of current policies and programs of the Department of Defense regarding religious practices in the Air Force?

It is my understanding that the Air Force actively supports free exercise of religion, mutual respect, and accommodation. If confirmed, I would continue the Air Force's commitment to upholding the free exercise of each person's religious convictions under the Constitution, and review policies as necessary to assure continued compliance with the First Amendment.

Do these policies accommodate, where appropriate, religious practices that require adherents to wear particular articles of faith?

I understand that they do.

In your view, do these policies accommodate the free exercise of religion and other beliefs without impinging on those who have different beliefs, including no religious belief?

I understand that they do.

In your opinion, do existing policies and practices regarding public prayers offered

by Air Force chaplains in a variety of formal and informal settings strike the proper balance between a chaplain’s ability to pray in accordance with his or her religious beliefs and the rights of other service members with different beliefs, including no religious beliefs?

I understand that they do.

Air Force Academy

What do you consider to be the policy and procedural elements that must be in place at the Air Force Academy in order to prevent and respond appropriately to sexual assaults and sexual harassment and to ensure essential oversight?

I understand the Academy has institutionalized a comprehensive program of both prevention and response to sexual assault and sexual harassment. If confirmed, I will support vigilant oversight of this issue.

What is your assessment of corrective measures taken at the Air Force Academy to ensure religious tolerance and respect, and of Air Force guidelines regarding religious tolerance that were promulgated in August of 2005?

I understand that corrective measures taken by the Air Force meet the constitutional obligations of protecting free exercise of religion rights of service members with different beliefs, including no religious beliefs, and guard against governmental establishment of religion, and promote mutual respect. If confirmed, I will support vigilant oversight of this issue.

Rising Costs of Medical Care

In testimony presented to Congress in February, 2009, the Assistant Director of the Congressional Budget Office asserted that “medical funding accounts for more than one-third of the growth projected for operations and support funding between 2009 and 2026.” In April, 2009, Secretary Gates told an audience at Maxwell Air Force Base that the cost of “health care is eating the Department alive.”

What is your assessment of the long-term impact of rising medical costs on future Air Force plans?

My view is that the rising cost of health care costs is a tremendous problem for all Services. In the Air Force over the last five fiscal years, medical costs have increased almost 8 percent annually. The Department of Defense and the services must strike a balance between maintaining its compact with servicemembers and their families to provide them high-quality medical care and the costs associated with this function which is taking up and increasingly great portion of the defense budget. Congress is also a

critical partner in any decisions affecting medical care for servicemembers. If confirmed, I would work with the Secretary of the Air Force, appropriate officials in OSD and the other services, and the Congress to further address this issue.

If confirmed, what actions would you recommend to mitigate the effect of such costs on the Air Force top-line?

The challenge of military health care costs cannot be solved in one service alone. TRICARE is a Department-wide system and any efforts to deal with rising costs must be dealt with across that system. Working to increase the utilization of the direct care system should lower costs as we recapture care that is being delivered in the private sector. Leveraging strategic partnerships across all services as well as civilian trauma centers, university medical centers, and the VA can provide a broad range of clinical opportunities for our entire medical team which in turn reduces expenditures in the private sector. For that reason, if confirmed, I will look forward to working with OSD, senior leadership from the Air Force and other services, and the Congress to strike the appropriate balance for these competing priorities.

What reforms in infrastructure, benefits, or benefit management, if any, do you think should be examined in order to control the costs of military health care?

Reforms in these areas, in order to be effective, would need to be addressed across the Department of Defense. Doing so would necessitate working with a range of infrastructure, healthcare, and military personnel experts from OSD, the services, and the Congress to identify effective options. If confirmed, I would look forward to being an active participant in these efforts.

Personnel and Entitlement Costs

In addition to health care costs, personnel and related entitlement spending continue to soar and is becoming an ever increasing portion of the DOD and Air Force budgets.

What actions do you believe can be taken to control the rise in personnel costs and entitlement spending?

Personnel costs and entitlement spending now constitute a significant portion of the Department of Defense's budget. In the Air Force, 34% of the FY10 budget supports pay and allowance for the Active Duty, Guard, Reserve and Civilian workforce. A major goal of the Air Force leadership is caring for Airmen and their families. Part of that effort must be the recruitment and retention of the highest quality Airmen and providing for them in their retirement. The Air Force, and the broader Department, must recognize, however, the pressure this puts on other parts of the budget. If confirmed, I will work with the rest of the Air Force leadership to continue to balance personnel costs with other high priority Air Force requirements.

If confirmed, what actions will you take to avoid a requirement for massive end-of-year reprogramming to cover personnel costs?

If confirmed, I will work closely with Financial Management in DoD and Air Force to ensure budgeting is accurate. In addition, I will monitor execution, end-strength and incentives to ensure a proper balance.

What is your assessment of the Air Force's use of bonuses?

My understanding is that the Air Force has a relatively small bonus program compared to the other services; and its strategy is to surgically target bonuses towards those Airmen with the skills most needed to accomplish its mission. From my knowledge to date, I believe the Air Force is using bonus programs judiciously and effectively to meet its retention goals.

What is your assessment of the Air Force's use of aviation career incentive pay or assignment incentive pay for unmanned aerial systems operators, both those who are rated pilots and those who are not?

I have not yet had an opportunity to review the use of aviation career incentive pay for unmanned aerial systems operators. If confirmed, I will look into this issue.

Mental Health Issues

The final report of the Department of Defense Task Force on Mental Health, issued in June 2007, found evidence that the stigma associated with mental illness represents a "critical failure" in the military, preventing individuals from seeking needed care. The report states, "Every military leader bears responsibility for addressing stigma; leaders who fail to do so reduce the effectiveness of the service members they lead." In light of increasing suicide rates in each of the Services and the increase in the number of service members experiencing symptoms of post-traumatic stress, it is more important than ever to ensure that service members and their families have access to mental health care and that the stigma associated with seeking such care is eliminated.

In your view, what actions are necessary to alleviate this stigma?

I strongly agree with the assessment of the Task Force and believe it is incumbent on every senior leader to ensure access to mental health care and to reduce the stigma associated with utilizing such services. If confirmed, I will examine efforts currently underway to address any stigma associated with accessing mental health services and work to ensure that all service members understand that seeking help for problems in any area of their lives is a sign of strength. I will also work to ensure that Air Force leaders at every level consistently re-enforce the message that seeking help is a sign of strength and is supported.

What is your view of the need for revision of military policies on command notification when Air Force personnel seek mental health care?

If confirmed, I will review existing policies in this area and make any recommendations necessary to ensure that these policies strike the proper balance between providing privacy for those seeking mental health care and the needs of the Air Force to maintain the ability to safely conduct the mission.

If confirmed, what actions will you take to ensure that sufficient mental health resources are available to service members in theater, and to Air Force personnel and their families upon return to home station?

It is my understanding that 45 Air Force mental health professionals are deployed in support of the joint warfighting effort. I support Air Force efforts to provide mental health services to those in combat. If confirmed, I would like to understand the additional needs that exist both for the joint deployed force and for Air Force personnel and their families once they return to home station and would plan to review the effectiveness of recruitment and retention efforts currently in place.

Medical Personnel Recruiting and Retention

The Department of Defense and the Air Force continue to face significant shortages in critically needed military medical personnel in both the active and reserve components. The Committee is concerned that growing medical support requirements will compound the already serious challenges faced in recruitment and retention of military medical, dental, nurse, and behavioral health personnel.

If confirmed, will you undertake a comprehensive review of the medical support requirements for the Air Force and the sufficiency of the plans to meet recruiting and retention goals in these specialties?

Yes. If confirmed, I will partner with The Surgeon General, Air Force A1, and Air Force Recruiting Service for this comprehensive review

What legislative and policy initiatives, including bonuses and special pays, do you think may be necessary to ensure that the Air Force can continue to meet medical support requirements?

Bonuses and special pays are important tools that help the Air Force retain quality medical service personnel. I am not aware of any new requirements for legislative or policy initiatives in this area. If confirmed, I will review of the Air Force's programs for recruiting and retaining military and civilian medical personnel in order to identify areas that may benefit from new policy or legislative initiatives.

Military Quality of Life

In January 2009, the Department published its second Quadrennial Quality of Life Review, which focused on the importance of key quality of life factors for military families, such as family support, child care, education, health care, and morale, welfare and recreation services.

How do you perceive the relationship between quality of life improvements and your own top priorities for Air Force recruiting and retention?

I believe there is a direct relationship between Quality of Life programs and success in the recruiting and retention of Airmen. Quality of Life programs are the cornerstone of regenerating, sustaining, and retaining the military's most important asset – its people. Our Airmen are only as strong as the network of family and friends around them and it is crucial that we take care of families so our Airmen can focus on the mission.

If confirmed, what further enhancements to Air Force quality of life programs would you make a priority, and how do you envision working with the Department, combatant commanders, family advocacy groups, and Congress to achieve them?

If confirmed, I will support policies and programs that enable the Air Force to achieve and sustain a "Ready Air Force Family." I will support the Secretary of the Air Force's efforts to work closely with Department of Defense and Service counterparts, combatant commands, and the Congress to identify, resource and execute the programs that will most effectively provide our military members and their families a quality of life that will sustain them and retain this most important national resource.

Family Support

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

What do you consider to be the most important family readiness issues for Air Force personnel and their families, and, if confirmed, how would you ensure that family readiness needs are addressed and adequately resourced?

Military families deserve our continued support. Important issues center on available and adequate child care, spouse employment, quality education for children, family separation during deployments and subsequent reintegration, and financial readiness.

If confirmed, I will work closely with DoD and Air Force leadership to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the issues facing Air Force families, including approaches to resourcing existing programs. Based on that, I hope to make a more informed judgment on the adequacy of funding for these important programs.

How would you address these family readiness needs in light of global rebasing, BRAC, deployments, and growth in end strength?

I believe that each of the factors mentioned in the question above increases the demand for family support services. If confirmed, I look forward to gaining a broader understanding of the specific impact of these issues and will foster an environment of support for all Airmen and their families regardless of where they reside.

If confirmed, how would you ensure support to reserve component families related to mobilization, deployment and family readiness, as well as to active duty families who do not reside near a military installation?

The reserve component is a critical part of the Air Force's Total Force approach and these families are equally deserving of support. There are additional challenges in providing effective support to reserve families who may not live in close proximity to a base or to other military families. If confirmed, I will need to gain a broader understanding of these issues and the range of possible options for addressing them. My intent would be to foster an environment of support for all Airmen and their families regardless of where they reside.

If confirmed, what additional steps will you take to enhance family support?

In my capacity as staff director for the House Armed Services Committee, I have general knowledge of family support issues from multi-service perspective. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Air Force leadership to explore and understand Air Force family support programs in more detail.

Access to Health Care

As evidenced in a family support hearing held by the Subcommittee on Personnel earlier this year, one of the major concerns for military family members is access to health care. Military spouses tell us that the health care system is overwhelmed, and those stationed in more remote areas may not have access to adequate care.

If confirmed, what steps would you take to ensure complete access to health care for the families of service members?

I concur with the subcommittee that this is a critical issue; adequate high-quality health care should be what military families can expect. If confirmed, I look forward to understanding more fully the challenges faced specifically by the Air Force and to

identify options for addressing these challenges, particularly to ensuring that the Air Force medical service has the appropriate manpower at each installation to execute the Family Health Initiative.

Morale, Welfare, and Recreation

Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) programs are critical to enhancement of military life for members and their families, especially in light of frequent and lengthy deployments. These programs must be relevant and attractive to all eligible users, including active duty and reserve personnel members and families assigned overseas, and personnel deployed in support of military training and operations.

What challenges do you foresee in sustaining MWR programs, and, if confirmed, what improvements would you seek to achieve?

The challenge continues to be maintaining the delicate balance of funding warfighting needs and family member support programs. MWR programs are needed to regenerate Airmen and provide comfort for their families so human performance is optimized. If confirmed, I will continue to emphasize the importance of these programs to support the well-being of all our Airmen.

Balance Between Civilian Employees and Contractor Employees

In recent years, the Air Force and the Department of Defense have become increasingly reliant on services provided by contractors. Over the past eight years, DOD's civilian workforce has remained essentially unchanged in size. Over the same period, the Department's spending on contract services has more than doubled, with the estimated number of contractor employees working for the Department increasing from an estimated 730,000 in Fiscal Year 2000 to an estimated 1,550,000 in Fiscal Year 2007. As a result of the explosive growth in service contracts, contractors now play an integral role in the performance of functions that were once performed exclusively by government employees, including the management and oversight of weapons programs, the development of policies, the development of public relations strategies, and even the collection and analysis of intelligence. In many cases, contractor employees work in the same offices, serve on the same projects and task forces, and perform many of the same functions as federal employees.

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

I agree with President Obama's government contracting memorandum of March 4, 2009, directing the Executive Departments and Agencies to ensure that contracts are not wasteful or inefficient, that contracts are designed to meet Federal Government needs, and that inherently governmental functions are not outsourced. Congress through recent

National Defense Authorization Acts has taken productive efforts to emphasize the importance of not outsourcing inherently governmental activities and to grow the acquisition workforce. If confirmed, I would work with the Secretary of the Air Force and leaders across the Air Force to assess this matter so as to ensure compliance with the law and with the President's policy.

In your view, has the Air Force become too reliant on contractors to perform its basic functions?

I believe the Department of Defense generally has become too reliant on contractors to perform basic functions. While I am not specifically familiar yet with the Air Force's contracting approach, I continue to believe that inherently governmental functions should not be outsourced, consistent with President Obama's government contracting memorandum of March 4, 2009. If confirmed, I would work with the Secretary of the Air Force and leaders across the Air Force to assess this matter so as to ensure compliance with the law and with the President's policy.

Do you believe that the current extensive use of personal services contracts is in the best interest of the Air Force?

The Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) restricts the use of personal services contracts. If confirmed, I would work with the Secretary of the Air Force and leaders across the Air Force to ensure compliance with applicable law and policy.

Do you believe that the Air Force and the Department of Defense should undertake a comprehensive reappraisal of "inherently governmental functions" and other critical government functions, and how they are performed?

I fully support the principles and policies set forth in President Obama's memorandum of March 4, 2009. That memorandum directs the Office of Management and Budget, in coordination with the Secretary of Defense, among others, to develop and issue "government-wide guidance to assist branch agencies in reviewing, and creating processes for ongoing review of, existing contracts in order to identify contracts that are wasteful, inefficient, or not otherwise likely to meet the agency's needs and to formulate appropriate corrective action in a timely manner." I believe that any such review must include a review of inherently governmental functions and other critical government functions and how they are performed. If confirmed, I will support any such review and corrective action, particularly as it relates to matters under the purview of the Under Secretary of the Air Force.

If confirmed, will you work with other appropriate officials in the Department of Defense to address these issues?

If confirmed, I will work collaboratively with appropriate Air Force and Department of Defense officials to ensure these matters are addressed in the best interest of the Air Force and the Department of Defense.

Civilian Personnel Systems

Section 1113 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010 repealed the statutory authority for the National Security Personnel System (NSPS), and required that all NSPS employees be converted to other personnel systems by no later than January 1, 2012.

If confirmed, will you ensure that Air Force NSPS employees are converted to other personnel systems as quickly as practicable, and with as little disruption to their organizations and their work as possible?

Yes.

Section 1113 also provides DOD with extensive personnel flexibilities for its civilian employees that are not available to other agencies. In particular, section 9902(a) of title 5, U.S. Code, as added by section 1113, directs the Department to establish a new performance management system for all of its employees. Section 9902(b) directs the Department to develop a streamlined new hiring system that is designed to better fulfill DOD's mission needs, produce high-quality applicants, and support timely personnel decisions.

Do you agree that the Air Force's civilian employee workforce plays a vital role in the functioning of the Department?

Yes.

What is your view of the personnel flexibilities provided by section 1113?

I understand that the Air Force is already an active participant in DoD and government-wide teams looking into options for a possible new civilian hiring system and performance management system. In the interim, I believe that the flexibilities granted by Congress can help ensure that the Department is able to hire high quality applicants during this period of transition. If confirmed, I will do everything I can to ensure and facilitate Air Force's continued participation in these important projects and to execute the changes in law as intended by Congress.

If confirmed, will you make it a priority to implement these flexibilities in a manner that best meets the needs of the Air Force and promotes the quality of the Air Force's civilian workforce?

Yes.

Defense Integrated Military Human Resources System (DIMHRS)

The Department and the Services continue to work toward adoption of DIMHRS as a cross-service, fully integrated personnel and pay system. Under the proposed timeline, the Army is the first in line to launch DIMHRS, with the Air Force, Navy, and Marine Corps to follow. Recent reports indicate technical difficulties have postponed the Army's launch date.

What is your assessment of the need for an integrated, cross-service personnel and pay system?

The integration of both personnel and pay into one common system will provide several key benefits for both the Air Force and for the Department of Defense. Some of these benefits are; the retirement of outdated legacy systems (reducing maintenance costs), the reduction of payroll errors, the ability to leverage the latest in industry technology, and the improved delivery of human resource information to our Airmen.

What is the status of the implementation of DIMHRS in the Air Force?

It is my understanding that per USD (AT&L) direction, the Air Force is evaluating the DIMHRS product as built to date to assess how best to use the DIMHRS solution to the maximum extent possible. If confirmed, I intend to look into the issue and to become more familiar with the status of DIMHRS implementation in the Air Force.

If confirmed, what changes, if any, would you recommend to the implementation schedule and process currently in place for the Air Force?

If confirmed, I would ensure the Air Force progresses in a measured approach to the program, considering lessons learned throughout each phase of the build-out increments to ensure DIMHRS is leveraged to the maximum extent possible. As I learn more about Air Force implementation, I would assess any changes that might be needed.

If confirmed, what role do you plan to play in oversight over and direction of Air Force efforts to develop and deploy DIMHRS?

If confirmed, my duties as the Chief Management Officer for the Air Force would be to work closely with the Air Force acquisition and functional communities. I would ensure appropriate metrics for effective management are applied, and would strive to identify efficiencies via business process reengineering, policy changes and reducing customization of commercial technology.

GI Bill Benefits

Last year Congress passed the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act that

created enhanced educational benefits for service members who have served at least 90 days on active duty since 9/11. The maximum benefit would roughly cover the cost of a college education at any public university in the country.

What is your assessment of the effect of the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act on recruiting and retention of service members for service in the Air Force?

In my current capacity as Staff Director, I have heard from a broad variety of servicemembers how much they value and appreciate the new GI Bill. Traditionally, educational benefits have been a strong consideration for members who want to enter military service; as well as, an incentive for members to continue serving to maximize educational opportunities. I believe that these new educational benefits will have a positive impact on recruitment and retention. If confirmed, I will ensure that there is a process to assess the impact of this important new benefit on Air Force recruiting and retention.

What is your view of the effectiveness of the transferability provisions contained in the Act on retention of mid- and late-career service members?

I am aware that the transferability provisions were highly sought by many servicemembers and their families. My initial assessment, from my current position, is that these provisions are having a beneficial effect. But if confirmed, I would familiarize myself with the relevant data and monitor the impact of the provision on retention of mid- and late-career service members.

Quadrennial Review of Military Compensation

Last year, the Department released the 10th Quadrennial Review of Military Compensation (QRMC). Among other recommendations, the QRMC proposes a new defined benefit retirement plan that more resembles the benefits available under the Federal Employee Retirement System than the current military retirement benefit; increasing TRICARE fees for retirees; and the adoption of dependent care and flexible spending accounts for service members.

What is your assessment of the QRMC recommendations, particularly the proposed new defined retirement plan?

I believe that any reduction in pay, allowances or benefits could have an adverse effect on morale and retention. But any new proposal should be carefully considered to understand the direct and second-order implications. If confirmed, I will ensure that any new proposal is reviewed to understand the consequences of implementation and assess whether support is in the best interest of military personnel.

Do you believe that service members should have access to flexible spending

arrangements?

Flexible spending accounts can provide employees with options and should be given consideration. If confirmed, I would ensure that full and fair consideration is given to any program that offers advantages to personnel, particularly if there is no adverse budgetary impact.

Legislative Fellowship Program

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

What is your assessment of the value of the Legislative Fellows program to the Air Force and to the career development of the officers involved?

I am a strong supporter of the Legislative Fellows program from my experience with the House Armed Services Committee. The Legislative Fellows program can provide mid-career officers with an invaluable experience as it exposes top tier officers, on track to be future Air Force senior leaders, to the inner workings of the legislative process as it relates to Department of Defense issues. Additionally, the relationships they form with civilian leaders and their staffs in Congress can benefit the officer, especially as he or she progresses into senior officer ranks.

What is your assessment of the Air Force's utilization of officers who have served as legislative fellows?

My understanding is that the Air Force been successful in properly utilizing fellows after they complete the program. Every effort is made to assign them to follow on positions which utilize their legislative experience. If confirmed, I would look more carefully at the utilization of prior legislative fellows.

Management and Development of the Senior Executive Service (SES)

The transformation of the Armed Forces has brought with it an increasing realization of the importance of efficient and forward thinking management of senior executives.

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

I believe that the Senior Executive Service is crucial to providing the consistent

leadership and continuity of excellence in these critical career fields. It is my understanding that the Air Force has implemented a rigorous corporate approach to overall management of the senior executive corps, which facilitates recruitment, development, compensation, and succession planning for senior civilian leaders. If confirmed, I will continue to support this approach.

Over the last ten years, the Air Force budget has almost doubled, but the number of senior executives in the Department of the Air Force has remained almost unchanged.

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?

I have not yet had the opportunity to review the number of Air Force senior executives and their associated skill sets. If confirmed, I will look into the issue.

Congressional Oversight

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

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

Yes.

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

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.