

**Advance Questions for General David L. Goldfein, USAF  
Nominee for the Position of Chief of Staff of the U. S. 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 the chain of command by clearly delineating the combatant commanders' responsibilities and authorities and the role of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. These reforms have also vastly improved cooperation between the services and the combatant commanders, among other things, in joint training and education and in the execution of military operations.**

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

The Goldwater-Nichols Act has been of tremendous benefit to the Department and nation. After 30 years of operating under the Goldwater-Nichols Act, helpful adjustments are warranted. The Secretary of Defense is carefully examining this issue and related provisions in the National Defense Authorization Act. If confirmed I will identify areas that merit reform and support the efforts of the Secretary of Defense and this Committee to assess and act upon needed modifications.

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

I believe modifications that are appropriate to address are already being considered by the Secretary of Defense and this Committee. They include improving staff integration within the Department, streamlining strategic planning and improved agility in planning, elevating Cyber Command to a full unified command, and other modifications under consideration.

**Do you believe that the role of the service chiefs under the Goldwater-Nichols legislation is appropriate and the policies and processes in existence allow that role to be fulfilled?**

Yes, I believe the role of service chiefs is appropriate and policies and process allow that role to be fulfilled.

**Do you see a need for any change in those roles, with regard to the resource allocation process or otherwise?**

At this time I do not see a need for a change in roles of the service chiefs with regard to resource allocation process or other fundamental changes. If confirmed and I see a need for change I will propose those changes through the appropriate established process.

## Relationships

**Section 8033 of title 10, United States Code, discusses the responsibilities and authority of the Chief of Staff of the Air Force. Section 151 of title 10, United States Code, discusses the composition and functions of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, including the authority of the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, as a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to submit advice and opinions to the President, the National Security Council, or the Secretary of Defense. Other sections of law and traditional practice, also establish important relationships outside the chain of command. Please describe your understanding of the relationship of the Chief of Staff of the Air Force to the following officials:**

**A. The Secretary of Defense.**

The Secretary of Defense serves as the principal assistant to the President on all Department of Defense matters. Senior Air Force leadership operates subject to the authority, direction, and control of the Secretary of Defense. If confirmed as Chief of Staff of the Air Force and a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, I will work closely with the Chairman and the other members of the Joint Chiefs to provide the best possible military advice to the Secretary of Defense, particularly with regard to matters of air, space, and cyberspace operations, policy and strategy.

**B. The Secretary of the Air Force.**

The Chief of Staff of the Air Force is directly responsible to the Secretary of the Air Force and performs duties subject to the Secretary's authority, direction, and control. For the Secretary of the Air Force, the Chief of Staff is responsible for providing properly organized, trained, and equipped forces to support the Combatant Commanders in their mission accomplishment. The Chief of Staff oversees members and organizations across the Air Force, advising the Secretary on plans and recommendations, and, acting as an agent of the Secretary, implementing plans upon approval. If confirmed as the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, I will work very closely with the Secretary to ensure our ability to rapidly provide forces tailored to meet the needs and objectives of our Combatant Commanders.

**C. The Under Secretary of the Air Force**

The Under Secretary of the Air Force is authorized, subject to the Secretary of the Air Force's direction and control, to act for and with the authority of the Secretary of the Air Force on all matters for which the Secretary is responsible; that is, to conduct the affairs of the Department of the Air Force. If confirmed, I will continue to foster a close working relationship Ms. Disbrow, the current Under Secretary of the Air Force.

**D. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.**

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is the principal military adviser to the President, the National Security Council, and the Secretary of Defense. If confirmed, I will work with and through the Chairman in formulating military advice as a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff by advising him on Air Force capabilities and our preparations to support the Combatant Commanders in the conduct of military operations. I look forward to performing the duties assigned by law to the Chief of Staff to provide properly

organized, trained, and equipped forces as needed by the Combatant Commanders and to provide military advice on matters within my expertise, as required.

**E. The Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.**

The Vice Chairman has the same statutory authorities and obligations of other members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. When performing duties as the Acting Chairman, the Vice Chairman's relationship with the Combatant Commanders is exactly the same as that of the Chairman. If confirmed, I will assist the Vice Chairman to execute the duties prescribed by law or otherwise directed by the Secretary of Defense or the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

**F. The Chiefs of the other services.**

If confirmed, I will work closely with the Chiefs of the other Services to capitalize on our individual strengths, complement our capabilities and enhance mutually beneficial relationships as we carry out our responsibilities as members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. My goal will be to work with each of them to enhance joint interoperability and other joint warfighting capabilities in order to provide the force mix desired by the Combatant Commanders

**G. The Commander, U. S. Transportation Command.**

I am keenly aware of the importance of a strong close working relationship between Transportation Command and the Air Force, its primary source of airlift. The Air Force remains a key contributor to TRANSCOM's success in meeting national military requirements. If confirmed, I will work to further enhance the Air Force's support to the TRANSCOM commander.

**H. The Commander, U. S. Strategic Command.**

A very close working relationship with the STRATCOM commander will be essential to identifying and implementing effective and enduring solutions to any issues with the Air Force's ability to support our nation's nuclear deterrent capabilities. If confirmed, I will ensure the STRATCOM commander is constantly apprised on readiness of the Air Force air, space, and cyberspace forces required to support STRATCOM's missions. I will strive, in particular, to, keep a clear focus on Service efforts to maintain the highest standards of performance in the nuclear arena, as well as the intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) mission and cyberspace mission areas.

**I. The other combatant commanders.**

If confirmed as the Chief of Staff, I will work with the Secretary of the Air Force to ensure that the Air Force is properly organized, trained, and equipped to provide the capabilities the Combatant Commanders need to execute their missions. That requires a clear understanding of their requirements. I will personally engage in a forthright and direct dialogue with the Combatant Commanders to ensure that I maintain that understanding.

**J. The Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Acquisition.**

The Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Acquisition plays an integral role in Air Force acquisition efforts, including serving as the Air Force's Senior Acquisition Executive. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Secretary of the Air Force and the Assistant Secretary on matters affecting the acquisition of the resources needed to train and equip the Air Force. I'll also ensure military expertise is readily available to assist them in accomplishing their acquisition-related responsibilities.

**K. The General Counsel of the Air Force.**

The General Counsel (GC) is the senior civilian legal advisor to Air Force senior leaders and all officers and agencies of the Department of the Air Force. The GC serves as the chief ethics official of the Air Force. If confirmed, I will continue the strong working relationship I have with Mr. Tanner and his staff.

**L. The Judge Advocate General of the Air Force.**

The Judge Advocate General (TJAG) 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 to The Judge Advocate General's Corps in the performance of their duties. If confirmed, I look forward to continuing my strong working relationship with Lieutenant General Burne and the TJAG staff.

**M. The Superintendent of the U. S. Air Force Academy.**

I have a strong affinity for the United States Air Force Academy as a graduate of the Class of 1983. It is a bedrock institution in the development of tomorrow's Air Force leaders. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Superintendent to address issues faced by the Academy and to promote the Academy's sustained commitment to excellence and fulfillment of its very important character building mission.

**Duties**

**What is your understanding of the duties and functions of the Chief of Staff of the Air Force?**

The Chief of Staff of the Air Force is directly responsible to the Secretary of the Air Force and performs duties subject to her authority, direction, and control. For the Secretary of the Air Force, the Chief of Staff is responsible for providing properly organized, trained, and equipped forces to support the Combatant Commanders in their mission accomplishment. The Chief of Staff oversees members and organizations across the Air Force, advising the Secretary on plans and recommendations, and, acting as an agent of the Secretary, implementing plans upon approval.

**Assuming you are confirmed, what duties and functions do you expect that the Secretary of the Air Force would prescribe for you?**

If confirmed as the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, I would expect the Secretary of the Air Force to assign me duties consistent with the responsibilities outlined above to ensure that the Air Force is appropriately organized, trained, and equipped to meet its institutional obligations and force provider responsibilities. If confirmed, I would foster a

close working relationship with the Secretary to ensure that policies and resources are appropriate to meet the needs of the Air Force.

**What changes, if any, would you recommend to section 8034 of title 10, United States Code, relating to the Air Staff and its composition and functions?**

None at this time, although if I develop a different view after I have observed Air Staff performance and am able to make an assessment from the vantage point of a Service Chief I will make that view known.

**What do you believe are your qualifications to assume this office?**

During my thirty-three years on active duty in the Air Force, I have served in a range of positions and have enjoyed a variety of opportunities and experiences which have helped prepare me to fulfill the duties and responsibilities commensurate with appointment as the Air Force Chief of Staff. Throughout my tenure in the Air Force, I have been privileged to serve with and learn from a host of exceptional service men and women, including members of our sister Services, many in Joint positions of trust and leadership.

For the last eleven months, I have been privileged to serve as the Vice Chief of Staff of the Air Force. In that role I preside over the Air Staff and serve as a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Requirements Oversight Council and Deputy Advisory Working Group. I assist the Chief of Staff with organizing, training, and equipping of the Air Force's 660,000 active-duty, Guard, Reserve and civilian forces serving in the United States and overseas.

Prior to assuming my current position, I served as the Director of the Joint Staff in the Pentagon. In that role I assisted the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in fulfilling his responsibilities as the principal military adviser to the President and Secretary of Defense by developing and providing strategic direction, policy guidance and planning focus to the Joint Staff and by fostering clear communication among the President, Secretary of Defense, unified commands, and services.

I received my commission from the U.S. Air Force Academy in 1983. I am a graduate of the U.S. Air Force Weapons School and am a command pilot with more than 4,200 flying hours in the T-37, T-38, F-16C/D, F-117A, MQ-9 and MC-12W. I have flown combat missions in operations Desert Shield, Desert Storm, Allied Force and Enduring Freedom.

These assignments have provided me with the breadth of experience that makes me qualified for the Chief of Staff position.

**Do you believe that there are actions you need to take to enhance your ability to perform the duties of the Chief of Staff of the Air Force?**

If confirmed as the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, I will work closely with the Secretary of the Air Force to identify, assess, and address all challenges. I will ensure the readiness and relevance of our Air Force along with the safety and well-being of our people.

## **Major Challenges and Problems**

### **In your view, what are the major challenges that will confront the Chief of Staff of the Air Force?**

The most pressing challenge for the United States Air Force is the rise of peer competitors with advanced military capabilities rivaling our own. Adversary advances are challenging our control of the Air. Space, long considered a sanctuary, is an increasingly contested environment. Airpower contributions to the rise of revisionist states will compete for resources with the ongoing demands of intractable conflicts and continued fiscal uncertainty. The next Chief of Staff, in support of the Secretary, must enable the innovation and agility of our Airmen, preserve the Air Force's competitive advantages, find solutions for readiness and modernize force structure and capabilities.

### **Assuming you are confirmed, what plans do you have for addressing these challenges?**

The Air Force is taking a number of steps to position us to fly, fight and win against a peer competitor with advanced capabilities. It starts with the continued development of Airmen and then we have to address a number of important modernization programs—including new platforms such as the F-35 and B-21, which will ensure a qualitative edge against likely adversaries. We also have a number of upgrades to existing platforms, which will extend their life and ensure their survivability in all but the most denied environments. But more importantly than platforms, we have a detailed, multi-year strategy to become a multi-domain force that integrates air, space and cyberspace capabilities to accomplish Air Force missions. This is a new way of thinking about the application of airpower, where once separate and distinct mission areas will operate synergistically to offer the Joint Force Commander multi-domain solutions.

### **What do you consider to be the most serious problems in the performance of the functions of the Chief of Staff of the Air Force?**

Balancing the demands of Combatant Commanders for the capabilities the Air Force provides today, against the requirement for a healthy, ready Air Force that is prepared for contingencies against peer adversaries with advanced capabilities tomorrow. This is the central challenge for all Service Chiefs. In our role as members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, we work closely with the Secretary and Chairman to articulate and manage the needs of the present day against the requirement to preserve readiness and modernize our aging fleet to be prepared for future threats.

### **If confirmed, what management actions and time lines would you establish to address these problems?**

The first step is to acknowledge that the Air Force will almost assuredly be engaged in continuous combat operations for the foreseeable future. So the central question is how to conduct persistent combat operations while also recovering readiness and modernizing the force under the current budgetary constraints. We must continue to find more efficient ways to present forces to forward combatant commanders with less cost and footprint. And we must also continue, in line with Secretary James' priorities, to make every acquisition dollar count. And finally, we must recognize that we're not going to

buy our way to a more capable Air Force. Tomorrow's Air Force will be built on the new concepts, developed by Airmen and enabled by technology. If confirmed, I'll focus on harnessing the innovative spirit of our Airmen to find opportunity in the challenges we face.

### **Priorities**

#### **If confirmed, what broad priorities will you establish within your role as Chief of Staff?**

If confirmed, I will fully support SECAF's priorities of (1) taking care of people, (2) balancing readiness and modernization, and (3) making every dollar count. Foundational to these priorities will be to revitalize the most critical organizational level in the Air Force — Squadrons.

### **Readiness Levels**

#### **What is your assessment of the current readiness of the Air Force to execute its assigned missions?**

The US Air Force is the oldest and busiest we've ever been. We find ourselves in a fiscal and global environment that forces us to prioritize training and funding for assigned/counterinsurgency missions at the expense of our training for high-end operations. As a result, we cannot recover surge capacity for major OPLAN contingencies and meet all the global demand with ready combat forces.

#### **What do you view as the major readiness challenges that will have to be addressed by the Air Force over the next 4 years, and, if confirmed, how will you approach these issues?**

Decades of constant deployment and focus on counterinsurgency operations have reduced the Air Force's overall readiness. These issues along with critical skills shortages and an aging aircraft fleet and training infrastructure that need recapitalization to ensure viability and readiness against a near-peer adversary continue to provide challenges for the Air Force. I will address these issues by balancing our effort between top acquisition programs, sustaining our current force, modestly growing end-strength, and investing in our full spectrum training and exercise programs. Sequestration in FY18 would further exacerbate these challenges and limit the AF's ability to recover readiness.

### **Air Force Ability to Respond to Worldwide Contingencies**

#### **What impact, if any, do you see on the Air Force's ability to respond to worldwide contingencies as a consequence of the demands of current operations in the U.S. European Command, U.S. Central Command, and U.S. Pacific Command areas of operations?**

The Air Force must be able to provide the preponderance of our Total Force in support of a conflict within the first 15 days; 80 percent or more of the force is required to be full-spectrum ready to fully accomplish the Defense Strategic Guidance (DSG). Continuous

combat operations and reduced budgets over the past quarter century have driven readiness levels to historically low levels.

**How much additional risk, if any, is the United States assuming in this regard?**

In order to regain readiness sufficient to meet DSG, the AF must limit our force presentation to support current operations. The AF can recover readiness across all core functions at a 1-to-4 deploy-to-dwell for the Active-duty. This means one unit deployed and four units in various stages of redeployment or preparation for deployment to meet a single requirement. Approximately 2/3 of AF fighter squadrons are currently engaged on a day-to-day basis. This includes forces deployed/allocated to the Central Command, Pacific Command, and European Command areas of responsibility, forces forward stationed in European Command and Pacific Command, Air National Guard units supporting Operation NOBLE EAGLE requirements, and forces sitting in Prepare To Deploy Order status in support of the Global Response Force.

If required, the AF is postured to provide nearly 100% of its combat force in response to a major contingency; however surging to that contingency may involve disengaging from existing steady-state operations. While less than 50% of Air Force units are full spectrum ready, the Air Force can surge forces at less than full-spectrum readiness however this will impact their ability to conduct all assigned mission essential tasks.

**Relations with Congress**

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

I agree that a certain amount of tension between the different branches of government can be healthy and is consistent with what our framers envisioned. During my tenure as the Vice Chief and during my recent office visits with the members of this committee, I have heard concerns with our responsiveness to your requests for information, frustration with a lack of prompt access to senior Air Force leaders, and perceptions of a tendency to bring solutions to problems without a willingness to seek counsel and input. I now have a good sight picture of this and if confirmed, I will make every effort to address and ease those concerns, frustrations, and perceptions. You can be assured that I place high value on a strong relationship with the Congress, and this committee in particular.

**If confirmed, what actions would you take to improve the overall relationship between the Congress and the Air Force?**

If confirmed, my interactions (and the interactions of my staff) with this committee and the Congress in general will be guided by the principles of transparency, responsiveness, and collaboration. As I mentioned during my recent office visits, I plan to be proactive in my communications with members--whether that is through visits to Capitol Hill or telephone calls to keep them abreast of, and seek their counsel on, Air Force issues that are of significance to them and their constituents. The news I deliver will not always be good, but I will make every effort to ensure that you are not caught off guard or otherwise found in a position of surprise.

**The committee has experienced frustration with the timeliness of responses from the Air Force on requests for information, questions and inserts for the record, and reports required by law.**

**If confirmed, what actions would you take to ensure such requests from the committee are met in a timelier manner, with comprehensive responses and detailed information?**

Providing timely and accurate information to Congress is central to our role in providing the best military advice to the Legislative Branch. We will continue to examine how our processes can be improved to increase responsiveness, and we are particularly interested in consolidating the number of offices involved in coordination and reducing cycle time from initial inquiry to final response. As an example, the Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of the Air Force, Management is concluding a process improvement activity that will streamline and improve the timeliness of our Congressional Reports. Moving forward, we will continue to seek opportunities to optimize our review and coordination processes to deliver responses in a timely manner.

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

**Senior Air Force leaders have stated on many recent occasions that the Air Force is the smallest size in its history, that it cannot get any smaller, and has numerous manpower shortfalls, particularly in the maintenance and fighter pilot career fields. While the Air Force's fiscal year 2017 budget submission did not request any increases in military end strength, the current Chief of Staff did request end strength increases in his unfunded requirements list.**

**What are your views on the current state of Air Force military end strength in relation to the missions the Nation requests its Air Force to perform?**

The Fiscal Year 2017 budget request fully funded Active Component end strength at 317,000 and continued our concentrated effort to "right the force" by stabilizing the force size and assessing critical capabilities to meet today's air, space, and cyber demands. However, during our budget build, we also recognized requirements in excess of 317,000 as supported by the FY16 NDAA authorization level of 321,000. The Air Force only requested dollars for 317,000 because the personnel system could not responsibly grow the force to 321,000 until late FY17. However, achieving this higher force level enables the mitigation of under manned units caused by force structure buy-backs, addresses maintenance manpower stressors associated with standing up F-35 units, and expands capacity to "right-size" the training pipeline. Furthermore, it also postures the Service to incrementally increase our total force beyond the current levels as we judiciously find ways to address top priorities including ISR, cyber, nuclear, and pilot production shortfalls.

**Do you believe end strength increase requests should be in your base budget request, or prioritized below modernization and recapitalization investment funding requests in an unfunded requirements list?**

Projected end strength increases reflect enduring mission demands. These increases should be incorporated into our base budget.

### **Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve**

**What is your vision for the roles and missions of the Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve, and, if confirmed, what objectives would you seek to achieve with respect to the organization, end strength, and force structure of the Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve?**

Inclusion across all three components of the Air Force is vital to create the strategic agility required to meet the challenges emerging from strategic uncertainty, fiscal constraints, and rapidly evolving threats. The contributions of the Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve span all core missions of the Air Force. If I am confirmed, this will not change. We have an increasing appetite for airpower combined with 30% fewer people overall, 37% less aircraft, and 59% fewer combat fighter squadrons now than since Desert Storm. We must rely on our Reserve Component to meet the demands of the nation. I support the National Commission on the Structure of the Air Force's recommendations to increase integration of Reserve, Guard, and Active Component Airmen. We will continue to monitor the progress of our I-Wing pilot program at Seymour Johnson and integrate lessons learned in future integration efforts. As we continue to modernize, we will concurrently field all new weapon systems in all three components from the start. This concurrent fielding strategy gives us the ability to effectively manage our new weapon systems and leverage the experience of our Reserve Components. Additionally, we seek to continue to increase reserve mission share in command and control, mobility, cyber, and space missions.

It is very important to note that all of our models and analysis show we cannot accomplish our required missions with our current end strength. As you know, the Budget Control Act has taken a significant toll on our Airmen and readiness; damage which will take time to undo. We need to grow across all three components if we are to remain the world's most capable and ready Air Force. We maintain the requirement for 321,000 Active Component Airmen and proportional growth in the Reserve Component.

**What is your understanding and assessment of the Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve as an operational reserve, as opposed to its long standing traditional role as a strategic reserve?**

Over the past fifteen years, the Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard have further validated their ability to operate and deploy side by side with Active Component counterparts. The Air Reserve Component is a more seasoned and capable force than at any time in history, and we must work hard to retain and recruit that talented pool of Citizen Airmen.

The Air Reserve Component has an indispensable role as both an Operational Reserve and a Strategic Reserve. There is no question the Air Reserve Component of today has a significant operational impact. They train to the same standards and maintain the same level of readiness as our Active Component. In FY15, the Air Reserve Component contributed over 15,000 man-years supporting the Air Force mission.

As a Strategic Reserve, the Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve can collectively bring over 950,000 selective reserve, individual ready reserve, standby reserve, and retired reserve back to active service when called upon by our nation. As an Air Force, we will continue to rely on this deep bench to provide surge capacity and strategic depth as needed.

**In your view, what are the major challenges to maintaining and enhancing the Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve as a relevant and capable operational reserve?**

The Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard face significant modernization and readiness challenges. To remain a relevant and capable operational reserve, we must work with Congress to pursue modernization options to ensure the viability of some legacy systems in order to adapt to budget realities, while continuing to provide a hedge against uncertainty. We need to secure support and funding for Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard modernization initiatives in Air Force appropriations as well as the National Guard and Reserve Equipment Appropriation. We rely on our Reserve Component to maintain an operational capability, so it is critical the resources are available to establish full-spectrum readiness. This will ensure our legacy systems and people are able to operationally integrate with the newest Air Force systems and remain viable well into the future.

**What are your views about the optimal role for the Reserve Component forces in meeting combat missions?**

The Reserve Components supply critical combat capabilities and maintain the readiness needed to meet mission demand. When deployed, members of the Reserve Components are operationally-indistinguishable from Active Component Airmen. When mission demand increases, the Total Force will be needed to meet requirement. To that end, resourcing the Reserve Component to maintain required readiness levels across the enterprise is essential.

**In your view, should the Department of Defense assign homeland defense or any other global or domestic civil support missions exclusively to the Reserves?**

No. The strength of the Total Force is commonality across mission areas. If confirmed as the Chief of Staff, I will ensure that the Reserve Components should be actively involved in every mission area of the Department. Specifically for the Air Force, the reserve components are currently engaged in all five AF Core Missions and possess a wealth of experience and capacity that provides both steady state rotational and surge capability. Continuing to ensure concurrent and balanced mission equity between the components will be critical to support the global and domestic requirements of the Combatant Commands.

## **Recruiting and Retention**

### **What do you consider to be the key to the Air Force's success in recruiting the highest caliber American youth for service and retaining the best personnel for leadership responsibilities?**

The Air Force is known as a technological force. It is also known as a force that values its personnel and their individual and collective contributions. We are meeting our recruiting targets both in numbers and quality, however the size of the youth market, propensity to serve, and market competition (especially for highly-skilled areas such as aviation/remotely piloted aviation, cyber, engineers and special operators) are all growing concerns. As such, it is important that we continue to offer a competitive compensation package, give individuals challenging opportunities to lead, and have a talent management system designed to extract the most productivity and value from an organization's greatest asset – its people – to meet mission objectives.

Deliberate development of our officers and enlisted give them the skills, knowledge, and experience when the Air Force needs them as future leaders of our force.

### **What steps, if any, do you feel should be taken to ensure that current operational requirements and tempo do not adversely impact the overall readiness, recruiting, retention, and morale of Air Force personnel?**

The Air Force recognizes that the evolving geopolitical situation continues to place significant demands on the force and we recognize the increased strain this places on our Airmen. The Air Force's capacity to reach the Secretary of Defense's goal is dependent on both its end strength and the number of Airmen the Air Force must deploy (operational tempo). As a result, the Air Force has embarked on a growth strategy to address key capability gaps in the nuclear, maintenance, cyber, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance and support career fields, adding roughly 4,000 active component personnel across these enterprises. As warfighter demands persist, the FY17 budget cycle sought to carry forward FY16 end strength levels of 317K to stabilize the force and posture for future manpower increases in order to address maintenance capacity shortfalls, additive F-35 beddowns, expanded training capacity requirements and systemic unit under-manning.

The Air Force is also retaining experience through robust and expanded incentive programs, like Selective Reenlistment Bonuses (increased from 40 specialties in FY15 to 117 in FY16/17); bringing on prior service accessions; utilizing Reserve active duty tour opportunities; and implementing High Year of Tenure extensions (increased from 38 specialties in FY15 to 122 in FY16/17). These programs target our shortfalls across the board with specific emphasis on battlefield airmen, maintenance, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance, support, nuclear, Air Liaison Officer, Intel, Remotely Piloted Aircraft, pilots and Cyber career fields.

With our current manning levels, projected growth, and retention efforts, we are working to address operational tempo concerns and other stressors.

**What impact, if any, do you believe the Department's proposals aimed at slowing the growth of personnel and health care costs will have on recruiting and retention in the Air Force?**

We won't know the full scope of any potential impacts associated with the Blended Retirement System, changes to military compensation, and potential changes to health care on recruiting and retention until we have Airmen living within those new rules. The cumulative effects are difficult to estimate and actual data will be needed to quantify and measure the actual impacts. These changes also come as the market for youth who are qualified and propensed to serve has diminished. This creates a challenge, but one I think we'll be able to continue meeting. I remain optimistic that we'll be able to attract and retain talented youth to serve in our Air Force as our benefit package continues to be very competitive with those packages young Americans will find in careers outside of military service. The promise of education, training, and job experience will continue to be a critical recruiting tool, and in conjunction with career benefits such as retirement and health care as well as other benefits such as competitive pay, leave and other quality of life initiatives all influence an individual's decision to serve and continue to serve.

**Aviation retention bonuses**

**The Air Force has long taken the view that maximum aviation retention bonuses should be offered to all pilots regardless of platform. Over the years, it appears this practice has led to the perception of these bonuses within the Air Force as an entitlement. By refusing to differentiate by platform, the Air Force has denied itself a valuable tool to right size pilot communities relative to each other. This is an especially ineffective and wasteful practice when such bonuses are offered at the 18 years of service point, as the Committee has been told happens, when no right-minded airman would leave the service. Now, the Air Force is asking for another increase in the maximum aviation retention bonus, for all platforms, even as it experiences overages in some areas and shortages in others, like remotely piloted aircraft operators, for which the higher amount has already been authorized by Congress.**

**Do you agree with the basic premise that special and incentive pays are designed to induce desired retention behavior?**

I do. For the Air Force, the competition for our pilots is the airline industry. As noted, increases in major airline pilot hiring and increases in private sector wages have a large impact on Air Force pilot retention; job availability has a much larger (negative) impact on pilot retention than changes in civilian pilot wage increases.

That is why we are asking Congress to increase the current aviation incentive bonus of \$25K/year.

**Do you agree, if confirmed, to reevaluate the Air Force's practice of offering the aviation retention bonus equally to all platforms, as a way to better shape and manage the Air Force's pilot force across disciplines?**

We will tailor any potential bonus based upon specific platform and overall Air Force requirements. The requested increase is not a set amount. If approved, this will give us

the flexibility to tailor bonus amounts and contract terms by platform.

## **Military Compensation**

### **What is your assessment of the adequacy of military compensation?**

As a Service, we greatly appreciate Congressional support of military compensation. I would note that military compensation for our Airmen is so much more than pay and allowances. Non-monetary benefits such as the Commissary, education assistance, and other on-base support activities provide unique benefits that help build a sense of community and contribute to mission readiness, as does maintaining a sustainable operational tempo and ensuring that our Airmen have the best equipment we can provide. That said, the overall compensation package will continue to be a fundamental aspect to attracting, recruiting and retaining the most talented Airmen in the world's greatest Air Force. From deployment entitlements to retirement reform, Airmen and their families are at the forefront. As we move to the future, we must continue to balance all requirements, and ensure adequate compensation. We are supportive of efforts that continue to modernize and reform in ways that are mindful of potential impacts to the force.

### **What recommendations would you have for controlling the rising cost of personnel?**

Military compensation is, and must remain, competitive in order to sustain recruitment and retention of high caliber men and women in order to meet readiness requirements and accomplish our national security mission. However, we must continue to remain cognizant of rising personnel costs and ensure efficiency, as well as look to new ideas and keep them manageable in order to provide for force structure and modernization that are also critical in defense of our Nation. If confirmed, I will ensure that the Air Force continues to make difficult, but fiscally responsible decisions, and pursues continued efficiency in force utilization as has been accomplished with the Total Force Enterprise. As we continue to modernize our personnel system, I believe there are opportunities available where we can increase efficiency and provide for world class support to our Airmen.

### **Do you support the Administration's compensation and health care proposals?**

Yes, the TRICARE reform proposal adds choice for beneficiaries, encourages the use of military treatment facilities, and modernizes health care cost sharing through reforms that are designed to provide greater value and address beneficiary concerns, while balancing requirements to maintain military medical readiness.

## **Education for Airmen**

**An important feature of the Post-9/11 GI Bill is the ability of career-oriented service members to transfer their earned benefits to spouses and dependents.**

### **What is your assessment of the effect of the Post-9/11 GI Bill on recruiting and retention of airmen?**

The Post-9/11 and GI Bills are critical programs for recruiting high caliber Americans and retaining our talented Airmen. According to 2015 Air Force Retention Survey,

Enlisted Airmen rank GI Bill and Tuition Assistance programs within the Top 5 influences to stay in the Air Force. Specifically, 75% of Airmen intending to stay indicate that the GI Bill was an influence to stay, and 62% of Airmen who are undecided on whether they will remain in the Air Force indicated that the GI Bill was an influence to stay.

**In your view, what has been the effect of the transferability option on retention and career satisfaction of airmen?**

According to 2015 Air Force Retention Survey, the vast majority of our Enlisted Airmen indicated that transferability is an influence to remain in the Air Force. Specifically, 72% of Airmen intending to stay indicate that transferability of the GI Bill was an influence to stay, and 59% of Airmen who are undecided on whether they will remain in the Air Force indicated that GI Bill transferability was an influence to stay.

**How important do you believe tuition assistance benefits are to young airmen, and what trends do you see in the Air Force's ability to pay for such programs at current levels over the FYDP?**

At any one point in time, one-third of our Airmen are taking advantage of the tuition assistance benefit. Education is a pillar of Air Force readiness and retention and it keeps faith with our Airmen as they transition out of the service and into civilian employment. Higher education develops skills such as critical thinking and the ability for life-long learning. Military tuition assistance has been funded at 95 percent of the requirements, which shows the emphasis the Air Force places on higher education.

**What changes, if any, would you recommend to current eligibility criteria for tuition assistance?**

Recently, the Air Force looked at the eligibility requirements to ensure the right education is instituted for the right Airman. We believe we have achieved that goal and do not see a need for further changes.

**Do you believe that tuition assistance should be used to enhance an airman's career while he or she is in the Air Force?**

I do. Tuition assistance benefits combined with the Community College of the Air Force (CCAF) program brings together the best of higher education, namely the development of critical thinking skills, the ability for life-long learning, and the development of technical expertise.

**Do you agree with the Military Compensation and Retirement Modernization Commission that tuition assistance should be limited to courses and education that contribute to an airman's professional growth?**

Absolutely not. We educate Airmen and send out citizens. The Air Force supports a position that educational pursuits conducted off-duty utilizing Tuition Assistance directly contribute to maintaining future readiness of the force and thus are innately considered "professional development." Education prepares individuals to think critically, develop leadership skills, and acquire other tools that are crucial to 21<sup>st</sup> century readiness.

## **Suicide Prevention**

**The numbers of suicides in each of the Services continues to concern the Committee.**

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

Our suicide prevention program is comprehensive and robust. As validated by our 2015 Suicide Prevention Summit, good prevention starts with good leadership. We support our Commanders from the Squadron level up through training, tools and initiatives to promote resilience and reduce risk. Squadron Commanders and First Sergeants set the tone and establish the environment for our Airmen to thrive. Commanders and First Sergeants who know their people and set clear expectations and limits, inspire trust and confidence within their organizations, support resilience and deter destructive behaviors. Analog leadership is critical to our success, which is why we instituted face to face, small group suicide prevention training for the total force in 2015. We in the Air Force are committed to optimizing Airman Culture. It is the personal engagement, the social connection and the sense of purpose that comes from being part of something greater than ourselves which sustains us in the face of adversity. We have exceptional support programs in the Air Force, phenomenal medical and mental health care, and research which are state of the art. These are essential elements, however, without strong leadership as the foundation our efforts will falter. We have strengthened our leadership oversight structures and redoubled our prevention efforts since our 2015 Suicide Prevention Summit. The Air Force has also increased our focus on culture in conjunction with the stand-up of our Profession of Arms Center of Excellence. Ultimately, initiatives that respect the central role of leadership in prevention will continue to produce the greatest effects and we are committed to ensuring a sustained focus on the role of our Commanders in our ongoing efforts.

### **In your view, what role should the Chief of Staff of the Air Force play in shaping policies to help prevent suicides both at home and in theater and to increase the resiliency of all service members and their families?**

In the Air Force we see suicide prevention as a leadership issue first and foremost. The Chief of Staff sets the tone and the priorities that decisively shape the policies which promote resilience and deter destructive behaviors, including suicide. This establishes an environment in which Airmen cope effectively, succeed and thrive both downrange and at home station.

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

The Air Force has incrementally increased our mental health provider staffing by 25% since 2012. However, despite this increase, nationwide there is a shortage in the field of psychiatry. To combat this, we are developing a plan to ensure that we have the right specialties at the right locations. We will continue to expand our utilization of technology such as telemental health to ensure needed resources are available to beneficiaries. We also utilize embedded mental health consultants in each of our primary care clinics under our Behavioral Health Optimization Program (BHOP) to ensure

available and accessible mental health care to Airmen and families. As Chief of Staff, I would sustain the focus on mental health manning and ensure adequate resources both in theater and at home station with flexible options to reduce stigma. I would meet these goals by expanding key initiatives including telemental health and our embedded mental health providers in primary care and in operational units and by leveraging our Military Family Life Counselors to promote and sustain resilience in Air Force Communities.

### **Prevention of and Response to Sexual Assaults**

**The Fiscal Year 2015 Department of Defense Annual Report on Sexual Assault in the Military reflects that total reports of sexual assault in the Air Force decreased by 3% from 406 reports in fiscal year 2014 to 381 reports in fiscal year 2015. The Academic Program Year 2014-2015 Annual Report on Sexual Harassment and Violence at the Military Service Academies reflects that the number of sexual assault reports at the Air Force Academy increased by 24 reports from 25 reports in Academic Program Year 2013-2014 to 49 reports in Academic Program Year 2014-2015.**

#### **What is your assessment of these reports?**

The numbers for the FY14 and 15 DoD Annual Reports referenced above reflect only the restricted reports for the Air Force. The total number of sexual assault reports for the Air Force also decreased slightly from 1350 in FY14 to 1312 in FY15. We'll know the true significance of that number after we complete the DoD Workplace and Gender Relations Survey this year and can compare the results to see if we've made progress on closing the gap between prevalence and reports. We know sexual assault is an underreported crime, so the Workplace and Gender Relations Survey is our best tool to understand the actual prevalence of the crime in our force. The survey provides us two important ways to measure progress: first, a decrease in prevalence rates as compared to previous years and second, a decrease in the gap.

At the Air Force Academy, the trend over the last four years suggests the 49 reports in this most recent academic year 2014-2015 report is more consistent with 51 in academic year 2011-2012 and 44 in 2012-2013. The 25 reports in 2013-2014 appear to be an outlier that we will continue to examine against future data.

The bottom line for both reports is that we still have work ahead of us to eliminate this crime from our force. We must continue to provide the best support possible to victims, but we also need to prevent this crime from happening in the first place. We must leverage scientifically proven prevention approaches.

#### **What is your assessment of the problem of sexual assaults in the Air Force?**

Until we completely end sexual assault in our ranks, any reported crimes are unacceptable. We will continue to look at our accession screening instruments to ensure we assess the right Airmen, as our Airmen come from all walks of life to join the Air Force. We will also continue to train our Airmen on Air Force values and give them the necessary education and tools to complete the mission. Over the past ten years, we've made progress in ensuring sexual assault awareness and prevention are part of our

Airmen's training and education, but the need for continued effort is evidenced by the fact that the crime still exists in our ranks. This is why we are increasing our emphasis on scientifically proven, evidence based prevention programs. We must work to stop the violence before it occurs. The vision is underscored in our Strategic Master Plan, to "move beyond ad-hoc or reactive measures as we work to address the underlying causes." This describes the recent efforts we have undertaken in sexual assault prevention. As part of this effort, we are in the process of hiring a prevention specialist at nearly every installation who will be responsible for implementing evidence-based sexual assault and violence prevention interventions.

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

While we have seen a steady increase in reporting, reflecting an increase in trust, we have not seen a sufficient decrease in prevalence. We appreciate funding and support from Congress, but we still have work ahead of us. We received 38 fewer reports of sexual assault in FY15 than we did in FY14, which is only a slight decrease. We'll know the true significance of that number after we complete the DoD Workplace and Gender Relations Survey this year and can compare the results to see if we've made progress on closing the gap between prevalence and reports. Our next step forward is focused on violence before it begins by implementing a scientifically proven prevention program, Green Dot, which is now underway across the Air Force. By using Green Dot and other evidence-based prevention programming, we hope to see a decline in prevalence in the coming years. We must not stop until we eradicate this crime from our ranks.

**What is your view of the provision for restricted and unrestricted reporting of sexual assaults?**

Our first priority upon receiving a report of sexual assault, whether restricted or unrestricted, is to care for the victim by providing necessary support services and empowering them with choice and control so they can become resilient survivors. Giving victims the ability to file restricted reports empowers them to access services and support that are unmatched in the civilian community, without fear of impacting their privacy, reputation or any other personal concern. Although it limits our ability to hold perpetrators accountable, it allows the Air Force to preserve evidence collected during a sexual assault forensic exam if the victim elects to have one. The restricted reporting option is a valuable method to help our Airmen.

**What is your view about the role of the chain of command in providing necessary support to victims of sexual assault?**

Commanders are responsible and accountable for establishing and maintaining good order and discipline required to accomplish the mission. As such, the chain of command is deeply and directly involved in providing support to victims of sexual assault. Even before a specific allegation arises, commanders are responsible for ensuring all Airmen are educated on sexual assault prevention and response. When a commander is notified of a sexual assault allegation, he or she takes immediate steps to ensure the victim's safety and well-being as well as the safety of the accused. Specifically, the commander makes sure that the victim is physically safe, emotionally stable, and being provided

assistance from all available resources and agencies, including the Sexual Assault Response Coordinator, legal office, medical, and chaplain. The commander is also directly involved in decisions such as victim's requests for an expedited transfer to another location; the issuance of a no-contact order or a military protective order; and is specifically responsible for keeping the victim informed on actions being taken on the case. Furthermore, the commander stays informed about the victim's well-being and the status of the case and, in turn, informs the multi-disciplinary Case Management Group (CMG) to ensure the victim is fully supported. The CMG addresses emotional, physical, and spiritual care of a victim in a collaborative environment with the collective goal of supporting the victim's well-being. The CMG convenes monthly to review each case, direct system coordination, assess victim access to services, and tracks the case until final disposition. In conjunction with the legal office, the chain of command obtains input from the victim as the case is processed for disposition and adjudication.

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

The Air Force provides a multitude of legal resources to assist victims of sexual assault. To meet increasing and evolving mission requirements and to enhance the Air Force's capability to provide legal representation to victims of sexual assault, last year Air Force senior leaders allocated additional manpower authorizations to the JAG Corps. This marks a permanent investment in the long-term sustainability of the Special Victims' Counsel (SVC) program, including establishing mid-level leadership positions, called senior special victims' counsel, while also facilitating an expansion of our senior prosecutors, senior defense counsel, and military judges. In all, the JAG Corps gained 58 officer positions (from the grades of O3 to O5) and 15 paralegal slots. With this expansion, the Air Force currently has six senior special victims' counsel positions, 50 special victims' counsel positions, and 25 senior prosecutor positions. These additional resources have directly benefited the Air Force's capability to provide first-class legal representation to victims and to prosecute serious criminal offenses. Additionally, the Air Force has implemented the Special Victims Investigation and Prosecution (SVIP) capability to ensure that victims are getting multi-disciplinary support as they work through the legal process. The Air Force's SVIP capability is made up of specially trained Air Force Office of Special Investigation (AFOSI) agents, judge advocates (including trial counsel), paralegals, and victim liaisons. Air Force personnel who constitute the SVIP capability are a group of highly trained and qualified individuals assigned on a case-by-case basis. Victims also have a variety of medical and psychological resources available to them. The Air Force Medical Service has trained Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners at every Military Treatment Facility to serve as the medical point of contact post-assault when medical care for the purposes of collecting forensic evidence or assessing and treating medically-related injuries is necessary. Victims are also offered mental health support by providers who are expertly trained to deliver both crisis-counseling services and ongoing care often needed when overcoming trauma events.

**What is your view of the steps the Air Force has taken to prevent additional sexual assaults both at home station and deployed locations?**

The decrease in prevalence between 2012 and 2014 is a positive indicator that the Air Force is making progress. We have built a robust response system unmatched in the civilian community. However, we must build on that foundation, and I believe our five-year prevention strategy, coupled with our focus on Squadron Commander's responsibility and accountability to establish and maintain the requisite good order and discipline, will help us continue our progress in eliminating sexual assault in the Air Force. In addition, working together with other Air Force agencies to address the factors that underlie multiple forms of violence, such as domestic violence and suicide, we will implement more robust and effective prevention interventions that address the multiple forms of violence that our Airmen experience.

**What is your view of the adequacy of the training and resources available to the Air Force to investigate and prosecute allegations of sexual assault?**

All members of the Special Victims Investigation and Prosecution (SVIP) capability receive comprehensive training and outstanding resources to meet the demanding and important mission of investigating and prosecuting sexual assault. AFOSI special agents are trained and credentialed at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center to conduct felony-level investigations, including sexual assaults. Air Force judge advocates receive specialized training to partner with AFOSI agents on sexual assault investigations and to prosecute sexual assault cases. In addition, the Air Force added 23 civilian criminal AFOSI investigators, positioned at 17 specific Air Force installations around the world, dedicated to sexual assault investigations. AFOSI selected the 17 installations based on the higher annual average number of adult victim sexual assault incidents at those installations. The Air Force also has 25 senior trial counsel (STC) who assist local trial counsel in prosecuting sexual assault cases. All STCs receive additional training in prosecuting sexual assault cases and have the opportunity to attend civilian courses and conferences pertaining to prosecuting crimes, including sexual assault. The Air Force has funded 9 examiners at the United States Army Criminal Investigations Laboratory (USACIL) who work exclusively on testing DNA samples for Air Force sexual assault cases. Even given this current status regarding training for investigators and prosecutors, we risk serious jeopardy to the integrity of our military justice process if we don't focus equally on the resourcing and training of Air Force defense counsel. If military members and the American public begin to believe that our system has lost balance, they will lose faith in the fairness of the system. The Air Force employs a robust selection criteria for military defense attorneys or Area Defense Counsel (ADC) to ensure the best qualified judge advocates are selected as ADCs.

All current Special Victims' Counsel (SVC) and Special Victims' Prosecutors (SVP) have received training from Air Force Judge Advocate General School (AFJAGS) SVC courses, civilian educators, and bi-weekly CLSV web-based distance learning training. The SVC Course at AFJAGS is an eight-day formal course covering representation of service members, DoD civilians and dependent child victims. To complement this

training with additional focus on litigation skills, SVCs attend the Intermediate Sexual Assault Litigation Course and Advanced Sexual Assault Litigation Course. Additionally, SVCs receive supplemental training with civilian courses with expertise provided by national subject matter experts.

**What is your view about the role of the chain of command in changing the military culture in which these sexual assaults occur?**

The chain of command has, and should retain, ultimate responsibility for the morale, welfare, good order, discipline, and effectiveness of military units. In the past, commanders have effectively dealt with issues including racial integration, illegal drug use during the Vietnam War, and the repeal of “Don’t Ask-Don’t Tell”. We are ensuring commanders place the same focus and emphasis on sexual assault prevention and response and we hold commanders accountable for the professionalism of the Airmen they command. Every Airman must be treated with dignity and respect, and commanders must have both the incentives and the tools to do so.

**Surveys report that up to 62 percent of victims who report a sexual assault perceive professional or social retaliation for reporting. If confirmed, what will you do to address the issue of retaliation for reporting a sexual assault?**

We must start by increasing Airmen’s knowledge at all levels about what constitutes retaliation and reprisal. We’re making progress by tracking reports of retaliation, but we need to understand what types of incidents Airmen experience as retaliation. Reprisal is a specific subset of retaliation where unfair personnel actions are taken, withheld, or threatened against the victim in response to making, preparing to make, or being perceived as making a report of sexual assault or harassment. Retaliation is an umbrella term that encompasses ostracism and maltreatment. If confirmed, I will focus on training members and first-line supervisors on avoiding, recognizing and reporting retaliation as well as the reporting options for members if they perceive professional or social retaliation. The Air Force Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office (AF SAPRO) is the lead organization training leaders and service members about retaliation against victims of sexual assault. This training is amplified at the highest levels of senior leadership including SecAF, my office, and the commanders of the Major Commands, all of whom convey the message that addressing the issue of retaliation is critical to the success of fighting sexual assault. If confirmed, I will continue to find actionable ways to use the data we have and guarantee that the Air Force will continue to train Airman at all levels about retaliation and the responsibility to ensure peers and subordinates do not retaliate against victims or other military members who report a criminal offense.

**Sexual assault is a significantly underreported crime in our society and in the military. If confirmed, what will you do to increase reporting of sexual assaults by military victims?**

Thanks to Congressional funding and support, we have developed a robust response system and ensured that Airmen at all levels know where to find help if they have been sexually assaulted. Our Airmen are trained on the resources available to them beginning at basic training and throughout their career. However, support to victims is not simply a job for our Sexual Assault Response Coordinators and other helping agencies; it’s a

responsibility for all Airmen and leaders. If confirmed, I will ensure we fulfill the words in the Air Force's Strategic Master Plan...that we move beyond ad-hoc or reactive measures as we work to address the underlying causes. In addition to credible and effective response measures, we will seek to proactively support a broad range of programs and communication activities to demonstrate Service-wide commitment to Air Force Core Values and promote an AF culture of professionalism." Commanders at all levels must continue to know their role in responding to sexual assaults and supporting survivors, and we will hold commanders accountable for the climate they create in their units not just for survivors, but for all Airmen.

**In your view, what would be the impact of requiring a judge advocate outside the chain of command, instead of a military commander in the grade of O-6 or above as is currently the Department's policy, to determine whether allegations of sexual assault should be prosecuted?**

I am not convinced that victims will be better served if we make this change. Removing commanders from military justice decision making sends the confusing message to Airmen that you can trust your commander to send you into battle, where your commander's decisions may require your ultimate sacrifice, but you cannot trust your commander to hold an Airman accountable for committing a crime. This message is more than just confusing; it degrades Airmen's trust and confidence in their commanders and, in turn, degrades the military discipline necessary to accomplish the mission of national defense. Commanders need to retain this critical command and control authority while still getting unvarnished, independent legal advice from judge advocates.

Neither military nor civilian communities can prosecute their way out of a sexual assault crisis. Prosecution is just one component of our holistic, multi-functional response strategy. Making the institutional changes required to succeed in our battle against sexual assault requires the continued involvement of commanders in every aspect--including the decision to send cases to court. Our commanders make their decisions based on specific legal training and only with the dedicated advice of their staff judge advocates. Only rarely is there a difference between the advice and the decision, and when there is, the law requires review at the Secretarial level.

The Congressionally chartered Response Systems to Adult Sexual Assault Crimes Panel (RSP) specifically addressed whether commanders should be removed from the prosecution decision. The RSP concluded, "The evidence does not support a conclusion that removing authority to convene courts-martial from senior commanders will reduce the incidence of sexual assault or increase reporting of sexual assaults in the Armed Forces." (p.22)

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

The true key to defeating this crime is to effectively prevent perpetration of it, rather than having to continue to respond to victims of it. I believe we're on the right path with the

scientific evidence-based approach to prevention we will take over the next five years, the hiring of prevention specialists dedicated to implementing this approach, and our commitment to holding Commander's responsible and accountable to establish and maintain the requisite good order and discipline. I will ensure we continue to properly resource both our prevention and response efforts with money and the right manpower.

**What is your assessment of the effect, if any, of recent legislation concerning sexual assault on the capability of Air Force commanders to prosecute sexual assault cases, including cases where prosecution is declined by civilian prosecutors?**

It is the Air Force's policy to maximize jurisdiction over our Airmen. In accordance with our regulations, when a member is subject to both the UCMJ and state or foreign jurisdiction for substantially the same act or omission, the determination of which sovereign shall exercise jurisdiction is made through consultation or prior agreement between appropriate Air Force and civilian authorities. Convening authorities and SJAs foster relationships with local civilian authorities with a view toward maximizing Air Force jurisdiction. For cases where the Air Force is given jurisdiction, Air Force commanders, in conjunction with their SJAs, assess each individual sexual assault investigation and decide on the best course of action. In addition to reviewing every report of investigation, commanders are soliciting victim input before making any disposition decisions. Our commanders will continue to ensure that good order and discipline is upheld in their units regardless of the decisions of outside law enforcement agencies.

**Religious Activity in the Armed Forces**

**What is your understanding of current policies and programs of the Department of Defense and the military services regarding religious practices in the military?**

The U.S. Constitution provides the foundation for religious freedoms. The Constitution also guarantees religious freedom without government interference. Federal law, consistent with the constitutional guarantee of religious freedom, provides specific rules to ensure that right is achieved to the greatest extent possible. The Department of Defense and the Air Force have developed instructions, consistent with the Constitution and federal law, to ensure mission success and to provide for the religious freedom of military members within the constraints of military necessity.

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

Yes. Air Force leaders are responsible for protecting the free exercise of religion for all Airmen and avoiding the appearance of an official endorsement of any particular religion. By promoting free exercise of religion in a manner that is respectful to other individuals' rights to follow their own belief systems, the Air Force creates a climate conducive to good order and discipline and maximum mission accomplishment. Supporting the right of free expression relates directly to the Air Force core values and the ability to maintain an effective team. All Airmen are able to choose to practice their particular religion or

subscribe to no religious belief at all.

**In your view, do requirements for individuals being accessed into the military, to first comply with military grooming and appearance standards that conflict with their sincerely held religious beliefs before being considered for a waiver of those military standards, constitute a constitutionally valid restraint on religious expression?**

We continue to review the complexities in balancing the need to compose, train, and equip the Air Force while protecting the civil liberties of its members and the public to the fullest extent. I am confident we can strike the proper balance in a manner consistent with religious accommodation principles.

**Under current law and policy, are individual expressions of belief accommodated so long as they do not impact unit cohesion and good order and discipline?**

Yes. Air Force Instruction 1-1 clearly states, “Every airman has the right to individual expressions of sincerely held beliefs, to include conscience, moral principles or religious beliefs, unless those expressions would have an adverse impact on military readiness, unit cohesion, good order, discipline, health and safety, or mission accomplishment.” The Air Force protects the civil liberties of its personnel to the greatest extent possible and fully complies with the law and DOD policy respecting religious expression and accommodation requests. We also specifically instruct our commanders to consult with their installation chaplain and staff judge advocate on requests for religious accommodation.

**In your opinion, do existing policies and practices regarding public prayers offered by military 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 belief?**

I do believe the Air Force has the proper balance. Within the performance of a chaplain’s primary, official duties with regard to spiritual or religious matters, there are no restrictions. With regard to public prayer, Air Force policy is that public prayer should not imply government endorsement of a particular religion and should not usually be a part of routine, official business. Mutual respect and common sense should always be applied, including consideration of unusual circumstances and the needs of command. Further, non-denominational, inclusive prayer or a moment of silence may be appropriate for military ceremonies or events of special importance when its primary purpose is not the advancement of religious beliefs.

**The Religious Freedom Restoration Act provides very broad protection for religious liberty, and provides that the Government [which includes the military] may not substantially burden a person’s exercise of religion unless it furthers a compelling government interest, and that any such burden must be the least restrictive means of furthering that interest.**

**Do you believe that uniformity of appearance in the military constitutes a compelling government interest?**

DOD has determined that the military departments have a compelling government interest in mission accomplishment, including the elements of mission accomplishment such as military readiness, unit cohesion, good order, discipline, health, and safety, on both the individual and unit levels. A key part of unit cohesion is establishing and maintaining uniform military grooming and appearance standards. While uniformity is important, it is only one factor evaluated when considering an accommodation request.

**If so, do you believe that denying certain faith groups the ability to deviate from uniform and grooming standards, e.g., in maintaining an unshorn beard, in observation of their sincerely held religious belief, is the least restrictive means of furthering that interest?**

We review each request on the individual facts. The Air Force has granted dress and grooming religious accommodation requests in the past. Such requests will continue to be carefully evaluated and accommodations granted unless doing so adversely impacts military readiness.

**How does the practice of allowing waivers for tattoos, including for religious themed tattoos, and medical shaving profiles for service members both home and deployed, affect your analysis?**

Once again, we evaluate each case on the individual facts. Accommodation requests in the military’s specialized community involve a complex analysis of multiple considerations. Whether the Air Force’s compelling interests in any individual case are impacted involves a careful fact-specific analysis. Prior waivers, and any potential impacts from those waivers, are part of the analysis.

### **Nuclear Force Modernization**

**In his message to the U.S. Senate of February 2, 2011, the President stated his intention to “modernize or replace the triad of strategic nuclear delivery systems: a heavy bomber and air-launched cruise missile, an ICBM, and a nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine (SSBN) and SLBM.”**

**Do you support plans to replace the Minuteman III ICBM with the Ground-based Strategic Deterrent (GBSD) program?**

Yes. Consistent with the President’s commitment to maintaining the strategic Triad, I believe fielding GBSD is vital to ensuring the US’s land-based nuclear deterrent remains credible and effective in the coming decades. Despite numerous upgrades to Minuteman III since it was first deployed in 1970, significant obsolescence and

sustainment challenges require development of a follow-on ICBM capability. GBSB will resolve MM III sustainment and aging issues, reduce total life-cycle costs, and extend the US's ICBM capability out to 2075.

**Do you support plans to replace the Air-launched Cruise Missile (ALCM) with the Long-range Standoff (LRSO) missile?**

Yes. Consistent with the President's commitment, I believe fielding LRSO is vital to sustaining the credibility and effectiveness of the air-delivered leg of the Triad in the coming decades. The current ALCM entered service in 1982 and was designed for a 10-year service life. Growing reliability and sustainment challenges, combined with advances in enemy air defenses that will degrade ALCMs effectiveness in near future, necessitate fielding a follow-on capability.

**What should be the priority of GBSB and LRSO with respect to all Air Force modernization efforts?**

The Air Force fully supports the President's commitment to maintaining a credible and effective nuclear Triad—both GBSB and LRSO are essential to that effort. In addition to the ground and air-legs of the Triad, the Air Force is also responsible for providing the nation and Joint Force with a range of multi-domain conventional capabilities. Together, I believe these nuclear and conventional capabilities are foundational components of effective 21st Century strategic deterrence. However, the Air Force will be unable to fully meet these demands in the coming years without additional topline investment.

**B-21 Long Range Strike Bomber**

**On October 27, 2015, the Air Force announced the award of the engineering, manufacturing, and development (EMD) contract for the new B-21 bomber.**

**If confirmed as Chief of Staff of the Air Force, what will be your role in the management of the B-21 bomber program?**

As the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, my role for the B-21 Long Range Strike Bomber program will be focused on owning and managing the requirements. It will be my job to ensure the program requirements remain stable, achievable and affordable.

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

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

The Air Force is fully committed to transparency with Congress on the B-21 program to include continuing our frequent discussions with the Congressional Defense Committees at the appropriate classification level. We are committed to controlling the program's

cost through rigorous oversight of the prime contractor's performance and an annual update of the Air Force's independent cost estimate.

Maintaining the classification of the B-21 program Engineering and Manufacturing Development (EMD) contract value is critical in order to protect vital information and capabilities of the aircraft that could be exploited by our adversaries. There is a strong correlation between the cost of an air vehicle and its total weight, thus making it decisively easier for our adversaries to calculate the aircraft capabilities and develop countermeasures.

In October 2015 we publicly released the Air Force's independent cost estimate of \$23.5 billion in base year 2016, which characterizes the total estimated B-21 development costs. This independent estimate, required by the *Weapons Systems Acquisition Reform Act of 2009*, is based on historical costs associated with this class of weapon system and includes average level of program risks. Additionally the independent estimate represents the service cost position, which is used to develop the Air Force Fiscal Years Defense Program budget.

### **Space and Space Launch**

**Section 802 of the FY16 NDAA adds to the acquisition responsibilities of the service chiefs by inserting into Chapter 149 of Title X, USC, "Decisions regarding the balancing of resources and priorities, and associated trade-offs among cost, schedule, technical feasibility, and performance on major defense acquisition programs." In the context of space launch acquisition:**

**Do you agree that it is technically feasible to meet assured access to space requirements without the use of Russian rocket engines?**

Ending the use of Russian rocket engines today would reduce our assured access to space and would incur substantial cost increase and schedule delays to our launch manifest. The Air Force is currently executing a strategy to transition off the Russian engine and is working with industry in public-private-partnerships to develop launch service capabilities that meet all of our launch requirements using domestically developed and procured propulsion systems. The development of new propulsion and associated launch systems will require about five years and remains one of the most challenging design and development activities the nation pursues, as flawless technical performance is paramount. During the transition period, the Air Force's position is that 18 RD-180 engines are needed to best maintain the nation's assured access to space and control cost. The Air Force remains committed to transitioning from, and ending the use of the RD-180 engine as soon as possible and we plan on doing this in the most prudent but expeditious manner possible.

**If confirmed, and if directed by Congress to meet assured access to space without Russian rocket engines, are you committed to doing so?**

Yes.

**Do you believe that dependence on Russia for space propulsion is a vulnerability given Russian efforts to target national security space systems?**

There are no indications that the use of Russian engine components in this program have impacted or impaired national security. These components are not connected electronically to any payload and do not contain software encoding or the ability to retrieve, store, or transmit information from the launch vehicle computer to any outside party. Russian citizens supporting the U.S.-based program are limited to monitoring preflight and real time data streams from basic engine-based sensors and are escorted at all times by authorized security personnel in strict compliance with Defense Technology Security Administration regulations. The engine itself only operates for approximately 4 minutes, at which time first stage separation occurs and the booster falls back to the earth ending the limited data stream from the basic sensors.

With that being said, I am committed to transitioning to two or more commercially – viable launch service providers using domestically produced propulsion systems to meet our assured access to space requirement.

**Combat Air Forces Capacity**

**According to the force sizing construct in the 2012 Defense Strategic Guidance and the 2014 QDR, U.S. forces should be able to “defeat a regional adversary in a large-scale multi-phased campaign, and deny the objectives of—or impose unacceptable costs on—another aggressor in another region.”**

**In your opinion, is OSD’s force sizing construct an adequate approach for the Air Force given the dynamics of the current and projected geostrategic and fiscal environments?**

Yes, the force sizing construct, which includes homeland defense and support for global counter-terror operations, adequately addresses the challenges of the current and projected environment. The OSD-led capability based process leads to the initial determination of a required force structure independent of fiscal constraints. The insights from this process are essential to determine the best available force structure, balancing readiness, capability, and capacity within the actual fiscal limitations.

**In your view is the Air Force accepting higher risk with the current strategy; can it execute the strategy with acceptable risk, or are increased resources required by the Air Force with regard to airpower capability and capacity?**

The Air Force continues to accept additional warfighting risk since the implementation of the Budget Control Act (BCA). We depend on our Airmen to deliver combat airpower to the best of their ability but today we face significant challenges to support the national strategies. The Joint Force is dependent on the Air Force to provide air superiority, airborne ISR, precision strike, space-based navigation and surveillance, cyberspace operations, rapid global mobility, and the command and control that integrates Joint Force airpower. Current operations tempo and fiscal limitations are a significant impact on full-spectrum readiness, and are forcing us to reduce capacity while slowing the growth of new capabilities in order to meet the BCA. The FY17 budget begins to address

these issues but significant additional long-term investment is required to ensure successful execution of the Air Force mission.

**Based on the current defense strategy, defense planning scenarios, and force-sizing construct, what are your views on the ability of the Air Force to meet current and future combatant commander requirements with acceptable risk in regard to combat fighter, bomber, preferred weapons, and joint enabler force structure capacity?**

In the twenty five years since Operation DESERT STORM, the Air Force has been globally engaged in sustained combat operations across all mission areas, placing a significant strain on our Airmen and resources. In the interim, our potential adversaries have made unprecedented strides to advance their capabilities in order to minimize our advantage. The current fiscal environment makes it increasingly difficult to adequately invest in fighter, bomber and preferred munitions programs and complete necessary modifications to legacy systems. The FY17 budget begins to address these shortcomings, however, additional and sustained investments are required to meet future combatant commander requirements.

**The 2012 Defense Strategic Guidance also directed that “*the U.S. military will invest as required to ensure its ability to operate effectively in anti-access and area denial (A2/AD) environments.*”**

**In your view, how has the Air Force adapted to anti-access challenges, and what do you see as the most critical next steps for the Air Force to take to better prepare for operations in anti-access environments?**

Integrated air defense systems are rapidly advancing in capability, complexity, and lethality, and are currently being proliferated world-wide. The Air Force recognizes the significant challenges Anti-Access / Area Denial environments place on our ability to provide the joint warfighter air superiority. The F-22, F-35, B-21, RQ-170 and LRSO programs are examples of our efforts to adapt to these Anti-Access / Area Denial environments and out-pace our potential adversaries. It is critical for the Air Force to continue to invest in agile and responsive air, electronic warfare, cyber, and space-based intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance capabilities, while also providing weapon systems capable of projecting power and achieving mission requirements in anti-access and area denial environments. The F-22, F-35, B-21, RQ-170 and LRSO will provide the ability to penetrate modern integrated air defenses to accomplish mission objectives.

**Do you believe the Air Force’s current and planned force mix of weapons, short-range fighters, and long-range strike aircraft is sufficient to meet current and future threats around the globe with acceptable risk, particularly in the Asia-Pacific Theater of operations where the “tyranny of distance” is such a major factor?**

The Air Force is committed to balancing long and short range capabilities in order to meet warfighter requirements in various scenarios. In these scenarios, we find that developing a mix of long range, increased payload, and highly survivable fighters and bombers suitable for operations in a highly contested theater will provide the essential capabilities to enable the Joint Force.

In the short term, we prefer to have more penetrating long range capacity to ensure persistent air operations in long range scenarios. For this reason, the B-21 is an operational imperative, and we must ensure it remains an affordable program in order to augment and eventually replace our legacy bomber fleet. The B-21 is just one part of our commitment to long range capabilities. In order to maintain acceptable levels of risk for the Asia-Pacific Theater of operations, the Air Force is looking at options to enhance the range of our fighter forces, increase capacity and capability of survivable stand-off weapons, and improve the capabilities of our legacy bombers. Increased resources are required to develop these capabilities without taking unacceptable risk in other mission areas. Without consistent investment and improvement, continued U.S. dominance of the battlespace is in doubt.

**In future operating environments U.S. communications architectures could come under attack, which could result in degraded or denied communications capabilities. In your view, how could the Air Force better prepare for such disruption?**

It is likely that our adversaries will attack our communication architectures. The Air Force is preparing for this likelihood by leveraging a combination of low-probability of intercept, low-probability of detection, and multi-layer communication networks that are robust and resilient. Further, we are fielding units to focus on assuring our missions across all domains to include a contested cyber domain. The ability to communicate effectively and fight through enemy anti-access and area-denial tactics will require a force that can rapidly flex between multiple communications options thereby increasing our operational agility and warfighting effectiveness.

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

**The F-35 Joint Strike Fighter Program, the largest and most expensive acquisition program in Department of Defense history, was formally initiated as a program of record in 2001, and subsequently adjusted to a total planned buy of 2,443 aircraft for the U.S. The program has not yet completed the System Development and Demonstration (SDD) phase, and is not due to enter full rate production until 2019, 18 years after its inception. At projected procurement rates, the aircraft would be procured by the Department with the last delivery of an F-35 now planned for the year 2040.**

**The Senate Armed Services Committee report accompanying S. 1376, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016, requires the Secretary of Defense to assess the current requirement for the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter total program of record quantity, and then revalidate that quantity or identify a new requirement for the total number of F-35 aircraft the Department would ultimately procure.**

**What will be your role in assisting the Secretary of the Air Force to revalidate the Air Force's F-35A total program quantity, currently established at 1,763 aircraft?**  
As the Secretary of the Air Force revalidates the Air Force's F-35A total program quantity, if confirmed, I will provide insight and advice on shaping our current and future fighter force structure in order to ensure we maintain a robust fighter force capable of meeting all current and future operational requirements. This requires careful planning as

we balance NDAA-directed capacity levels with the operational capabilities required to meet Defense Planning Guidance, Operational Plans, and Global Force Management Allocation Plan mission requirements. Once revalidated, the F-35A total program quantity will provide us sufficient capacity to recapitalize our aging legacy fleet with 5<sup>th</sup> generation capability, which is required to successfully accomplish the joint warfighter's mission objectives against the current and emerging advanced threat.

**If the Air Force were to revalidate their original 1,763 F-35A requirement, and reach a procurement rate of 80 aircraft per year, it will take until the year 2040 to receive all F-35As.**

**In your opinion, can the Air Force afford this effort at the same time as the Air Force needs to invest in KC-46A, B-21, JSTARS, T-X, nuclear enterprise modernization, and myriad other modernization programs all anticipated to be required simultaneously in the decade of the 2020s?**

Air Force investment plans, to include the F-35 at 60 aircraft per year, are affordable across long range planning horizons for the KC-46A, B-21, JSTARS, T-X, nuclear enterprise modernization and other modernization programs. The scope and schedule for these FYDP and post-FYDP investments, along with all other force structure and resource plans are consistent with Air Force funding levels in the FY17 President's Budget; however, F-35 procurement beyond 60 aircraft per year or any reduction in funding below FY17PB levels requires a reevaluation of these investments and other force structure plans.

**After completion of the SDD and commencement of full rate production, the F-35 will require a robust Follow-On Modernization program to ensure the aircraft capabilities continue to outpace our potential adversaries' technological advancements.**

**In your opinion, should the F-35 follow-on modernization program be designated as a separate Major Defense Acquisition Program from the current F-35 program of record?**

The F-35 follow-on development program, now known as the follow-on modernization program, is a continuation of the existing program rather than a new stand-alone program and does not need to be designated as a separate Major Defense Acquisition Program. The existing management and oversight structure in place for the F-35 Program will be used to manage the follow-on modernization effort.

**The different variants of the F-35 for each Service have specific follow-on capabilities required for each, and these common capabilities are prioritized in different ways between the Services depending upon their assigned warfighting requirements.**

**Do you believe the Joint Program Office should be disbanded following the full rate production decision and each Service stand up their own F-35 program offices to better accommodate their needs with respect to required follow-on capabilities and overall management of their respective F-35 variants?**

The F-35 Joint Program Office should not be disbanded. Retaining the current program structure for the follow-on modernization program, with its existing oversight mechanisms, is the most prudent approach. In addition, a single program office provides one voice to the contractor and allows the Air Force to share development costs with the Navy and our international Partners.

**Other have argued that the major differences in the F-35 variants are in the airframes, and that the software development could remain common among the different variants of F-35.**

**Do you believe the Department could achieve economies by keeping the software modernization effort for F-35 as a joint program effort?**

Yes, keeping the software modernization effort as a joint/international program effort will allow the Department to achieve economies. A single program office provides one voice to the contractor and allows the Air Force to share development costs with the Navy and our international Partners.

### **Remotely Piloted Aircraft (RPA) Enterprise Management**

**The Air Force has struggled for nearly a decade to assimilate and normalize the medium altitude ISR mission and its MQ-1 and MQ-9 fleets into the Air Force capabilities portfolio, resulting in severe manning shortages due to insufficient training pipelines, and causing low retention and poor morale across the enterprise.**

**In your view, what steps should the Air Force take to remedy these issues?**

The Air Force should complete the Deputy Secretary of Defense-directed RPA Get Well Plan to repair and grow the RPA training pipeline. In addition, we should focus on pipeline stability and resources (manpower) to grow (when directed) with a disciplined, programmatic approach.

**The U.S. Army operates some of the same medium altitude ISR platforms as the Air Force, uses warrant officers and enlisted personnel to supervise and conduct ISR and strike operations, and are led by very few officers.**

**What are your views on the Air Force reintroducing a warrant officer program or using enlisted personnel to operate its RPA fleets to increase manning and reduce costs, as well as relieve manning level stress on other rated career fields?**

The Air Force considered reinstating WOs in 2008, 2012 & 2015. An additional

category of serving members does not align well with AF Culture and our enlisted force development objectives. AF enlisted corps has the technological and leadership capabilities to perform at the same level of a WO corps without instituting a fundamental change in our NCO developmental and progression. Thus, in Dec 2015, the Secretary of the Air Force announced an initiative to enhance the Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) mission by integrating enlisted operators into the RQ-4 Global Hawk. The Air Force has determined that a deliberate, methodical transition in the RQ-4 Global Hawk enterprise, similar to a previous transition in AF Space Command (AFSPC), will present the Air Force with future posturing opportunities.

**How do you see the Air Force integrating the medium altitude ISR mission into its future operating concepts?**

Nearly two decades of extremely successful operations in permissive Counterinsurgency ISR environments have proven that unmanned aircraft are an “enduring source of U.S. Advantage” that our Future Operating Concept supports through development and integration efforts in air, space and cyberspace. To adequately address future ISR needs across the full spectrum of conflict, we anticipate future unmanned systems will require increased levels of automation and endurance, resilient and survivable networks, and robust and anti-jam communications paths to improve performance and real-time access to multi-domain decision-quality data.

We envision a more survivable, cost effective, and manpower efficient medium altitude ISR enterprise of the future. As such, we are not limiting future innovations to the medium altitude architecture seen today. Our recently published *Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems Flight Plan* outlines innovative approaches that can “increase our joint force capability from the tactical to the strategic level.” These disruptive innovations coupled with expanded concepts of operations point to a new use for small UAS in anti-access and area denial environments while offering efficiencies in meeting the growing ISR capacity needs of combatant commanders.

**Independence of the Judge Advocate General**

**What are your views about the responsibility of the Judge Advocate General of the Air Force to provide independent legal advice to the Chief of Staff and the Air Staff, particularly in the areas of military justice and operational law?**

I value the independence of The Judge Advocate General (TJAG) and The Judge Advocate General's Corps. Independent legal advice is crucial to allow commanders at all levels to make properly informed decisions on all matters, including military justice and operational law, affecting their command.

I have no concerns regarding the independence of the advice I would receive from TJAG, as I respect the professionalism of the JAG Corps and know that sufficient safeguards exist to ensure that TJAG is independent in the performance of his or her duties. The position of TJAG is established by statute (10 U.S.C. § 8037) and is appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate.

In accordance with current law and doctrine, all operations and planning of future operations are carried out by the Combatant Commands. Accordingly, TJAG does not provide legal advice regarding the conduct or planning of those operations. That advice is provided by the legal staff of the relevant Combatant Command. However, outside of those operations there are circumstances in which the Air Force has an equity where TJAG provides advice on operational law matters to the Chief of Staff and the Air Staff. Air Force instructions dictate that TJAG provides advice to the Secretary of the Air Force, Chief of Staff and Air Staff on matters involving international law, including the law of war and space law (Air Force Instruction 51-102, paragraph 3.6).

The right to provide independent legal advice to the Secretary of the Air Force and the Chief of Staff, free from interference from any officer in the DOD, is protected by statute (10 U.S.C. § 8037(f)). TJAG is also required to be a licensed attorney, member of the bar of a Federal court or the highest court of a State and is thus also subject to the commensurate professional regulatory regime (which includes a responsibility to provide independent legal advice). TJAG has issued relevant direction to the JAG Corps on fulfilling their duties as attorneys, to include certifying annually that they have reviewed the attorney rules of professional conduct of the Air Force and their State bar.

**What are your views about the responsibility of staff judge advocates throughout the Air Force to provide independent legal advice to military commanders in the field and throughout the Air Force establishment?**

Staff judge advocates (SJAs) are essential to the proper functioning of both operational and support missions. SJAs have a major responsibility to promote the interests of a command by providing relevant, timely, and independent advice to commanders, and this independence is reflected in statute (10 U.S.C. § 8037(f)(2)).

Convening authorities are required by statute (10 U.S.C. § 806) to communicate with their SJAs on issues related to military justice matters, which is critical to disciplined mission execution. In addition, commanders and other leaders rely on their SJAs for advice on all types of legal and policy matters. SJAs offer legal advice independent of any particular agenda. I believe it is very important for commanders to continue to receive uniformed legal advice.

**What are your views about the respective roles of the Judge Advocate General and the General Counsel of the Air Force?**

The Judge Advocate General (TJAG) 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 to The Judge Advocate General's Corps in the performance of their duties. The General Counsel (GC) is the chief legal officer and senior civilian legal advisor to Air Force senior leaders and all officers and agencies of the Department of the Air Force.

The relationship between TJAG and the GC is based on the complementary roles that Congress intended for these offices when it established the GC as part of the Office of the

Secretary of the Air Force and TJAG as part of the Air Staff. Both are legal advisors to the Secretary of the Air Force and the Chief of Staff, with right of direct access and the ability to provide independent legal advice to those officials. TJAG and GC are independent of each other for the purposes of rating, reporting, and the accomplishment of their responsibilities. They perform their missions in an environment of collaboration and information sharing.

## **Family Support**

**What do you consider to be the most important family readiness issues in the Air Force, and, if confirmed, what role would you play to ensure that family readiness needs are addressed and adequately resourced?**

The most important family readiness issue is ensuring adequate support during deployments and for those carrying the burden at home. Twenty-five years of continuous combat combined with unpredictable budgets has placed strains on families and the programs they rely on for support. If confirmed, I will focus on aligning our programs to best serve families so their service members can focus on the mission.

**How would you address these family readiness needs in light of global rebasing and lengthy deployments?**

If confirmed, I will ensure Airman and Family Readiness programs deliver community-based resources for Airmen and their families. This means high-quality, accessible and what our Airmen and families actually require.

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

Ensuring military families are provided with the resources and support during military deployments is one of our top priorities. We've put in place a number of programs designed to support all personnel prior to, during and following deployments. This is especially important to our Reserve Component and active duty families who may not be assigned near a military installation. One of our most effective tools is Military One Source which provides 24/7 access to a wealth of information for military families. Our Reserve Components and active duty members can also leverage the Wingman Toolkit. This provides Airmen and families with quick and easy access to vital resources (such as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline and SAFE Helpline) through a variety of methods - by telephone, mobile app, websites, and social media—regardless of geographic location or status. Also critical is the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program (YRRP), which sponsors informational events and activities for members and their families. YRRP provides services for health and well-being throughout all phases of deployment. Direct feedback from Yellow Ribbon event attendees reflects a positive impact on communication, stress and financial management, and the willingness to continue their military service. If confirmed, I would continue to build on the great foundation already in place to ensure the needs of our military families continue to receive the attention and care they so rightly deserve.

Air National Guard Family Readiness Programs are designed to maintain and support mission readiness by assisting Service members and families with adaptations to the challenges of the military lifestyle. Airman & Family Readiness Program Managers align family support capabilities with the Joint Family Program in the States to provide support to all Service members and their families, providing direct sustainment and support to their Wings.

Air National Guard Warrior and Survivor Care works in concert with the Air Force Wounded Warrior Program and Recovery Care Program to provide needs- based assistance to all wounded, ill and injured Service members and their families.

### **Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC)**

**The Department continually asks for BRAC authorities based on claims of excess infrastructure that unnecessarily wastes precious defense dollars.**

**Do you believe additional rounds of BRAC are warranted at this time?**

Yes. Drawdowns in force structure have greatly outpaced reductions in infrastructure. As a consequence, we pay to maintain and sustain installations that we don't need. Closing unneeded bases is one of the few ways we can achieve significant savings and use that money to recapitalize and sustain our weapons systems, enhance our readiness training, and invest in the quality of life of our airmen.

**If so, how do you quantify the Air Force's excess capacity driving your decision?**

The Air Force estimated excess capacity through parametric analysis of force structure to quantity of infrastructure. DoD's April 2016 report to Congress stated the AF had 32 percent excess infrastructure capacity based on the projected FY19 force structure. In the last round of BRAC, the Air Force reduced its infrastructure by less than one percent, and since then we've reduced our size by hundreds of aircraft and thousands of personnel. Reductions in force structure have greatly outpaced reductions in infrastructure.

**The Air Force has claimed an excess infrastructure capacity of approximately 30%. How much excess capacity do you believe the Air Force should maintain to preserve strategic depth and expansion capacity during a potential national emergency requiring a national mobilization?**

The Air Force has no intention to close infrastructure that may support future needs. Through five previous rounds of BRAC and numerous force structure changes, we've always left room for future maneuvering. Going back to the 1990s, the Air Force has never dipped below 20 percent excess infrastructure capacity, and in previous rounds of BRAC we've never closed more than 5% of our installations.

## Air Force Science and Technology

### **If confirmed, what direction would you provide regarding the importance of innovative defense science in meeting Air Force missions?**

Providing *Global Vigilance, Global Reach, and Global Power* for the security of our Nation is the enduring purpose of the U.S. Air Force. We recognize the pace of change has quickened substantially since the Air Force's inception and that it has accelerated dramatically over the last two decades. If confirmed, I will provide direction which keeps us on our path to strategic agility in capability development. Drawing from the Air Force Strategy and the Strategic Master Plan and in concert with the Air Force Science and Technology Executive, I will provide direction which focuses our Science and Technology Program on developing technologies to provide options across all mission areas for our forces of tomorrow and ensuring needed technologies are delivered to our warfighters today.

### **Do you believe the current balance between short- and long-term research is appropriate to meet current and future Air Force needs?**

Our Air Force *Future Operating Concept* highlights that no military advantage will go unchallenged by adversaries seeking to achieve their objectives. As such, we invest in a broad portfolio that is balanced across the warfighter's need for near-term, rapid-reaction solutions; mid-term technology development; and revolutionary, far-term capabilities. I believe the Air Force's current Science and Technology investment strategy is well-balanced and appropriate to meet current and future warfighter needs.

### **If confirmed, what role would you play in ensuring research priorities that will meet the needs of the Air Force in the future?**

The Air Force continues to make great strides in transforming how we envision the future and the capabilities needed to meet any threat. We must be strategically agile in how we conceptualize future capability needs, how we leverage game-changing technologies, prototyping, and experimentation, and how we recruit and develop our people. If confirmed, I will lead Air Force capability development activities and processes to focus on agility (emphasizing speed and flexibility), inclusiveness (leveraging the entire Air Force enterprise), and transparency (developing shared awareness and understanding to enable unity of purpose and effort).

### **In the face of rising acquisition costs for a multitude of expensive programs such as the F-35, KC-46A, B-21, JSTARS, T-X, and programs to support space operations, if confirmed, how would you plan to ensure the protection of funding for long-term science and technology investments?**

Development and maturation of revolutionary, relevant, and responsive technologies through our Air Force Science and Technology Program is vital to maintaining—and even growing—our advantage in the dynamic global environment. As such, if confirmed, I will provide direction that focuses and protects Science and Technology investments that mature and advance the state-of-the-art in areas critical to continued U.S. dominance of air, space, and cyberspace.

## **General Officer Management Issues**

**Incidents of misconduct or substandard performance and findings of inspectors general and other command-directed investigations are documented in various ways in each of the services. Procedures for including and forwarding adverse and alleged adverse information in connection with the promotion selection process are set forth in title 10, United States Code, and in DOD Instruction 1320.4.**

### **How is the Air Force ensuring compliance with requirements of law and regulation regarding review of adverse information?**

We are required by law and DOD policy to present all adverse information of a credible nature to general officer promotion and Federal recognition boards. The Air Force Inspector General initiates a review of Air Force, DOD, and other government investigative files for potential adverse information on everyone meeting these boards.

If substantiated adverse information is discovered, a summary of the information, plus any written comments from the officer, are placed in a senior officer unfavorable information file and attached to the officer's selection record. If the officer is selected for promotion or Federal recognition, this file stays with the officer's nomination package through its coordination with the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the White House, and the Senate. If substantiated adverse information is discovered about an officer after selection for promotion or Federal recognition, this information will be presented to a promotion review board.

The promotion review board will consider the adverse information and make a recommendation to the Secretary of the Air Force whether to continue to support the officer for appointment to the next higher grade. If the Secretary continues to support the officer, the information will be added to the nomination package.

### **What standards and procedures are in place in the Air Force to ensure that allegations of adverse information relating to a nominee for promotion are brought to the attention of the Department and the Committee in a timely manner?**

As stated earlier, any substantiated adverse information accompanies an officer's nomination through the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the White House, and the Senate. We perform additional checks for adverse information following the selection board, and every 60 days throughout the nomination process. If allegations of adverse information arise after the board is complete the Air Force typically will separate the officer's name from the promotion list until the investigation is complete. If the allegations are substantiated, the Secretary will convene a promotion review board to determine if the individual should continue to be nominated for (or, if after confirmation, appointed to) the next higher grade.

The Air Force always includes substantiated adverse information with its nomination packages through the Office of the Secretary of Defense to the Senate. For three- and four-star nominations, substantiated adverse information is included in the nomination

packages and the Air Force performs adverse information checks every 60 days throughout the nomination process.

## **Joint Officer Management**

### **What is your assessment of the effectiveness of the Goldwater-Nichols-required Joint Qualification System?**

The Goldwater-Nichols required Joint Qualification System has been extremely successful over the last 30 years, but as with all systems over time, there are adjustments needed to bring legislation in line to meet current wartime demands of the Department. The Services have made great strides to meet the intent of the original legislation and are working with the Joint Staff and Office of the Secretary of Defense on future initiatives, such as reviewing joint positions within the COCOMs and Joint Staff and better developing joint officers to meet today's demands. The joint qualification system must be updated to better reflect the current organization of the Department, adapt to the changes in joint operations and provide Services additional flexibility in how we support joint organizations.

### **Do you think additional changes in law or regulation are needed to respond to the unique career-progression needs of Air Force officers?**

Yes. We recommended the following modifications to the Joint Officer Management program:

Change the 36 month tour length requirement to 24 months

- to better align with many officer rotations, especially for our HPOs
- to ensure the AF continues to send its best officers to key positions
- to better assist our services critical specialties to support war time missions, without negatively impacting critical manning requirements within individual services—especially for our operators.
- \*\*This does not mean members can't stay in joint positions for 36 months or longer, depending on their Services assignment requirements and available budget.
- Remove the requirement to maintain a tour length average
- A modified definition of Joint Matters to ensure more clarity and allowances for members to gain joint credit
- Modify the JPME II requirement to increase flexibility in the administration of the program.

### **In your view, are the requirements associated with becoming a Joint Qualified Officer, including links to promotion to general and flag officer rank, consistent with the operational and professional demands of Air Force officers?**

We believe our recommendations to modify our joint officer program's requirements will better align with the operational and professional demands of our Air Force officers and our current wartime requirements. We also believe the requirements are necessary, as it ensures our officers get what they need developmentally as they attain training and experience in joint matters that will be key to a well-rounded, joint trained and qualified officer.

**If not, what modifications, if any, to the requirements for joint officer qualifications are necessary to ensure that military officers are able to attain meaningful joint and service-specific leadership experience and professional development?**

These modifications will support our current service and department's needs.

**In your view, what is the impact of joint qualification requirements on the ability of the services to select the best qualified officers for promotion and to enable officer assignments that will satisfy service-specific officer professional development requirements?**

With the modifications, we will be able to better align assignments for all officers whether to or from joint assignments. We will continue to develop a joint qualified officer that has the training/education/ experience we need in our General and Flag Officer leaders.

**Do you think a tour with a Combatant Command staff should count toward the Joint tour requirement?**

Yes. However, not all positions at a COCOM deal with joint matters. We need to take a better look at designated joint positions, as there are some positions within these organizations that may not provide for the best joint development as compared to other positions in other organizations that are not considered.

### **Acquisition Reform**

**The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2016 emplaced myriad changes to defense acquisition processes, including reinserting service chief influence and accountability into acquisition processes.**

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

I expect to continue the critical role of the position given by 10 U.S.C., §2547 to be the sole authority and responsibility for the Air Force requirements. Through my involvement in the Selected Acquisition Report, I would certify that program requirements are stable and funding is adequate to meet cost, schedule, and performance objectives for a major defense acquisition program and identify any increased risk. Further, under the new authorities granted by the FY16 NDAA 2366a and 2366b determinations, I expect to be actively involved in Milestone A and B approvals and trade-off decisions between cost, schedule, performance requirements, and operational risk for our major defense acquisition programs.

**What are your views on the use of cost plus versus fixed price contract structures for Air Force programs?**

Cost-type contracts are most appropriate when the Air Force is not able to fully define its requirements or the contractor is unable to sufficiently determine costs. Cost plus contracts are used most frequently during the Research and Development phase of acquisition when there are uncertainties in contract performance. Specifically, the use of

cost plus contracts for the Engineering and Manufacturing Development (EMD) phase is typically appropriate given the level of risk inherent in that stage of development and the need to accommodate changes driven by technical developments and affordability trades. The Air Force would pay a price premium to the contractor for assuming the cost risk for a fixed price development contract.

Fixed price contracts are appropriate when the requirement is well defined (commercial item/services); the contractor can reasonably estimate the price; the contractor is willing to accept risk; and, the government can determine the fixed-price to be fair and reasonable.

Limiting contract types would restrict the Air Force's ability to execute the most appropriate cost and effective business arrangements and could impact Industry's willingness to contract with the Air Force.

**How would you support the Secretary of the Air Force in your new role regarding major defense acquisition programs?**

If confirmed, I will work with the Secretary of the Air Force, whose acquisition authorities originate from 10 U.S.C. §8013, to ensure we can fulfill our 10 U.S.C. §§2366a and 2366b responsibilities for major defense acquisition programs. I would continue to consult with the Secretary on proposed changes in program requirements or operational risk acceptance decisions affecting or affected by program cost or schedule decisions.

**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, when asked, to give your personal views, even if those views differ from the administration in power?**

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 Chief of Staff 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 communications, 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