



DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
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WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1010

APR - 7 2025

MEMORANDUM FOR SENIOR PENTAGON LEADERSHIP
COMMANDERS OF THE COMBATANT COMMANDS
DEFENSE AGENCY AND DOD FIELD ACTIVITY DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: Workforce Acceleration & Recapitalization Initiative Organizational Review

As directed by Secretary of Defense Memorandum, "Initiating the Workforce Acceleration & Recapitalization Initiative," March 28, 2025, I will lead the DoD effort to rebalance and optimize its civilian workforce to urgently rebuild our military, revive the warrior ethos, and deliver maximum deterrence.

This initiative, which is an element of a broader DoD Comprehensive Review, will begin with a detailed analysis of the organizational structure of all DoD Components. This evaluation will result in an enhanced organizational design and an allocation of manpower that boosts readiness, capability, and efficiency across the Department.

The proposed future-state organizational charts that the Secretary directed the Secretaries of the Military Departments, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Directors of the Defense Agencies and Field Activities, and the Principal Staff Assistants¹ to submit to the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (USD(P&R)) are the first step in this campaign. The proposals prepared as part of the preliminary review should communicate potential opportunities to reduce or eliminate redundant or non-essential functions and include adjusted civilian manpower levels that reflect these projected changes. The USD(P&R) will consolidate and submit these proposals to my office by April 11, 2025. Components will conduct a more detailed review using the attached guidance and provide updated proposals to USD(P&R) by May 24, 2025. These updated proposals will support the DoD Comprehensive Review, and the Department will implement resulting organizational improvements in an efficient, deliberate manner over the remainder of Fiscal Year 2025 and Fiscal Year 2026. All proposals will comply with all applicable law; if statutory changes are required in order to implement, draft legislative proposals will be provided for consideration.

To successfully deter America's adversaries and posture our Forces to prevail in combat, we must focus our efforts and our resources on our top priorities. Optimizing the organizational structure and civilian workforce of the Department is foundational to that effort. Thank you for your leadership and steadfast support as we execute the Secretary's intent of rebuilding our military, reviving the warrior ethos, and reestablishing deterrence.

Attachment:
As stated

¹ Directors of Defense Agencies and Field Activities will submit through their Principal Staff Assistants. Combatant Commanders will submit and coordinate through the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.



Attachment

Guiding Principles for The Department of Defense Workforce Optimization

To ensure the Department of Defense remains the most agile and lethal force the world has ever known, we must align every part of our organization around the needs of the warfighter. A lean, disciplined, and financially efficient Department is a cornerstone of our national strength.

Every role must now meet a simple test: *If this position didn't exist today, and we were at war tomorrow, would we create it?* If the answer is no, it should be consolidated, restructured, or eliminated.

Reorganization plans should be guided by the following principles designed to strip away bureaucracy, accelerate decision-making, and deliver maximum value to the warfighter. These principles are built for a Department operating on a war footing:

- **Mission-First Alignment:** Every civilian role should directly enable lethality, readiness, or strategic deterrence. If not, it should be reclassified, outsourced, or removed.
- **Consolidated Functions:** We will consider consolidating duplicate functions, overlapping offices, and parallel authorities, and we will right-size manpower to accomplish the mission.
- **Flattened Hierarchies:** We should eliminate excessive layers of supervision and middle management, empowering decision makers at every level.
- **Speed Over Process:** Civilian structures should support rapid deployment of capabilities, not delay them. We should eliminate unduly burdensome reviews and legacy coordination rituals that are misaligned with that vision.
- **Fiscal Discipline:** Every dollar not tied to warfighter outcomes should be considered for reallocation, consistent with applicable law.
- **No Vestiges of the Past:** This realignment is driven by current mission urgency. Civilian roles that cannot be directly tied to today's operational priorities should be consolidated or eliminated, without deference to legacy structures, historical jurisdictions, or institutional memory.
- **Digital-First Operations:** We should modernize or eliminate manual workflows, paper-based processes, and outdated IT platforms and leverage automation and artificial intelligence to power the mission impact of our civilian workforce.

The following basic examples – which do not constitute an exhaustive list - convey the mindset and level of detail we will apply during the upcoming review process:

- If a GS-12 or GS-13 position is supervisory but oversees only one person, it should be considered for consolidation with another position or returned to a non-supervisory grade.
- If a GS-14 or GS-15 claims management status but supervises fewer than three people, the position should be considered for consolidation, downgrading, or reclassification as non-managerial and rejustified.
- If a position exists to manage or track documents between systems, the process — not the person — is broken and should be rectified.
- If an organization has multiple functional leads (e.g., Chief Information Officers, Chief Human Capital Officers, Chief Financial Officers) they should only have one. Enterprise functions do not need duplicative leadership at multiple levels.
- If two offices produce separate strategies or policies on the same topic, one should be considered for absorption or elimination.
- If an office exists primarily to coordinate between other offices, it should be considered for absorption into one of them. Coordination should not be a standalone mission.
- If a service function exists at multiple levels with no unique contribution (e.g., multiple communication offices, help desks), it should be consolidated at a single level. If it does have a unique contribution, it should be minimized to just those functions.
- If a non-research program office has not deployed a new and meaningful capability in the last five years, its functions should be absorbed or shut down.
- All functions that are not inherently governmental (e.g., retail sales and recreation) should be prioritized for privatization.

This realignment is a strategic imperative for ensuring readiness. The Department's structure must be streamlined to concentrate resources where they matter most — with the warfighter. As George Washington stated, *"To be prepared for war is one of the most effective means of preserving peace."* By cutting unnecessary layers, eliminating redundancy, and aligning every role to mission readiness, we ensure our ability to respond to any threat with speed, precision, and overwhelming force.