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ON

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020

AND

OVERSIGHT OF PREVIOUSLY AUTHORIZED PROGRAMS

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED SIXTEENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE AND EMERGING THREATS AND CAPABILITIES HEARING

ON

EVOLUTION, TRANSFORMATION, AND SUSTAINMENT: A REVIEW OF THE FISCAL YEAR 2020 BUDGET REQUEST FOR U.S. SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES AND COMMAND

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CONTENTS

Page

STATEMENTS PRESENTED BY MEMBERS OF CONGRESS

Langevin, Hon. James R., a Representative from Rhode Island, Chairman, Subcommittee on Intelligence and Emerging Threats and Capabilities 1
Stefanik, Hon. Elise M., a Representative from New York, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Intelligence and Emerging Threats and Capabilities 4

WITNESSES

Clarke, GEN Richard D., USA, Commander, U.S. Special Operations Command 7
Mitchell, Mark E., Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict 6

APPENDIX

PREPARED STATEMENTS:
Clarke, GEN Richard D. 46
Langevin, Hon. James R. 31
Mitchell, Mark E. 34

DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD:
[There were no Documents submitted.]

WITNESS RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS ASKED DURING THE HEARING:
Mr. Bacon 63
Mr. Langevin 63

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MEMBERS POST HEARING:
Mr. Bacon 73
Mr. Langevin 67

EVOLUTION, TRANSFORMATION, AND SUSTAINMENT: A REVIEW OF THE FISCAL YEAR 2020 BUDGET REQUEST FOR U.S. SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES AND COMMAND

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE AND EMERGING THREATS AND CAPABILITIES,
Washington, DC, Tuesday, April 9, 2019.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 2:05 p.m., in room 2212, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. James R. Langevin (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES R. LANGEVIN, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM RHODE ISLAND, CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE AND EMERGING THREATS AND CAPABILITIES

Mr. LANGEVIN. The hearing will come to order.

First of all, I want to welcome our witnesses here today. Welcome to the hearing on the fiscal year 2020 budget request for the United States Special Operations Command and special operations forces.

It is an understatement to say that the world has changed since the establishment of the command in 1987. 9/11 dramatically altered the national security landscape. SOF [special operations forces] personnel have been deployed for almost two decades, and despite policy shifts and planned drawdowns, even today they continue to deploy in support of Operation Inherent Resolve and Operation Enduring Freedom.

Outside of declared theaters of active armed conflict, geographic combatant commanders [GCC] have what some would call an insatiable appetite for SOF to achieve their objectives in their campaign plans, and they have made use of congressional authorities granted to the Department over the last decade including security cooperation, support of ongoing operations, exercises, and other activities to do so.

The Department has recognized that GCC requirements are a major contributor to the high OPTEMPO [operation tempo]. For instance, one stated purpose for the Africa Command force optimization effort announced in November 2015 was to decrease the burden on SOF. However, optimization relies upon events that may not transpire anytime soon, such as assignment of a security force assistance brigade to the continent. And I am concerned that this optimization may be happening without an adequate plan to continue to support our partners and allies in Africa and beyond.

For years, I have highlighted this ever-increasing demand, and SOF have critical skill sets and conduct activities that can be employed across the full spectrum of conflict and against all types of warfare. They are the force of choice. Yet we must be prudent about how the force is employed or we risk breaking the tip of the spear.

General Tony Thomas, the previous commander of SOCOM [U.S. Special Operations Command], took action to manage the demand for SOF. To that end, the deploy-to-dwell ratio has improved for a substantial percentage of the force. Yet more must be done to continue this positive trend and reduce the burden on our SOF personnel. As SOCOM aligns to the National Defense Strategy, continuing to understand and manage that demand, not just increasing the size of the force, will remain a key component of readiness.

Prior to his retirement, General Thomas, along with the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Low-Intensity Conflict, Mr. Owen West, began an effort related to professionalism and ethics training in the force. The effort is to understand and correct what they identified as a disordered value system in the force, and I applaud his efforts in that respect. This committee is committed to maintaining a sound culture our quiet professionals can thrive in, and I look forward to hearing from our witnesses on how they plan to continue to build on the efforts that are underway.

The fiscal year 2020 budget request for USSOCOM totals $13.8 billion. As in years past, there is more than $4 billion of SOCOM funding requested in the overseas contingency operations account, or OCO. Approximately 90 percent of SOCOM funding in OCO is for activities and programs that are enduring.

This concerns me because baseline funding is crucial to providing USSOCOM stability. Furthermore, when base funding is improperly classified as contingency, it prevents Congress from fulfilling its oversight role and considering the totality of enduring defense spending in current and future years.

So I am pleased that the SOCOM request includes SOF-peculiar investments in technologies outlined in the NDS [National Defense Strategy], such as directed energy, cyber, and space capabilities. However, as I recently noted in the subcommittee's hearing on science and technology, I remain concerned that policy is not being developed as fast as the technology. So maturation of policy and technology must occur simultaneously so that we can field the latest and greatest capabilities to our warfighters.

SOCOM's proposed investments in behavioral health and family support under the Preservation of the Force and Families initiative has certainly increased, but tragically, in 2018 suicide rates amongst SOF nearly tripled. This troubles me. Family support and behavioral health should be considered as important, if not more important, as the physical well-being aspects of the initiative. So we must take care of our people and our families.

SOCOM's budget request also includes investments for implementation of some of the recommendations from the Niger investigation like those related to training. This is important progress, and I am glad to see the command is not resting on its laurels with respect to the incident in Niger.

However, I remain disappointed and dismayed that the Department has not yet provided the families of the fallen or the American people with the final decisions on awards and reprimands and is conducting yet another review almost a year and a half later.

SOCOM's budget request also is only 2 percent of the Department's total request. When coupled with funding requested by the military departments and other agencies for support, the total requested funding related to SOF is over $20 billion or about 4 percent of the total DOD [Department of Defense] request in fiscal year 2020.

The military departments' budget request and efforts have a profound impact on SOF. Since release of the NDS, we have carefully scrutinized SOCOM's alignment to the outlined priorities, but we haven't been as diligent in ensuring the services continue to support SOF SOCOM requirements for a sustainable counterterrorism campaign and fully account for SOF equities in budget decisions related to future capability development and posture. This hearing provides us an opportunity to understand where there may be a mismatch in the budget request and how service challenges, like recruiting and retention, impact title 10 responsibilities of SOCOM.

So, with that, testifying today is Mr. Mark Mitchell, the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict [SO/LIC].

Secretary Mitchell is a decorated Army combat vet from the SOF community who was amongst the first U.S. soldiers on the ground in Afghanistan after 9/11. For his actions in battle alongside the Northern Alliance during November 2001 he was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, our Nation's second-highest military award. He commanded a Joint Special Operations Task Force in Iraq from 2010 to 2011.

In 2014, Mr. Mitchell served in the National Security Council as the Director for Counterterrorism on the National Security Council, where he was a critical player in the effort for the Presidential policy review of hostage policy.

Mr. Mitchell, welcome back, and I want to thank you for your service to our country.

Mr. MITCHELL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. LANGEVIN. I certainly look forward to hearing from you about continued implementation and execution of section 922 of the fiscal year 2017 National Defense Authorization Act. This legislation elevated the role and responsibility of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict to a service-like secretary for SOCOM.

So welcome to you.

Also before us is General Richard D. Clarke. General Clarke assumed command of SOCOM less than 2 weeks ago.

General Clarke, I want to welcome you, and I want to thank you for being here.

General Clarke has served the Nation for nearly 35 years. His most recent assignment was on the Joint Staff as Director of Strategy, Plans, and Policy, J5. He served as the commanding general of the 82nd Airborne, spent 6 years in the 75th Ranger Regiment in CENTCOM [U.S. Central Command] and EUCOM [U.S. European Command], and was the Director of Operations at Joint Spe-

cial Operations Command from 2009 to 2011, including during the Osama bin Laden raid.

General Clarke was also the Commandant of Cadets at West Point. He has deployed countless times to Iraq and Afghanistan and deployed in support of Operation Desert Storm. He is a recipient of the Distinguished Service Medal and the Defense Superior Service Medal. He appears before us today as the 12th commander of SOCOM.

General, I want to welcome you here today.

General CLARKE. Thank you, Chairman.

Mr. LANGEVIN. General, I just again want to thank you for your service. And with your background, you are well-poised to ensure that SOCOM is structured appropriately and ready to effectively execute the NDS as well as to fulfill coordinating authority responsibilities.

And before I turn to the ranking member, I also want to take the opportunity to thank Mrs. Clarke, who I know is here with you today. I just had the opportunity and the pleasure of meeting your wife. And I just want to thank her for her commitment to our Nation and for lending you to us and supporting you in your work.

So welcome to you, Mrs. Clarke.

With that, before we go to opening statements, I want to now recognize Ranking Member Stefanik for her remarks.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Langevin can be found in the Appendix on page 31.]

STATEMENT OF HON. ELISE M. STEFANIK, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM NEW YORK, RANKING MEMBER, SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE AND EMERGING THREATS AND CAPABILITIES

Ms. STEFANIK. Thank you, Chairman Langevin. And thank you to our witnesses for being here today.

Let me begin by welcoming back Mr. Mitchell to our committee. And, also, I want to echo Mr. Langevin's remarks in congratulating General Clarke on assuming command of U.S. Special Operations Command.

While Jim highlighted many of your leadership roles within the U.S. military, he skipped over a very important chapter that is near and dear to my heart. I want to thank you for your service at Fort Drum as the deputy commanding general and thank Mrs. Clarke for her years of service as well. I am the proud Representative of the 10th Mountain Division in Congress, so I just wanted to note your leadership for my constituents who are watching here today.

Today's event continues our series of traditional posture hearings as we examine the fiscal year 2020 budget request for U.S. Special Operations Command and prepare for the National Defense Authorization Act.

I am pleased to see continued support for special operations forces in this budget request. This force remains very much at war, directly and indirectly deployed to more than 80 countries at any given time. They continue to bear an outsize burden, absorbing some 40 percent of recent combat casualties, while we also witness significant increases in suicides across the force.

And amidst this continued strain and heavy combat commitment throughout the Middle East and Africa, we are now also asking our special operations forces to position themselves to counter and mitigate nation-state threats such as Russia, China, North Korea, and other emerging national security threats.

While the fiscal year 2020 budget request for Special Operations Command is seemingly a modest 2.8 increase to $13.38 billion, when taken in aggregate, this year marks yet again continued and seminal growth for our special operations forces. In particular, we are seeing nearly 18 consecutive years of end-strength growth, which will now approach 74,000 personnel. And for context, that is almost as large as the Department of State and roughly twice the size of the FBI [Federal Bureau of Investigation].

Make no mistake, this growth was needed after 9/11 and, indeed, can still be justified today due to the continued and morphing national security threats we face. But while our 21st century challenges demand high-end capabilities that only SOF can provide, we must continually work to ensure that this force remains balanced and modernized and that we are adhering to one of the most central of all the SOF truths, that quality is better than quantity. On this point, we can never compromise.

We should also remember that most of the realized growth of our special operations forces was originally envisioned to support heavy and continued demands for counterterrorism and direct action forces and skill sets. How much of those experiences will shape our thinking about future conflicts remains to be seen.

Considering this, I would also like to highlight that now, more than ever, as we consider the growth of this force, we must also ask ourselves if we are truly building the force of the future rather than just the force of today and yesterday. What unique and strategic contributions can only special operations make to our national security to counter and frustrate peer adversaries such as China and Russia? To date, I do not think that we have thoughtfully answered this important question.

I have long said that a large part of this subcommittee's charge is looking far ahead to consider what is next. And in doing so, I see great opportunity for special operations forces to leverage emerging technology in novel and forward-leaning ways. Artificial intelligence, quantum and high-performance computing, nanotechnology, and 5G communications, if leveraged right, will all provide a significant battlefield advantage for special operations forces and the broader joint force. Rest assured, our adversaries are already aggressively exploring the development of these exponential technologies, which present us with both economic and strategic national security challenges for our Nation.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding this important hearing. I look forward to the dialogue in both the open and closed session. And I will yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Thank you, Ranking Member Stefanik.

And before we go to our witnesses, I would just mention that we are expecting votes to be called any minute. I am hoping that we can get through both the opening statements. And we will recess once votes are called and then be back right after that to continue the hearing.

So, with that, we will now hear from our witnesses and then move into the question-and-answer session. And then, after the open session, the committee will reconvene in a closed classified session.

With that, your opening statements in full will be submitted into the record, without objection, and you each now are invited to summarize your statements.

With that, let me begin by recognizing Secretary Mitchell.

STATEMENT OF MARK E. MITCHELL, PRINCIPAL DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR SPECIAL OPERATIONS AND LOW–INTENSITY CONFLICT

Mr. MITCHELL. Chairman Langevin, Ranking Member Stefanik, and other members of this committee, especially my former colleagues Andy Kim, Elissa Slotkin, and Mike Waltz. Congratulations on your election and your service on this committee.

I am grateful for the opportunity to testify on our global posture for the Department of Defense special operations enterprise. My remarks will focus on SO/LIC's statutory authority within the administrative chain of command for SOCOM overseeing the SOF enterprise.

I am honored to testify alongside General Richard Clarke, with whom I have had the privilege of serving in a combat zone and hold in the highest regard. I would also like to recognize his lovely wife, Ms. Suzanne Clarke, and thank her for her long service. I believe she is a lifelong member of the Army family, and that doesn't come without a cost.

The breadth and capability of our SOF force is astonishing. Operating in over 80 countries, this vanguard force tackles our most pressing challenges in the most hostile environments.

In the past 2 years, 25 members of the SOF community have been killed in action and many more have sustained life-altering injuries. While SOF accounts for just 3 percent of the joint force, it has absorbed over 40 percent of the casualties in this time. The families of those men and women carry the burden of the individual tragedy so that we can help prevent a national tragedy.

This is a unique time for service in the SOF enterprise because it is an inflection point. First, section 922 has reinvigorated SO/LIC's partnership with SOCOM. And secondly, the National Defense Strategy has challenged us to increase our focus on long-term strategic competition with Russia and China.

The SOF enterprise is in the midst of a transformation, something special operators have always done very well. In November, General Clarke's predecessor General Thomas and Assistant Secretary West issued the first-ever joint vision for the SOF enterprise, challenging our professionals to innovate relentlessly in pursuit of a decisive competitive advantage.

To improve SOF's readiness for contingencies across the vast spectrum of warfare, we continue to make tremendous progress in reducing the strain caused by high operational tempo and demand. At the height of the wars, a large portion of our force was spending as much time overseas as in the United States. This year, over 90 percent of our force will spend at least twice as much time at home as they will in deployment.

I am proud to report to you that our SOF force is healthy, poised, and eager to defend the Nation against increasingly adaptive foes.

Building out our 2019 trajectory to develop a more resilient, ready, and lethal SOF enterprise, the fiscal year 2020 budget requests the resources necessary to sustain our readiness while supporting recapitalization and modernization of SOF-peculiar capabilities.

As called for in the NDS, we have prioritized investments in technology to enhance lethality and effectiveness of the force, focusing our modernization on precision strike, directed energy, artificial intelligence, close-combat lethality, cyber, and space operations.

Our $13.8 billion baseline budget request embraces innovative capabilities that result in greater lethality, increases in efficiencies and flexibility, and strengthens our ties to allies and partners. The request supports an end-strength increase of approximately 2.2 percent while we continue to mitigate shortfalls in certain enablers.

As we continue to make progress in meeting these challenges, ASD [Assistant Secretary of Defense] West and I share the committee's concerns about the serious ethical failings of some members of our SOF community. While they don't reflect the true nature of the SOF professional, such incidents erode morale and the confidence of our partners and our elected representatives and our moral authority. I can assure you that these incidents have our full attention.

Last year, SOCOM and SO/LIC jointly issued clear guidance to the force, and our office recently provided a report to Congress on a review of our professionalism and ethics. We continue to explore ways to enhance oversight and accountability by senior leaders, and we will continue to be held to the highest standards, including professionalism and ethics.

Finally, I would like to thank this subcommittee for its continued strong support of our mission and personnel. The sustained funding and authorities you provide are central to our success in advancing national security interests at home and abroad and in caring for our service members and our families.

Mr. Chairman, I am grateful for the opportunity to testify today, and I look forward to your questions. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Mitchell can be found in the Appendix on page 34.]

Mr. LANGEVIN. Thank you, Secretary Mitchell.

General Clarke, you are now recognized for your opening statement.

STATEMENT OF GEN RICHARD D. CLARKE, USA, COMMANDER, U.S. SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND

General CLARKE. Chairman Langevin, Ranking Member Stefanik, and distinguished members of the committee, I am grateful for the opportunity to speak to you today and honored to work with ASD and SO/LIC in guiding our special operations force during this time of change and challenge.

I am glad to be here with my teammate Mark Mitchell, who mentioned that we have served together in combat in Iraq in the past.

USSOCOM fields ready and capable forces that conduct special operations globally to support geographic combatant commanders as an integral part of the joint force. We have extraordinarily dedicated and talented men and women who relentlessly fight and sacrifice for our country and our way of life.

This morning, we interred at Arlington National Cemetery CW2 [Chief Warrant Officer] Jonathan Farmer, a special forces officer from South Florida who was killed in action in Manbij, Syria, on January 16 of this year.

Jon was a seasoned soldier, with six combat deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan. He leaves behind a wife and four children. Their devotion and courage are representative of the surviving teammates and families. On their behalf, let me say thank you for your consistent support from Congress in their endeavors.

Command Sergeant Major Pat McCauley is here with me today, our SOCOM senior enlisted leader. And I fully understand that the support is contingent upon the trust and faith that you place in us to execute our missions to the highest professional standard and ethical and moral obligations.

We are also aware that members of our SOF units have failed in recent times to always meet these standards. This misconduct erodes that trust. While the vast majority of USSOCOM teammates serve with honor and distinction, as our ethos demands, perfection is our goal where our values and our laws are concerned. We will push forward with our efforts to reinforce our core values. You have my commitment that I will hold people accountable and preserve the trust that America has in its special operation forces.

USSOCOM's mission is to defend the homeland from the continued threat of violent extremist organizations as we deter, disrupt, or defeat threats from revisionist and rogue states, in line with the priorities laid out in our National Defense Strategy. We are postured to address these challenges by providing unique capabilities alongside our interagency colleagues and international partners.

My chief assigned task is to organize, train, and equip SOF to fight and win against these threats, many of which are advancing a technological and tactical capability. To this end, we are reshaping and refocusing our current forces and capabilities while developing new means and methods for future missions. As Secretary Mitchell mentioned, our joint SO/LIC–SOCOM SOF vision moves us forward in this regard.

Our SOCOM 2020 budget aligns with this vision and reflects the drive for innovative capabilities that increase efficiencies, improve lethality, and strengthen ties to allies and partners. We are prioritizing the right capabilities required for these NDS priorities and sustaining investments in advanced training infrastructure to support program force structure.

None of these initiatives are possible without Congress's watchful eye and support in securing the authorities and resources needed to sustain the world's most capable special operations forces. So let me thank you again for your support of USSOCOM and our time before you today. I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of General Clarke can be found in the Appendix on page 46.]

Mr. LANGEVIN. Thank you, General and Secretary, for your opening statements. I want to extend my condolences, too, to the SOF community for their most recent loss. And thank you for highlighting that today, the ceremony at Arlington.

With that, the votes have been called. We are going to stand in recess. We will stand in recess subject to the call of the Chair, which will be within 10 minutes after votes.

[Recess.]

Mr. LANGEVIN. The committee will come to order.

Again, I want to thank the witnesses for the opening statements. I thank both of you for your service to the country.

And, General Clarke, if I could, I would like to begin with you for questions, and then I will yield to the ranking member.

In 2001, SOCOM comprised approximately 46,000 military personnel and civilians. Since that time, SOCOM has grown to almost 27,000, with additional proposed end-strength increases this year.

Now, some of that growth can be attributed to new SOCOM responsibilities such as becoming the coordinating authority for weapons of mass destruction and other growth intended to increase our readiness of SOF and address growing demand.

However, as I noted in my opening statement, SOCOM cannot solely rely on growth of the force to alleviate the high operational tempo of SOF, especially when recruiting and retention plague the services and demand continues to increase.

Further, 1:2 deployment-to-dwell ratios may be a goal of SOCOM, but much of that time is spent preparing for the next mission. So it is unclear to me why that is considered optimal when there is no time off between deployments unless you are actively preparing for the next one.

So stress and strain on the force is significant, and I wanted to know what steps you are going to take to manage the growing demand on the force and ensure preparedness for assigned missions, to include sustainable terrorism operations and alignment to the NDS.

General CLARKE. Chairman, a couple things that I would highlight.

I am glad you brought up the 1:2 dwell ratio that the Department guidance has moved us to. The feedback that I have gotten is that it has been exceptionally helpful for our force, gives them time. But I would look—that is more of a minimum that we are striving to. Many of the forces are actually at 1:3, which is our goal. And that is for the Active Component.

So that would be the first point. And that ability for us to be predictable and allow the additional training time has greatly increased the readiness, which goes to the point you said in terms of the mission and the preparedness for the mission.

I think it is key to note for this committee that we are looking hard at what missions we actually are going to take part in at the request of the geographic combatant commands, that those missions to which we are committed are in our vital national interest, that, in fact, no other force can do those. So could a conventional force actually do those, or could that mission go to our allies or our partners in a specific region? And so the manner in which we look

at these missions and employ those SOF forces forward on behalf of the geographic combatant commanders will be key.

And I think, to note, our reduction in forces over a 5-year trend is actually down between 15 and 20 percent right now, using a 5-year average of numbers deployed. So we are actually trying to optimize the force across SOF.

Mr. LANGEVIN. What percentage of the force is at 1:3 now? And when do you think you will reach your goal?

General CLARKE. Congressman, of the, as you talked about, the 70-plus thousand, there are some that don't necessarily fall in that pattern at all. I would have to come back to you to say which forces overall are 1:3, but there are a good amount of our forces that are already at that 1:3 today.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Good. Yeah. I mean, it would be helpful to us to quantify 1:3, 1:2, and then the 1:1 ratio, what——

General CLARKE. The 1:2 is a minimum, and then 1:3 is our goal.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Okay. All right. Thank you.

So, on that point, will you conduct a comprehensive review of SOF organization capabilities and structure to determine adequacy, like the one conducted in 2013–2014, as mandated by Congress? And should there be another relook since the NDS has been published since this assessment?

Mr. MITCHELL. Mr. Chairman, we have a report that is currently being prepared—it is in staffing within the Department—that is looking at that, doing a comprehensive review of USSOCOM roles and missions. And we expect to deliver that report on time in May.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Okay. And as a followup to that, what action do you believe the Department can take to better balance the workload across the joint force?

Mr. MITCHELL. In addition to the steps that General Clarke has already outlined, for our part, we are looking across the globe at prioritizing, again, those strategic engagements for the force.

And I would point out that the whole point of the NDS is to compete in peacetime, you know, short of armed conflict. And our SOF forces in that environment are really multidimensional. In other words, you can't look at a CT [counterterrorism]—you know, what is ostensibly a CT deployment to Africa is also a part of that great power competition against the Russians and the Chinese, where we are the force of choice.

So we are trying to look at our employment of the SOF force from a holistic view to ensure that we are maximizing the return on that investment, both, again, to our CT mission and our great power competition.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Thank you. And as a followup for you, Secretary Mitchell, so what role do you actually play in allocation of SOF to the global special operations synchronization effort, since allocating force is not solely a military matter, obviously, but a political-military task, as stated by the NDS Commission?

And, also, how are you approaching managing the high demand for SOF?

Mr. MITCHELL. So our Secretariat for Special Operations, which was created in response to section 922 and which is expanding, they actively participate in the SOCOM global special operations synchronization process. And we get another vote when the SEC-

DEF [Secretary of Defense] Orders Book comes up for staffing with those deployments.

And that is really where we, as the special operations enterprise, and ASD(SO/LIC) has an opportunity to influence those high-demand items, because if they are not at a 1:2 deployment ratio, it requires a Secretary of Defense waiver. And as a management tool, we can request that the Secretary decline that waiver. And that is really our main management tool for that.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Has that happened often, where the waiver is requested?

Mr. MITCHELL. So this is the first year that we have had with the formal 2:1 ratio. And the SECDEF Orders Book is in processing for next fiscal year, for fiscal year 2020—I am sorry, the current process for fiscal year 2021.

And so that is where we are exerting that influence, and we are looking very closely at those forces to make recommendations. So it is a process that is ongoing as we speak.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Thank you, Secretary.

With that, I will hold. I have additional questions, but I will hold there and yield to the ranking member for questions.

Ms. STEFANIK. Thank you.

I wanted to follow up on what I mentioned in my opening statement, the fact that approximately 40 percent of all recent casualties are SOF, and we are also seeing increases in suicide rates and ideations that we have seen in 2018 most recently.

I am pleased that the budget request increases the Preservation of the Force and Families program by more than 30 percent, with continued funding for the Defense Health Program.

That said, I wanted to ask you, General Clarke, how, specifically, do we plan on addressing increased suicides, this pressure on the families? It is tied into Chairman Langevin's question regarding the 1:2, 1:3 ratio.

And how do we also address other problems, such as lapses in ethics and discipline, that are symptoms of a force under tremendous strain of 18 years of high operational tempo deployment?

General CLARKE. To the first point on behavioral health and the suicide rate, I think it is important to note that the suicide trend from 2013 to 2018 was actually statistically down. But one suicide is far too many, and we continue to put the emphasis on each and every one of our service members that are in need.

I am glad you mentioned specifically the Preservation of the Force and Family, because in this year's budget request we asked for additional funds from Congress. The majority of those additional funds are in the behavioral health arena. They are to put at the brigade group level to make sure we have an additional behavioral health assistant at each and every one of those groups to help identify not only for that group but also to help the family members. Because, many times, we find that the person that is best able to sense or see a change in a service member is actually the spouse. So that is why the "force and family" aspect of this is really critical in that program. And so thanks to Congress for continuing to support that initiative and for behavioral health.

On the lapses in discipline, obviously for—ASD(SO/LIC) submitted a report to Congress addressing that issue specifically. But

internal to SOCOM, we conducted a 90-day review. It was initiated by General Thomas in January. That review is in.

I will meet with all—next week, I am hosting a commanders conference with all the component commanders. And that is one of the top topics that we will discuss next week, now that the report is in from ASD(SO/LIC), is, how do we view this problem, and how are we going to in fact get after the root causes of any ethical lapses we have had in the past, and what do we do going forward.

Ms. STEFANIK. And I wanted to ask a followup on the 90-day review that has been completed. This committee is very interested in getting briefed on what was found in that review and recommendations moving forward. So I would ask for your commitment to make sure that the findings of the most recent 90-day review are briefed to this subcommittee.

General CLARKE. You have my commitment to that.

Ms. STEFANIK. Thank you.

My next question is sort of at a 30,000-foot level. I talked about in my opening statement the importance of building a force for the future rather than of today and yesterday.

And we have been very focused on the CT mission, but as we face growing threats from nation-states like China and Russia, can you talk to me, both Mr. Mitchell and General Clarke, how this budget request and our overall strategy does that?

And what specifically—what are the unique and strategic contributions that only special operations can make to our national security when it comes to combating nation-state adversaries?

Mr. MITCHELL. So let me start off with the 30,000-foot view on what those strategic contributions are.

We have grown accustomed in the special operations community to being the supported force for most of the last 18 years because we have been the tip of the spear in the CT fight. However, moving forward, particularly in great power competition, our special operations forces are not necessarily going to be in that fight, because the whole idea of the strategy is to avoid a kinetic fight.

And in that regard, I have urged and the command has responded by looking to CYBERCOM [U.S. Cyber Command], to STRATCOM [U.S. Strategic Command], to TRANSCOM [U.S. Transportation Command], and the global combatant commands, and seeing how we can best integrate our forces and provide support to those in those other domains.

And I think the special operations community is uniquely suited to build networks of partners and allies around the globe to put us in a position, first of all, to compete for that influence and legitimacy in peacetime and, secondly, to be in a position, should armed conflict arise, that we can help support our conventional forces, which will be the decisive force in a conflict with Russia or China, to be successful and also help to defeat the strategies that our adversaries would impose.

Ms. STEFANIK. General Clarke.

General CLARKE. Taking that and—I think there are two specific things that I would highlight to the committee that allow us to compete.

Number one is the authority to train foreign forces, irregular forces, with the 1202 authority that was granted by Congress. We

do that on behalf of the geographic combatant commander. And in a closed session, I can talk some of the details of that that allow us to compete. But I think that is something we should talk to the committee about, how we can compete in a narrow focus, coordinated with our interagency partners, that allow us to be in that competition sphere.

The second thing that I would highlight for the committee is the MISO, which is inherently—our military information support operations—which is inherently a special operations force task with our SIOP [single integrated operational plan] forces.

With this Congress giving the funding for the Joint MISO WebOps Center, which the Department determined would be resident in Tampa, that would cut across the geographic combatant commanders so that we can get our messages out that are aligned with Department of State's Global Engagement Center and allow us to compete in that space ahead of time and make sure that we are countering some of the vitriol that is coming out of Russia at this time and the falsehoods.

And I can talk more about that in closed session.

Ms. STEFANIK. Thank you. I yield back.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Thank you, Elise.

And I want to also reiterate what the ranking member had brought up in terms of continued work with the committee on the professionalism and ethics review. I think that is important. We need to make sure that we get that right. It goes right to the heart of the health, also the force, and make sure they have the right training and support.

With that, Mr. Kim is now recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KIM. Well, thank you so much for coming on out here. I am going to probably reserve most of my questions for the closed session, but I just wanted to go off of what the ranking member just brought up.

I think that is critically important for us on this committee to be able to articulate well, both to our colleagues as well as to our constituents, the mission of what it is that your organizations are doing going forward as we see the near-peer conversation and this great power competition become more and more in our lexicon once again.

So with Mr. Mitchell, I just wanted to go back to what you were saying. You were talking about some of the efforts that you are working on with CYBERCOM. And I guess I just wanted to ask, you know, how is that integrating in? How is SOCOM integrating in with CYBERCOM? And how are those roles and responsibilities being, you know, deconflicted there?

Mr. MITCHELL. So I would just start off by saying that I believe that CYBERCOM has been an important addition to our Nation's arsenal. Long overdue, and happy to see that there and actually out now working on behalf of the Nation.

As I stated earlier, we have a responsibility to help coordinate with that. We do have liaisons there at Cyber Command, SOCOM does, and works very closely with them to ensure that we are integrated.

And I will let General Clarke address some of the——

General CLARKE. Some of the specific details that we work with CYBERCOM, I can talk more in detail in a closed session.

But, Congressman Kim, I think the key for me with General Nakasone going forward is that we have a relationship that is clear in our division. There is no overlap with CYBERCOM and SOCOM, but, in fact, it is a relationship that gets after our national security interest.

Mr. KIM. Thank you. I mean, we will look forward to picking that back up in the closed session.

Just, again, continuing on this thread, some of the different roles and responsibilities that you talked about coming under this NDS, MISO and some of the other efforts that you mentioned, a lot of these are ones that SOCOM had been conducting previously as well.

So I guess I am questioning, does the NDS actually change anything for SOCOM? Do you feel like there are new missions or new entities within what it is you are doing that are coming up because of this now greater focus on near-peer and great power competition?

Mr. MITCHELL. Let me just say, I do think there will be. We are in the early stages of implementing the NDS. I point out that the NDS calls for a focus on great power competition, but it recognizes that the fight against violent extremist organizations is not going away and we have to balance that.

I do think we will see some new concepts for employment of special operations forces moving forward. And we are working with the services to ensure that we are integrated with their development efforts. A lot of them are implementing experiments with employment and making sure that we are tied in with them. Because the fifth SOF truth is that successful special operations requires support from general purpose forces.

Mr. KIM. Appreciate it. Anything else to add?

General CLARKE. The asymmetric advantage that we have over the two great power competitors of Russia and China is our allies and partners.

And Mr. Mitchell mentioned it, but as we look at where we posture our force to be in that great power competition and as we place forces at the right time to compete on the edges with those near-peer competitors, I think that alone sends a signal, but then if you bolster it with the information operations—and a small team, small element of special operations forces can bring a significant impact——

Mr. KIM. Yeah.

General CLARKE [continuing]. Working with foreign forces.

Mr. KIM. The other thing I will just add there, just, you know, from my time seeing how SOCOM and our special forces have been operating, I would add to it, just saying that the coalitions that you have built with our partners around the world, I have seen the special ops side of things have deeper ties with other forces across our partners, more so than pretty much anything else that I have witnessed.

And I think that would be a great place for you to be able to build that out going forward as we try to realize the true potential of SOCOM there with this new strategy.

I will yield back.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Thank you, Mr. Kim.

And Mr. Bacon is now recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BACON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to thank both of you for being here today.

And we ought to just say right up front, our special forces are the best in the world—battle-proven, battle-hardened virtually every day, going back 18 years. And I was fortunate enough to have served with you all in the conventional air forces, supporting you with ISR [intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance], electronic warfare, but then also a year in Iraq, more or less part of your team. And I would just say, the results day in and day out were remarkable, and I know it continues. So my hat is off to you and your team.

My first question is about light attack aircraft, and I defer to which one is best to ask. But, as you know, the Air Force had signaled that it was going to produce a light attack aircraft, whether it be a light attack bomber or a ground attack fighter-type aircraft. And now it subsequently looks like it has changed directions on that.

It is my position that there is still a need for it, though, because F–35s, F–22s are high-end. We need something for that permissive environment that is cheaper to operate or more efficient to operate.

So is there a requirement for SOCOM for a light-attack-type platform, and should this fall in your bucket?

General CLARKE. I will take first attempt at this one.

First, concur, light attack aircraft is a need for SOCOM, and I think it is a need for our Nation. And I see it for two primary reasons. One, it will help our special operators on the ground for identification and protection from and of enemy forces.

Second reason, as we look at the foreign internal defense [FID] of other nations, many nations are now developing their own air forces. In many cases, they are light attack. And so to train with those nations, as developing countries, with SOCOM FID forces is something that is really inside our jar job, inside SOCOM.

We will work with the Air Force. I will work with General Goldfein to look at the timing and the mix and where we go forward with that. So you have my commitment to do that with the Chief of Staff of the Air Force and his team. I don't know specifically some of the programmatics at this point in time to be able to address that, but I identify it as a need.

Mr. BACON. Secretary Mitchell.

Mr. MITCHELL. Yes, I would like to add that, you know, from our perspective, the NDS calls on us to have a more cost-effective counterterrorism effort. The most cost-effective CT effort is the one done by our partners and allies, if we can help them be successful. And many of them simply don't have the resources to put into, you know, fifth-generation fighters.

And from a strategic perspective, we think the flight hours for those fifth-generation fighters are best spent preparing——

Mr. BACON. Right.

Mr. MITCHELL [continuing]. And deterring our near-peer competitors.

So we see a real important need for a light attack moving forward and are hopeful to come up with a suitable solution with the Air Force.

Mr. BACON. Right. Second question is on DCGS, the Distributed Common Ground System, for intelligence and exploitation. As you may recall, the Army had done investments but did a lot of internal R&D [research and development] and then found they were not in compliance, lost a couple of court cases. I think there have been some efforts by SOCOM to do something similar with your own DCGS capabilities.

And so, are we confident we are doing the right thing, that we are not looking at commercial-off-the-shelf capabilities first and then going internal? And I just want to make sure that you feel like you are in compliance and doing that right.

Mr. MITCHELL. I am going to have to take that back for the record.

Mr. BACON. Okay.

Mr. MITCHELL. My understanding of where we are at, though, is that the systems that are going into the DCGS SOF are commercially available software and systems. But we owe you a more in-depth answer on that.

Mr. BACON. Okay.

[The information referred to can be found in the Appendix on page 63.]

Mr. BACON. One last question, as I have about, like, 1 minute left here. You know, there are some various allegations on civilian casualties in AFRICOM [U.S. Africa Command]. Can you just tell us about the processes that you go through to be as safe and as smart about this as possible? Because I know how hard you try, but I think it is important for the committee to hear and, you know, our citizens.

Mr. MITCHELL. So, first, let me say that from ASD(SO/LIC), we have responsibility for civilian casualties as part of our portfolio. Even though the Deputy Under Secretary, Dave Trachtenberg, has been named as the senior civilian official, we provide him support.

We go through extensive measures, typically many, many hours of ISR, watching targets, trying to ensure with the highest level of certainty that there are no noncombatants in there.

In the case of the AFRICOM casualty estimate—or civilian casualties, unfortunately, the command, in reviewing their film, identified that but failed to report it up, and that is why so much time went through.

But we take it very seriously. We are in the process of developing a department-wide directive on mitigating civilian casualties, reporting, tracking, and responding. So it is something that Secretary Mattis and Secretary Shanahan take very seriously.

Mr. BACON. Thank you so much.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back. Appreciate the time.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Thank you, Mr. Bacon.

Mr. Crow is now recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CROW. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you, Mr. Mitchell and General Clarke, for your long and distinguished service to the country.

I know, General Clarke, last time we saw each other was at Bagram in 2005 when we were both members of the 75th Ranger Regiment. Rangers lead the way.

And thank you, Mrs. Clarke, for your long history of service to the country as well.

And as a former captain, when I walk into a room, I immediately try to identify the command sergeant major. So, Sergeant Major McCauley, thank you. I understand you are retiring next month, so congratulations on that retirement. And thank you for your long history of service to our country as well.

We are at our 18th year of war now. There are twice as many SOF forces deployed as there were before 9/11. We are operating in over 80 countries, as you indicated earlier, Mr. Mitchell. The suicide rates have been well documented. It is a theme that you are picking up from the committee here. I and many of my colleagues are gravely concerned with the stress that we are putting on our force.

You know, undoubtedly, as Mr. Bacon indicated, our special operations forces are the best in the world. And when people are very good at what they do, they are often asked to do a lot.

And we have continued to add to that mission over the last 18 years. And I know SOCOM now does the counter-WMD [weapons of mass destruction] mission, the synchronization of plans and operations for a global terrorist network operations, lead for DOD's security force assistance, all in addition to traditional CT and foreign internal defense and direct action missions.

Simply put, I am gravely concerned that we are over-tasking SOF. And as we pivot to great power competition, I just see no scenario under which SOF isn't asked to pick up more of the burden for our legacy operations.

So, all of that said, which of those new mission sets least align with the historical mission set in the mission of SOCOM? And if you had a magic wand today, which ones would you take off of your plate so that we could reduce stress and burden on our troops and remain good at what we are asked to do?

General CLARKE. In terms of the mission——

Mr. CROW. Correct.

General CLARKE [continuing]. I believe at this time the counterterrorism mission for our national mission force is the most important mission that we do, number one priority, and that is because that is to protect the homeland.

I think that within that mission, much like some of the aspects we have done with the Africa optimization, it is not necessarily take away a mission, but I see reduction internal to some of these missions, rather than take a mission off the plate.

You specifically mentioned the countering weapons of mass destruction mission. For SOCOM, that is largely a staff and look-at process, where the resources for that actually came completely from our Strategic Command. And so it hasn't increased a burden on the force. But I am glad you asked it.

And so I think it is a rightsizing of the missions internal to make sure we have the right force allocation against it. You have my pledge to look at do we have the right forces at the right place and

are they overstressed, and if they are, I will call that signal bell immediately.

Mr. CROW. Okay. I appreciate that. And I know you are the quintessential professional, so you won't ever ask for things to be taken off your plate, but it is our responsibility to ensure you are not being over-tasked. And what I am hearing is the CT mission should remain the primary focus.

Mr. Mitchell.

Mr. MITCHELL. I would echo General Clarke's comments, particularly about the CWMD/counter-VEO [violent extremist organization] coordination mission being a mostly headquarters function and not requiring deployment of forces.

To return, also, back to the discussion earlier about the 2:1 dwell time ratio as the floor that we are seeking, I think having a department-wide policy with respect to that is an important tool in our management toolbox to say no to those missions that aren't priority missions for the Nation and to protect the force moving forward. And I think that is going to be our main tool.

We, as the civilian leadership, have to set the priorities for the missions and help shape and protect the force. But that tool of the dwell time is extremely——

Mr. CROW. And other than that dwell time tool, are there other tools that you are missing that allow you to make that prioritization?

Mr. MITCHELL. No, I don't think—in terms of tools missing. We have a role in the development of policy. Obviously, SO/LIC is dual-hatted both as a service secretary and a policy, and I think in our policy role we can advocate for the appropriate prioritization of the missions.

Internal to the Department, the Secretary has asked us to take a look at how we view, globally, our CT efforts and how we are managing those. And we expect to change the way that the Department is looking at those. Again, that is our main tool for shaping employment.

Mr. CROW. Thank you.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Thank you, Mr. Crow.

Before I go to Mr. Gallagher, you know, we hear a lot about what is a priority SOF mission, but what, in your minds, is not a priority mission for SOF?

General CLARKE. Chairman, the way I look at it, it would be: What are those security-force-assistance-type missions that could in fact pivot to another force?

And an example would be our security force advisory brigades. SOF should be in places where it is a light footprint, it is politically sensitive, with a small team that is training other special operations forces primarily.

But I think there are opportunities going forward with the element that I just mentioned that the Army has developed where, in fact, a security force advisory brigade that has company commanders and battalion commanders that have been trained conventionally can train conventional forces from other forces if we can have a footprint.

So I think that would be an example of something that SOF doesn't have to do any longer going forward. And, obviously, I will

work very closely with the Army and with the Department to make sure that we have the right force applied.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Secretary, comment on that?

Mr. MITCHELL. I would echo that comment. I think that is really the major area. Of course, our CT forces, there is nobody else in the Department that can provide that mission and that effective a force.

And the security force assistance, whether it is in Joint Staff exercises or other types of engagements, we need to be very selective in which ones of those that we take on and make sure that we maximize our support from our general purpose forces.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Thank you. And lastly, I wanted to ask, when will the Army brigades be available outside of Afghanistan?

Mr. MITCHELL. Well, I think we will have to take that one for the record. I don't have enough visibility on the Army's force generation process to answer that.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Okay.

[The information referred to can be found in the Appendix on page 63.]

Mr. LANGEVIN. I wanted to get those in, so thank you. I am sorry.

The Chair now recognizes Mr. Gallagher for 5 minutes.

Mr. GALLAGHER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I would like to follow up on Mr. Crow's line of questioning as well as the ranking member's line of questioning.

I think we sort of have bipartisan agreement around the conceptual shift embedded within the NDS. Sort of, we are moving towards the near-peer fight, great power competition. Therefore, counterterrorism cannot be ignored, but it is not the top priority.

You have both stated that counterterrorism is your bread and butter. But as you look at that shift, right, I mean, as we try and implement the National Defense Strategy, not only sort of throwing around heady terms like "great power competition" but specifically to move from a paradigm of deterrence by punishment to deterrence by denial, particularly in the Indo-Pacific region, just in as specific terms as you can, what role do you think SOCOM will play in that effort?

And if the answer is you will cover the CT mission while other forces do deterrence by denial in the Pacific, that is okay as well. Just help us flesh that out.

Mr. MITCHELL. I would offer a couple thoughts.

As we talked about earlier, our special operations forces excel at building partner capacity with similar forces. And as we look to shift to that denial, I think we will find our SOF forces being involved in that.

Remember, the Chinese and the Russian threats are global threats, and that is one of the reasons why—part of the reason why we are in 80 countries, because we are addressing those threats and trying to gain influence and legitimacy with those partners.

Again, I think we will play a significant role in that. We have a built-in advantage as a preferred partner for providing security assistance, and I think we need to leverage that, again, to build our influence.

The one example I would give right now: In the Philippines, this committee, the chairman of the HASC [House Armed Services Committee] recently agreed to allow us to move forward with an important CT effort, but that is also a critical component of building influence with that country and maintaining—keeping Chinese at arm's length.

Mr. GALLAGHER. And, General Clarke, if you could comment.

And, also, building upon that, I mean, besides the relationship with the Philippines, as you look at the INDOPACOM [U.S. Indo-Pacific Command] region in particular, what partnerships jump out to you as ones that SOCOM in particular but DOD in general should prioritize with the long-term China threat in mind?

General CLARKE. Right. Immediate to mind comes in Korea and Japan. We have a special operations Korea theater Special Operations Command that not just assists with a conflict on the peninsula but they can also look broader. We have special operation forces in Okinawa in Japan that can help with that great power competition and have a sense for around the country. But those are two where we have a large U.S. presence.

I think the other countries that fall into that: Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam, Malaysia. And in the future, I think India is a great partner, specifically, for us. We don't have a great SOF presence there now, but my predecessor, General Thomas, traveled to India earlier this year specifically to engage the Indians for the future.

It is a great question. Thank you.

Mr. GALLAGHER. So that might be an area where we could grow, going forward.

So just a final one. The other big conceptual shift that I am struggling to understand in the NDS is this idea of sort of a contact, a blunt layer, a surge layer, and a homeland layer. How should we think about where SOF sort of fits in that taxonomy?

Mr. MITCHELL. I think we fit in the contact layer, day in, day out, across the globe, making contact with partners and allies and being in a position to reduce the influence of the Russians and the Chinese.

I would just point out that they are willing to fill a vacuum. Anytime we leave somewhere or move out, they are more than willing to get in. And so I think it is a primary role that we play in that contact layer.

General CLARKE. If I could, the only other thing I would say—I agree with Secretary Mitchell's comments. But against Russia and China, we don't have to compete "mano a mano" [hand to hand]. There are places where China and Russia exist—Djibouti, in South America—that our actions there could also work in that layer that I think we should consider going forward.

Mr. GALLAGHER. Yeah. I mean, to the extent you are talking about subconventional gray-zone-type competition, I would completely agree.

Thank you both, gentlemen. My time has expired.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Thank you, Mr. Gallagher.

Mr. Brown is now recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROWN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, gentlemen, for your presence today and for your service to our Nation.

Maybe about 6 or 7 weeks ago, I wrote a letter to Secretary Shanahan, joined by a number of members in this committee, where we expressed our deep concern on the use of military service members and Department of Defense resources for operations on the southwest border and construction of a border wall.

As you know, the President invoked section 2808 of title 10, which allows unobligated MILCON [military construction] funds to be used as a source of funds for the border wall.

So my question is, how does this impact SOCOM? How many projects are unobligated? How does this compound the unfunded requirements by further delaying unfunded projects?

Mr. MITCHELL. It is my understanding that there are—no decisions have been made with respect to taking any SOCOM MILCON funding. There are a number of projects—I believe the number is six—that are on the list of potential projects, but there has been no decision made on those specific projects. So it has not, to date, had any impact on SOCOM.

Mr. BROWN. And assuming that one or more of those six would see funds taken away, what would be the impact?

Mr. MITCHELL. I would have to reevaluate at the time on the specific project and how long it would be delayed.

General CLARKE. And I would voice and echo Mr. Mitchell's point. I would weigh in from the impacts if it were decided that one of our MILCON projects was there.

But I would also highlight, Congressman Brown, to your first question, there are no SOCOM forces on the border. There has been no impact to SOCOM thus far because of the border employment.

Mr. BROWN. Another question. How would deferred counter-drug programs under section 284(c) of title 10, how would that impact SOCOM and counter-transnational-organized-crime efforts?

Mr. MITCHELL. So SO/LIC also has responsibility for counternarcotics and transnational organized crime. All of our DOD counternarcotics efforts are, at this time, fully funded. And none of the funds that have gone from 284 have been actually taken from our counternarcotics budget.

We distributed all of our funds to our National Guard. Our DOD Demand Reduction [Program] is fully funded. And we are continuing to support our law enforcement partners around the globe using our 284 authorities.

Mr. BROWN. Okay. Because in a response that I received just recently to my inquiry—and the response was from Kenneth Rapuano—he did indicate that activities supporting counter-drug and counter-transnational-organized-crime activities under section 284(c) of title 10 would be deferred to the end of the current fiscal year or fiscal year 2020.

So what you are saying is that—but SOCOM effort in that program wouldn't be impacted.

Mr. MITCHELL. So no impact to SOCOM. And ASD Rapuano is our ASD for Homeland Defense and Global Security. At the time that that letter was written, there was discussion within the Department and with the White House about potentially holding those funds pending a decision. Those funds have all been released by OMB [Office of Management and Budget] and the Comptroller.

And so the letter was accurate at the time, but the situation has changed since then.

And, again, has no impact on SOF forces.

Mr. BROWN. Thank you.

I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Thank you, Mr. Brown.

Mr. Waltz is now recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WALTZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And I just want to echo my colleagues' gratitude—really, I know you are in your dream job, so really to your families, who are putting up and once again suffering with your service. But thank you.

And thank you, ma'am, as well.

I just want to go back to Africa for a moment, where I understand you are going through optimization, which is really a reduction of a footprint. What are we not doing there? Where are we taking risk?

I have served in Niger, Nigeria, all along West Africa. I mean, the geography is just intense, vast. Libya, I understand the operations that are going on there in terms of the evacuation; East Africa, the Kony mission. I mean, it has been—it was already, I think, chronically underresourced.

So what are we not doing? Then what are we doing with optimization of those forces if we are not increasing dwell time? Where are they shifting to? Just walk us through what we are no longer going to do or do as much in that theater.

General CLARKE. I will take first stab at it.

On the Africa optimization, I am glad you raised it, because it was looked at through the lens of threat to our homeland and the specific CT mission that we were conducting. And any force that was decided they were no longer needed were the only forces that came out.

And I can talk specific numbers in the closed hearing as to what came out, but it really did go to what is important in our vital national interest and then could another, in this case an ally, do it. Because it is clearly in, in particular, our European allies' best interests because of migration into their area of operations and specific to their populations.

So that is really the lens at which the Africa optimization did—and some of these programs were enduring programs that truthfully just needed a relook.

Mr. WALTZ. Okay.

General CLARKE. So that is the way I would address——

Mr. WALTZ. I will look, you know, for more detail perhaps in the closed session. I hope we can get there.

It just occurs to me that that is—if we are looking at a shift to great power competition, that there is a confluence there between resource competition, China's involvement, Russia's re-involvement, and the CT space, where half the world's population is going to be by 2050. I think it was already an underresourced area.

But just in the interest of my few minutes, I want to go back to light attack. Do you need that capability now?

General CLARKE. I would say we have some capability now, but we need to continue to grow it.

Mr. WALTZ. You know, the Air Force went through this, started a program in 2009. You know, that did not come to fruition. Now we are looking at a continued experimentation. And I have been pretty vocal on the record that, while we of course as a Nation need things that fly far, fast, and high, we need things that fly low, armored, and can loiter and can land in places like West Africa.

So I will continue to press, frankly, the Air Force on that capability. We need it now. And while we shift to great power—I think that is a comfort zone for lots of places in the building—that we can't forget those operators like Chief Farmer—I was at the funeral this morning as well—that are out there in 70, 80 countries as we speak.

CIV/CAS [civilian casualties]. Is—does—let me ask you this way. Do the geographic combatant commanders feel like they have full responsibility with the shift? I guess what I am trying to get at is, with the shift of the Theater Special Operations Command in, what, 2013, 2014, the reporting to SOCOM, I just sense, is there a disconnect?

I know, obviously, you are responsible for the training. You hand them off to the geographic combatant commander. There is an operational line there. But, you know, I am thinking back to the ongoing Niger investigation; now in East Africa. It seems to be a trend there. I think in Afghanistan, in those combat theaters, they seem to have more pieces in place for oversight.

Do you sense a disconnect there, number one?

And then, number two, I am very mindful of an overreaction, where we tend to pull flexibility away from the ground force commanders. What are your thoughts?

And I would welcome from both of you.

General CLARKE. I don't see any disconnect. You specifically mentioned the theater Special Operations Command. They are COCOM to me, they are assigned to me, but they are actually under the operational and tactical control of the geographic combatant commanders.

So that strike approval process and the CIV/CAS that is monitored and watched to prevent is all done based upon the intent of the geographic combatant commander. So, Congressman, I don't see any disconnect at all.

Mr. MITCHELL. From a policy perspective, the combatant commanders are solely responsible for the conduct of operations within their AORs [areas of responsibility]. And we hold them accountable for implementing the Department's measures with respect to civilian, noncombatant casualties.

Mr. WALTZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My time has expired.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Thank you, Mr. Waltz.

Ms. Slotkin is now recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. SLOTKIN. Thanks.

It is great to see you guys. I know everyone has lauded you and said how happy they are to see you, but I know that, for a lot of us, we sleep easier knowing that you two are in the jobs that you are in. So thank you for that.

A lot of my questions have been asked, so I am going to take it in a slightly different direction.

I was asking a number of the service chiefs last week about the value of allies and partners and, in particular, the SOF world. And I know, from my time, we watched a number of countries go from being sort of middling to being better and being able to conduct and perform operations with us.

Can you help us understand what would happen if those allies and partners, let's say, with us in West Africa, in the Middle East, decided not to support those missions? What would your budget request look like? How would it be different?

General CLARKE. Congresswoman, the number one thing that I look at from what you are raising is our—what our allies and partners give us is the access and placement and the posture to be able to project our power going forward. And, specifically, we do that from a CT and a VEO aspect, focused on the high-end threat, but it also allows us, as both of us have said, to actually compete with Russia and China.

In terms of what that could mean for budget, I think it looks to the posture aspect of what would we then have to do differently where we couldn't get into a specific country. And there are a lot of variations on this depending on where and when that happened. You may need additional ships; you may need additional long legs for some of your aircraft. So having the posture that can be allowed by our allies or partners is critical.

Ms. SLOTKIN. Uh-huh.

Mr. MITCHELL. I would just offer that we also have responsibility for U.N. [United Nations] peacekeeping. And a recent study looked at the cost of deploying a battalion from another troop-contributing country in lieu of a similarly sized U.S. organization. The cost to deploy that U.S. force would be eight times as much as the support that we offer through the U.N.

So we very much value the contribution of our partners and allies. As I said earlier, that is the most cost-effective way, is having competent and willing partners and allies.

Ms. SLOTKIN. Uh-huh.

Let me shift gears. The designation on Monday of the IRGC [Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps] as a terrorist organization, a foreign terrorist organization, and then the retaliatory declaration that CENTCOM is a foreign terrorist organization.

What contingency plans have you all put in place? How do you think this is going to affect you? What work have you done to prepare yourselves for what may be—I don't know—a different world based on how Iran plans to act?

Mr. MITCHELL. We don't want to address any specific force protection measures in this forum.

But what I would say is that the IRGC has been a threat to U.S. forces for decades, since the 1983 bombing, through Khobar, and then into Iraq, where they are responsible for the deaths of hundreds of American service men and women. And so we have been aware of the threat for a long time and have factored that into our protections.

And, again, we would be happy to talk a little bit more in detail in the closed session on that.

Ms. SLOTKIN. But so you supported the designation?

Mr. MITCHELL. The Department offered its views during the interagency process. The decision has been made by the State Department to designate them and we are supportive of that.

Ms. SLOTKIN. Okay.

I yield back my time.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Thank you, Ms. Slotkin.

And now, last but not least, Mr. Conaway is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CONAWAY. Thanks, Chairman. Appreciate that.

Just real quickly, on a whole lot more mundane subject but nevertheless important, and that is auditing the Department of Defense books involves everybody. And could you help me and the rest of us understand where your role is and how important it is to you that we get that done? And are you going to make it?

Mr. MITCHELL. So, from a macro perspective, SOCOM underwent its first audit. They were unable to give any kind of real grade.

One of the challenges that we face is that the SOCOM accounting systems are dependent upon the service accounting systems. And so, to the degree that we are depending on them, it is very difficult for us to get to that complete auditability.

Don't get me wrong; we are very much interested in making sure that we get to that point. But the limiting factor on us right now, the most significant one, is the service accountability procedures.

Mr. CONAWAY. General Clarke.

General CLARKE. Yes, sir. One, SOCOM welcomes the audit. It helps us see ourselves, and I think it is actually a good thing when you can look at yourselves and get an outside look to help us get better.

There were 69 internal controls identified in the audit that we will look at strongly and come up with a path to try to reduce those down. Because, at the end of the day, this is a good thing. It will help us get better and actually save some money in the long run.

Mr. CONAWAY. So have you actually assigned somebody either in uniform or a civilian specific responsibility for shepherding each of those to completion?

General CLARKE. I can't tell you today in——

Mr. CONAWAY. But the idea is, if everybody is responsible, then nobody is responsible.

General CLARKE. But, Congressman, we will have someone responsible. Ultimately——

Mr. CONAWAY. I understand.

General CLARKE [continuing]. Myself, reporting to the Secretary, is responsible for getting it done. And I assure you we will get that done.

Mr. CONAWAY. Okay. Well, again, it is important on lots of levels. I appreciate both your attitudes to that.

And I will add my congratulations to both of you.

And, Sergeant Major, thank you for your long years of service.

There are an awful lot of hash stripes on all three of you-all's sleeves. I can't see the Air Force sleeves. But that is an awful lot of time away from Mom and Dad and the kids and a lot of birthdays missed and a lot of anniversaries missed and a lot of once-in-a-lifetime opportunities back home that were missed.

And so you are doing the fun part. I try to thank the families more than anybody else, because they bear the largest brunt of keeping you in the fight. And so, on behalf—please thank your families for what all they have put up with over all these years of your long service.

So thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Thank you, Mr. Conaway. And I, too, echo those comments.

I want to thank you, Secretary Mitchell and General Clarke, for your testimony here today, for your service to our Nation.

Mrs. Clarke, it was an honor to meet you as well. I am glad you could attend today's hearing.

And before I close out the hearing, I, too, want to congratulate Command Sergeant Major Patrick McCauley on your retirement.

And the command sergeant major began his career as a Marine in 1986. Joined the SOF community and went to assessment and selection and a special forces qualification course.

And now you retire as the SOCOM senior enlisted leader. A great deal to be proud of, and many great years of service to our country, for which we are all grateful. And I wish you well in the next chapter in your life.

With that, I thank you all again for your service. And I hope you express our appreciation, the committee's appreciation, to all of those under your command and all of the SOCOM family, both the families themselves and the men and women who wear the uniform. We are all grateful and indebted to you for your service. Thank you for what you do.

This hearing will now—the public hearing will now adjourn, and we will reconvene in closed session.

[Whereupon, at 4:19 p.m., the subcommittee proceeded in closed session.]

A P P E N D I X

April 9, 2019

PREPARED STATEMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

APRIL 9, 2019

Opening Statement
Chairman James R. Langevin
Intelligence and Emerging Threats and Capabilities Subcommittee

Evolution, Transformation, and Sustainment: A Review of the Fiscal Year 2020 Budget Request for U.S. Special Operations Forces and Command

April 9, 2019

Welcome to today's hearing on the Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 Budget Request for United States Special Operations Command (SOCOM) and Special Operations Forces (SOF).

It is an understatement to say that the world has changed since the establishment of the Command in 1987. 9/11 dramatically altered the national security landscape. SOF personnel have been deployed for almost two decades. Despite policy shifts and planned drawdowns, even today they continue to deploy in support of Operation Inherent Resolve and Operation Enduring Freedom.

Outside of declared theaters of active armed conflict, Geographic Combatant Commanders have what some would call an "insatiable appetite" for SOF to achieve the objectives in their campaign plans, and they have made use of Congressional authorities granted to the Department over the last decade including security cooperation, support of ongoing operations, exercises, and other activities to do so.

The Department has recognized that GCC requirements are a major contributor to high op-tempo. For instance, one stated purpose of the Africa Command force optimization effort, announced in November 2015, was to decrease the burden on SOF. However, "optimization" relies upon events that may not transpire anytime soon, such as assignment of a Security Forces Assistant Brigade to the continent, and I am concerned that this optimization may be happening without an adequate plan to continue to support our partners and allies in Africa and beyond.

For years, I have highlighted this ever-increasing demand. SOF have critical skillsets and conduct activities that can be employed across the full spectrum of conflict and against all types of warfare. They are the "force of choice." Yet, we must be prudent about how the force is employed, or we risk breaking the tip of the spear.

General Tony Thomas, the previous commander of SOCOM, took action to manage the demand for SOF. To that end, the deploy-to-dwell ratio has improved for a substantial percentage of the force, yet more must be done to continue this positive trend and reduce the burden on our SOF personnel. As SOCOM aligns to the National Defense Strategy (NDS), continuing to understand and manage that demand, *not just increasing the size of the force*, will remain a key component of readiness.

Prior to his retirement, General Thomas, along with the Assistant

Secretary of Defense for Low Intensity Conflict, Mr. Owen West, began an effort related to professionalism and ethics in the force. The effort is to understand and correct what they identified as a "disordered value system" in the force. This subcommittee is committed to maintaining a sound culture our quiet professionals can thrive in. I look forward to hearing from our witnesses how they will continue to build on the efforts underway.

The FY20 Budget Request for USSOCOM totals $13.8 billion. As in years past, there is more than $4 billion of SOCOM funding requested in the overseas contingency operations (OCO) account. Approximately 90% of SOCOM funding in OCO is for activities and programs that are enduring. This concerns me because baseline funding is crucial to providing USSOCOM stability. Furthermore, when base funding is improperly classified as "contingency," it prevents Congress from fulfilling its oversight role and considering the totality of enduring defense spending in the current and future years.

I am pleased that the SOCOM request includes SOF-peculiar investments in technologies outlined in the NDS such as directed energy, cyber, and space capabilities. However, as I recently noted in the subcommittee's hearing on Science and Technology, I remain concerned that policy is not being developed as fast as the technology. Maturation of policy and technology must occur simultaneously so we can field the latest and greatest capabilities to our warfighters.

SOCOM's proposed investments in behavioral health and family support under the Preservation of the Force and Families initiative has increased. Tragically, in 2018, suicide rates amongst SOF nearly tripled. Family support and behavioral health should be considered as important, if not more important, as the physical well-being aspects of the initiative. We must take care of our people and families.

SOCOM's budget request also includes investments for implementation of some of the recommendations from the Niger investigation, like those relating to training. This is important progress, and I am glad to see the command is not resting on its laurels with respect to the incident in Niger. However, I remain disappointed and dismayed that the Department has not yet provided the families of the fallen, or the American people, with final decisions on awards and reprimands and is conducting yet another review almost a year and a half later.

SOCOM's budget request is only about 2% of the Department's total request. When coupled with funding requested by the Military Departments and other agencies for support, the total requested funding relating to SOF is over $20 billion, or about 4% of the total DoD request in FY20.

The Military Departments' budget requests and efforts have a profound impact on SOF. Since release of the NDS, we have carefully scrutinized SOCOM's alignment to the outlined priorities, but we haven't been as diligent in ensuring the Services continue to support SOCOM requirements for a

sustainable counterterrorism campaign and fully account for SOF equities in budget decisions relating to future capability development and posture. This hearing provides us an opportunity to understand where there may be a mismatch in budget requests, and how Service challenges—like recruiting and retention—impact the Title 10 responsibilities of SOCOM.

Testifying today is Mr. Mark Mitchell, the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict. Secretary Mitchell is a decorated Army combat vet from the SOF community who was amongst the first U.S. soldiers on the ground in Afghanistan after 9/11. For his actions in battle alongside the Northern Alliance during November 2001 he was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, our nation's second highest military award. He commanded a Joint Special Operations Task Force in Iraq from 2010–2011.

In 2014, Mr. Mitchell served in the National Security Council as the Director for Counterterrorism on the National Security Council where he was a critical player in the effort for the Presidential Policy Review of Hostage Policy.

Mr. Mitchell, welcome back and thank you for your service. I look forward to hearing from you about continued implementation and execution of Section 922 of the Fiscal Year 2017 National Defense Authorization Act. This legislation elevated the role and responsibility of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict to a service-like secretary for SOCOM.

Also before us today is General Richard D. Clarke. General Clarke assumed command of SOCOM less than two weeks ago. General Clarke, welcome and thank you for being here.

General Clarke has served the nation for nearly 35 years. His most recent assignment was on the Joint Staff as the Director for Strategy, Plans and Policy, J5. He served as the Commanding General of the 82nd Airborne, spent six years in the 75th Ranger Regiment in CENTCOM and EUCOM, and was the Director of Operations at Joint Special Operations Command from 2009–2011, including during the Osama bin Laden raid.

General Clarke was also the Commandant of Cadets at West Point. He has deployed countless times to Iraq and Afghanistan and deployed in support of Operation Desert Storm. He is a recipient of the Distinguished Service Medal and Defense Superior Service Medal. He appears before us today as the 12th Commander of SOCOM.

General, thank you for your service. With your background, you are well poised to ensure that SOCOM is structured appropriately and ready to effectively execute the NDS, as well as fulfill Coordinating Authority responsibilities. I also want to thank Mrs. Clarke for being here today and thank her for her commitment to the nation.

Thank you.

Statement for the Record

Mr. Mark E. Mitchell
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense
Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict

Before the
Subcommittee on Intelligence and Emerging Threats and Capabilities
Committee on Armed Services
United States House of Representatives
April 9, 2019

Chairman Langevin, Ranking Member Stefanik, and other distinguished members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify on our global posture for the Department of Defense's Special Operations Enterprise. As the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict (SO/LIC), my remarks will focus on SO/LIC's statutory authority within the administrative chain of command for U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) overseeing the Special Operations Forces (SOF) Enterprise. I'm honored to testify alongside General Richard Clarke, with whom I have had the privilege of serving in a combat zone and hold in the highest regard.

Having served in this capacity for the past two years, I am humbled by the daily service and sacrifice of the over 70,000 Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, and civil servants who comprise the SOF Enterprise. Its breadth and capability is astonishing. Operating in over 80 countries, this vanguard force is prepared to tackle our Nation's most pressing national security challenges, from Salafi Jihadism to great power competition. These guardians often serve in hostile environments. In the past two years, 25 SOF personnel have been killed in action, while many more have sustained life-altering injuries. Special operations personnel, representing just three percent of the Joint Force, have absorbed over 40% percent of the total U.S. casualties. This sacrifice serves as a powerful reminder that special operators are in the risk business. They and their families carry the burden of individual tragedy so that we might prevent a national tragedy.

This is a unique time to serve the SOF Enterprise because it is an inflection point. First, Section 922 of the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2017 has reinvigorated SO/LIC's

role in overseeing and advocating for the SOF Enterprise. Second, the National Defense Strategy (NDS) has challenged all of DoD to deter rogue regimes and defeat terrorist networks while placing new focus on long-term strategic competition with Russia and China. The SOF Enterprise is in the midst of transformation -- something special operators have always done very well.

Alignment of SOF Capabilities to NDS Objectives

The NDS calls on us to ensure our special operations capabilities will compete *and win* in today's complex national security environment. The NDS emphasizes the importance of counterterrorism in protecting our homeland from threats to our core national interests, while prioritizing investments that restore a decisive competitive advantage with our principal strategic competitors. In November, General Clarke's predecessor General Thomas and Assistant Secretary West issued the first-ever joint vision for the SOF Enterprise, which challenged our SOF professionals to innovate relentlessly in pursuit of decisive competitive advantage. While our enemies have scattered from the conventional battlefield, SOF is a fast-adapting, full-spectrum force, uniquely capable of imposing costs on our adversaries wherever their threat resides and whatever form it takes.

As the Department implements the NDS's vision for strategic competition, the SOF Enterprise is adapting to meet the demands of our modern security environment. In this environment, both state and non-state actors threaten our national security interests with increasingly sophisticated and asymmetric capabilities below the level that would provoke a U.S.

conventional response. SOF's unique capabilities, understanding of the threat environment, and interagency and international partnerships are critically important in addressing these challenges.

In coordination with USSOCOM, the Joint Staff, the Services, and Combatant Commands, SO/LIC is working to institutionalize our approach to irregular warfare across the Department to meet the demands of an evolving and increasingly complex security environment. Although irregular warfare remains a core SOF competency, successful irregular warfare in competition short of armed conflict and against high-threat violent extremist organizations will continue to require support across the entire Joint Force and close cooperation with our interagency partners. Acting Secretary of Defense Shanahan recently approved the Irregular Warfare Annex to the NDS, which outlines our approach to institutionalization in greater detail. We look forward to briefing you and your staff on this annex.

Even as we and our international partners eliminate ISIS's physical caliphate, the threat from international terrorists to our interests at home and abroad persists. SOF are essential to direct action against high-value targets, supporting key allies and partners, and deterring state and non-state actors from acquiring, proliferating, or using weapons of mass destruction. In this regard, Southwest Asia and the Middle East will continue to be the focus of these efforts, but, because these transnational threat networks operate globally, USSOCOM's worldwide reach will be essential to confronting them.

Enabling free peoples to fight for mutually shared interests is the original core competency of SOF. Reassuring allies and building and sustaining partnerships remain critical to accomplishing our national security objectives. Along with general purpose forces' increasing role in security cooperation, SOF provide the Joint Force with deep cultural, linguistic, stabilization, and operational expertise to build the capacity of our partners and allies and develop lasting relationships. SOF also provide critical stabilization expertise and capability, assisting the interagency in addressing instability across much of Africa and the Middle East. From Eastern Europe to South Korea and from Colombia to North Africa, SOF presence and partnerships support U.S. national security interests in key regions.

As the NDS notes, the surest way to prevent a war is to be prepared to win one. In this strategic context, SOF personnel, capabilities, agility, and technological advantages help enable decisive combat power as an integral part of the Joint Force. We have long recognized that the vast majority of special operations depend upon a broad array of Service-provided capabilities. At the same time, SOF's role as part of the Joint Force in a traditional wartime construct is critically important in disrupting our adversaries' operations, creating complex dilemmas and imposing asymmetric costs. Special Operations should not be viewed as distinct but an integral part of the force with a unique role derived from its basic value proposition -- quickly and cost-effectively solving risky problems that do not lend to mass or scale. Within this strategic partnership with the Services, SOF capabilities serve as a fulcrum that help maximize the effectiveness of the Joint Force.

The SOF Enterprise is an exceptional national investment. Representing approximately two percent of the overall Defense budget, USSOCOM provides extraordinary leverage to national security. In a transformative era, our basic obligation is to tie USSOCOM's fiscal strategy with its future operating concept, driving budget discipline and delivering downstream performance. The Section 922 reforms have bolstered this effort. To optimize the efficiency and performance of every dollar spent, we foster a culture of performance, accountability, and innovation, and the Section 922 reforms have strengthened our oversight to better inform budgetary and programmatic decision-making. As a starting point, capability and program guidance for the SOF Enterprise is now jointly issued by the Commander, USSOCOM and the ASD (SO/LIC). The ASD (SO/LIC) is now responsible for approving USSOCOM's Program Objective Memorandum five-year budget plan and is also now authorized to approve and submit program and budget review issue papers on behalf of the SOF Enterprise.

With fiscal strategy aligned with future concepts, SOF's value as an integral part of the Joint Force is reinforced. Over the years, SOF has also developed a culture of innovation, driving a battlefield technical revolution in developing a surveillance-strike capability that no competitor can quickly replicate. Protecting the nation against a terrorist attack remains our enduring task. Additionally, we must meet the challenge as a vanguard force in great power competition.

FY 2020 SOF Budget Request

Building upon our FY 2019 trajectory to develop a more resilient, ready, and lethal SOF Enterprise, the FY 2020 SOCOM budget requests the resources necessary to sustain SOF

readiness while supporting the recapitalization and modernization of SOF-peculiar capabilities. The FY 2020 request aligns USSOCOM missions with NDS priorities, continuing support for SOF's core competency of counterterrorism, as well as providing an additional $3.6 billion for SOF investments focused on strategic competition by significantly increasing funding for research and development, sustaining modernization, and expanding capabilities for the high-end fight. We have prioritized investments in technologies to enhance the lethality and effectiveness of the force, focusing our modernization on precision strike, directed energy, artificial intelligence, close-combat lethality, cyber and space operations. For example, the request includes funding for Precision Strike Package kits for the AC-130J, upgrades and sustainment for rotary wing aircraft (A/MH-6, MH-47, and MH-60), AC/MC-130J, procurement and sustainment of individual warrior systems, and procurement and modification of a variety of underwater systems including dry and wet combat submersibles, Dry Deck Shelter, Shallow Water Combat Submersible (SWCS), and combat diving systems.

The request seeks an end-strength increase of approximately 2.2% as we continue to mitigate combat support and combat service support shortfalls. Our $13.8 billion FY 2020 request embraces innovative capabilities that result in greater lethality, increases efficiencies and flexibility, and strengthens our ties to allies and partners. With these sustained investments, USSOCOM will remain postured to provide necessary support the Geographic Combatant Commands, meet NDS mission requirements, and sustain readiness.

Through efforts such as Preservation of the Force and Family (POTFF), as well as Service-specific programs and activities, we are enhancing the resilience of SOF personnel and their families. As a community, we are only as good as our people, and that includes the well-being of our families. Programs and resources like these help families overcome significant physical, mental, and emotional difficulties that accompany deployments. POTFF resources help shorten recovery time toward healthy and productive lives, in and out of service. As such, in support of our members and families, the FY 2020 request includes an additional $34 million for POTFF to expand support for behavioral health, families, and human performance across the SOF formation.

Readiness and Resilience of the Force

The SOF Enterprise has enhanced its readiness by balancing deployments and dwell-time for strained units, modernizing equipment and capabilities, aligning our efforts with NDS priorities, and investing in the well-being of SOF members and their families. As we focus on our core tasks and responsibilities in implementing the NDS, today's SOF is ready to conduct major contingency operations with the Joint Force, conduct and respond to irregular warfare, and provide national leadership with options for responses to high-priority crises.

To improve its readiness for contingencies across the vast spectrum of warfare, we have made tremendous progress in reducing the strain caused by the high operational tempo of certain SOF units. Not long ago, it was common for many SOF units and personnel to operate on a 1:1 deployment-to-dwell ratio. For example, a typical Green Beret could have expected to spend six

months deployed followed by only six months in the U.S. before redeploying. This high tempo strained our personnel and their families and eroded our long-term readiness. Given that the demand for SOF from the Geographic Combatant Commands will likely remain high, we must ensure that these forces are provided on a sustainable basis. I am proud to report that SOF is a healthy force, and the men and women who comprise this force are prepared to deploy to combat at a moment's notice in defense of our Nation.

We continue to make progress toward our 1:2 deployment-to-dwell ratio target for the Enterprise, and, today, 90 percent of our deployed forces are at or above this target, allowing more time to train for the full spectrum of special operations missions and increasing the time our people spend at home with their families. However, we still have more progress to make. Approximately 10 percent of our force remains below a 1:2 deployment-to-dwell ratio. Many of these personnel are high-demand/low-density specialists performing crucial functions. Thanks to the support of Congress and the Department, we have plans in place for small and targeted end-strength growth that will reduce the strain on these essential skillsets.

My primary concern regarding SOF readiness is our ability to continue to attract top talent and retain our high-quality personnel. While the challenges SOF face in this area generally mirror those of the Services overall, our challenges will likely be magnified given the necessary experience levels of our people and our generally lengthy training pipelines. We are addressing current and projected shortfalls by offering special pay and incentives for high-demand career fields, improving recruitment and marketing practices, and optimizing our training pipelines.

Culture and Accountability

ASD West and I are concerned about serious ethical failings by some members of our SOF community. Such incidents erode morale of our force, confidence of our allies and partners, and the moral authority of American values. Moral failings are not individual but can impact our large-scale mission. While these specific incidents are being addressed by appropriate disciplinary mechanisms, we are working to identify any potential systemic problems and to enhance policies that hold leaders and individuals accountable. Because SOF operate at the forefront of highly complex military operations in remote and high-threat environments, we must maintain the highest standards of personal conduct, and the joint guidance General Thomas and ASD West issued emphasizes the standards of trustworthiness and accountability we expect from our SOF community. SOF is a mature and elite force and it will be held to the highest standards – and those standards include professionalism, ethics, and accountability. Last month, my office issued a report to Congress on SOF professionalism and ethics, as required by the FY 2019 NDAA. While the review found that the current management and oversight framework exceeds Departmental standards, we continue to explore ways to improve the oversight and accountability by senior leaders of SOF-related ethics and professionalism issues.

These incidents have our full attention. We also recognize that they do not reflect the true nature of the SOF professional. When I visit with our SOF service members at home and in the field, their selfless energy and devotion to mission are clearly evident, and they are exemplars of American values when deployed overseas.

Conclusion

Mr. Chairman, let me conclude by, again, thanking the committee for supporting SOF with the legislation and appropriations essential to combating terrorists, building critical partnerships, and enabling the Joint Force. Through its strong partnership with Congress, USSOCOM continues to field the most professional, most highly trained, best equipped, and most effective special operations warriors in the world.

Mark E. Mitchell
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for
Special Operations/Low-Intensity Conflict

Mark E. Mitchell is a highly decorated U.S. Army combat veteran in the Special Operations community with extensive experience in the Middle East and South Asia. He brings 28 years of national level defense and counterterrorism policy experience to the Policy team.

Mitchell was among the first U.S. soldiers on the ground in Afghanistan after 9/11 and advised the Northern Alliance prior to the fall of the Taliban regime. He was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for his actions in the November 2001 Battle of Qala-I Jangi in Mazar-e Sharif.

In 2014, Mitchell served as a Director for Counterterrorism on the National Security Council where he was intimately involved in significant hostage cases and recovery efforts in Syria, Yemen, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Somalia. He was instrumental in establishing the framework for the landmark Presidential Policy Review of Hostage Policy, which resulted in significant changes in organization and policy. He previously served in the Office of the Secretary of Defense as the Senior Military Assistant to the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict. As a colonel, he commanded 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne) and simultaneously commanded a nationwide, Joint Special Operations Task Force in Iraq in 2010-2011. Mitchell has planned and conducted counterterrorism and counterinsurgency operations, foreign internal defense, unconventional warfare, and other sensitive special operations. In addition to commanding multiple Special Forces organizations, he has served in principal staff positions up to and including the Theater Special Operations Command. He most recently worked as a business executive in the private sector and served on the board of a non-profit organization.

Mitchell earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Biomedical Engineering from Marquette University and a Master of Science degree in Defense Analysis from the Naval Postgraduate School. He also served as a National Security Fellow at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government.

STATEMENT OF

GENERAL RICHARD D. CLARKE, U.S. ARMY
COMMANDER
UNITED STATES SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND

BEFORE THE

HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
INTELLIGENCE, EMERGING THREATS AND CAPABILITIES SUBCOMMITTEE
APRIL 9, 2019

Introduction

Chairman Langevin, Ranking Member Stefanik, and distinguished members of the Committee, thank you for this opportunity to inform you on the posture of United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) and your Special Operations Forces (SOF). USSOCOM continues to field ready and capable SOF to the Geographic Combatant Commands to conduct globally integrated operations as an integral part of the Joint Force against state and non-state threats to America and its interests, and to advance U.S. policy objectives. We greatly appreciate the continued support of the Congress in this endeavor.

USSOCOM is focused on addressing the defense and security threats and challenges from emerging great power competitors as well as terrorists and violent extremist organizations (VEOs) identified in the National Defense Strategy (NDS) along the directed lines of effort: building a more lethal force, strengthening alliances and attracting new partners, and reforming our institution for greater performance and affordability. Consequently, we are re-shaping our current forces and capabilities even as we develop new technological and tactical approaches for our diverse missions. USSOCOM is an organization of empowered SOF professionals, who are globally networked, partnered and integrated, and relentlessly seek advantage in every domain and against any adversary for the Joint Force and the Nation. To achieve this vision, we are embarking on a path I will outline today.

SOF Vision – "Empowered SOF Professionals…"

Our vision emphasizes the enduring truth that "humans are more important than hardware" by recognizing that our people – more than platforms – are the source of our decisive advantage. To that end, we continue to recruit, assess, select, and retain the Nation's finest human potential. We empower them with training, technology and authorities to solve some of the most complex

and dangerous mission challenges. That empowerment comes with a degree of trust, the foundation upon which we operate on a daily basis.

In the recent past, members of our SOF units have been accused of violating that trust and failing to meet our high standards of ethical conduct this command demands. The overwhelming majority of our teammates continue to serve with honor and distinction as our ethos demands, and anything less than 100% is unacceptable. We understand that criminal misconduct erodes the very trust that enables our success. We continue our efforts to inculcate and reinforce our core values. Toward this end, USSOCOM provided input to a report the Assistant Secretary of Defense, Special Operations/Low Intensity Conflict (ASD/SOLIC) submitted to Congress on a comprehensive review of our ethics and professionalism programs, as directed by the Fiscal Year 2019 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). We also just completed a USSOCOM-wide directed 90-day review of our core values and their role in the SOF culture. The results are currently being analyzed for review and consideration for any follow-on actions. You have my commitment that we will hold members of our SOF enterprise accountable to our ethical, moral, and discipline standards, and preserving the trust America has in its SOF.

Empowered SOF professionals are the foundation of USSOCOM. Since we have high expectations for them, we will continue to invest in them and equip them with a comprehensive set of tools to make SOF ready and resilient in all aspects. We steward our SOF professionals through their careers and their transition out of service, placing a special emphasis on resiliency by providing exceptional care to them and their families. In order to continue meeting today's operational demands and enable longer, more productive careers in SOF, we endeavor to holistically address impacts on our people. Our Preservation of the Force and Family (POTFF) programs are agile and innovative, taking advantage of advancements in medicine, psychology,

and data science. We have directed mandatory participation for all SOF members in our embedded, multidisciplinary program. We appreciate your support through the authorities and funding provided to date. USSOCOM's FY20 POTFF request increases our investment significantly over the FY19 program to properly support the entirety of our force through improvements in behavioral health, human performance, and family support programs. I look forward to continuing to work with Congress in improving this initiative for our special operations personnel and their families.

USSOCOM is also appreciative of Congress' sustained support for our Warrior Care Program. Wounds, injury, and illness threaten the ability of our SOF personnel and their families to continue to serve. Our Warrior Care Program – the largest in the Department of Defense with over 15,000 participants – contributes to the resiliency of our force by providing advocacy and care coordination through the recovery and rehabilitation process, returning 75% of our SOF professionals to the fight, and restoring their families' footing as rapidly as possible.

We continue to make strides in managing the deployment-to-dwell (D2D) and personnel tempo (PERSTEMPO) of our personnel. Our force is executing the FY19 Global Force Management Allocation Plan (GFMAP) as ordered, and is prioritizing and resourcing emergent requirements based on the updated department guidance to adhere to a *minimum* of a 1:2 ratio. This guidance is driving ongoing efforts in our current force generation models to ensure SOF provides ready forces at a consistent and sustainable rate to meet the NDS and National Military Strategy (NMS) objectives. The continuation of a planned increase of personnel in FY 2019-2020 will help close current D2D and PERSTEMPO gaps among our enabler forces. These additional support personnel, and adherence to a 1:2 rate for Active and 1:5 for Reserve Forces,

will ensure SOF can sustain our support to future Geographic Combatant Commander (GCC) requirements with the capabilities they require.

SOF Vision – "Globally networked, partnered and integrated…"

SOF is an integral part of the Joint Force and the interagency effort that successfully compete on a global scale. USSOCOM provides critical coordination and assessment functions for the Department's operations and activities against VEOs and weapons of mass destruction (WMD) threats. Our worldwide access and placement, our networks and partnerships, and our flexible global posture enable the Department to understand adversary actions and intent and to respond across the spectrum of competition, especially below the threshold of armed conflict where our competitors – particularly Russia and China – continue to hone their skills and advance their strategic objectives.

As the Coordinating Authority (CA) for the C-VEO mission, USSOCOM collaborates with geographic and functional combatant commands on the Global Campaign Plan for VEO (GCP-V). USSOCOM provides an annual assessment on VEO trends – which we have just completed – and the Joint Force's progress towards accomplishing its campaign objectives. Along with this assessment, we make recommendations on campaign adjustments to the Secretary of Defense. To facilitate GCP-V execution, USSOCOM integrates Joint Force, Interagency, and partner nations' activities into a unified effort, the Transregional Synchronization Forum (TRSF). Current campaign efforts are focused on disrupting the financial, messaging, and foreign terrorist fighter networks that enable and sustain VEOs. Severing these conduits will degrade and disrupt VEO attacks against the US homeland, our interests, and against our allies and partners.

Similarly, as the CA for countering weapons of mass destruction (CWMD), we continue to develop and refine our capabilities to execute CWMD campaigns. We completed and signed the DoD Functional Campaign Plan to Counter Weapons of Mass Destruction last November. This campaign nests under, cross-cuts, and complements the NDS, the National Military Strategy (NMS), and global and other functional campaigns across the Department. USSOCOM guides and coordinates the planning and assessments of CWMD campaign execution, and then makes recommendations to the Chairman and Secretary of Defense on actions to disrupt and deter adversary WMD programs.

USSOCOM has the mission to field a transregional Military Information Support Operations (MISO) capability to address the opportunities and risks of the global information space – an increasingly critical domain that challenges the Department's command and control boundaries. The Joint MISO WebOps Center (JMWC) is operating today, and will act in close coordination with the State Department's Global Engagement Center and other members of the interagency to deliver GCC messages under their authorities to a broader portion of the Joint Force and beyond C-VEO themes. The JMWC supports the combatant commands with improved messaging and assessment capabilities, shared situational awareness of adversary influence activities, and coordinated internet-based MISO globally. We remain on track to achieve Full Operating Capability by the end of FY 2025.

We continue to work with and rely extensively upon the capabilities provided by DoD. These include the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA), and the Defense Information Systems Agency (DISA). The Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA), in particular, has done exceptional work on CWMD and counter-proliferation (CP) problems. DTRA plays an integral role in creating shared awareness of the threat that supports

our campaign planning. We are also working closely with them on the pressing and expanding asymmetric threat of small unmanned aerial systems (UAS) by VEOs and state actors is a significant concern to the Joint Force. USSOCOM fully endorses DTRA's initiatives to understand and counter this threat and is working with them on several fronts toward this end.

Beyond our national collaborative efforts, USSOCOM also extends its network abroad to engage willing international partners, fulfilling the NDS direction to strengthen alliances, and attract new partners. USSOCOM hosts highly qualified and talented Special Operations officers and Non-Commissioned Officers from 24 nations with established SOF capability, many of whom are contributing combat forces to today's C-VEO efforts. We also maintain US Special Operations Liaison Officers (SOLOs) in 21 countries. These liaison relationships provide agility to a global network that creates a common understanding of threats, develop response options, and – in some cases – to develop technology, tactics and equipment for mutual benefit to our forces.

For developing countries, security cooperation activities are key tools for strengthening relationships and attracting new partners while enabling them to tackle threats and challenges of common concern. USSOCOM appreciates Congressional consolidation of security cooperation authorities in 10 U.S.C. §333. USSOCOM on behalf of GCCs have leveraged this authority to build partner capacity by providing the necessary skills and equipment to conduct security operations in their own self-defense.

SOF continues to use the authority to support foreign forces and groups for irregular warfare operations as provided in Section 1202 of NDAA for FY2018 to work by, with, and through partners, and in support of the GCCs. This authority fills a gap in our arsenal at a critical juncture for USSOF as we sustain our capacity for conducting CT and CWMD missions, while

increasing the efficiency and affordability of these capabilities enabling us to invest in readiness and modernization efforts for high-end conflicts. Through these authorities, we will partner with select regular and irregular forces possessing unique access and capabilities to frustrate, deter, and disrupt peer competitor actions harmful to our mutual interests. Recognizing the strategic implications of great power competition, we will move forward deliberately, coordinated with interagency partners, while providing full transparency to Congress. We are seeking a four year extension of this authority to allow the necessary time to deliberately pursue these initiatives and adequately assess their value and impact.

The provision of support to the same types of forces and groups to support or facilitate SOF operations to combat terrorism (10 U.S.C. §127e) remains a critical enabler for our forces executing combating terrorism operations. It allows small-footprint USSOF elements to take advantage of the skills and unique attributes of indigenous regular and irregular forces – local area knowledge, ethnicity, and language skills – to achieve effects that are critical to our mission objectives while mitigating risk to U.S. forces. This is especially true in remote or politically-sensitive areas where larger U.S. formations are infeasible and/or the enemy leverages safe-havens that are otherwise inaccessible to USSOF. The use of 127e authority has directly resulted in the capture or killing of thousands of terrorists, disrupted terrorist networks and activities, and denied terrorists operating space across a wide range of operating environments, at a fraction of the cost of other programs. This authority continues to be a key tool as we seek cost-effective and sustainable CVEO operations called for in the NDS.

SOF Vision – "Relentlessly seeking advantage in every domain to compete and win…"

In addition to geographic domains, we must fight and win enabled by the latest technological advancements. The increasingly data-driven, networked, miniaturized, and

automated world where goods, information, and people move across the globe at a furious pace significantly impacts virtually every aspect of SOF operations. We need to understand this impact and embrace and harness the opportunities offered by technology. Data science, artificial intelligence, automated systems, and cryptography are no longer restricted or isolated products available to select powers. They are commodities accessible to all. Social media and publicly available information presents us with a world of far fewer shadows for concealment and yet opportunities for understanding heretofore unseen indicators of adversarial intent or action. For this reason, to achieve our mission we cannot relent in our pursuit of capabilities that will sustain and increase our advantage along the entire spectrum of conflict.

In 2018, USSOCOM established the position of Chief Data Officer (CDO) to lead the integration of artificial intelligence and machine learning (AI/ML) across the enterprise and create a culture of data-driven decision making. Our CDO is guiding data governance efforts and leading engagement with the Defense Digital Service, the Joint Artificial Intelligence Center, Project Maven, and related activities. Under the direction of the CDO, USSOCOM is also consolidating a data engineering lab and operationalizing a Development Operations (DevOps) environment that enables world-class talent to collaborate and deliver technical solutions for the SOF enterprise.

Embracing these technologies will allow our workforce to consume and process data in ways that exceed basic human cognitive capabilities and reserve our valuable manpower for the tasks that are the exceptional domain of the human. To maximize the effectiveness of available technology, we must also address data architecture and data management as priorities. We will transition to cloud-based data services and treat our data as a critical, strategic asset. We will

ensure that data is defended from our adversaries while remaining usable and accessible to those who need it.

To ensure that these changes are rooted in SOF unique requirements and relevant to our special operations missions and tasks, USSOCOM will expand the use of wargames and exercises, and establish a joint SOF Experimentation Force (EXFOR) within our force structure. The EXFOR will test concepts developed in our SOF Future Operating Concept alongside technology and equipment developed from our innovation efforts. The EXFOR will consist of existing units and personnel from our SOF service components and operational commands and will serve as the pacing element for the development and fielding of innovative joint concepts, equipment, and tactics.

USSOCOM funding efforts have specifically enabled the force to pursue technologies critical to resourcing the NDS priorities. Those technologies will enable the survivability of SOF operators while executing missions in denied environments by addressing evolving threat weapon systems, to include protective systems such as next-generation radio frequency countermeasures that are critical to aircraft survivability. The Special Operations Precision Guided Munition, Common Launch Tube munitions, and SOF modification of Service-provided munitions are also funded at full-rate production to meet SOF operational requirements. Funding in the FY20 budget is based on established NDS priorities to maintain a comparative advantage when operating in near-peer environments.

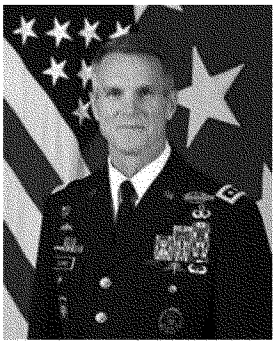
USSOCOM values its acquisition authority and welcomes recent legislative acquisition reforms such as Other Transactional Authorities (OTAs) under Section 2371b and Mid-Tier Acquisition (MTA) authority under Section 804 of the 2016 NDAA. These initiatives enable our SOF acquisitions personnel to move at a pace more commensurate with the commercial and non-

traditional industry partners we need. We look forward to working with the Office of the Secretary of Defense and Congress on ways to further enhance agile and timely acquisition schedules that can attract these innovative companies to SOF.

Conclusion

In a few short months, USSOCOM will host the 2019 DOD Warrior Games in Tampa, Florida from June 21st through June 30th. Approximately 300 wounded, ill and injured service members and veterans will participate in 11 sporting events. The Warrior Games were established in 2010 to enhance the recovery and rehabilitation of our personnel with health challenges. The athletes will represent the United States Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, and Special Operations Command. Additionally, allied athletes from the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, Denmark and the Netherlands will compete. A large contingent of these athletes' families will also attend. I invite all of you to attend these games, and join us in cheering alongside them and honoring their courage and perseverance.

In closing, I thank the Congress for the steadfast support for USSOCOM. We are already competing with adversaries and adapting to complex challenges facing our country and will continue to do so now and into future.



General RICHARD CLARKE, United States Army
Commander United States Special Operations Command
7701 Tampa Point Boulevard
MacDill Air Force Base, Florida 33621-5323
Since: 29 March 2019

SOURCE OF COMMISSIONED SERVICE USMA

EDUCATIONAL DEGREES
United States Military Academy – BS – No Major
Benedictine College – MBA – Business Administration
National Defense University – MS – National Security and Strategic Studies

MILITARY SCHOOLS ATTENDED
Infantry Officer Basic and Advanced Courses
United States Army Command and General Staff College
National War College

FOREIGN LANGUAGE(S) None recorded

PROMOTIONS	DATE OF APPOINTMENT
2LT	23 May 84
1LT	23 Nov 85
CPT	1 Sep 88
MAJ	1 Oct 95
LTC	1 Feb 01
COL	1 Feb 06
BG	2 Aug 12
MG	2 Sep 14
LTG	1 Aug 17
GEN	29 Mar 19

FROM	TO	ASSIGNMENT
Mar 19	Present	Commander, United States Special Operations Command, MacDill Air Force Base, Florida
Aug 17	Mar 19	Director, Strategic Plans and Policy, J5, Joint Staff and Senior Member, United States Delegation to the United Nations Military Staff Committee, Washington, DC
Sep 16	Aug 17	Vice Director for Strategic Plans and Policy, J5, Joint Staff, Washington, DC
Oct 14	Aug 16	Commanding General, 82d Airborne Division, Fort Bragg, North Carolina and OPERATION INHERENT RESOLVE, Iraq

Sep 14	Oct 14	Special Assistant to the Commanding General, United States Army Forces Command, Fort Bragg, North Carolina
Jan 13	Aug 14	Commandant of Cadets, United States Military Academy, West Point, New York
Sep 11	Jan 13	Deputy Commanding General, 10th Mountain Division (Light), Fort Drum, New York
Aug 09	Aug 11	Director of Operations, Joint Special Operations Command, Fort Bragg, North Carolina and OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM, Iraq, OPERATION NEW DAWN, Iraq and OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM, Afghanistan
Aug 07	Aug 09	Commander, 75th Ranger Regiment, Fort Benning, Georgia and OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM, Iraq and OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM, Afghanistan
Jun 06	Aug 07	Student, National War College, Fort McNair, Washington, DC
May 04	Jun 06	Commander, 1st Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment, Hunter Army Airfield, Georgia and OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM, Iraq
Mar 02	May 04	Commander, 3d Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade, 82d Airborne Division, Fort Bragg, North Carolina and OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM, Afghanistan and OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM, Iraq
May 99	Mar 02	Executive Officer, 173d Airborne Brigade, United States Army Southern European Task Force, Italy
Jun 97	May 99	Operations Officer, later Executive Officer, 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment, 1st Armored Division, United States Army Europe and Seventh Army, Germany and OPERATION JOINT GUARDIAN, Macedonia
Aug 96	Jun 97	Student, United States Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas
Feb 94	Aug 96	Commander, B Company, later Liaison Officer, 3d Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment, Fort Benning, Georgia
Mar 93	Feb 94	Commander, Ranger Reconnaissance Detachment, 75th Ranger Regiment, Fort Benning, Georgia
Jun 92	Mar 93	Assistant Operations Officer, 75th Ranger Regiment, Fort Benning, Georgia
Jul 90	Jun 92	Commander, Long Range Surveillance Detachment, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), Fort Campbell, Kentucky and OPERATION DESERT STORM, Saudi Arabia
Dec 88	Jul 90	Commander, B Company, 2d Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), Fort Campbell, Kentucky
Aug 87	Nov 88	Adjutant, 1st Battalion, 48th Infantry Regiment, 3d Armored Division, United States Army Europe and Seventh Army, Germany
Jul 86	Aug 87	Aide-de-Camp to the Assistant Division Commander (Maneuver), 3d Armored Division, United States Army Europe and Seventh Army, Germany
May 85	Jun 86	Platoon Leader, C Company, 1st Battalion, 48th Infantry Regiment, 3d Armored Division, United States Army Europe and Seventh Army, Germany

SUMMARY OF JOINT ASSIGNMENTS	DATE	GRADE
Commander, United States Special Operations Command, MacDill Air Force Base, Florida	Mar 19 - Present	General
Director, Strategic Plans and Policy, J5, Joint Staff and Senior Member, United States Delegation to the United Nations Military Staff Committee, Washington, DC	Aug 17 - Mar 19	Lieutenant General
Vice Director for Strategic Plans and Policy, J5, Joint Staff, Washington, DC	Sep 16 - Aug 17	Major General
Commander, Combined Joint Forces Land Component Command-Operation Inherent Resolve, OPERATION INHERENT RESOLVE, Iraq	Jun 15 - Mar 16	Major General
Director of Operations, Joint Special Operations Command, Fort Bragg, North Carolina and OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM, Iraq, OPERATION NEW DAWN, Iraq and ENDURING FREEDOM, Afghanistan	Aug 09 - Sep 11	Colonel
Commander, 75th Ranger Regiment, OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM, Iraq	Feb 08 - Apr 08	Colonel
Commander, 75th Ranger Regiment, OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM, Iraq	Sep 07 - Jan 08	Colonel
Commander, 1st Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment, OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM, Iraq	Sep 05 - Jan 06	Lieutenant Colonel
Commander, 1st Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment, OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM, Iraq	Dec 04 - Apr 05	Lieutenant Colonel
Commander, 3d Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade, 82d Airborne Division, OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM, Afghanistan	Jan 03 - Jun 03	Lieutenant Colonel

SUMMARY OF OPERATIONAL ASSIGNMENTS	DATE	GRADE
Commander, Combined Joint Forces Land Component Command-Operation Inherent Resolve, OPERATION INHERENT RESOLVE, Iraq	Jun 15 - Mar 16	Major General
Director of Operations, Joint Special Operations Command, Joint Task Force Neptune, OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM, Afghanistan	Mar 11 - May 11	Colonel
Director of Operations, Joint Special Operations Command, Joint Task Force, OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM and OPERATION NEW DAWN, Iraq	Aug 10 - Nov 10	Colonel
Commander, 75th Ranger Regiment, OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM, Afghanistan	May 09 - Jul 09	Colonel
Commander, 75th Ranger Regiment, OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM, Iraq	Feb 08 - Apr 08	Colonel
Commander, 75th Ranger Regiment, OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM, Iraq	Sep 07 - Jan 08	Colonel
Commander, 1st Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment,	Sep 05 - Jan 06	Lieutenant

OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM, Iraq		Colonel
Commander, 1st Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment, OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM, Iraq	Dec 04 - Apr 05	Lieutenant Colonel
Commander, 3d Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade, 82d Airborne Division, OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM, Iraq	Jan 04 - Apr 04	Lieutenant Colonel
Commander, 3d Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade, 82d Airborne Division, OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM, Afghanistan	Jan 03 - Jun 03	Lieutenant Colonel
Executive Officer, 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment, 1st Armored Division, OPERATION JOINT GUARDIAN, Macedonia	Oct 97 - May 98	Major
Commander, Long Range Surveillance Detachment, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), OPERATION DESERT STORM, Saudi Arabia	Aug 90 - Apr 91	Captain

US DECORATIONS AND BADGES

Distinguished Service Medal (with 1 Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster)
Defense Superior Service Medal (with 2 Bronze Oak Leaf Clusters)
Legion of Merit (with 1 Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster)
Bronze Star Medal (with 4 Bronze Oak Leaf Clusters)
Meritorious Service Medal (with 3 Bronze Oak Leaf Clusters)
Air Medal
Army Commendation Medal (with 2 Bronze Oak Leaf Clusters)
Army Achievement Medal (with Silver Oak Leaf Cluster and 1 Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster)
Combat Infantryman Badge (with Star)
Expert Infantryman Badge
Master Parachutist Badge
Military Free Fall Parachutist Badge
Air Assault Badge
Ranger Tab
Joint Chiefs of Staff Identification Badge

WITNESS RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS ASKED DURING THE HEARING

April 9, 2019

RESPONSE TO QUESTION SUBMITTED BY MR. LANGEVIN

Mr. MITCHELL. A Security Force Assistance Brigade (SFAB) is already working outside Afghanistan now. Currently, the 2nd SFAB from Fort Bragg, North Carolina, is deployed to the U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM) area of responsibility executing train, advise, and assist missions in support of Operation INHERENT RESOLVE (OIR) (Iraq) and Operation FREEDOM'S SENTINEL (OFS) (Afghanistan). The deployment of the SFAB to the USCENTCOM area of responsibility has allowed for the reduction of one Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT) in support of OFS. USCENTCOM is the only combatant command sourced with the SFAB capability. As designed, the SFAB can be trained and equipped for any theater of operations. USCENTCOM is currently the priority for SFAB employment. [See page 19.]

RESPONSE TO QUESTION SUBMITTED BY MR. BACON

Mr. MITCHELL. U.S. Special Operations Command's (USSOCOM) decision to pivot from the previous All-Source Analytical Environment capability to the National Reconnaissance Office's (NRO) Fusion Analysis and Development Effort (FADE) platform is based on substantial research, evaluation, and collaboration. FADE is an established commercially developed and Government-owned platform with connections across the Intelligence Community (IC) and other Federal agencies. The more salient aspects of the platform are its advanced analytics maturity; underlying modern architecture; use of proven agile software development methodologies; quantity and quality of data sources; established partnerships; and cost effectiveness.

USSOCOM is committed to fielding and deploying all components of the DCGS–SOF capability in a fiscally efficient and operationally effective manner. The DCGS–SOF acquisition strategy consistently leverages existing SOF programs as well as DOD and other Government agencies' programs to integrate commercial-off-the-shelf, Government-off-the-shelf, and other mature technologies into the Program of Record. In January 2018, USSOCOM provided written certification that all DCGS–SOF program increments procured after enactment of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018 will be carried out in accordance with 10 U.S.C. § 2377. Our strategy involving the selection and integration of FADE into the DCGS–SOF POR complies with this section of the U.S. Code. [See page 16.]

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MEMBERS POST HEARING

APRIL 9, 2019

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. LANGEVIN

Mr. LANGEVIN. What are the top five most high-demand/low-density skill sets in SOCOM currently? How are personnel being selected to attend training for these skills? How long, on average, are personnel in these skill sets staying in SOCOM? What is the average deployment-to-dwell ratio and PERSTEMPO for these personnel?

Mr. MITCHELL. While I would defer to Commander, USSOCOM, for the specific details, in general, Special Operations Forces' (SOF) high-demand/low-density (HD/LD) skillsets are concentrated in the intelligence, aviation, joint fires communities, psychological operations, and civil affairs career fields. These career fields, most of which are found across the SOF Service Components, are among the most stressed communities in USSOCOM in terms of deploy-to-dwell ratios and personnel tempo ratios. Unlike core special operations specialties, identifying the retention in the SOF community of these HD/LD skill sets in SOF is difficult due to service-specific personnel policies which may require mandatory reassignments. The Services' recruitment and training processes provide uniformed personnel with the baseline skills and qualifications needed to perform similar roles in the conventional forces (such as intelligence analysis or an aircrew role).

Typically, personnel in those Service communities volunteer for SOF and may undergo additional selection, training, and education in order to fulfill SOF-unique requirements. Irrespective of the additional training, however, the services are not obligated to preserve these individuals in SOF assignments. Nevertheless, retention of experienced personnel with HD/LD skillsets is a high priority for the SOF enterprise given the lengthy training pipelines and the small number of qualified candidates. The retention rates may also vary over time based on Geographic Combatant Command requirements and USSOCOM's capacity.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Please provide the percentage of SOCOM personnel who are below a 1:1 dwell ratio, between a 1:1 and a 1:2 dwell ratio, between a 1:2 and 1:3 dwell ratio and at a 1:3 or greater than 1:3 dwell ratio? Is there a disparity between core special operators (i.e. SEAL, 18 Series, Marine Raider) and enabler populations and if so, what does that disparity look like?

General CLARKE. 1. The following is a breakdown of Special Operations Forces (SOF) deployment-to-dwell (D2D) percentages.

a. D2D below 1:1 = 1.8%
b. D2D 1:1–1:2 = 3.9%
c. D2D 1:2–1:3 = 3.3%
d. D2D 1:3 or greater = 91.0%

2. Three of the four SOF Service Components have D2D disparities between SOF critical skills operators and SOF Combat Support (CS) populations due to force structure and differing generation rates for major operator force elements versus support personnel. Examples follow:

a. Marine Special Operations Command's Marine Special Operations Companies' force generation ratio is 1:3. However, their CS forces generate at a 1:2 ratio based on current force structure. Examples of combat support specialties with low D2D are Joint Terminal Attack Controllers, Dog Handlers, and Signals Intelligence specialists. MARSOC's "get well" date is Fiscal Year (FY) 22 following the realization of programmed growth of 368 Combat Support/Combat Service Support (CS/CSS) personnel. This growth will address the current organizational imbalances.
b. Air Force Special Operations Command's Remotely Piloted Aircraft (RPA) Combat Support community (launch and recovery personnel) continue to deploy with less than 1:2 D2D but are expected to reach 1:2 D2D by early FY20 with the implementation of pending government-owned, contractor-operated launch and recovery elements.
c. U.S. Army Special Operations Command's force generation rate for operator units of action does not create a major disparity between combat and CS forces, primarily because the organic CS personnel are only applied in support of the parent battalion or its subordinate units' deployments. The exception to this model is the Group Support Battalion (GSB) designed to support

the Special Forces Group and its organic battalions. When the battalions are deployed separately from the group, they receive a "slice" from the GSB, at times overburdening the low density/high demand CS personnel. These assets are carefully managed to prevent overutilization and are rarely directed to support another SOF component requirement.

3. Naval Special Warfare Command's (NSWC) 24-month force generation model is comprised of an 18-month Inter-Deployment Training Cycle (IDTC) and 6 month deployments. NSWC deploying force elements, both operator and CS personnel, maintain a 1:3 force generation ratio which equates to the majority of personnel deploying above 1:2 D2D.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Is there a personnel tempo (PERSTEMPO) restriction in place to prevent SOCOM personnel from going TAD for extended periods of time while in CONUS? If so, what is that restriction and is it adequate? How is that restriction waived for personnel who volunteer to attend training or deploy at a higher pace than the rest of the community?

General CLARKE. 1. Yes, there is a PERSTEMPO restriction in place to prevent USSOCOM personnel from going on extended temporary duty. This restriction is contained in SOCOM's Personnel Tempo Policy 17–24 and is adequate.

2. The USSOCOM PERSTEMPO threshold in the policy is 480 days away from home station (defined as head away from pillow) in a 24 month period (730 days) utilizing a rolling scale that looks at all PERSTEMPO events in the previous 18 months and projects upcoming PERSTEMPO events 6 months forward.

3. PERSTEMPO events include, but are not limited to: operational deployments; Temporary Duty Assignments (TDY); night training or field exercises where the service member cannot sleep at his/her normal residence; performing service as a student or trainee at a school (including any government school); performing administrative, guard, or detail duties in garrison at their permanent duty station or home port; or unavailable as a result of hospitalization or as a result of disciplinary action.

4. When a Commander (CDR) identifies an individual who will break the USSOCOM PERSTEMPO threshold due to current or projected duty status, the CDR must either change the projected schedule for that individual or initiate a waiver request to be staffed through the individual's chain of command to CDR USSOCOM as early as practicable. The waiver request can be disapproved by any CDR in the chain of command, but only CDR USSOCOM can approve the waiver. This waiver process is for directed PERSTEMPO events or those for which an individual volunteers.

Mr. LANGEVIN. What is the average number of deployments, broken down by grade and component, of SOCOM personnel? Is there a correlation between retention and deployment/PERSTEMPO?

General CLARKE. 1. Determining an average number of deployments is very difficult; some deployments are less than a week while others range from four to twelve months. There are a number of other factors that also make determining averages and identifying impacts on retention difficult including the following:

a. Deployment rates vary between special operations rated personnel and enabling support personnel who have very different deployment timelines, cycles, and lengths. The number of deployments generally correlates to time in service, particularly for SOF and combat arms.
b. Differing deployment lengths across Services generally result in Army personnel having greater number of deployed months when compared to individuals in other Services with an equal number of deployments.
c. Navy includes time away from home port while on sea duty in its deployment tracking.
d. NSW can only track deployments for FY 15–19. These numbers are artificially low as personnel often depart the unit following completion of a deployment.
e. Special operators in special mission units deploy much more often than the rest of the Special Operations Force and are excluded from these averages.

2. Given the considerations outlined above, the list below shows the average number of deployments across all SOF Service Components:

- Enlisted grades E3–E6 average from 1–4
- Enlisted grades E7–E9 average from 4–5
- Warrant Officer grades W2–W3 average from 1–6
- Warrant Officer grades W4–W5 average from 9–16
- Officer grades O1–O4 average from 1–5
- Officer grades O5–O6 average from 5–6

3. The current relationship between deployments and retention is unclear. Previous studies conducted by RAND had indicated both positive and negative correla-

tions with deployments. Most of this work was completed prior to 2009 and is not special operations specific. A 2009 RAND news release does indicate that Army had been effective in its use of retention bonuses to maintain retention against the otherwise negative effects of deployment. USSOCOM will require at least 180 days to conduct a study of the relationship between deployment and retention for personnel serving in special operations specialties.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Do all SOCOM components use the same parachutes and airborne equipment? If not, why and is there an effect on the interoperability of SOF components?

General CLARKE. 1. No, USSOCOM Components use several different types of military personnel parachute systems and ancillary airborne equipment to conduct static line and military free fall (MFF) training and operations. While SOF does conduct airborne operations, USSOCOM is not the only element within DOD that possesses this capability.

2. Parachute systems and ancillary equipment are typically Service Common or Service Approved Commercial-off-the-Shelf (COTS). They are funded by the individual Services using either MFP–2 or MFP–4 funds and provided to USSOCOM service components. Each Service also maintains its own airborne related "authorized for use list" (AUL) based on its specific needs and mission essential tasks, all of which have been rigorously tested and approved by the appropriate Service Research, Development, Testing and Experimentation organizations. Although the Services and USSOCOM Components use different parachutes and airborne equipment, interoperability is generally not affected in operations due to the make-up of the insertion force, which is typically composed of personnel from the same unit using the same equipment. However, the four AULs cause a lack of standardization of airborne equipment across the USSOCOM Components and does impact training efficiencies and interoperability. Recognizing the potential benefits for a single point of contact, the USSOCOM Director of Operations is coordinating with the Department to designate a single entity responsible for DOD-wide airborne related programs.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Do all SOCOM components use the same individual dive equipment (i.e. closed circuit UBA, BCD)? If not, why and is there an effect on the interoperability of SOF components?

General CLARKE. 1. Yes, all USSOCOM components use the same individual dive equipment (i.e. SCUBA, closed circuit Underwater Breathing Apparatus (UBA), Buoyancy Competency Device (BCD)).

2. The SOF diving capability (Combat Diving and Maritime Infiltration) is standardized for two reasons. First, there is an established Authorized-for-Navy (military)-Use (ANU) list that USSOCOM components can choose equipment from to meet their requirements. For example, while all SOF use the Draegar MK25 as the primary UBA, there is a family of UBAs components can choose from (i.e. MK25, MK16, MODE). Similarly, there are multiple BCDs from different manufactures on the list. All items on the ANU list have been tested to nationally recognized standards set by the Navy Experimental Diving Unit and approved by NAVSEA OOC3. Secondly, the Navy Dive Manual (NAVSEA SS521–AG–PRO–010 Rev 7) is universally recognized as the authoritative reference publication for all diving. Organizationally, the DOD Instruction (DODI) 3224.04, Single Manager Responsibility for Joint Service Military Diving Technology and Training (MDT&T), establishes an effective chain of command with military dive training and safety reporting requirements, while directing the Secretaries of Military Departments and USSOCOM to conduct all actions necessary to satisfy Service or SOF-unique requirements. USSOCOM coordinates its actions through the N97 and PMS–NSW and reports to the MDT&T as required.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Do all SOCOM components use the same ground mobility vehicles? If not, why and is there an effect on the interoperability of SOF components?

General CLARKE. Yes, USSOCOM equips each of the components with the same tactical ground mobility vehicles. USSOCOM tactical vehicles are designed to provide varying degrees of performance, protection, and mobility based on mission, threat, and geographic terrain. There is a minimal number of select USSOCOM National Mission Force units that maintain unique mobility capabilities for executing time sensitive missions.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Over the past 5 years, what is the range of special duty incentive pay paid to SOCOM personnel broken out by component? Within each component, please delineate between rank and occupational specialty.

General CLARKE. 1. USSOCOM components utilize both special duty assignment pay and assignment incentive pay. Below are the assignment pays categorized by Service Component:

2. Special Duty Assignment Pay

a. Army
- Enlisted Operators: $375/month
- 75th Ranger Regiment/Military Information Support Operations "V" Coded Positions: $300/month
- 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment "F" qualified: $150–$300/month
- Special Mission Unit (SMU): $375–450/month

b. Air Force
- Combat Controllers, Pararescue, Tactical Air Control Party Specialist, and Special Operations Weather Technician, SD6: $450/month
- Career Enlisted Aviators Remotely Piloted Aircraft Sensor Operator, SD2 to SD4 based on assigned aircraft: $150–$300/month
- Special Mission Unit operators, SD3 to SD6: $225–$450/month
- SMU support, SD3 to SD5: $225–$375/month

c. Navy
- SEAL: $450/month
- Special Warfare Combatant-Craft Crewman: $300/month

d. Marines
- $75–375/Month

3. Assignment Incentive Pay

a. Army
- E–9 Over 24 years of service: $500–$1000/month
- E–9 Nominative billet: $1250 per month
- SMU: $750–$1000/month

b. Air Force
- SMU: $750–$1000/month

c. Navy
- SMU: $500–$1500/month

d. Marines
- NA

*Greater detail is available in the chart attached in question 8

[The chart referred to is retained in the committee files and can be viewed upon request.]

Mr. LANGEVIN. Over the past 5 years, what is the range of retention or accession bonuses paid to SOCOM personnel broken out by component? Additionally, within each component, what is the range of retention or accession bonuses paid within each occupational specialty broken down by rank? [Question #8, for cross-reference.]

General CLARKE. 1. Recruiting and retention programs are specific to each Armed Service with varying compensations. USSOCOM provides generalized responses below for recruitment and retention to give a general sense of the bonuses:

a. Service Initial Enlistment Bonuses:
- Army: Up to $10K
- Air Force: Up to $15K
- Navy: Up to $12K
- Marines: N/A, as Marines do not recruit directly into Special Operations

b. Current Retention Bonuses: Retention bonuses are paid based on eligibility zones. Zone A is personnel with 17 months to 6 years of service. Zone B is personnel with 6 to 10 years of service. Zone C is personnel with 10 to 14 years of service. Navy and Marines use a Critical Skills Retention Bonus for personnel with more than 14 years of service. Army uses a Written Bonus Agreement for senior personnel and Air Force currently has no program for senior personnel. Attachment 1, SOF Pay Comparison Chart, illustrates Enlistment, Accession, and Retention bonuses delineated by each Service, rank, and occupational specialty. [The chart referred to is retained in the committee files and can be viewed upon request.]

c. Historic Retention Bonuses: Retention bonuses are paid from Service monies and are not tracked by USSOCOM headquarters.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Over the past 5 years, what is the range of hazardous duty incentive pay paid to SOCOM personnel broken out by component? Within each component, please delineate between rank and occupational specialty.

General CLARKE. 1. While the Services have some discretion with respect to who is paid and the amounts paid, the authorized range of Hazardous Duty Incentive Pay (HDIP) pay has remained fairly constant over the past five years. The Department of Defense Instruction for the Hazard Pay Program restricts payment to three or less hazard incentives per individual. The Service authorized HDIP is the same across USSOCOM components, ranks, and specialties. The amounts are:

a. Flying Duty—Aircrew: $250/month; Non-aircrew: $150/month

b. Parachute Duty—Static line: $150/month; Freefall: $225/month

c. Demolition Duty—$150/month
d. Diving Duty—up to $240/month (Master Diver Skill Incentive Pay for enlisted Soldiers is up to $340)

2. For the Air Force, including the Air Force Special Operations Command, DOD approved a three-year pilot program for Battlefield Airman Skill Incentive Pay (BASIP). This program replaces individual hazardous duty pays (jump, dive, demo, etc.) with one combined monthly pay. Rates are based on individual skill level, advanced qualifications, and duty requirements. The program became effective September 1, 2017 at the following rates:

a. Combat Control/Special Tactics Officer: $525–600/month
b. Pararescue/Combat Rescue Officer: $540–615/month
c. Special Operations Weather Officer: $300–$525/month
d. Tactical Air Control Party/Air Liaison Officer: $150–525/month

3. Naval Special Warfare Skill Incentive Pay (SKIP). SKIP will be used in lieu of hazardous duty incentive pays to minimize costly training interruptions in the NSW inter-deployment training cycle (IDTC), minimize the strain on force Personnel Tempo System (PERSTEMPO) during the IDTC, and remove financial disincentives associated with NSW operators seeking medical care. Specialties: SO, SWCC (O/W/E) up to $715/month.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Do SOCOM personnel conduct periodic peer reviews of their team members and if so, how does this affect personnel management?

General CLARKE. 1. USSOCOM units do not conduct periodic peer reviews for the purposes of evaluations or personnel management.

2. Many commanders use 360 degree reviews as a means of obtaining feedback for their own leaders' development. For example, within Naval Special Warfare Command (NSW), Navy officers attend the Naval Leadership and Ethics Course (NLEC) prior to taking command or serving as an Executive Officer. The NLEC curriculum integrates a contracted "360 Feedback" peer review program to solicit individual feedback as an assessment tool. This opportunity provides the member the chance to get anonymous feedback from direct reports, peers, and managers in order to help refine their leadership style prior to assuming their leadership job. NSW's training curriculum also utilizes this same program to conduct peer reviews for future Officer and Enlisted SEALs as well as Special Warfare Combatant Craft Crewmen.

Mr. LANGEVIN. How has the optimization of AFRICOM affected SOCOM? Has this improved PERSTEMPO and dwell ratios for force providing components?

General CLARKE. 1. AFRICOM's Counter–Violent Extremist Organizations (C–VEO) Optimization implementation remains underway, consisting of various Special Operations Forces moves within AFRICOM and redeployments from AFRICOM.

2. The in-theater moves have had no effect on PERSTEMPO or Deployment to Dwell ratios to date.

3. The redeployments occur between May and October 2019. USSOCOM will realize improved PERSTEMPO and dwell ratios during FY20 based on the redeployment dates.

Mr. LANGEVIN. What is the language training requirement for SOCOM personnel? What programs are in place for distance learning? [Question #13, for cross-reference.]

General CLARKE. 1. There are four sources of language training requirements:

a. USSOCOM Directive 350–17—This language, regional expertise, and culture (LREC) directive prescribes minimum annual language training for SOF. It also articulates the minimum training required as a part of pre-deployment training.
b. Theater Special Operations Commands (TSOC)—The TSOC language capability requirements articulated in plans and current operations are validated by USSOCOM and inform the Service SOF Component training programs.
c. Commander's Training Guidance (CTG)—The CTG prioritizes the Joint and Component institutional and unit training programs in terms of capacities and skill levels.
d. Service or military specialty driven requirements—organic cryptologic language analysts, Army human intelligence linguists, and Army SOF specialties (18, 37, and 38) are required to maintain minimum skill levels.

2. Generally, regionally aligned SOF units whose primary tasks include Unconventional Warfare, Security Force Assistance, Foreign Internal Defense, Civil Affairs Operations, or Psychological Operations will have a mix of skill level 1 and skill level 2 capability and non-regionally aligned SOF will have a mix of SOF capability at skill level 1. These needs are addressed in basic language training courses in the Army SOF, Air Force SOF, and Marine SOF pipelines and sustained at unit level. Crypto-linguist, human intelligence, and Foreign Area Officers assigned to

SOF receive basic language training from their Service and sustainment training at the unit.

3. The minimum formal sustainment training is 120 hours annually for category three and four languages and 80 hours annually for category one and two languages. Formal sustainment training must include a program of instruction developed by an expert in a unit or school language training program tailored to the individual student. This training will also include interaction with an instructor or computer based program and yield an academic score. Training is not limited to sustainment training programs work to enhance the students' skill level to meet the CTG level 2 requirement.

4. The primary distance learning platform for SOF is the Special Operations Forces Tele-training System (SOFTS). The SOFTS platform uses web video conferencing to place students from anywhere into a classroom with qualified instructors. About 1,300 students receive basic through advanced training through SOFTS annually. Army SOF also uses Polycom, a virtual tele-conference system, in their local language training facilities to connect students to language training centers (specifically from the University of Montana). USSOCOM personnel also have access to Service, Defense Language Institute, and Joint Language University on-line language and culture resources.

Mr. LANGEVIN. How many current SOCOM personnel have graduated from the Joint Fundamentals Course (CEP–1)? Please delineate the number by duty status (i.e. Active, Reserve, Guard) and component command (i.e. AFSOC, USASOC, NAVSPECWAR, MARSOC). [Question #14, for cross-reference.]

General CLARKE. The table below provides the response for Questions 13–17 and outlines current number of USSOCOM personnel trained in CEP 1–4 courses.

	CEP 1		CEP 2		CEP 3		CEP 4	
	Active	Res/NG	Active	Res/NG	Active	Res/NG	Active	Res/NG
USSOCOM HQ/TSOCs	6	0	23	2	8	0	1	0
USASOC	183	8	151	7	130	5	19	0
AFSOC	98	3	49	1	29	1	7	1
NSW	28	1	50	0	35	0	7	0
MARSOC	231	0	140	0	34	0	3	0
Total	546	12	413	10	236	6	37	1

Mr. LANGEVIN. How many current SOCOM personnel have graduated from the Enterprise Management Course (CEP–2)? Please delineate the number by duty status (i.e. Active, Reserve, Guard) and component command (i.e. AFSOC, USASOC, NAVSPECWAR, MARSOC). [Question #15, for cross-reference.]

General CLARKE. See response to Question 13 [above].

Mr. LANGEVIN. How many current SOCOM personnel have graduated from the Joint Special Operations Forces Senior Enlisted Academy (CEP–3)? Please delineate the number by duty status (i.e. Active, Reserve, Guard) and component command (i.e. AFSOC, USASOC, NAVSPECWAR, MARSOC). [Question #16, for cross-reference.]

General CLARKE. See response to Question 13 [above].

Mr. LANGEVIN. How many current SOCOM personnel have graduated from Summit (CEP–4)? Please delineate the number by duty status (i.e. Active, Reserve, Guard) and component command (i.e. AFSOC, USASOC, NAVSPECWAR, MARSOC). [Question #17, for cross-reference.]

General CLARKE. See response to Question 13 [above].

Mr. LANGEVIN. What are the top five most high-demand/low-density skill sets in SOCOM currently? How are personnel being selected to attend training for these skills? How long, on average, are personnel in these skill sets staying in SOCOM? What is the average deployment-to-dwell ratio and PERSTEMPO for these personnel?

General CLARKE. 1. The top five high demand/low density skill sets are: intelligence (multiple types including counter-intel, cryptologic, signals and imagery/geographic); combat medics and corpsman; fire support specialists; cyber; and logistics (including water treatment, electronics maintenance, and submarine ratings to support Dry Combat Submersible (DCS)/SEAL Delivery Vehicle Teams (SDVT)).

2. Personnel are selected to attend training for these skills in accordance with their respective Service career timelines and professional development benchmarks, ability to hold security clearances, General Technical scores, and career experience within their occupational specialty.

3. The average time these high demand/low density skill personnel stay assigned to USSOCOM units is driven by a combination of each occupational skill specialty's career development timeline, total force requirements, and individual availability. Calculating the average time that personnel stay in these specialties in SOCOM will require additional time for data collection and analysis (180 days).

4. Based on the wide variety of specialties across the Services, the PERSTEMPO by specialty is difficult to calculate. While these specialties are high demand, USSOCOM leaders have proactively managed personnel so that USSOCOM has required zero waivers for the last 12 months.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. BACON

Mr. BACON. Does SOCOM have the ability to bed-down additional squadrons of Light Attack Aircraft today? What are the primary operational, infrastructure, personnel and resource considerations necessary to establish a SOCOM Light Attack Aircraft force structure?

Mr. MITCHELL. USSOCOM currently has the ability to bed-down the 2–3 Light Attack Aircraft that are the USSOCOM portion of the USAF Light Attack experiment continuation and can absorb a total of five aircraft in support of Air Force Special Operations Command's Aviation Foreign Internal Defense mission.

If directed to support Joint Force requirements for close air support and precision strike, USSOCOM would require additional manpower, infrastructure/military construction, and maintenance support as well as sufficient basing to provide access to airspace and ranges. A sustainable force structure is essential to establishing a USSOCOM Light Attack Aircraft capability that would provide an economical and effective means to counter external threats and to conduct persistent counter-VEO operations in support of National Defense Strategy objectives.

Mr. BACON. What do you believe are the critical steps to establishing a Light Attack Aircraft capability for SOCOM?

Mr. MITCHELL. The first critical step going forward would be for the Rapid Fielding Document (RFD) to be refined to ensure that it, in a cost effective manner, adequately accounts for the following requirements:

1) able to operate from austere, dirt surfaces and shorter runway lengths;

2) can be operated with small operational and logistical footprints in support of disaggregated teams;

3) can employ cost-effective precision-guided munitions;

4) can employ standard intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance payloads; and

5) has the capacity to share data-linked information with partnered forces.

Once the RFD is approved, the acquisition process would need to continue with a request for proposal, contract award, and initial production. In parallel, a manpower and basing analysis needs to be conducted to ensure USSOCOM receives the necessary force structure and infrastructure to sustain continued combat engagements.

Mr. BACON. In your testimony, you stated that you believe SOCOM needs a Light Attack Aircraft. What are the priority SOCOM missions that a Light Attack Aircraft is needed to perform?

General CLARKE. 1. A Light Attack Aircraft program could fulfill two primary missions supporting Joint Force requirements. These missions are: 1) to build partnerships and indigenous air support capacity; and 2) to conduct low-cost irregular warfare operations in support of U.S. and partnered ground forces.

2. Air Force Special Operations Command requires the ability to train partner nation air forces in close air support operations as part of an Aviation Foreign Internal Defense mission. A light attack platform could serve as a training platform for combat aviation advisors preparing to deploy to advise partners who operate a similar type of aircraft.

3. The second mission is close air support in austere locales where U.S. and partnered ground forces are conducting irregular warfare operations. A platform of

this type could reduce risk to small disaggregated teams in remote locations, providing armed overwatch and, if necessary, close air support during mission execution.

Mr. BACON. What are the key performance attributes of a SOCOM Light Attack Aircraft? Would a SOCOM Light Attack Aircraft be required to conduct sustained operations from austere and unimproved operating locations? What type of data would a Light Attack Aircraft be required to share to ensure interoperability with other SOF, conventional, and partner operating forces?

General CLARKE. 1. A light attack platform should be affordable to buy and operate (to both U.S. and partner nations) and able to deploy to remote areas with a small logistics footprint. It should have the ability to employ precision guided weapons while also being equipped with an electro-optical targeting system with full-motion video and standard intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance capabilities.

2. SOF frequently operate at great distance from main operating bases, thus a light attack platform would be required to forward stage near or with small disaggregated ground teams to reduce response time and increase loiter over the target area by minimizing enroute flight time. This type of platform would be expected to conduct sustained operations from austere and unimproved fields and have the flexibility to reposition rapidly as the threat environment evolves. USSOCOM defines austere operations as operating from dirt runways with associated forward refueling and rearming areas. Dirt surfaces with lengths between 4,000 to 6,000 feet are expected to be commonly used.

3. USSOCOM anticipates using Service-common and USSOCOM-established datalink programs alongside commercially off-the-shelf procured systems, ensuring secure voice and video connectivity between U.S. and partnered forces.

Mr. BACON. What do you believe is the minimum viable force structure for a SOCOM Light Attack Aircraft capability?

General CLARKE. 1. For the Aviation Foreign Internal Defense mission, SOCOM has established a requirement for five light attack platforms.

2. For the mission in support of U.S. and partnered ground forces conducting irregular warfare operations, our minimum requirement would be dependent on the size of a larger service-common acquisition effort. SOCOM has not conducted detailed analysis on the force structure needed in the absence of a larger service acquisition program.

Mr. BACON. Do you believe an organically operated SOCOM Light Attack Aircraft would reduce the requirement to deploy advanced 4th and 5th generation aircraft to support SOCOM forces? Can you quantify the operational benefit to DOD of procuring a low-cost Light Attack Aircraft to support SOCOM forces worldwide?

General CLARKE. USSOCOM continues to team with the Air Force as it proceeds with the Light Attack Experiment to determine the force employment options and possible operational benefits of a light attack aircraft program. There are several potential benefits to the joint force which could accrue as a result of a light attack aircraft program. These include: 1) cost-effective support to irregular warfare operations; 2) reduced demand on fourth and fifth generation fighters; and 3) increased partner capacity to conduct these operations.

Mr. BACON. Does SOCOM have the ability to bed down additional squadrons of Light Attack Aircraft today? What are the primary operational, infrastructure, personnel and resource considerations necessary to establish a SOCOM Light Attack Aircraft force structure?

General CLARKE. 1. As with all weapons systems, USSOCOM does not have organic infrastructure, but relies on the Service-provided infrastructure for support. Any USSOCOM program would require service basing action to bed down additional force structure.

2. If directed to field light attack force structure, USSOCOM would require additive manpower, infrastructure/military construction, maintenance support, and accompanying sustainment funding in order to conduct economical and effective Aviation Foreign Internal Defense and irregular warfare operations.

Mr. BACON. What do you believe are the critical steps to establishing a Light Attack Aircraft capability for SOCOM?

General CLARKE. A key step when considering a Light Attack Aircraft program will be to work with the Air Force to ensure any requirements documents adequately account for the following capabilities: 1) operable from austere, dirt surfaces and shorter runway lengths; 2) requires a small operational and logistical footprint in support of disaggregated teams; 3) possesses the ability to employ cost-effective precision guided munitions; 4) includes standard intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance payloads; and 5) has the ability to share data-linked information with partnered forces. Additionally, additive manpower and basing analysis is critical in ensuring this force has the necessary force structure to sustain continued engage-

ments along with the basing—to include adequate training areas—to prepare for combat operations.

Mr. BACON. I understand that in summer of 2017 USSOCOM cancelled its software development effort which had been funded to satisfy the All Source Information Fusion component of the Distributed Common Ground System–Special Operations Forces (DCGS–SOF). What was the total cost of the cancelled ASIF development effort? What were the specific reasons for program cancellation?

General CLARKE. 1. From 2015 to 2018, USSOCOM obligated $30.6M on development and integration efforts associated with the DCGS–SOF ASIF requirements and All Source Analytic Environment (ASAE) contract.

2. USSOCOM continuously monitors schedules, materiel acquisition costs, performance, and risk to mission. To that end, we conducted a progress check of the openly-competed ASAE contract that was attendant to the DCGS–SOF ASIF requirements in the summer of 2017. Although significant progress was evident, USSOCOM user assessments determined the ASAE contract materiel solution was not sufficient to support the requirements of both SOF Operators and intelligence analysts within acceptable cost and schedule.

Mr. BACON. I understand that in February 2018 the USSOCOM Commander selected the Fusion Analysis Development Effort (FADE) as the new solution to meet the ASIF requirement. What do you estimate it will cost to develop and fully field FADE as the solution to meet SOCOM's ASIF requirement? When do you estimate FADE will reach full operational capability?

General CLARKE. 1. The transition to the National Reconnaissance Organization (NRO) FADE platform in 2018 allowed the DCGS–SOF program to consolidate the Enterprise (ENT) and ASIF requirements into a singular, more capable and cost effective materiel solution. The estimate to enhance the FADE platform to reach Full Operational Capability for ENT and ASIF by 3QFY20 is $36M. Additionally, the integration of the DCGS–SOF ENT and ASIF requirements into the singular FADE solution provides a cost avoidance of $125M over the Future Years Defense Plan of the original DCGS–SOF ENT and ASIF acquisition strategies.

2. We estimate FADE will reach full operational capability in the 3rd Quarter of FY20.

Mr. BACON. Given the failure of the first development effort to meet the ASIF requirement, what specific factors give you confidence that another government development effort like FADE will succeed?

General CLARKE. 1. USSOCOM has joined eighteen other Government and Intelligence Community (IC) agencies and over 85K+ registered users of the NRO's FADE platform. We have confidence that this commercially-developed, government-owned capability provides the foundation for achieving all remaining DCGS–SOF ENT and ASIF program requirements with the planned USSOCOM modifications to the system.

2. USSOCOM's decision was based on substantial research, evaluation, and assessment by USSOCOM intelligence operators and intelligence support analysts. The more salient aspects of the platform are its advanced analytics maturity, underlying commercial and cloud based modern architecture, the prevalence of open commercial software solutions, the use of proven agile software development methodologies, the quantity and quality of DOD and IC data sources, the established DOD/IC partnerships, and the cost effectiveness of the partnership model. USSOCOM is confident that based on these fundamental characteristics the DCGS–SOF program has the appropriate foundation to enhance the FADE platform to fully realize a materiel solution that supports the DCGS–SOF ENT/ASIF requirements.

Mr. BACON. Please describe specific performance gaps that currently exist between FADE and USSOCOM's ASIF requirement. Please provide estimated timelines to resolve or mitigate these performance gaps.

General CLARKE. 1. Two major requirement gaps existed at the time of the transition decision to the NRO FADE platform. The first gap was a lack of Human Intelligence (HUMINT) reporting data sources that SOF all source analysts predominately rely on for all source analysis. The second gap was the lack of a fielded Disconnected, Intermittent, and Low-Bandwidth (DIL) capability that intelligence operators and intelligence support analysts could use in forward edge locations under denial of services conditions.

2. The FADE platform has since added the primary HUMINT data sources the DCGS–SOF ENT/ASIF was targeting for inclusion into the FADE data fabric. At Trident Spectre 2019, the FADE team successfully demonstrated a DIL laptop prototype to the SOF enterprise. Based on the successful demonstration of the DIL prototype, three SOF Components will begin pre-deployment training with the DIL capability in July 2019.

3. Additional secondary tier gap requirements existed at the time of the transition decision. The DCGS–SOF program envisions at least an additional 12 month effort to complete these SOF enhancements to the FADE platform. Full Operational Capability is estimated as 3QFY20. Thereafter, the DCGS–SOF ENT/ASIF component envisions a steady state enhancement effort based on user feedback, new data sources, and the agile software development process.

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