



SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
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WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1000

JUN 19 2020

MEMORANDUM FOR CHIEF MANAGEMENT OFFICER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF
DEFENSE
SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS
CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF
UNDER SECRETARIES OF DEFENSE
CHIEF OF THE NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU
COMMANDERS OF THE COMBATANT COMMANDS
GENERAL COUNSEL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
DIRECTOR OF COST ASSESSMENT AND PROGRAM
EVALUATION
INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONAL TEST AND EVALUATION
CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF
DEFENSE
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR LEGISLATIVE
AFFAIRS
ASSISTANT TO THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR PUBLIC
AFFAIRS
DIRECTOR OF NET ASSESSMENT
DIRECTORS OF DEFENSE AGENCIES
DIRECTORS OF DOD FIELD ACTIVITIES

SUBJECT: Actions for Improving Diversity and Inclusion in the Department of Defense

For more than 200 years the U.S. military has fought to defend our great Nation and our interests abroad, earning the reputation as the greatest military force in history. We have reached this apex because we are an all-volunteer force of patriots who believe in the Constitution and the rights it guarantees all Americans. We have also reached this level of mission excellence because we attract the best America has to offer: young men and women from across the land and beyond our shores. They not only love our country and share these values, but also represent a wide range of creeds, religions, races, ethnicities, sexual orientations, and other attributes that distinguish us as individuals, and make us stronger together.

To ensure the morale, cohesion, and readiness of the military it is essential that our ranks reflect and are inclusive of the American people we have sworn to protect and defend.

While the military has often led on these issues throughout history, we are not immune to the forces of bias and prejudice. We know this bias burdens many of our uniformed personnel and has direct and indirect impacts on the experiences of our minority members and their representation in our ranks, especially in our officer corps. That is why bias and prejudice have no place in our military; they also have no place in our country. We can and must do better.



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We must lead on these issues as America's most respected institution and as a global leader when it comes to building diverse, winning teams and creating opportunity for all. Therefore, I am directing the following actions:

- By June 29, 2020 the Secretaries of the Military Departments and the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (USD(P&R)), in consultation with the Chiefs of the respective Military Services and informed by Combatant Commanders through the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, will conduct a review of all DoD, Military Department, and Military Service policies, programs, and processes that may negatively affect equal opportunity, diversity, and inclusion for all our people. The Secretaries of the Military Departments and USD (P&R) will recommend changes for swift implementation to address any identified issues. Examples of policies, processes, and programs to be reviewed include areas such as accessions, promotion boards, and associated processes; assignment and command opportunity and selection; and professional military education selection.
- By July 2, 2020 USD(P&R) will establish the framework and terms of reference for an internal DoD Board on Diversity and Inclusion to undertake a more comprehensive evaluation and assessment of military policies, processes, and practices to improve racial diversity in our ranks. This Board will be led by the Secretary of the Air Force, the Honorable Barbara Barrett. USD(P&R) will provide me and Secretary Barrett a coordinated proposal for the Board's framework and terms of reference, including its structure, membership, goals, and objectives, with the aim of the Board being operational by July 15, 2020 if not sooner. A final report by the Board, with findings, actionable recommendations (including proposed changes to policy, statute, and resources), and proposed metrics to evaluate the effectiveness of these recommendations, will be provided to me not later than December 15, 2020. The Military Departments are directed to provide logistical and administrative support to the Board, as required.
- Finally, by July 20, 2020 the USD(P&R), with the assistance of the Office of the Chief Management Officer, will provide a proposal to me for establishing an enduring Defense Advisory Committee on Diversity and Inclusion in the Armed Services to examine any and all issues that will improve equal opportunity, diversity, and inclusion in the military. This advisory committee will be an independent body that mirrors the Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services, and will be composed of subject matter experts and distinguished authorities from outside DoD. This advisory committee will build upon the work of the new aforementioned Defense Board, as appropriate, and will be ready to begin its work by December 1, 2020. The advisory committee will be charged with conducting studies, generating findings, and providing its recommendations to the Secretary of Defense.

A starting point for each of the above actions must include an examination of the reports of the numerous efforts and studies concerning issues of diversity and inclusion in the past, as well as a review of the implementation status of any resulting recommendations. Such reports include U.S. Government Accountability Office studies and the reports of the Military

Leadership Diversity Council. In addition, the work of existing forums that address aspects of these critical issues, such as the Defense Diversity Working Group and the Defense Equal Opportunity Reform Group, should also inform these actions.

Updates on all of these actions will be provided to me by USD(P&R) and the chain of command on a monthly basis.

I am proud to be part of an institution that embraces diversity and inclusion, and rejects hate and prejudice in all its forms. I am committed to effecting an enterprise-wide, organizational and cultural shift. In doing so, we will continue to be the greatest fighting force in history and the most respected institution in the country; one that not only reflects its values, but one that also fully represents the American people it has sworn to protect and defend.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark T. Esper". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.