



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

SUBJECT: DoD Structure for Past Conflict Personnel Accounting

After intensive review, I have determined that the Department of Defense must change the way it manages accounting for personnel missing from past conflicts. I have directed the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy to provide me, within 30 days, a plan for how to organize the Department most effectively to increase to the maximum extent possible the numbers of missing Service personnel accounted for annually while ensuring timely and accurate information is provided to their families.

This plan should address organizational and process changes required to consolidate all Departmental assets into a single, accountable entity that has oversight of all personnel accounting resources, research, and operations across the Department. It should propose methods to maximize the number of identifications, improve transparency for families, reduce duplicative functions, and establish a system for centralized, complete, fully accessible personnel case files for missing personnel. At a minimum, this plan should articulate recommendations for changes to civilian and military personnel policies, contracting and acquisition policies, statutory and regulatory authorities, facilities, budgets, and procedures to ensure effective oversight of laboratory operations. This effort should be informed by past studies and reviews.

The Military Departments, Combatant Commands, and OSD Components shall provide the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy with all information and materials needed for this planning effort. This is a top priority for the Department.

I am deeply committed to the fullest extent possible the accounting for missing Service members. Upon receipt of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy's plan, I am prepared to direct changes to use the Department's resources for this mission more effectively and efficiently.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a stylized name followed by a horizontal line underneath.