

Advance Questions for Dale Klein
Nominee for the Position of Assistant to the Secretary of Defense
for Nuclear, Chemical and Biological Defense Programs

Defense Reforms

Almost 15 years have passed since the enactment of the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 and the Special Operations reforms.

A. Do you support full implementation of these defense reforms?

If confirmed, I will fully support the intent of the reforms and will advocate policies that will facilitate accomplishment of joint operations, streamline acquisition management and oversight, and enhance the Department's ability to respond to our 21st century national security challenges.

B. What is your view of the extent to which these defense reforms have been implemented?

I think the Department has done a creditable job in implementing defense reforms. However, without periodic policy reviews, these reforms can lose their effectiveness. It is my understanding that periodic reviews will be conducted to address the evolving security environment.

C. What do you consider to be the most important aspects of these defense reforms?

I would consider each of the goals noted below to be an important aspect of these defense reforms. Prime among these is the concept of strengthening civilian control.

The goals of the Congress in enacting these defense reforms, as reflected in section 3 of the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act, can be summarized as strengthening civilian control; improving military advice; placing clear responsibility on the combatant commanders for the accomplishment of their missions; ensuring the authority of the combatant commanders is commensurate with their responsibility; increasing attention to the formulation of strategy and to contingency planning; providing for more efficient use of defense resources; and enhancing the effectiveness of military operations and improving the management and administration of the Department of Defense.

D. Do you agree with these goals?

Yes.

Recently, there have been articles which indicate an interest within the Department of

Defense in modifying Goldwater-Nichols in light of the changing environment and possible revisions to the national strategy.

E. Do you anticipate that legislative proposals to amend Goldwater-Nichols may be appropriate?

If confirmed, I would consult with the Secretary of Defense and the Congress on any changes that might be appropriate.

F. If so, what areas do you believe it might be appropriate to address in these proposals?

It is premature to offer any thoughts on the question at this time.

Duties

What is your understanding of the duties and functions of the Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Nuclear, Chemical and Biological Defense Programs?

It is my understanding that my primary duty, if confirmed, is to work with the National Nuclear Security Administration to take care of the U.S. nuclear weapons stockpile. My duties also include countering the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the oversight of effective chemical and biological defense programs. Finally, but equally important, it seems clear that my duties also include the oversight of the safe and secure demilitarization of our chemical weapons stockpile.

What background and experience do you possess that you believe qualifies you to perform these duties?

Since 1977, I have been a professor in the Department of Mechanical Engineering, Nuclear and Radiation Engineering Program at the University of Texas at Austin. I have been the Vice-Chancellor for Special Engineering Programs at the University of Texas System since 1998. I also serve as the Chairman and Executive Director of the Amarillo National Research Center for Plutonium (ANRC), during which time I have overseen more than \$45 million in funding for plutonium research and nuclear weapon dismantlement issues. I have collaborated very closely with researchers at Pantex and the national laboratories to address stockpile stewardship issues. In addition, I previously served as Associate Dean of Research in the University of Texas College of Engineering, where I had twenty-two research units reporting to me, with several in the chemical and biological areas.

Do you believe that there are actions you need to take to enhance your ability to perform the duties of the Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Nuclear, Chemical and Biological Defense Programs?

As you are well aware, the office has been vacant for three years. If confirmed, my first task will be to staff my office. Then I need to listen to the subject matter experts and the people in the field to perform my duties as I outlined above.

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

I expect to be prescribed responsibilities for maintaining the nuclear stockpile, addressing counterproliferation and chemical and biological defense, and working chemical demilitarization.

In carrying out your duties, how will you work with the Secretary of Defense, the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Technology, the Secretaries of the Military Services, the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, and the Administrator and Deputy Administrators of the National Nuclear Security Administration?

If confirmed, I intend to work as a team with Secretary Rumsfeld, Under Secretary Aldridge, the Secretaries of the Military Departments, and Director Younger. I will also, if confirmed, work closely with General Gordon and the Deputy Administrators of the National Nuclear Security Administration through the Nuclear Weapons Council. Then, working with others in DoD and the Congress, I will recommend whatever changes might need to be made.

Major Challenges and Problems

In your view, what are the major challenges that will confront the Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Nuclear, Chemical and Biological Defense Programs?

I see five major challenges that will confront me, if confirmed. These include maintaining the safety, security and the reliability of our aging nuclear weapons stockpile, countering the continued proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, meeting the challenges of chemical and biological defense, ensuring the safe and secure demilitarization of our nation's chemical weapons, and ensuring that DoD is able to support the nation's focus on Homeland Defense.

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

If confirmed, I will listen to subject matter experts, members of Congress, and the leadership of the Department of Defense, and I will assess existing programs to ensure they adequately address our national security needs.

What do you consider to be the most serious problems in the performance of the functions of the Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Nuclear, Chemical and Biological

Defense Programs?

Since the position of the ATSD(NCB) has been vacant since 1998, staff and resources will be important, as will fostering a sense of teamwork with other offices and organizations.

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

While I am not prepared to discuss specifics at this time, if confirmed, I will take actions to establish management priorities and timelines to address these problems.

Priorities

If confirmed, what broad priorities would you establish in terms of issues which must be addressed by the Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Nuclear, Chemical and Biological Defense Programs?

If confirmed, I think the broad priorities would be (1) sustainment of the nuclear weapons stockpile to ensure it remains safe, secure and reliable; (2) countering weapons of mass destruction; (3) implementing effective chemical and biological defense programs; (4) ensuring the safe and secure demilitarization of our chemical weapons; and (5) coordinating our actions with all homeland security activities.

Reporting Chain

What is your understanding of who you would report to, if confirmed, within the Department of Defense?

If confirmed, it is my understanding that I will report to Mr. Pete Aldridge, the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology & Logistics.

Section 142 of Title 10 of the United States Code requires that the ATSD “advise the Secretary on nuclear energy, nuclear weapons, and chemical and biological defense.” The responsibilities for chemical and biological defense were added to the ATSD in 1996. The position was originally created to ensure that the ATSD had direct access to the Secretary of Defense to ensure that any matters implicating the safety, security or reliability of the nuclear weapons stockpile were immediately provided to the Secretary.

Will the position of ATSD continue to have unfettered access to the Secretary for

matters pertaining to the safety, security, and reliability of nuclear weapons?

Yes.

Organizational Structure of the Office of the Assistant to the Secretary

What is the organizational structure of the office of the ATSD?

Currently the office consists of the ATSD and three deputies: one for Nuclear Matters; one for Counterproliferation and Chemical and Biological Matters; and one for Nuclear Treaty Programs.

Will the offices and responsibilities that previously reported to the ATSD the last time the position was filled by an individual appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate be restored to the office?

Yes.

Will the director of the Defense Threat Reduction Agency report to the ATSD?

Yes.

Will the office responsible for nuclear matters that previously reported to the ATSD and currently reports to the Director of Defense Research and Engineering be returned to the ATSD? What role, if any, will the Director of Defense Research and Engineering have in nuclear matters?

Yes.

If confirmed, I will coordinate with the DDR&E on nuclear issues as appropriate.

Duties and Responsibilities

Section 179 of Title 10 of the United States Code designates the ATSD as the Executive Director of the Nuclear Weapons Council. The chairman of the Nuclear Weapons Council is the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Technology.

Will the ATSD have direct responsibility, authority, direction, and control of all the assets, resources, and people needed to fulfill the responsibilities of Executive Director of the Nuclear Weapons Council?

Yes.

If confirmed as ATSD, would you propose that the Nuclear Weapons Council resume its monthly meetings, or would you propose a different meeting schedule?

If confirmed, I will continue to schedule monthly meetings.

If confirmed as ATSD, would you ensure that the Nuclear Weapons Council carries out its statutorily mandated duties?

Yes.

Nuclear Posture Review

If confirmed, would you participate in the nuclear posture review?

Yes.

Nuclear Weapons Testing

Do you believe that there is a technical reason to resume nuclear weapons testing at the present time?

At the present time, I have no indication that a nuclear weapons test is needed.

Do you believe we should develop a new weapon design in an effort to make sure our experienced designers are maintaining their skills and have the opportunity to transfer their expertise to the new generation of nuclear weapon designers?

Until I've had a chance to review this issue in detail, I must defer an answer at this time.

Stockpile Stewardship Program

Do you support the National Nuclear Security Administration stockpile stewardship program?

Yes.

If through our science-based stockpile stewardship program, the Secretary of Energy and Secretary of Defense are unable to certify the safety, security and reliability of our nuclear stockpile, would you support the resumption of underground nuclear testing?

If the Secretary of Energy and the Secretary of Defense reach the point where they are unable to certify the safety, security and reliability of the nuclear stockpile, I would assume that, if confirmed, I would have been a key contributor to that decision. If the President supports this decision and determines that the need for nuclear testing is in the supreme national interest of the United States, if confirmed, I too would support the resumption of underground nuclear testing.

Cooperative Threat Reduction Programs (Nunn-Lugar programs)

Do you support the Cooperative Threat Reduction Programs?

Yes.

Do you support the effort of the United States to assist Russia with the destruction of chemical weapons?

Yes.

Do you believe that there are any additional activities that you would propose be undertaken by the Cooperative Threat Reduction program in the areas of nuclear weapons or materials, chemical munitions or chemical weapons technologies; or biological technologies?

While there may be additional activities that could be proposed, I would need to wait to confer with subject matter experts before making a determination.

Would you support joint research programs between Russia and the United States in the areas of chemical or biological weapons defense?

Again, I would need to wait to confer with subject matter experts before making a determination.

Chemical and Biological Defense Research

There are currently a number of ongoing research and development programs to support chemical and biological defense requirements spread across the various Services and Agencies.

If confirmed, would you support the consolidation of those programs into one office? What are the advantages or disadvantages of this consolidated management approach?

In order to better manage the joint chemical and biological defense program, it is my understanding that Under Secretary Aldridge has organized a task force to address some of the management deficiencies in the program. If confirmed, I would need to see the report from the task force before I made any determinations.

The Congress has worked to greatly increase the funding of research in the life sciences and biomedical sciences, especially at the National Institutes of Health.

If confirmed, how would you work to leverage these investments to meet the needs of the Department of Defense in therapeutics, vaccines, decontamination agents, and other technologies? How are the research and development programs of DoD and NIH currently coordinated? In your view, how should this coordination be improved?

It is my understanding that the Department of Defense currently has a collaborative research effort with NIH in the development of the next generation anthrax vaccine. Collaborative efforts with NIH are leveraged on a case-by-case basis.

As the Department moves to improve its capability to meet chemical and biological threats, there will be an increasing dependence on the commercial sector, in both research and production.

In your view, what steps can Congress take to improve DOD's ability to leverage the technical talent, production capabilities, and research capabilities of the private sector? In your view, what steps could DOD take to encourage new private sector participation in the development of technologies of interest to the military?

I believe that the current program has taken advantage of considerable technical talent, research and production capabilities of a number of commercial companies who have developed and are producing improved chemical and biological defense equipment. If confirmed, I will place a high priority on advocating sufficient resources and on further enhancing lines of communication with industry, universities, and others.

A number of promising medical and CB decontamination technologies that have been developed with DoD's investments are now involved in an extended and costly federal regulatory process.

If confirmed, how would you work to speed this regulatory process for critical defense technologies? What actions, if any, would you propose to assist successful contractors in getting their technologies approved for use by the military?

The Department of Defense will continue to coordinate efforts with the FDA to facilitate industry compliance with regulations and to ensure that safe and effective medical products are developed in a timely manner. At this point, I cannot comment specifically on appropriate changes that could streamline the regulatory process until I've had the opportunity to fully examine the issue.

Role of the Deputy Assistant to the Secretary

In the absence of an Assistant to the Secretary, there has been a Deputy Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Chemical and Biological Defense matters.

If you are confirmed to the position of ATSD, what would be the role and functions of the current position of the Deputy Assistant for Chem-Bio Defense?

It is my understanding that the current role and functions of the position are to provide day-to-day oversight for all counterproliferation and chem-bio defense programs, consequence management, chemical demilitarization, assembled chemical weapons assessment, and chemical and biological weapons treaty implementation. If confirmed, I would review these roles and functions.

Would the Deputy Assistant report to the ATSD?

Yes.

What will be the relationship between the Deputy Assistant and the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics?

If I am confirmed, the Deputy Assistant will report through me to the Under Secretary.

Role of the Assistant to the Secretary on Chemical and Biological Defense Matters

If you are confirmed, what would you expect your roles and responsibilities to be on chemical and biological defense matters?

If confirmed, my responsibilities will be to address countering the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. I also expect, if confirmed, to oversee effective chemical and biological defense

programs. And finally, but equally important, I intend to oversee the safe and secure demilitarization of our chemical weapons stockpile.

If confirmed, would you review the chemical and biological defense program and make any needed recommendations to Congress for improving the program?

In order to better manage the joint chemical and biological defense program, Mr. Aldridge has organized a task force to address some of the management deficiencies in the program. If confirmed, I would need to see the report from the task force before I made any determinations. The task force is required to report to Mr. Aldridge early next year.

The Department of Defense plays a significant role in the area of research, development and acquisition of vaccines, medical therapy products, and decontamination technologies for chemical and biological defense, among other things.

If confirmed, would you work with other federal agencies to review the regulatory and approval process for vaccines, medicines and decontamination technologies to improve the process and the timeliness of product approval?

Yes.

Counterproliferation Program Review Committee

The Assistant to the Secretary of Defense (NCB) is mandated in statute to “serve as the executive secretary” to the Counterproliferation Program Review Committee.

If confirmed as the ATSD, would you fulfill this statutory responsibility?

Yes.

If confirmed, what would be your roles and responsibilities relative to the Counterproliferation Program Review Committee?

If confirmed, my responsibilities would be to ensure that the CPRC adequately coordinates the efforts of the Department of Defense with the Department of Energy and the intelligence community in countering proliferation, and paramilitary and terrorist threats.

Counterproliferation Program Review Committee

If confirmed, what priorities would you establish for the CPRC?

If confirmed, I will review the responsibilities of the CPRC and establish appropriate priorities.

Chemical and Biological Defense:

Will the ATSD (NCB) have oversight of the safety and security of biological and chemical agents in stock at DOD training, R&D, and production facilities?

Yes.

If confirmed, what steps would you take to guarantee the safety and security of these agents?

If confirmed, I will work with the Military Services to guarantee the safety and security of these agents.

Congressional Oversight

In order to exercise its legislative and oversight responsibilities, it is important that this Committee and other appropriate committees of the Congress are able to receive testimony, briefings, and other communications of information.

Yes.

Do you agree, if confirmed for this high position, to appear before this Committee and other appropriate committees of the Congress?

Yes.

Do you agree, if confirmed, to appear before this Committee, or designated members of this Committee, and provide information, subject to appropriate and necessary security protection, with respect to your responsibilities as the Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Nuclear, Chemical and Biological Defense Programs?

Yes.

Do you agree to ensure that testimony, briefings and other communications of information are provided to this Committee and its staff and other appropriate Committees?

Yes.