



SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
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WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1000

JUL 14 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  
GENERAL COUNSEL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
DIRECTOR OF COST ASSESSMENT AND PROGRAM  
EVALUATION  
INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
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CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF  
DEFENSE  
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR LEGISLATIVE  
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ASSISTANT TO THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR PUBLIC  
AFFAIRS  
DIRECTOR OF NET ASSESSMENT  
DIRECTORS OF DEFENSE AGENCIES  
DIRECTORS OF DOD FIELD ACTIVITIES

SUBJECT: Immediate Actions to Address Diversity, Inclusion, and Equal Opportunity in the  
Military Services

On June 19, 2020 I issued a memorandum directing a three-pronged approach to take the initiative against discrimination, prejudice, and bias in all ranks of our Armed Forces. The purpose of this approach is to promote the morale, cohesion, and readiness of the force. Each effort aims to identify actions the Department can take within policies, programs, and processes to improve diversity, inclusion, and equal opportunity for our Service members:

1. A short-term "sprint" to identify immediate actions;
2. A mid-term DoD Board on Diversity and Inclusion (the "Board") to dive deeply into our policies and processes and identify additional actions; and
3. A long-term *Defense Advisory Committee on Diversity and Inclusion in the Armed Services* to provide an independent and enduring review and assessment that will strengthen our efforts in this area for generations to come.



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After reviewing recommendations from across the Department, I am resolved to act immediately on those issues that we can address now. To that end, I direct the following:

- **Remove photographs from consideration by promotion boards and selection processes and develop additional guidance, as applicable, that emphasizes retaining qualified and diverse talent.** To ensure equal opportunity for all, I direct the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (USD(P&R)) to prescribe policy prohibiting the use of photographs for promotion boards and selection processes pertaining to assignment, training, education, and command, effective September 1, 2020. Further, I direct the USD(P&R) to review policies and processes and develop additional guidance – including provisions for establishing diverse selection panels and the removal of all references to race, ethnicity, and gender in personnel packets reviewed by panel members – to ensure promotion boards and selection processes enable equal opportunity for all Service members, promote diversity in our ranks, and are free from bias based on race, ethnicity, gender, or national origin. The USD(P&R) will prepare guidance with timelines for implementation for my signature NLT September 30, 2020.
- **Update the Department’s military equal opportunity and diversity inclusion policies.** The Department will update its military harassment policy to strengthen protections for Service members against inappropriate and intolerable harassing behaviors, especially racial bias and prejudice. The Department will update its military equal opportunity policy to prohibit pregnancy-based discrimination. The Department will update its policy *on Diversity Management and Equal Opportunity in the DoD* to delineate roles and responsibilities of leaders and provide reference points for engaged and critical thinking on this topic. I direct the USD(P&R) to issue updates to these policies NLT September 1, 2020.
- **Obtain and analyze additional data.** The prejudice and bias that exist within our force are not always transparent. The Department must collect data and analyze it to identify patterns and trends, and to inform and improve the Department’s policies and programs. I direct the USD(P&R) to increase the frequency of the *Workplace and Equal Opportunity* survey to measure the effectiveness of our actions and identify areas requiring improvement. This survey will include metrics concerning harassment and discrimination, extremist groups and activities, and the effectiveness of military equal opportunity offices. I also direct the USD(P&R) to develop and implement an officer retention and promotion cohort analysis study, in order to understand the potential factors affecting racial and ethnic minority officer retention and promotion. The USD(P&R) will provide me a proposal for these actions NLT October 1, 2020.
- **Add bias awareness and bystander intervention to the violence prevention framework.** Addressing racial prejudice and bias within the force requires a combination of ongoing skill development, leadership, and accountability. I direct the USD(P&R) to ensure the integrated violence prevention framework currently

under development, includes measures for addressing bias through personal skill development, to include bias awareness and bystander intervention in response to improper remarks or other communications made by peers or superiors. Issue this policy NLT September 15, 2020.

- **Develop educational requirements for implementation across the military lifecycle to educate the force on unconscious bias.** To effectively educate Service members and leaders concerning the impact of their own biases and prejudices on their decisions, I direct the USD(P&R) to develop requirements for Common Military Training including terminal learning objectives, enabling learning objectives, purpose of learning, and desired outcomes that are targeted to Service members, tailored to their place within the military lifecycle (e.g., new recruits, newly appointed leaders, senior officers), and deployable enterprise-wide through existing training and professional military education programs. These requirements must include clear and concise definitions of key and relevant terms. Provide me a plan of action and milestones, including timelines, for the development and implementation of these requirements NLT October 1, 2020.
- **Develop a program of instruction containing techniques and procedures which enable commanders to have relevant, candid, and effective discussions.** Develop specific training requirements, relevant talking points, and scenario-based learning to assist commanders in guiding discussions on discrimination, prejudice, and bias within units and organizations. The USD(P&R) will provide a training plan, including timelines for requirements development, NLT October 1, 2020.
- **Review hairstyle and grooming policies for racial bias.** I direct the Services to review all appearance standards and policies and make appropriate policy modifications NLT September 15, 2020.
- **Review effectiveness of Military Service equal opportunity offices.** To supplement data obtained through the *Workplace and Equal Opportunity* survey, I direct the Military Service Inspectors General to initiate a review, NLT September 1, 2020, to assess the effectiveness of Military Service equal opportunity offices and other applicable offices, in responding to equal opportunity issues and to make recommendations based on their findings.
- **Support Military Department initiatives.** To synchronize efforts and appropriately allocate resources, I direct the Secretaries of the Military Department to provide me a status report on the implementation of the immediate actions they identified within their components NLT August 15, 2020, and to provide me updates monthly thereafter through December 2020.

The success of our military mission depends on a disciplined and lethal force prepared to defend our country and our Constitution. There is no greater mission and no greater calling. When our Nation's young men and women volunteer to join the U.S. Armed Forces, they do so

to be a part of this critical mission, but also to be a part of a military “family” that spans over 10 generations. It is a bond that is revered, enduring, and essential to our integrity and all we do. As a military, we succeed by working together, hand in hand, side by side. Diversity and inclusivity in the ranks are not merely aspirations, they are fundamental necessities to our readiness and our mission success.

The actions I am directing are a necessary first step, but hard work remains, and we will continue to learn as we move forward. Shifting culture requires steadfast attention; these actions will maximize our efforts to ensure a diverse workforce at all levels, an inclusive environment, and equal opportunity for all who serve.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark T. Esper". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a prominent initial "M".