

Opening Statement
Chairman James R. Langevin
Intelligence and Emerging Threats and Capabilities Subcommittee
Reviewing Department of Defense Strategy, Policy, and Programs for Countering
Weapons of Mass Destruction for Fiscal Year 2020
April 3, 2019

The subcommittee will come to order. Welcome to today's hearing on Reviewing Department of Defense Strategy, Policy, and Programs for Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction (CWMD) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2020.

This past year, both Russia and North Korea famously employed chemical weapon nerve agents in England and Malaysia, respectively. In Syria, pro-regime and ISIS forces have continued to use chemical weapons on civilian populations since 2013 to achieve their tactical and strategic objectives. The President's recent decision to withdraw from the Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty could open the possibility of proliferation of intermediate-range and shorter-range missiles. Emerging capabilities in biotechnology may allow individuals acting with nefarious intent – or even just by chance – to produce biological agents in a scope and scale not yet encountered. And more emerging capabilities like cyber and hypersonics, among others, threaten to exacerbate the complexity of the world's WMD threats.

In 2014, the Department approved its Strategy for CWMD which outlined three end-states – no new actors possess WMD, no WMD use, and minimization of WMD effects - with associated objectives and lines of effort. The strategy notes fiscal constraints will require that the Department make strategic choices and

accept some risk, but rogue actors and technological advances still challenge the strategy's goal of ensuring that "the US. and its allies and partners are not attacked or coerced by adversaries possessing WMD."

Today we will hear from five of the major players in the Department who develop CWMD policies, oversee and execute CWMD programs, and coordinate the Department's CWMD efforts.

We welcome today Dr. D. Christian Hassell, the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Chemical and Biological Defense who is here today for the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Nuclear, Chemical and Biological Defense Programs in the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment, and we thank him for stepping in. This office is responsible for developing capabilities to detect, protect against, and respond to WMD threats; ensuring DoD compliance with nuclear, chemical, and biological treaties and agreements; continuing to work with allies and partners to strengthen our collective CWMD capabilities; and advancing the United States' nonproliferation goals.

Next, we welcome Ms. Theresa Whelan who is the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and Global Security the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy. The ASD HDGS is responsible for developing policy guidance; providing policy advice; and overseeing planning, capability development, and operational implementation to assure warfighting and national security advantages in the mission areas of: CWMD; Cyber; Space; and Defense Support of Civil Authorities, among others. The ASD HDGS also supervises the Department's Homeland Defense activities.

Ms. Whelan, we thank you for acting on behalf of Assistant Secretary Rapuano today, who is currently down the hall testifying at our Strategic Forces subcommittee's Space hearing. He was recently before this subcommittee testifying about cyber. Clearly, he's got a big portfolio. We look forward to hearing about the Department's current CWMD policies from you, including:

- how the Department is ensuring that its Cooperative Threat Reduction programs, which have achieved notable accomplishments in the past, are oriented to address today's threats;
- and how the Department is thinking about cyber, opioids, and other non-traditional materials and capabilities that could be used to cause mass destruction.

Over the last few years since the strategy was released, the Department has taken some initial steps to strengthen CWMD efforts since the strategy was released. In 2017, Special Operations Command (SOCOM) was designated as the Coordinating Authority for CWMD.

Today, we will hear from Vice Admiral Timothy Szymanski, the Deputy Commander of SOCOM, about how the command is leveraging best practices from its traditional missions and lessons learned in its Coordinating Authority role for countering violent extremism to reinvigorate and integrate CWMD awareness, planning, capacity, and capability across the Department and with the interagency. Welcome, Admiral.

Finally, we welcome Director Vayl Oxford from the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, the execution arm that falls within Secretary Robert's ASD(NCB) office. Before departing, Secretary Mattis approved a new mission statement for DTRA, redirecting the mission from countering and deterring WMD and improvised explosive device threats to countering WMD and improvised threat *networks*. This, and DTRA's participation in the counter Unmanned Aerial System mission, are substantial evolutions. I am interested in understanding where this agency fits into the Department's CWMD organization today and what effects this change is having on your core mission responsibilities. Director Oxford, we welcome you and look forward to hearing about the changes.

Together, these individuals hold positions that comprise the bulk of assigned roles and responsibilities associated with aligning CWMD policy to strategy and programs, executing CWMD programs, and delivering current and future personal protective equipment and other CWMD capabilities to our warfighters.

In the last few years the CWMD bureaucracy has evolved as the Department has reorganized. In addition to the movement of the CWMD mission from U.S. Strategic Command to USSOCOM, in section 901 of the FY17 NDAA Congress split the former Under Secretary for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics into two positions, the Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering and the Under Secretary for Acquisition and Sustainment in the hopes of simplifying and focusing the responsibilities of each.

The split of USD(AT&L) into two Under Secretariats serves as both an opportunity, and a potential area of risk, to the CWMD effort. Though both ASD(NCB) and DTRA fall under USD(A&S), there must continue to be coordination within all elements of the Office of Secretary of Defense on CWMD, including with the USD(R&E). This is especially true for the science and technology investment and research and development portfolio so characteristic of DTRA's past focus. There must also be continued focus on, and prioritization of, CWMD by all those with assigned roles and responsibilities, especially considering connected roles and responsibilities of each of your offices. We are looking forward to hearing how the CWMD Unity of Effort Council is operating.

To that end, the Fiscal Year 2019 NDAA included a section mandating that the Secretary of Defense designate a Principal Advisor on CWMD to coordinate the CWMD activities of the Department. Additionally, it directed the development of a plan to streamline the oversight framework of OSD; that plan was to focus on any efficiencies that could be realized and the potential to reduce, realign, or otherwise restructure current ASD and Deputy ASD positions with responsibilities for overseeing CWMD policy, programs, and activities. It also directed a report on these and related efforts be submitted with the FY20 budget. We look forward to hearing about where these all stand today.

Finally, I am concerned that due to almost two decades of war in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria, our preparedness for a significant state-level WMD event has atrophied. A few years ago, General Scaparrotti said that he believed we were unprepared, and the Congress has expressed its continued dissatisfaction with our preparedness for such an event, and whether our troops

are trained and equipped to operate in a contaminated environment. Thus, the FY19 NDAA directed the Department to submit an assessment on material shortfalls in United States Forces Korea for chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear defenses. GAO has just begun work on this project.

In closing, there is much work to be done to strengthen CWMD policy, programs, and preparedness. I said as much when I testified before the Blue Ribbon Study Panel on Biodefense in February, and I commend the Panel and others who have continued to highlight the unique challenges posed by technologies that can cause indiscriminate destruction on a wide scale. Congress has an important role to play as well, and our focus today on understanding the 2014 strategy in the context of today's threat landscape, the budget request's alignment to the current strategy, and how the Department's strategy and end-states are consistent with a national level strategy and whole-of-government effort, will help ensure effective oversight going forward.

I look forward to hearing from our witnesses on the FY20 CWMD request and note that following this discussion, we will continue in a closed, classified, follow-on hearing.