



# Department of Defense **DIRECTIVE**

**NUMBER 5160.41E**  
August 21, 2015

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USD(P&R)

**SUBJECT:** Defense Language, Regional Expertise, and Culture Program (DLRECP)

**References:** See Enclosure 1

1. PURPOSE. This directive:

- a. Reissues DoD Directive (DoDD) 5160.41E (Reference (a)) to establish DLRECP policy and assign responsibilities.
- b. Incorporates language, regional expertise, and culture as elements of the DLRECP.
- c. Provides guidance for the biennial Capabilities Based Review (CBR) and development, distribution, and update of the DoD Strategic Language List (SLL).
- d. Designates the Secretary of the Army as the DoD Executive Agent (EA) for both the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center (DLIFLC) and the Contract Linguist Program in accordance with DoDD 5101.1 (Reference (b)).
- e. Designates the Secretary of the Air Force as the DoD EA for the Defense Language Institute English Language Center (DLIELC) in accordance with Reference (b).
- f. Establishes the Defense Language Steering Committee (DLSC) and updates members' responsibilities.

2. APPLICABILITY

- a. This directive applies to OSD, the Military Departments, the Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) and the Joint Staff, the Combatant Commands (CCMDs), the Office of the Inspector General of the Department of Defense, the Defense Agencies, the DoD Field Activities, and all other organizational entities within the DoD (referred to collectively in this directive as the "DoD Components").

b. Nothing in this directive will inhibit the roles and responsibilities of the Inspector General of the Department of Defense in accordance with Appendix to Title 5, United States Code (known as the “Inspector General Act of 1978”) (Reference (c)).

3. POLICY. It is DoD policy that:

a. Foreign language skills, regional expertise, and cultural capabilities are enduring critical competencies essential to the DoD mission and must be managed to maximize the accession, development, sustainment, enhancement, and employment of these critical skills to the DoD mission.

(1) All DoD personnel will be screened upon entering federal service for foreign language proficiency.

(2) The study, maintenance, and employment of proficiency in critical languages by DoD personnel are encouraged with monetary and non-monetary incentives such as:

(a) The Secretaries of the Military Departments may pay a foreign language proficiency bonus to their active duty and Reserve Component members who are certified proficient in a foreign language, in accordance with DoD Instruction 1340.27 (Reference (d)).

(b) The Secretaries of the Military Departments may pay a Senior Reserve Officers Training Corps foreign language skill proficiency bonus for cadets and midshipmen, in accordance with Reference (d).

(c) Defense Civilian Intelligence Personnel System foreign language pay for civilian personnel performing intelligence duties who are certified proficient in a foreign language, in accordance with Volume 2006 of DoD Instruction 1400.25 (Reference (e)). Other defense civilian personnel performing non-intelligence duties who are certified proficient in a foreign language may be eligible for foreign language pay in accordance with Reference (e).

(d) The Secretaries of the Military Departments may authorize time for self-managed and classroom facilitated skill maintenance and enhancement of language skills in continuing education programs such as DoD Language Training Centers and the Reserve Officers’ Training Corps Language Flagship and Project Global Officer, in accordance with section 529 of Public Law 111-84 (Reference (f)) and section 535 of Public Law 109-163 (Reference (g)) or access to technology-based language maintenance and enhancement products and tools.

(3) Military and DoD civilian personnel deploying to foreign territories must possess or have access to an appropriate capability to communicate in the languages of the territories of deployment and at least have a rudimentary understanding of the region and associated culture(s).

(4) As mission dictates, the DoD will make full use of available language proficiency, regional expertise, and cultural capabilities without regard to Service or DoD agency affiliation, consistent with law and DoD policy.

(5) Centralized oversight of human language technology (HLT) and other automated language translation tools system research, development, and acquisition will promote a coherent DoD-wide program advancing cross language communication to avoid duplication.

(6) The DLSC will recommend initiatives to improve language proficiency, regional expertise, and cultural capability development across the DoD. Both military and select civilian personnel receive region and culture education and training to meet mission requirements.

(7) The implementation of the policies and procedures in this directive ensures the protection of an individual's privacy in the collection, use, maintenance, and distribution of personally identifiable information as required by DoDD 5400.11(Reference (h)) and DoD 5400.11-R (Reference (i)).

b. The DoD will support partner nation security force efforts to increase their proficiency in the English language to facilitate communication.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES. See Enclosure 2.

5. RELEASABILITY. **Cleared for public release**. This directive is available on the Internet from the DoD Issuances Website at <http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives>.

6. EFFECTIVE DATE. This directive is effective August 21, 2015.



Robert O. Work  
Deputy Secretary of Defense

Enclosures

1. References
2. Responsibilities
3. DLSC Organization

Glossary

ENCLOSURE 1

REFERENCES

- (a) DoD Directive 5160.41E, “Defense Language Program,” October 21, 2005, as amended (hereby cancelled)
- (b) DoD Directive 5101.1, “DoD Executive Agent,” September 3, 2002, as amended
- (c) Title 5, United States Code (Appendix also known as the “Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended”)
- (d) DoD Instruction 1340.27, “Military Foreign Language Skill Proficiency Bonuses,” May 21, 2013
- (e) DoD Instruction 1400.25, Volume 2006, “DoD Civilian Personnel Management System: Defense Civilian Intelligence Personnel Compensation Administration,” March 3, 2012, as amended
- (f) Section 529 of Public Law 111-84, “The National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2010,” October 28, 2009
- (g) Section 535 of Public Law 109-163, “The National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2006,” January 6, 2006
- (h) DoD Directive 5400.11, “DoD Privacy Program,” October 29, 2014
- (i) DoD 5400.11-R, “Department of Defense Privacy Program,” May 14, 2007
- (j) DoD Directive 5143.01, “Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence (USD(I)),” October 24, 2014, as amended
- (k) Federal Government Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) Skill Level Descriptions<sup>1</sup>
- (l) DoD Instruction 5160.70 “Management of DoD Language and Regional Proficiency Capabilities,” June 12, 2007

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<sup>1</sup> Available at <http://www.govtilr.org/>

ENCLOSURE 2

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. USD(P&R). The USD(P&R):

- a. Provides overall policy guidance for the DLRECP.
- b. Consults with the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics (USD(AT&L)) on multi-language technology efforts.
- c. Consistent with Reference (b), serves as the OSD Principal Staff Assistant for and oversees:
  - (1) The Secretary of the Army as the DoD EA for DLIFLC and the DoD EA for the Contract Linguist Program.
  - (2) The Secretary of the Air Force as the DoD EA for the DLIELC.
- d. Oversees the DLSC. Designates a general officer or flag officer (GO/FO) or Senior Executive Service (SES) member in writing to serve as the DoD Senior Language Authority (SLA) and chair of the DLSC.
- e. Conducts biennial CBR in coordination with the Secretaries of the Military Departments, the CJCS, the USD(AT&L), the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (USD(P)), the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence (USD(I)) and select Defense Agencies (listed in section 7 of this enclosure) to identify DoD language capability needs based on national security strategy. Reviews plans for addressing resource needs to meet DoD language capabilities. Provides results from this review to inform the development of the DoD SLL.
- f. Develops and maintains personnel systems with accurate data on all DoD personnel with formally assessed and self-reported foreign language proficiency, regional expertise, and cultural capabilities. Classified personnel data will be maintained in a classified system.
- g. Develops and publishes a DoD SLL and updates it as required, in coordination with the USD(P), the USD(I), the CJCS, the Combatant Commanders, and the Secretaries of the Military Departments.
- h. Manages and oversees the DoD Language Readiness Index to track foreign language capabilities and requirements.

2. USD(AT&L). The USD(AT&L):

- a. Designates a representative as defined in the Glossary to serve on the DLSC.

b. Oversees research, development, testing, evaluation, and acquisition of multi-language technology to be employed with the operating forces and coordinates these efforts with the USD(P&R) and the USD(I).

c. Consults with the USD(P&R), the USD(I), the CJCS, the Secretaries of the Military Departments, and the directors of the Defense Agencies to identify HLT needs. Guides research, development, and acquisition of automated language translation system capabilities.

d. Oversees development of HLT and other automated language translation tools system research, development, and acquisition to promote a coherent DoD-wide program that advances cross language communication and avoids duplication.

3. USD(P). The USD(P):

a. Designates a representative as defined in the Glossary to serve on the DLSC.

b. Provides, in coordination with the USD(P&R), the USD(I), the CJCS, and the Secretaries of the Military Departments, national security strategy advice to the CBRs and updates of the DoD SLL.

4. USD(I). The USD(I):

a. Designates a representative as defined in the Glossary to serve on the DLSC.

b. Exercises policy oversight of personnel in defense intelligence positions to ensure that DoD intelligence, counterintelligence, and security components possess the necessary foreign language proficiencies in support of intelligence mission requirements, in coordination with representatives from the Secretaries of the Military Departments and the directors of the defense intelligence combat support agencies.

c. Oversees and coordinates with the USD(AT&L) on research, development, testing, evaluation, and acquisition of HLT to be employed within the Defense Intelligence Components.

5. UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE (COMPTROLLER)/CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER, DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE (USD(C)/CFO). The USD(C)/CFO designates a representative as defined in the Glossary to serve on the DLSC.

6. DIRECTOR, COST ASSESSMENT AND PROGRAM EVALUATION (DCAPE). The DCAPE:

a. Designates a representative as defined in the Glossary to serve on the DLSC.

- b. Maintains separate OSD program elements (PEs) for DLIFLC and for DLIELC.

7. DIRECTORS OF THE DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE AGENCY (DIA), NATIONAL GEOSPATIAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY (NGA), DEFENSE THREAT REDUCTION AGENCY (DTRA), AND DEFENSE SECURITY COOPERATION AGENCY (DSCA), AND DIRECTOR, NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY/CHIEF, CENTRAL SECURITY SERVICE (DIRNSA/CHCSS).

a. The Defense Agency directors in this section are under the authority, direction, and control of the following OSD Component heads:

- (1) USD(I). The Directors of DIA and NGA, and DIRNSA/CHCSS.
- (2) USD(AT&L). Director, DTRA.
- (3) USD(P). Director, DSCA.

b. The Directors of DIA, NGA, DTRA, and DSCA and the DIRNSA/CHCSS:

- (1) Designate an individual to serve as an SLA as defined in the Glossary.
- (2) Build, train, and maintain an appropriate level of foreign language qualified civilian personnel as well as personnel with the requisite levels of regional expertise and cultural capabilities.
- (3) Screen their civilian personnel upon entering federal service and periodically for foreign language capabilities and forward results to the appropriate personnel system.
- (4) Establish technical requirements for appropriate levels of foreign language proficiency, regional expertise, and cultural capabilities and specialized training programs to meet mission requirements.
- (5) Develop an agency-specific program to provide both military and select civilian personnel with regional and cultural training to better understand the global environment in which the DoD operates and improve their ability to successfully work with international partners. These programs will not replace or employ programmed and appropriated funds for developing foreign language capabilities.
- (6) Determine requirements and research, develop, test, evaluate, acquire, and integrate HLT tools that support multi-discipline collection, analysis, and production. Provide HLT usage and developments to oversight organizations as appropriate.

8. SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS. The Secretaries of the Military Departments:

- a. Designate an individual to serve as an SLA as defined in the Glossary. The Secretary of the Navy designates one individual each from the Navy and Marine Corps.
- b. Organize, train, and equip the force to meet operational requirements for language proficiency, regional expertise, and cultural capabilities.
- c. Screen all military personnel upon entering federal service and periodically for foreign language proficiency and regional expertise and forward results to the appropriate personnel system.
- d. Monitor the organization's accession, retention, attrition, and promotion of language professionals to identify trends or anomalies.
- e. Set language, regional, and cultural standards for leaders of deploying units and staffs supporting deployments to ensure all personnel that deploy to overseas regions receive training to meet their mission responsibilities.
- f. Develop a Service-specific program to provide military and select civilian personnel with regional and cultural training to meet mission requirements.
- g. Build relevant career models for officer and enlisted personnel that leads to greater retention by personnel with foreign language proficiency, regional expertise, and cultural capabilities to meet mission requirements.
- h. Ensure that all foreign language, regional, and cultural education and training of personnel is tracked and documented in Service personnel and training systems and made available to the Defense Readiness Reporting System.
- i. Comply with collective bargaining obligations as applicable.
- j. Determine requirements and research, develop, test, evaluate, acquire, and integrate HLT tools that support multi-discipline collection, analysis, and intelligence production. In coordination with the USD(P&R) and the USD(AT&L), collaborate between the Military Services and other government agencies as appropriate to ensure common data standards and avoid duplication of effort.

9. SECRETARY OF THE ARMY. In addition to the responsibilities in section 8 of this enclosure, the Secretary of the Army:

- a. As the DoD EA for DLIFLC:



(1) Plans, programs, budgets, funds, and executes resources to meet the DoD mission requirements of DLIFLC in coordination with the DoD SLA. Coordinates with the DoD SLA, the USD(I) (as resource sponsor for Military Intelligence Program (MIP)/National Intelligence Program (NIP)), the Secretaries of the Military Departments, and USD(P&R) before modifying DLIFLC funding or resources. Maintains a PE to program for and accounts for execution of resources for DLIFLC.

(2) Nominates the Commandant, DLIFLC, to the USD(P&R) for approval before assignment.

b. As the DoD EA for the Contract Linguist Program:

(1) Oversees all contracts established specifically for contract linguist foreign language support provided to the DoD Components except for combat support agencies and United States Special Operations Command.

(2) Executes policy and procedures and validates contract linguist support requirements, including the resourcing of such requirements and oversight of program and funding execution.

(3) Documents all contracts relevant to contract linguist management, and the contract linguist enterprise data base.

(4) May grant other exceptions for direct contracting of language services under memorandums of agreement consistent with law and DoD regulations.

(5) Establishes procedures for the DoD Components to submit requests for contract language support.

(6) Ensures that DoD policies for counterintelligence and security screening are followed for all language services contracted.

10. SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE. In addition to the responsibilities in section 8 of this enclosure and in his or her capacity as DoD EA for the DLIELC, the Secretary of the Air Force:

a. Plans, programs, budgets, funds, and executes resources to meet the DoD mission requirements of DLIELC in coordination with the DoD SLA. Coordinates with the DoD SLA, USD(I) (as resource sponsor for MIP/NIP), the Secretaries of the Military Departments, and USD(P&R) before modifying DLIELC funding or resources. Maintains a PE to program for and accounts for execution of resources for DLIELC.

b. Nominates an individual to serve as the Commandant, DLIELC, for USD(P&R) approval before assignment.

11. CJCS. The CJCS:

- a. Designates an individual to serve as an SLA as defined in the Glossary.
- b. Develops employment doctrine and oversees a planning process to ensure the consideration of foreign language proficiency, regional expertise, and cultural capability requirements in operational and contingency plans.
- c. Provides planning guidance to the Combatant Commanders to enable consideration of foreign language proficiency, regional expertise, and cultural capability requirements in operational planning.
- d. Recommends to the Secretary of Defense, in coordination with the USD(P&R), the USD(I), and the USD(P), ways to make full use of available capabilities during times of operational necessity without regard to Service or DoD agency affiliation.
- e. Screens all civilian personnel under his or her cognizance upon entering federal service and periodically for foreign language, regional expertise, and cultural capability, and forwards results to the appropriate personnel system.
- f. Develops a staff-specific program to provide select civilian personnel with culture training.

12. COMBATANT COMMANDERS. The Combatant Commanders:

- a. Designate an individual to serve as an SLA as defined in the Glossary.
- b. Dedicate sufficient support staff for the SLA to identify language, regional expertise, and cultural requirements and address related issues.
- c. Incorporate language needs into operational and contingency plans. Plans will include the capacity to surge foreign language proficiency, regional expertise, and cultural capabilities beyond organic capabilities as appropriate.
- d. Screen their civilian personnel upon entering federal service and periodically for foreign language skills and forward results to the appropriate personnel system.
- e. Determine the appropriate foreign language, regional expertise, and cultural capabilities requirements, based on the current situation and circumstances, for personnel deploying to their area of responsibility.

ENCLOSURE 3

DLSC ORGANIZATION

1. DLSC MEMBERSHIP. The DLSC:

a. Consists of:

(1) GO/FO or SES (or equivalent) representatives from the Offices of the USD(P), USD(I), USD(C)/CFO, USD(AT&L), and DCAPE.

(2) SLAs from the CCMDs, Joint Staff, the Military Departments, DIA, DSCA, DTRA, National Security Agency/Central Security Service (NSA/CSS), and NGA.

b. Is chaired by the DoD SLA.

2. DLSC PURPOSE. The DLSC:

a. Advises and recommends to the USD(P&R) policy and initiatives to improve the full spectrum of foreign language proficiency, regional expertise, and cultural capability development across the DoD.

b. Meets quarterly or when directed by the DoD SLA. Sets a formal agenda that coordinates recommended changes and updates to policies affecting DoD foreign language, regional expertise, and cultural capabilities.

c. Reviews and provides recommendations on present and emerging foreign language, regional expertise, and cultural capability needs for DoD personnel.

d. Reviews and provides recommendations to USD(P&R) on foreign language, regional expertise, and cultural capability training, education, personnel, and financial requirements.

e. Serves as an advisory board to the USD(P&R) for the DLIFLC and the DLIELC.

3. COMMANDANT OF DLIFLC. The Commandant of DLIFLC:

a. Executes standardization, testing, research and development, and evaluation of foreign language training, education, and related services for language professionals and general purpose forces within the DoD.

b. Exercises direct liaison authority with the DoD SLA and the Defense Language and National Security Education Office (DLNSEO).

c. Staffs requests for support and resource requirements and issues through the DoD EA of the DLIFLC to the USD(P&R).

d. Staffs resource requirements involving MIP/NIP through the USD(I).

e. Serves as technical advisor to the DLSC.

4. COMMANDANT OF DLIELC. The Commandant of DLIELC:

a. Executes the standardization, testing, research and development, and evaluation of English language training, education, and related services within the DoD.

b. Meets English language, regional expertise, cultural education, and operational training needs of the DoD.

c. Provides operational services and management oversight of grant-in-aid international English language programs conducted under security assistance.

d. Exercises direct liaison authority with the DoD SLA and the DLNSEO.

e. Staffs requests for support and resource requirements and issues through the DoD EA of DLIELC to the USD(P&R).

f. Serves as technical advisor to the DLSC.

GLOSSARY

PART I. ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

|              |  |
|--------------|--|
| CBR          | capabilities based review  |
| CCMD         | Combatant Command  |
| CJCS         | Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff                              |
|              |  |
| DCAPE        | Director Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation                    |
| DIA          | Defense Intelligence Agency  |
| DIRNSA/CHCSS | Director, National Security Agency/Chief, Central Security Service |
| DLIELC       | Defense Language Institute English Language Center                 |
| DLIFLC       | Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center                 |
| DLNSEO       | Defense Language and National Security Education Office            |
| DLRECP       | Defense Language, Regional Expertise, and Culture Program          |
| DLSC         | Defense Language Steering Committee                                |
| DoDD         | DoD Directive  |
| DSCA         | Defense Security Cooperation Agency                                |
| DTRA         | Defense Threat Reduction Agency                                    |
|              |  |
| EA           | Executive Agent  |
|              |  |
| GO/FO        | general officer or flag officer                                    |
|              |  |
| HLT          | human language technology  |
|              |  |
| MIP          | Military Intelligence Program                                      |
|              |  |
| NGA          | National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency                            |
| NIP          | National Intelligence Program                                      |
| NSA/CSS      | National Security Agency/Central Security Services                 |
|              |  |
| PE           | program element  |
|              |  |
| SES          | Senior Executive Service   |
| SLA          | senior language authority  |

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| SLL        | Strategic Language List  |
| USD(AT&L)  | Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics                      |
| USD(C)/CFO | Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller)/Chief Financial Officer,<br>Department of Defense |
| USD(I)     | Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence  |
| USD(P)     | Under Secretary of Defense for Policy  |
| USD(P&R)   | Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness                                     |

## PART II. DEFINITIONS

Unless otherwise noted, these terms and their definitions are for the purpose of this directive.

contract linguist. A person hired to fill any contract position primarily because of their ability to listen, read, speak, or write in a foreign language, except those hired specifically to conduct foreign language instruction.

cultural capabilities. The skills and knowledge that enable personnel to adapt and function effectively in any culture to achieve mission success. Includes culture-general capabilities that promote effective development and use of regional expertise.

Defense Intelligence Components. All DoD organizations that perform National Intelligence, Defense Intelligence, and intelligence-related functions, including: the DIA, the NGA, the National Reconnaissance Office, the NSA/CSS, and the intelligence elements of the Active and Reserve Components of the Military Departments, including the United States Coast Guard when operating as a service in the Department of the Navy. The offices and staffs of the senior intelligence officers of the CCMD Headquarters are designated as Defense Intelligence Components in accordance with DoDD 5143.01 (Reference (j)).

DoD Language Readiness Index. A strategic, near real-time web-based tool that enables the management of DoD language and available regional expertise capabilities and requirements for DoD. It captures and compares language capabilities against requirements to identify the gaps in the Total Force that allows senior leaders to make informed decisions, develop risk assessments, mitigation measures, and shape the future force.

DoD personnel. All military (Active Component and Reserve Component) members and DoD civilian employees.

DoD SLA. A GO/FO or SES member appointed in writing by the USD(P&R) to chair the DLSC.

HLT. A range of technologies that process human natural language data in a variety of ways to address the needs of human analysts and translators or for other computer applications. Examples include but are not limited to: optical character recognition; speech recognition to take

audio input and convert it to written language; foreign language dictionaries for specialized strategic areas; machine translation for critical foreign languages with few or no human translators; and information extraction (e.g., identifying foreign names, places, and organizations).

language professional. A person who is certified in a foreign language proficiency of at least skill level 2 (as identified in the Federal Government Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) Skill Level Descriptions (Reference (k)) in two of the three modalities (listening, reading, and speaking) in one or more foreign languages, and who requires that foreign language to perform his or her primary function.

language proficiency. The continuum—from memorized proficiency to functionally native proficiency—that describes the ability of an individual to function in the reading, listening, and speaking modalities of a foreign language as assessed by the U.S. Government Interagency Language Roundtable proficiency rating scale.

regional expertise. Knowledge about a specific region of the world that focuses on but is not limited to the political, historical, cultural, sociological, economic, and geographic factors of that region.

regional proficiency. The continuum—from pre-novice to expert—of knowledge and application thereof with regard to a defined region of the world, including but not limited to the political, historical, cultural, sociological, economic, and geographic factors (as outlined by the Regional Proficiency guidelines in DoD Instruction 5160.70 (Reference (l))).

representative. A GO/FO or SES member who represents their Component at DLSC meetings. The representative must have direct access to their Component’s senior leadership, understand the force-wide programmatic and policy implications of the DLRECP and articulate, advocate, and defend their Component equities as they pertain to force-wide policy and resourcing activities.

screened. The process to document a member’s capabilities in foreign language, regional proficiency, and culture, as an official part of a military or civilian personnel record.

SLA. An individual at the GO/FO, SES, or equivalent level designated in writing by the head of the Military Departments, Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, CCMDs, and Defense Agencies to represent their organization’s equities in the DLRECP and participate in the DLSC. The SLA must have direct access to their component’s senior leadership and understand the joint capabilities in foreign language, regional, and culture capability needs of his or her component. SLAs are responsible for drafting, coordinating, and executing their organizations’ language, regional expertise, and culture capability strategic plans and for overseeing capability allocation and utilization policies within their component.

SLL. The list of languages that present the greatest utility toward achieving U.S. national security interests, near and far term. It informs the DoD’s foreign language planning and helps direct resources for training, testing, incentivizing, recruiting, and manning.