



March Message to the DoD Team

Team, I begin this month's message with a sobering statistic: Monday through Thursday every week in our department, we experience a non-combat fatality. While we know combat will always carry inherent risks, we must commit to achieving zero *non-combat* fatalities. Zero is possible when we believe it is possible. Safety is a mindset. This is a collective and individual responsibility, and I ask all hands to help their own. As you do, never forget that we are one DoD family. We have to look out for one another – outside the wire or on base, stateside or overseas. Thank you in advance for your heightened effort here.

Budget: Last week, President Trump signed an omnibus spending bill that funds the government for the remainder of this fiscal year. This law – along with the two-year budget agreement passed in February's Bipartisan Budget Act – provides the budgetary certainty the Department of Defense needs to implement the 2018 National Defense Strategy. In short, Congress has given us the resources we need to do our jobs. Now, as Secretary Mattis wrote in his memo to the department, it is “contingent on us to gain full value from every taxpayer dollar spent on defense.”

We want *everyone* – from every team and from every level of leadership – committed to the wise allocation of our financial resources. This means establishing a culture of performance and accountability on every expenditure. America needs our two million team members to embrace financial stewardship as never before, and that's what we're going to do.

National Defense Strategy Implementation: If you have not read the [2018 National Defense Strategy](#), you should take the time to do so now. This is our plan to defend America. Read every word. Internalize our three lines of effort. We are bringing this strategy to action, and we need your help to do it.

Since this strategy encompasses our entire department, everyone has a role to play. Find your contribution and take the initiative. Don't wait. We have an opportunity to leverage the reform of our department to achieve better outcomes – a more lethal force, a more affordable security, a safer America.

In support of these outcomes, we are executing our budget in a way that expands the competitive space and makes it harder for any competitor to consider challenging us. This month, we recognize the outstanding contributions of **John 'Jay' Burdon**, **Roy Esperancilla**, and **Colonel Kenyatte Booker of J35 South** for their work enabling innovation in the Global Force Management – Data Initiative. To the J35 South team, we say 'well done.'

Senior Civilian Leader Offsite: Earlier this month, senior civilian leaders in our department gathered to hear Secretary Mattis' vision for developing leadership within DoD. One key observation he shared was this: “Organizations and institutions get the behavior they reward.” As we move forward and implement America's National Defense Strategy, I ask you to apply this concept to your DoD team. What behavior does your team reward? Is it the kind we need to bring our National Defense Strategy to action? If not, how can you change it?

As always, thank you for what you do. I remain incredibly proud to serve alongside you.

-Pat