



## April Message to the DoD Team

Team, this month we continue to drive towards military readiness. As we determine how best to spend the funds Congress has appropriated to the Department this fiscal year, we must keep in mind our duty to spend responsibly every cent of the hard-earned tax dollars entrusted to us. We remain committed to achieving high performance levels as we do so, all while driving along the strategic priorities identified in our National Defense Strategy.

You are in a unique position to help us move the needle on readiness. Think about what this means and go beyond the bumper sticker slogan. Whether you are developing contracts; performing maintenance on our ships, aircraft, or weapons systems; or training on the flight line, you have the insight the Department needs to make the most efficient and effective decisions. Therefore, how we communicate and collaborate is essential for bringing readiness to fruition.

Sustainable readiness does not come from a leadership memo. It comes from those who step away from their desks to reconfirm priorities. It comes from those who investigate purchases that do not align with those priorities. It comes from those who raise new ideas and engage in discussion about best practices and ways to move our Department forward. It comes from you.

Many of you are already leading the readiness charge. Next week, the Department will honor our 2017 OSD Senior and Junior Enlisted Service Members of the Year for their efforts. SFC(P) Brian DeMeio, the Armed Forces Radiobiological Research Institute Safety Officer, conducted audits of almost 500 sites, ensuring the safety of more than 300 employees. His work resulted in zero significant injuries or lost work hours, allowing the organization to remain mission-focused. TSgt Matthew Scully at the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency's (DPAA) Surgeon's Office oversaw medical readiness requirements for more than 2,000 individuals across three theaters of operations and 350 DPAA-assigned personnel. Congratulations to both of you for this well-deserved recognition, and thank you for keeping readiness efforts at the forefront of your work.

Our commitment to readiness also demands we understand our Department's strategic priorities in the context of today's security environment. We can't win tomorrow's conflicts with yesterday's training or understanding. Seize opportunities to expand your knowledge. This month, ADM Harry Harris, our PACOM Commander, recommended a book to the Department's senior leaders – "Silent Invasion," by Clive Hamilton. I look forward to reading it, and I pass his recommendation onto you with the request that you never stop exchanging ideas with one another. Develop your own reading lists. Keep a pulse on the world around us. Stay engaged.

In honor of the Month of the Military Child, I ask that you also reinforce another key factor for readiness – the resilience of our families. I was reminded of just how critical this component is during OSD Policy's Kids Day yesterday. Our families' support allows us to remain focused on our mission, and I thank them for the vital role they play in ensuring our Nation's security.

As we close out the month, remember that seemingly small, everyday decisions can have a significant impact on readiness. The large decisions matter, but we cannot lose sight of the importance of our collective efforts. A million small decisions keep our Department running and make our military the most lethal in the world. If we keep this in mind, our results will be staggering.

As always, thank you for your commitment to this Department and to this country. I remain proud to serve alongside each and every one of you.

- Pat