



January Message to the DoD Team

This month, our department released the first [National Defense Strategy](#) (NDS) in ten years. The result of months of comprehensive planning and a clear-eyed assessment of our international security environment, the NDS directs how we as a department will accomplish the president's National Security Strategy. This document is our guide: it will drive our plans, resources, organization, and activities; it also prioritizes threats, as well as the missions and timeframes we'll use to meet them.

As Secretary Mattis made clear when he announced the strategy, great power competition is now our primary effort. We will enhance **lethality** to compete with nations as different as Russia and China; we will also deter and address challenges from North Korea, Iran, terrorism, and hedge for uncertainty. As we go, we'll develop a resource-sustainable approach by working "by, with, and through" our **allies and partners**. We'll bring **business reforms** to the department to better leverage performance and affordability while going after the bureaucratic excess that hurts our force. We will deliver lethality, unpredictability, and affordability at the speed of relevance. We will do this at speed, recognizing that we cannot afford to wait.

Success requires all of us to have a winning mindset, regardless of the jobs we hold. We need everyone at full capacity to outthink our competitors and, ultimately, outmaneuver them. We are relying on you to maintain and grow our competitive advantage.

Across your teams, be agile. Be willing to fail fast – and *learn*. Abandon losing propositions and adopt new practices. To the best you are able, prepare the environment, gain the initiative, and develop sustainable advantages. Remember, we will be held accountable for successfully implementing this strategy. We own this.

As we deliver on this strategy, we must always be good stewards of the tax dollars entrusted to us. Results and accountability matter. To quote Secretary Mattis, "our watchwords are solvency and security, ensuring that we earn the trust of Congress and the American taxpayer."

Fully aware that organizations get the behavior they reward, we are going to recognize creativity and innovation. We're going to tell everyone every time you get it right. To that end, we acknowledge the hard work and strategic vision of Mr. Chris Dougherty, Lieutenant Colonel "Buzz" Phillips, and Mr. Jim Mitre from Strategy and Force Development (in OSD Policy). They worked countless hours during the seven months leading up to the release of the Department's National Defense Strategy, developing the language for the classified strategy while coordinating with the White House to ensure we are aligned with the National Security Strategy. Congrats on a job well done.

The size of the Department gives us some incredible advantages. With 2 million military and civilian employees, we're unstoppable when we are all on the same page. With the release of our strategy, we've got our marching orders—now let's get to it.

As always, thank you for your relentless efforts in defense of our nation.

It is an honor to serve alongside you,
-Pat