



## DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

1010 DEFENSE PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1010

DEC - 3 2020

MEMORANDUM FOR CHIEF MANAGEMENT OFFICER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF  
DEFENSE  
CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF  
UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR POLICY  
UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE (COMPTROLLER)/CHIEF  
FINANCIAL OFFICER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
COMMANDER, U.S. SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND  
GENERAL COUNSEL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR SPECIAL  
OPERATIONS AND LOW-INTENSITY CONFLICT  
DIRECTOR, WASHINGTON HEADQUARTERS SERVICES

SUBJECT: Development of an Implementation Plan for a Direct Reporting Assistant Secretary  
of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict

On November 18, 2020, the Acting Secretary of Defense signed a memorandum designating the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict (ASD SO/LIC) as a principal staff assistant reporting directly to the Secretary of Defense and Deputy Secretary of Defense. The Acting Secretary's memorandum also removed the ASD SO/LIC and Office of ASD SO/LIC from the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (OUSD(P)).

As a next step, the Acting Secretary's memorandum provides for the presentation of a detailed implementation plan for approval by the Secretary or Deputy Secretary of Defense. To facilitate development of this implementation plan, I will lead regular meetings beginning the week of November 30, 2020.

The implementation plan is to cover the following topics:

- **Budget authority.** ASD SO/LIC will receive its own topline guidance, and submit its own Program Objective Memorandum and Budget Estimate Submission.
- **Division of responsibilities as between the OUSD(P) and the Office of the ASD SO/LIC.** The implementation plan will address the alignment of specific Deputy Assistant Secretaries of Defense under either the ASD SO/LIC or an ASD within the OUSD(P).
- **ASD SO/LIC role with respect to USSOCOM.** The implementation plan will address the ASD SO/LIC role with respect to oversight and management of the special operations-peculiar administrative matters of USSOCOM, including acquisition oversight and prioritization; legislative affairs; public affairs; Special Access Program cognizant authority; information technology; and financial management.



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- **Resources for the Office of the ASD SO/LIC.** The implementation plan must identify the organizational structure and resources necessary to perform assigned roles effectively consistent with applicable law, including limitations on the size of the Office of the Secretary of Defense. It must include timelines and milestones for assumption of additional roles.

I look forward to your support on this.

