

INSPECTOR GENERAL

U.S. Department of Defense

October 8, 2020



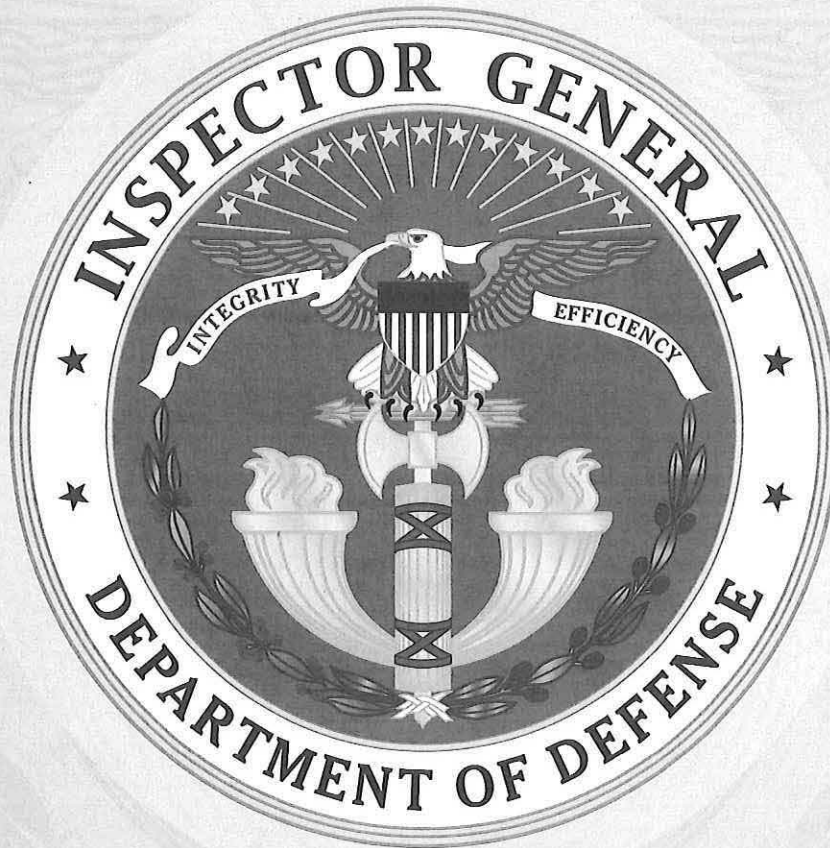
(U) Evaluation of the U.S. European Command's Response to the Coronavirus Disease-2019

Classified By: DoD OIG (b)(6)
Derived From: Multiple Sources
Declassify On: 20450525

INTEGRITY ★ INDEPENDENCE ★ EXCELLENCE

Released by the DoD OIG FOIA Office
under FOIA request DODOIG-2021-001354
on 9/29/2023

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~



~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~



INSPECTOR GENERAL
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
4800 MARK CENTER DRIVE
ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 22350-1500

October 8, 2020

MEMORANDUM FOR COMMANDER, U.S. EUROPEAN COMMAND

SUBJECT: Evaluation of the U.S. European Command's Response to the
Coronavirus Disease-2019 (Report No. DODIG-2021-002)

(U) On May 11, 2020, the Department of Defense Office of Inspector General (DoD OIG) began the subject evaluation to provide an early assessment of the efforts undertaken by U.S. Africa Command, U.S. Central Command, U.S. European Command (USEUCOM), U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, U.S. Southern Command, and the Joint Staff to maintain force, mission, and readiness while responding to the Coronavirus Disease-2019 (COVID-19) pandemic and the subsequent public health crisis. This evaluation was conducted as a joint project by the Evaluations and Audit Components of the DoD OIG. This report focuses on the USEUCOM response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we will address the other Combatant Commands and the Joint Staff portions of this work separately.

(U) This report provides the results of the DoD OIG evaluation related to USEUCOM. We provided a draft copy of this report to USEUCOM and considered management's feedback when preparing this final report. USEUCOM officials agreed to address the recommendation presented in the report; therefore, we consider the recommendation resolved and open. As discussed in the Recommendation, Management Comments, and Our Response section of this report, we will close the recommendation when you provide us documentation showing that all actions to implement the recommendation are completed. Therefore, please provide us your response concerning specific actions completed on the recommendation. Send your response to either [DoD OIG \(b\)\(6\)@dodig.mil](mailto:DoD OIG (b)(6)@dodig.mil) if unclassified or [DoD OIG \(b\)\(6\)@dodig.smil.mil](mailto:DoD OIG (b)(6)@dodig.smil.mil) if classified SECRET.

(U//~~FOUO~~) If you have questions, or would like to discuss this evaluation, please contact [DoD OIG \(b\)\(6\)@dodig.mil](mailto:DoD OIG (b)(6)@dodig.mil) at [DoD OIG \(b\)\(6\)@dodig.mil](mailto:DoD OIG (b)(6)@dodig.mil). We appreciate the cooperation and assistance received during our review.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Richard B. Vasquez".

Richard Vasquez
Assistant Inspector General for Audit
Readiness and Global Operations

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Carolyn R. Hantz".

Carolyn Ramona Hantz
Assistant Inspector General for Evaluations
Programs, Combatant Commands, and
Overseas Contingencies Operations

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~

(U) Objective

(U) The objective of this evaluation was to determine whether USEUCOM and its Component Commands executed a pandemic response plan (PRP), to identify the challenges encountered in implementing the PRP, and to identify the impact to operations resulting from COVID-19.¹

(U) Scope and Methodology

(U) We conducted this evaluation from May through September 2020 in accordance with the "Quality Standards for Inspections and Evaluations," published in January 2012 by the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency. Those standards require that we plan and perform the evaluation to obtain sufficient appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusion based on our evaluation objective. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusion based on our evaluation objective.


(U) To answer the evaluation objective, the evaluation team obtained and reviewed USEUCOM's Campaign Plan, Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP), and PRPs, including USEUCOM's PRP and applicable supporting PRPs. We obtained and reviewed the USEUCOM operational orders and force health protection guidance to obtain an understanding of how USEUCOM responded to the COVID-19 pandemic beyond the measures included in the PRPs and COOP. We developed a request for information based on our evaluation's objective and analyzed USEUCOM's responses to the request. To identify challenges, lessons learned, and impacts to operations and exercises, we conducted interviews with USEUCOM's Chief of Staff and select personnel from USEUCOM's Joint Directorates, Support Staff offices, and Service Component Commands. Additionally, we analyzed USEUCOM's input in the DoD's Joint Lessons Learned Information System, reviewed internal USEUCOM taskers and associated documentation, and analyzed operational impact reports provided to the Joint Staff.

¹ (U) PRP refers to the Combatant Commands' Pandemic Influenza and Infectious Disease plans, which provide a strategic framework to prepare for, detect, mitigate, respond to, and recover from the effects of a pandemic. In this report, we will refer to USEUCOM's Pandemic Influenza and Infectious Disease concept plan as its PRP.

(U) Background

(U) DoD Preparedness Efforts

(S//NF) DoD OIG (b)(1) 1.4(a)(g); USEUCOM (b)(1) 1.4(a)



(U) DoD Response to COVID-19

(U//FOUO) Following the World Health Organization's declaration of a public health emergency of international concern on January 30, 2020, the DoD took action to ensure a coordinated global response to COVID-19. Specifically, on February 1, 2020, the Secretary of Defense approved a Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Execute Order directing the DoD response to COVID-19. The Execute Order directed U.S. Northern Command to execute its Global Campaign Plan for Pandemic Influenza and Infectious Disease and Geographic Combatant Commands to execute their supporting PRPs in response to COVID-19. By the end of March 2020, the Secretary of Defense issued Departmental travel restrictions and raised the health protection condition levels at all DoD installations to signify that the COVID-19 disease presented a substantial threat and to outline additional actions DoD employees should take to respond to COVID-19.

(U) U.S. European Command

(U) Headquartered in Stuttgart, Germany, USEUCOM is one of the DoD's six Geographic Combatant Commands. With an area of responsibility that comprises 51 nations, including all of Europe and Israel, USEUCOM's mission is to execute a full range of multi-domain operations in coordination with Allies and partners to support the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), deter Russia, assist in the defense of Israel, enable

2 (U) Level III contingency planning results in a Concept Plan (CONPLAN), which includes a Base Plan and annexes to add operational details on areas such as logistics, personnel, public affairs, and operational contract support.

3 (U) Guidance for the Employment of the Force 2015-2017.

(U) Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction 3110.01J, "Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan," September 25, 2015.

(U) global operations, and counter trans-national threats. USEUCOM's mission is supported by the following Service Component Commands:

- (U) U.S. Army Europe,
- (U) U.S. Naval Forces Europe,
- (U) U.S. Air Forces in Europe,
- (U) U.S. Marine Forces Europe, and
- (U) U.S. Special Operations Command Europe.

(U) U.S. European Command's Pandemic Response and Continuity of Operations Plans

(U//~~FOUO~~) Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, USEUCOM took some action to prepare for a pandemic or other emergency situations by developing both a PRP and a COOP, as required by DoD policy. However, USEUCOM's PRP did not include the detailed annexes required by the Global Campaign Plan, the Service Component Commands' installation-level PRPs were not updated in accordance with USEUCOM's PRP, and the USEUCOM COOP only focused on a relocation of headquarters and did not include the information necessary to respond to a pandemic, such as procedures for social distancing, telework, and alternative work schedules.⁴ Therefore, USEUCOM used an operational approach that executed phases of the PRP, established operational planning teams (OPTs) to analyze risk and present options for responding to COVID-19, and provided directions to staff and Service Component Commands through a series of orders and force health protection guidance.⁵ USEUCOM personnel reported that the operational approach implemented by USEUCOM leadership was effective in reducing the COVID-19 rate of transmission and, as addressed later in this report, in mitigating the impact that COVID-19 had on USEUCOM's operations and mission-essential functions.

(U//~~FOUO~~) USEUCOM's PRP Did Not Include All of the Details Required by the Global Campaign Plan

(U//~~FOUO~~) USEUCOM had developed a PRP prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, but the PRP did not include all of the details required by the Global Campaign Plan and was not adequate for responding to COVID-19. The Global Campaign Plan requires the Geographic Combatant Commanders to develop supporting PRPs for their individual areas of responsibility and states that the Combatant Commands' plans are to include

4 (U) European Command Instruction 3230.01, "United States European Command Continuity of Operations Plan," September 26, 2017.

5 (U) Joint Publication 5-0, "Joint Planning," June 16, 2017, defines an operational approach as a commander's description of the broad actions the force can take to achieve an objective or attain a military end state.

(U//~~FOUO~~) Level III planning details and format, which includes, at a minimum, a base plan with annexes that contain operational details on logistics, personnel, public affairs, and operational contract support. Furthermore, the Global Campaign Plan requires the Commander of U.S. Northern Command, as the global synchronizer, to approve all of the Geographic Combatant Commands' supporting plans to the Global Campaign Plan.

(U//~~FOUO~~) In April 2019, USEUCOM issued its latest PRP – Base Plan 4451-19 – as a contingency plan for responding to a pandemic influenza or infectious disease outbreak within the USEUCOM area of responsibility.⁶ However, USEUCOM's PRP only contained Level II planning details and lacked the operational details required by the Global Campaign Plan for an effective pandemic response.⁷ Specifically, USEUCOM's PRP only contained the base plan and did not have the logistics, personnel, public affairs, and operational contract support annexes required by the Global Campaign Plan. In addition, USEUCOM personnel stated that they did not submit the latest PRP to the Commander of U.S. Northern Command for approval. Without the required details in its PRP and an approval from U.S. Northern Command, USEUCOM did not have a full analysis of the risks and resources associated with the courses of action for responding to a pandemic and lacked assurance that its plan was synchronized and integrated with the DoD-wide response plan.

(U//~~FOUO~~) While USEUCOM J-5/8 personnel stated that the PRP was designed to be a framework for the command's response to a pandemic, USEUCOM personnel acknowledged that USEUCOM's PRP needed improvement.⁸ USEUCOM personnel stated that the command is committed to collecting and analyzing the global lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic and performing a complete re-write of USEUCOM's PRP in conjunction with the U.S. Northern Command's updates to the Global Campaign Plan. In addition, the USEUCOM's Surgeon General stated that it is in discussions with USEUCOM's J-5/8 and J-7 to integrate pandemic crisis response into the USEUCOM Joint Exercise Program.⁹ To improve USEUCOM's preparedness for future pandemics and to institute lessons learned from COVID-19, USEUCOM should coordinate with U.S. Northern Command to synchronize the creation of a PRP with Level III planning details and integrate the updated PRP annually into USEUCOM's Joint Exercise Program.

6 (U) Base Plan 4451-19, "Pandemic Influenza and Infectious Disease," April 15, 2019.

7 (U) Level II contingency planning results in a Base Plan and includes some flexibility in addressing a contingency as it develops or to aid in developing the situation.

8 (U) USEUCOM J-5/8 is the Plans, Policy, Strategy, and Capabilities Directorate.

9 (U) The USEUCOM Joint Exercise Program provides trained and ready joint forces, exercises contingency plans, informs readiness, and supports engagement activities. Exercises play a key role in ensuring operational readiness, interoperability with allied nations, and bolstering partner nation relations.

(U//~~FOUO~~) Installation-Level PRPs Were Not Updated

(U//~~FOUO~~) The Service Component Commands did not update all installation-level PRPs in accordance with the USEUCOM PRP. The installation-level supporting plans are intended to outline procedures for protecting populations on USEUCOM's installations, such as the identification of the installations' stakeholders needed when responding to a pandemic, the establishment of chains of command for reporting, and the inclusion of COOP procedures that address absenteeism and social distancing during a pandemic. USEUCOM's PRP required each installation in the USEUCOM area of responsibility to develop a supporting PRP and send those plans to the Service Component Headquarters within 180 days of April 15, 2019, the date that USEUCOM issued its PRP. However, of the 20 installation-level plans we reviewed, 17 were not updated after the effective date of USEUCOM's PRP. In USEUCOM's consolidated lessons learned on the COVID-19 response that the USEUCOM J-7 briefed to the command in May 2020, each of USEUCOM's Service Component Commands reported that they will review their supporting PRPs. To better prepare USEUCOM for future pandemics, USEUCOM should obtain and review the installation-level PRPs to ensure the plans contain sufficient details to respond to a future pandemic and are synchronized with USEUCOM's PRP.

(U//~~FOUO~~) USEUCOM's COOP Did Not Include Required Information

(U//~~FOUO~~) USEUCOM developed a COOP prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, but the COOP did not include the information necessary to respond to a scenario that required social distancing and maximum telework, such as COVID-19.¹⁰ The Global Campaign Plan required each Geographic Combatant Command to develop personnel policies related to social distancing, such as alternative work schedules, telework, and leave; guidance for supervisors; and accountability measures to mitigate the impact on personnel in a pandemic. The USEUCOM PRP required the USEUCOM J-1 to develop USEUCOM's personnel policies, procedures, and planning guidance and required the USEUCOM J-3 to refine the USEUCOM COOP to include guidance on implementing social distancing, restriction of movement procedures, and medical and logistical support for a pandemic.¹¹ In addition, the USEUCOM PRP also required the USEUCOM J-6 to develop a COOP to maintain USEUCOM Headquarters critical information technology services and develop procedures to support telework.¹² However, despite the USEUCOM PRP's direction that the J-3 and J-6 update USEUCOM's COOP with pandemic-related guidance, as of May 2020, the USEUCOM COOP focused only on continuity events that would

10 (U) USEUCOM Instruction 3230.01 provides the policy, responsibilities, and procedures for the continuity of USEUCOM's mission-essential functions in the event that USEUCOM primary facilities or functions are rendered inoperative.

11 (U) USEUCOM J-1 is the Manpower and Personnel Directorate.

(U) USEUCOM J-3 is the Operations Directorate.

12 (U) USEUCOM J-6 is the Command, Control, Communications & Computers / Cyber Directorate.

(U//~~FOUO~~) require USEUCOM Headquarters to relocate to another location and did not address pandemic-related procedures required by the Global Campaign Plan.

(S) USEUCOM (b)(1) 1.4(g)



(U) USEUCOM Used an Operational Approach to Respond to COVID-19

(U//~~FOUO~~) The USEUCOM PRP and COOP did not include all the information necessary to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. Because the plans did not include all the information necessary to respond to COVID-19, USEUCOM used an operational approach and issued a series of orders to execute aspects of the PRP and to provide additional direction on areas not addressed in the PRP, established OPTs to analyze risk and present response options to USEUCOM leadership, and provided force health protection guidance to USEUCOM staff with directions for minimizing the risk of contracting COVID-19 and breaking the chain of transmission.¹⁴ USEUCOM's operational approach during the pandemic was effective in reducing the spread of COVID-19. Specifically, after an initial surge of COVID-19 cases in late-March and early-April, USEUCOM reported zero new cases of COVID-19 among its headquarters staff between April 16 and August 6, 2020.

(U//~~FOUO~~) USEUCOM Issued Orders to Direct Its Response to COVID-19

(U//~~FOUO~~) USEUCOM issued 15 orders to USEUCOM staff and USEUCOM's Service Component Commands from February to July 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. These orders directed the command's progression through the phases of the PRP and provided additional operational directions that were not addressed in USEUCOM's existing plan, such as ensuring that accurate inventories of personal protective equipment were available, identifying and maintaining mission-essential

¹³ (U) USEUCOM J-7 is the Exercise and Assessment Directorate.

¹⁴ (U) Operational Planning teams are typically established to direct planning efforts across the command, including implementation of plans and orders.

(U//~~FOUO~~) personnel lists, and requiring the use of cloth face coverings on DoD property within the USEUCOM area of responsibility.

(U//~~FOUO~~) USEUCOM Established Operational Planning Teams

(U//~~FOUO~~) Another vital aspect of the USEUCOM response to the COVID-19 pandemic was the early establishment of multiple OPTs to analyze the potential impact on USEUCOM's missions, develop options for implementing the PRP, and address problems brought on by COVID-19. USEUCOM established the first OPT in February 2020 to collect information on the pandemic, analyze the pandemic threat, and generate options for USEUCOM's response in accordance with USEUCOM's PRP, Secretary of Defense, and Joint Staff guidance. USEUCOM later established another three OPTs throughout its pandemic response that focused on:

- (U//~~FOUO~~) planning USEUCOM's COVID-19 response with a longer time horizon,
- (U//~~FOUO~~) analyzing USEUCOM's support to Allies and partner nations, and
- (U//~~FOUO~~) assessing the impacts COVID-19 had on USEUCOM's operations, activities, and investments.

(U//~~FOUO~~) USEUCOM Issued Force Health Protection Guidance

(U//~~FOUO~~) USEUCOM also issued guidance on force health protection measures throughout the pandemic. Force health protection measures outline the requirements needed to safely continue mission-essential functions within USEUCOM Headquarters. As a tenant command to U.S. Army Garrison–Stuttgart, USEUCOM Headquarters staff stated that they followed force health protection measures implemented by the Commander of U.S. Army Garrison–Stuttgart, such as the requirement that patrons in service facilities present a valid DoD identification card and wash their hands prior to entering the facility. In addition, the USEUCOM Chief of Staff issued additional force health protection guidance to all staff under USEUCOM's authority. For example, on March 19, 2020, the Chief of Staff issued a memorandum that outlined various force health protection measures to minimize the risk of COVID-19 and break the chain of transmission. In this memorandum, the Chief of Staff provided Command-wide guidance on the following topics:

- (U//~~FOUO~~) adjustments to workforce duty schedules, including shift work and telework;
- (U//~~FOUO~~) changes to scheduled events and regular meetings;
- (U//~~FOUO~~) requirements for quarantining, self-isolating, and reporting COVID-19 cases;
- (U//~~FOUO~~) restrictions on official and leisure travel; and

- (U//~~FOUO~~) requirements for cleaning facilities.

(U//~~FOUO~~) In response, USEUCOM officials stated that the USEUCOM Directors and Special Staff Chiefs applied the Chief of Staff's recommendations, including the implementation of alternative work schedules and maximum telework.¹⁵ Multiple USEUCOM Directors and Special Staff Chiefs stated that the USEUCOM Chief of Staff's force health protection guidance allowed them the flexibility they needed to reduce the transmission of COVID-19 and still meet their mission.

(U//~~FOUO~~) USEUCOM Effectively Communicated Across the Command

(U//~~FOUO~~) Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, USEUCOM personnel reported that leadership was effective in leveraging existing battle rhythm events and in creating new lines of regular and recurring communication in order to maintain a real-time understanding of the COVID-19 environment in the USEUCOM area of responsibility and to promote a synchronized COVID-19 response. For example, the USEUCOM Chief of Staff initiated regular communication with the USEUCOM Surgeon General and with installation officials to gather updates on the spread of COVID-19 across the USEUCOM area of responsibility and to collaborate on ways to break the chain of transmission. In addition, USEUCOM leadership conducted virtual Morning Update Briefs 3 days a week, where USEUCOM Headquarters and USEUCOM Service Component Command representatives shared updates on COVID-19-related impacts and collaborated on USEUCOM's COVID-19 response. Furthermore, USEUCOM officials participated in multiple global DoD meetings to discuss lessons learned across each area of responsibility, which helped promote a more effective global response. USEUCOM officials reported that this communication proved to be vital for decision making and establishing effective force health protection measures in a timely manner.

(U) USEUCOM's Primary Challenges During COVID-19

(U//~~FOUO~~) USEUCOM experienced many of the same challenges as other Federal entities during the pandemic, such as the closure of schools and day care facilities, difficulties in tracking and reporting COVID-19 cases, and insufficient quantities of personal protective equipment and medical cleaning supplies, such as bleach wipes. However, USEUCOM also experienced various challenges that could be addressed by adapting its own internal practices and by improving its pandemic planning efforts. Specifically, USEUCOM's lack of an established telework program and reliance on its fixed facilities resulted in significant challenges when transitioning to a maximum telework environment. USEUCOM (b)(1) 1.7(e)

¹⁵ (U) USEUCOM staff is primarily assigned to directorates and special staff offices. Directorates are the J-1 through J-9, which are established throughout this report. For this report, special staff offices refers to USEUCOM's Surgeon General, Judge Advocate, Public Affairs, and Inspector General offices.

(U//~~FOUO~~) USEUCOM (b)(1) 1.7(e)

(U//~~FOUO~~) USEUCOM Did Not Have Adequate Telework Program and Capabilities

(U//~~FOUO~~) On March 19, 2020, USEUCOM's Chief of Staff issued force health protection guidance to USEUCOM Headquarters staff that directed staff to adjust workforce duty schedules, to include allowing staff to telework. Prior to COVID-19, USEUCOM policy did not allow staff to telework because the policy stated that staff needed daily access to its fixed facilities, classified networks, and collaboration capabilities that were only accessible in the offices. Therefore, despite a Global Campaign Plan requirement that Combatant Commands establish policies on telework, and a USEUCOM PRP requirement that the USEUCOM J-1 develop pandemic-related policy and the J-6 develop telework supportability procedures, USEUCOM did not have an established telework program and corresponding telework policy, telework agreements and training, or tested telework capabilities when the USEUCOM Chief of Staff directed USEUCOM staff to maximize telework. The lack of a telework program created several challenges related to performing work in a maximum telework environment, including an insufficient supply of telework equipment, problems with USEUCOM's network infrastructure, and the inability of USEUCOM personnel to remotely access information because it was stored on the classified network (SIPRNet). To ensure USEUCOM staff are able to telework to the greatest extent practical during any future mass telework event and to comply with the Global Campaign Plan, USEUCOM should develop an official telework policy that includes guidance on telework agreements and training.

(U//~~FOUO~~) Limited Availability of Equipment for Telework

(U//~~FOUO~~) USEUCOM experienced significant shortages of Command-issued Government computers and mobile SIPRNet kits, which allow USEUCOM personnel to access the SIPRNet while teleworking. The USEUCOM J-6 reported that USEUCOM only had 100 unclassified telework-capable computers for its entire command, which includes approximately 1,800 personnel. Therefore, USEUCOM leadership, based upon the network services available, made the decision to allow users to access their unclassified network (NIPRNet) desktops from home using their personal computers. However, USEUCOM officials reported that not all personnel had personal computers and some who did were sharing their computer with family members.

(U//~~FOUO~~) In addition to the insufficient quantity of unclassified computers, USEUCOM personnel also reported insufficient mobile SIPRNet kits. Specifically, the USEUCOM J-6 reported that USEUCOM only had approximately 150 mobile SIPRNet kits and that these SIPRNet kits were primarily reserved for USEUCOM's senior officials. Throughout the pandemic, USEUCOM was able to issue additional mobile SIPRNet kits to each

(U//~~FOUO~~) directorate or special staff office based upon mission priority determined by the Chief of Staff, but many directorates reported that there was a need for more mobile SIPRNet kits to perform their duties. For example, USEUCOM's J-4 reported a need for additional SIPRNet kits and the USEUCOM Deputy Commander's Executive Officer reported that he, as well as other personnel in the J-3 and J-5/8, needed access to their SIPRNet files and e-mails from their residence but were unable to do so without the required equipment.¹⁶

(U//~~FOUO~~) USEUCOM officials have acknowledged the need to expand its telework capabilities. Specifically, the USEUCOM J-6 created a plan of action and milestones and spend plan that is postured to support current or emergent requirements by September 2020. In addition, USEUCOM J-6 personnel stated that they had already initiated several purchases based upon the SIPRNet mobile requirements identified by each of the directorates and special staff offices. Specifically, the USEUCOM J-6 initiated a purchase of 400 mobile SIPRNet kits to provide e-mail, video, and portal access to up to 550 users, but the kits were delayed by supply chain deficiencies and may not be available until the fall of 2020. The USEUCOM J-6 also reported that it had ordered 25 additional secure hand-held SIPRNet mobile devices to increase voice and e-mail access in the Command.

(U//~~FOUO~~) While the purchase of additional mobile SIPRNet kits and SIPRNet mobile devices will improve deficiencies related to limited telework equipment, this does not address a shortage of NIPRNet equipment and other equipment that may be required to support a mass telework scenario. Therefore, USEUCOM should direct its staff and subordinate commands to identify and resource any other necessary equipment to support mass telework scenarios.

(U//~~FOUO~~) USEUCOM (b)(1) 1.7(e)

(U//~~FOUO~~) USEUCOM (b)(1) 1.7(e)

(U//~~FOUO~~) USEUCOM (b)(1) 1.7(e)

¹⁶ (U) USEUCOM J-4 is the Logistics Directorate.

(U//~~FOUO~~) USEUCOM (b)(1) 1.7(e)

(U//~~FOUO~~) USEUCOM (b)(1) 1.7(e)

(U//~~FOUO~~) During the COVID-19 pandemic, USEUCOM personnel reported that they were unable to access most of their work because USEUCOM stored the majority of its workload, to include unclassified information, on the SIPRNet. According to USEUCOM personnel, the majority of USEUCOM's workload, to include unclassified and For Official

(U//~~FOUO~~) Use Only information, is stored on the SIPRNet. This ultimately constrained the scope of work that USEUCOM personnel could accomplish while teleworking, as most personnel did not have access to the SIPRNet at home. While the purchase of an additional 400 mobile SIPRNet kits will increase remote access to classified information, most of USEUCOM will not be provided with a SIPRNet kit and will still only be able to access the NIPRNet while teleworking. Therefore, it is imperative that USEUCOM uses the NIPRNet to the greatest extent possible to ensure its staff is gainfully employed.

(U//~~FOUO~~) Personnel from several USEUCOM Directorates and Service Component Commands, including at least four USEUCOM Directorates, U.S. Air Forces in Europe, and Special Operations Command Europe, asserted the need to use NIPRNet for unclassified and For Official Use Only information, rather than the SIPRNet. For example, the EUCOM J-1, J-5/8, and Special Operations Command Europe stated that it was unable to access USEUCOM's task management tool, which is the official tasking system for managing and assigning administrative staff actions to USEUCOM staff, because the tool was only available on SIPRNet. In addition, USEUCOM J-7 personnel stated that despite being unclassified, many of USEUCOM's exercise-related documents were stored on the SIPRNet.

(U//~~FOUO~~) To improve operations in a telework environment, several USEUCOM Directorates recommended that USEUCOM expand its NIPRNet capabilities and use unclassified systems to the greatest extent possible. Of note, the EUCOM J-1 and J-5/8 suggested that USEUCOM expand the task management tool to NIPRNet, and the USEUCOM J-4 and J-7 recommended actions to transfer unclassified and For Official Use Only information to the NIPRNet. To provide USEUCOM staff with access to as much work as possible while teleworking, USEUCOM should direct a review of the Command's use of the SIPRNet for unclassified activities to determine whether official guidance on using the unclassified network is adequate.

(U//~~FOUO~~)

USEUCOM (b)(1) 1.7(e)

(S//~~NF~~)

USEUCOM (b)(1) 1.4(g)

(S//~~NF~~)

USEUCOM (b)(1) 1.4(g)

(S//~~NF~~)

USEUCOM (b)(1) 1.4(g)

(S//NF) USEUCOM (b)(1) 1.4(g)



(U//~~FOUO~~) *Communicating Through Nonofficial Accounts*

(U//~~FOUO~~) USEUCOM reported that the challenges in accessing the network and in communicating across official channels often resulted in USEUCOM employees using personal e-mail and commercial messaging platforms for communicating work-related information. While DoD Instruction 8170.01 provides exceptions for DoD employees to use personal e-mail and nonofficial messaging accounts, the DoD has stated on several occasions, including in a January 2018 memorandum issued by the Deputy Secretary of Defense, that this should be avoided due to security and accountability concerns.¹⁷ In addition, to ensure compliance with U.S. laws on records management, DoD Instruction 8170.01 requires the employee using the nonofficial electronic messaging accounts to copy their official messaging account, such as their work e-mail account, on the original transmission or forward a complete copy of the record to an official messaging account within 20 days of the original transmission. Due to the high number of employees using nonofficial accounts during the COVID-19 response, there is a risk that USEUCOM personnel did not comply with all applicable regulations for communicating over nonofficial accounts.

¹⁷ (U) USEUCOM J-2 is the Intelligence Directorate.

(U) DoD Manual 5105.21, Volume 3, "Sensitive Compartmented Information Administrative Security Manual: Administration of Personnel Security, Industrial Security, and Special Activities," April 5, 2018.

(U) Intelligence Community Technical Specifications for Intelligence Community Directive 705, "Technical Specifications for Construction and Management of Sensitive Compartmented Information," September 28, 2017.

¹⁸ (U) DoD Instruction 8170.01, "Online Information Management and Electronic Messaging," January 2, 2019, states that an employee may use personal, nonofficial accounts, to conduct DoD communications when the following combined three conditions are met: 1) emergencies and other critical mission needs, 2) when official communication capabilities are unavailable, impracticable, or unreliable, and 3) it is in the interests of DoD or other U.S. Government missions.

(U//~~FOUO~~) Further compounding the risk that information may have been improperly handled during the COVID-19 response, USEUCOM personnel were deficient in security training, which increases the risk that personnel will inadvertently disclose classified information over non-official networks. Specifically, USEUCOM reported that social distancing requirements prevented staff from completing their in-person security education training, which was already a known deficiency prior to COVID-19. In an attempt to correct this training deficiency, USEUCOM officials stated that it has implemented computer-based training modules for security education, but acknowledged that it lacked meaningful ways to measure the impact of the training. To avoid security concerns and comply with U.S. records management laws, USEUCOM should develop procedures for communicating work-related information over nonofficial accounts, including guidance on copying official messaging accounts, and should include these procedures in its updated PRP.

(U//~~FOUO~~) Challenges Communicating Sensitive Information

(U//~~FOUO~~) USEUCOM officials also reported that sensitive personally identifiable and protected health information was communicated to too broad of an audience at the onset of the pandemic. According to USEUCOM officials, the spread of COVID-19 created an environment that necessitated complex personnel information management among its staff, as certain types of information that needed to be communicated to leadership was protected by numerous laws and policies, to include the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act. USEUCOM officials stated that they eventually established a better process for communicating sensitive information to key leadership and recommended USEUCOM establish standardized reporting procedures for the future. Furthermore, USEUCOM J-1 officials stated that they will lead a working group that establishes terms for identifying and delineating reporting responsibilities within USEUCOM. To protect sensitive information in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations, USEUCOM should develop procedures for managing and communicating sensitive personnel information within the command and include those procedures within its updated PRP.

(U//~~FOUO~~) USEUCOM (b)(1) 1.7(e)

(U//~~FOUO~~) USEUCOM (b)(1) 1.7(e)

(U//~~FOUO~~) USEUCOM (b)(1) 1.7(e)

[REDACTED]

(U//~~FOUO~~) USEUCOM (b)(1) 1.7(e)

[REDACTED]

(U//~~FOUO~~) COVID-19's Impact to USEUCOM's Operations, Mission-Essential Functions, and Exercises

(S//~~NP~~) USEUCOM (b)(1) 1.4(g)

[REDACTED]

(U//~~FOUO~~) Officials from several USEUCOM Joint Directorates stated that reduced manning and the prioritization of mission-essential tasks impacted lower priority functions. For example, officials in one USEUCOM Directorate stated that they extended the timelines of lower priority functions when possible and reduced the amount of personnel assigned to other tasks in an effort to preserve the directorate's essential functions. In addition, several USEUCOM personnel stated that they were unable to complete formal training and professional development programs due to reduced manning and travel restrictions. USEUCOM officials also stated that, as more personnel return to the office, it will become evident which lower priority functions within directorates are necessary to complete. Furthermore, USEUCOM estimated that the long-term strategic impact of COVID-19 will be minor, but also acknowledged that they

(U//~~FOUO~~) may not understand the impact that delaying lower priority functions ultimately had on its readiness for an extended period of time.

(S) USEUCOM (b)(1) 1.4(a)(g) [REDACTED]

(S) USEUCOM (b)(1) 1.4(a)(g) [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

(S) USEUCOM (b)(1) 1.4(a)(g) [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

(S//NF) USEUCOM (b)(1) 1.4(a)(g) [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

- (S) USEUCOM (b)(1) 1.4(a)(g) [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

- (S) USEUCOM (b)(1) 1.4(a)(g) [REDACTED]

- (S) USEUCOM (b)(1) 1.4(a)(g) [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

- (S) USEUCOM (b)(1) 1.4(a)(g) [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

- (S) USEUCOM (b)(1) 1.4(a)(g) [REDACTED]

- (S) USEUCOM (b)(1) 1.4(a)(g) [REDACTED]

(S//NF) USEUCOM (b)(1) 1.4(a)(g) [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

~~(S//NF)~~ USEUCOM (b)(1) 1.4(a)(g)

~~(U//FOUO)~~ USEUCOM Experienced Significant Impact to Exercises

~~(U//FOUO)~~ While the COVID-19 pandemic had minimal impact on USEUCOM's operations and mission-essential functions, the pandemic resulted in significant impact to its exercise program. Specifically, as of June 15, 2020, COVID-19 impacted 17 exercises in the USEUCOM area of responsibility, as USEUCOM was forced to postpone four exercises, modify six exercises, and cancel seven exercises due to travel restrictions, border closures, and force health protection measures. For example, JUNIPER COBRA 20, a biannual large scale exercise conducted with the Israeli Defense Forces, was one of the first USEUCOM exercises affected by COVID-19, as Israeli officials canceled the exercise shortly after it began, due to growing concerns related to COVID-19.

~~(U//FOUO)~~ Another key exercise that COVID-19 significantly affected was DEFENDER-Europe 20, which was projected to cost \$340 million and was planned as the DoD's largest deployment of U.S.-based forces to Europe in 25 years. DoD had planned to deploy approximately 20,000 U.S. based forces to Europe for the exercise, but only deployed 550 for the modified exercise due to COVID-19 travel restrictions. In addition, many of the partner nations and Allies that were scheduled to participate in DEFENDER-Europe 20 withdrew from the exercise. Therefore, USEUCOM modified the exercise to reduce the scope of its planned objectives and reported that despite the impacts of COVID-19, USEUCOM successfully accomplished most of its main objective such as the deployment of equipment to Europe, the drawing of pre-positioned stock, and conducting live exercises with some partner nations, such as Poland. However, USEUCOM personnel acknowledged that reducing the scope of DEFENDER-Europe 20 did have some adverse effects. For example, because many of the nations did not participate, the DoD was unable to fully exercise its interoperability with its Allies and partner nations. In addition, USEUCOM personnel reported that because over 19,000 U.S. based forces were unable to deploy, DEFENDER-Europe 20 participants were not able to exercise in the large formations planned.

~~(S)~~ USEUCOM (b)(1) 1.4(a)(g)

(S) USEUCOM (b)(1) 1.4(a)(g)

(U) Conclusion

(S//NF) USEUCOM (b)(1) 1.4(a)(g)

(U) Recommendation, Management Comments, and Our Response

(U) Recommendation 1

(U) We recommend that the Commander, U.S. European Command:

- a. (U//~~FOUO~~) Coordinate with U.S. Northern Command to synchronize the improvement of a pandemic response plan that contains Level III planning details and annually integrate the updated pandemic response plan into the U.S. European Command Joint Exercise Program. In addition to the annexes required by the Global Campaign Plan, the updated pandemic response plan should include procedures on communicating work-related information over nonofficial messaging platforms and guidance for managing and communicating sensitive personnel information.
- b. (U//~~FOUO~~) Obtain and review the installation-level pandemic response plans to ensure the supporting plans contain sufficient details to respond to a future pandemic and are synchronized with U.S. European Command's pandemic response plan.

19 (U//~~FOUO~~) USEUCOM officials could not provide sunk costs for the remainder of the funds spent on exercises in the theater.

- c. (U//~~FOUO~~) Coordinate with North Atlantic Treaty Organization officials and assist, as necessary, in the development of a North Atlantic Treaty Organization pandemic response plan.
- d. (U//~~FOUO~~) Update the U.S. European Command's Continuity of Operations Plan or include an annex in the pandemic response plan that addresses the policies, procedures, and responsibilities for executing mission-essential functions in a socially distanced environment. In addition, annually integrate the updated continuity of operations procedures into the U.S. European Command Joint Exercise Program.
- e. (U//~~FOUO~~) Develop and implement a telework policy that, at a minimum, includes guidance on telework agreements, telework training, and how to properly access and use the NIPRNet-Over-Web system remotely.
- f. (U//~~FOUO~~) Direct Command Staff and Service Component Commands to identify and acquire, as necessary, any equipment, network capabilities, and tools required to support personnel working in a telework environment and to enable effective communication with our Allies and partners.
- g. (U//~~FOUO~~) Conduct a review of U.S. European Command's use of the classified network for unclassified activities to determine whether official guidance on using the unclassified network is adequate.
- h. (S) USEUCOM (b)(1) 1.4(a)(g)
[REDACTED]

(U) U.S. European Command's Comments

(U//~~FOUO~~) USEUCOM personnel agreed with the recommendation and had initiated actions, or planned to take action, to address the report recommendation. USEUCOM J-5/8 personnel stated they have joined the Joint Staff planning efforts to establish a Global Integrated Base Plan for Pandemic Influenza and Infectious Disease. USEUCOM J-5/8 personnel stated the Global Integrated Base Plan, in addition to updates to U.S. Northern Command's Functional Campaign Plan for Pandemic Influenza and Infectious Disease, will set the strategic direction for updates to the USEUCOM and installation-level PRPs. In addition, USEUCOM J-5/8 personnel have multiple meetings scheduled with NATO personnel from September through November 2020, and plan to discuss NATO pandemic response planning efforts at those meetings.

(S) USEUCOM (b)(1) 1.4(a)
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

(S) USEUCOM (b)(1) 1.4(a)



(U) Our Response

(U) Comments from USEUCOM personnel addressed all of the specifics of the recommendation; therefore, the recommendation is resolved, but will remain open. We will close the recommendation once we receive documentation showing the actions to implement the recommendation are completed.

(U) List of Classified Sources

(U) Source 1: (U) Guidance for the Employment of the Force 2015-2017

~~(SECRET//NOFORN)~~

Declassification Date: February 3, 2040

Date of Source: February 3, 2015

(U) Source 2: (U) Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction 3110.01J, "2015 Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan" ~~(SECRET)~~

Declassification Date: September 25, 2040

Date of Source: September 25, 2015

(U) Source 3: (U) United States European Command Instruction 3230.01, "United States European Command Continuity of Operations Plan" ~~(SECRET)~~

Declassification Date: July 17, 2042

Date of Source: September 26, 2017

(U) Source 4: (U) COVID-19 Operational Impacts to Combatant Commands, EUCOM

~~(SECRET//FRD)~~

Declassification Date: May 25, 2045

Date of Source: May 25, 2020

Whistleblower Protection

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Whistleblower Protection safeguards DoD employees against retaliation for protected disclosures that expose possible waste, fraud, and abuse in government programs. For more information, please visit the Whistleblower webpage at <http://www.dodig.mil/Components/Administrative-Investigations/Whistleblower-Reprisal-Investigations/Whistleblower-Reprisal/> or contact the Whistleblower Protection Coordinator at Whistleblowerprotectioncoordinator@dodig.mil

**For more information about DoD OIG
reports or activities, please contact us:**

Congressional Liaison
703.604.8324

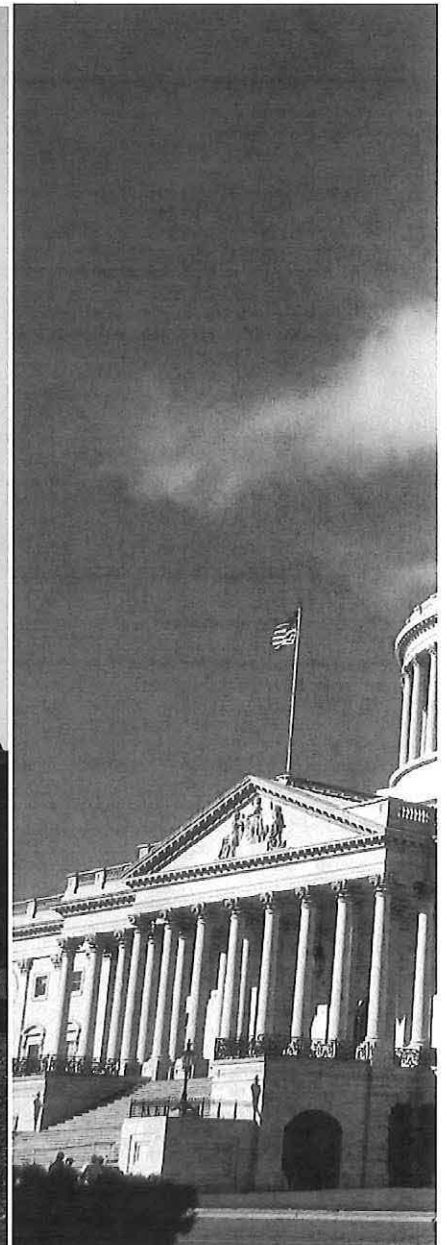
Media Contact
public.affairs@dodig.mil; 703.604.8324

DoD OIG Mailing Lists
www.dodig.mil/Mailing-Lists/

Twitter
www.twitter.com/DoD_IG

DoD Hotline
www.dodig.mil/hotline

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE | OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

4800 Mark Center Drive
Alexandria, Virginia 22350-1500
www.dodig.mil
DoD Hotline 1.800.424.9098

~~SECRET//NOFORN~~