



# WASHINGTON UPDATE

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## Va. congressional delegation questions JFCOM closing.

"I believe in another sport, this is called stiff-arming," Virginia Sen. Jim Webb said in describing the Defense Department's failure to answer questions presented by the state's congressional delegation over how the decision was reached to eliminate Joint Forces Command.

Questioning William Lynn, deputy secretary of defense at a Sept. 28 hearing on the department's efforts to save \$100 billion over the next five year, Webb, a Democrat, said, "This is not a parochial issue. We did not have access" or the opportunity to provide input before the decision was made.

He added he first learned about the decision to close the Norfolk-based command in a telephone call 15 minutes before Defense Secretary Robert Gates made the announcement.

Lynn, a former staff member of Sen. Edward Kennedy, said that there were 30 or so meetings in the Pentagon with the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the regional combatant commanders on the initiatives. He added the decision was not made on business issues but military ones, including whether a four-star command was needed to carry out most of its work.

"We need to know if the department has conducted similar analysis" in deciding to eliminate other agencies, Webb said. "We have no real information to quantify" how this decision was made. "People are perplexed."

While generally approving of the department's plans to seek efficiencies to free up money for higher priority programs, Sen. Joseph Lieberman, I-Conn., asked, "Is it time to hang the 'Mission Accomplished' sign on jointness?"

"I think we've made substantial progress on internalizing jointness in combat," Lynn said. It is a process that "will not be reversed."

Sen. Carl Levin, D-Mich., committee chairman, said, "I fully understand the frustration of the senators from Virginia and others about their inability to obtain a more complete rationale and a plan for the Pentagon's proposed action" that would shut down the command that employs 3,000 military and DoD civilians and 3,000 contractors. It has an annual budget of \$1 billion.

## Defense Department wants to instill 'culture of cost-consciousness' in its operations.

The Defense Department's Number 2 official said the Pentagon bureaucracies have "swelled to cumbersome proportions, grown over-reliant on contractors and became accustomed to operate with little consideration of cost."

William Lynn, testifying Sept. 28 before the Senate Armed Services Committee, said the idea was to "instill a culture of cost consciousness" that would lead to \$100 billion worth of savings over the next five years.

"To sustain the current military force structures, which we must do given the security challenges this country faces, requires the equivalent of real budget growth of 2 to 3 percent." He said the projected future years' spending plan called for 1 percent growth over inflation, not enough to invest in high-priority needs.

"Many of these changes will be painful," Lynn said. Among the recommendations sent to President Barack Obama are the elimination of Joint Forces Command and a number of smaller defense agencies, 50 general officer positions, 150 Senior Executive Service positions, cutting contracting support by 10 percent and closer scrutiny over how the armed forces buy goods and services.

"We need productivity growth," Ashton Carter, under secretary of defense for acquisition, technology and logistics, said. He added the department spends about \$200 billion annually on contracting for information technology, facilities maintenance and transportation.

"Most of our services are done on ancillary duties" where the military and Defense Department civilians do not have the expertise. Carter said the question that needs to be asked is: "Why five people are doing what three did five years ago?" This was particularly true in information technology. To build that expertise in the department, "we need to make it easier to bring people in," Carter said.

On another personnel issue, Lynn said that the Defense Department is also reviewing escalating medical costs and the issue will be addressed in the Fiscal Year 2012 budget submission in February.

**DoD challenged to cut overhead.** The former chairman of the Commission on the National Guard and Reserve, said, “DoD is carrying way too much overhead,” especially when it comes to personnel and health care costs for the active duty force.

Arnold Punaro, speaking Sept. 23 at the unveiling of the Center for New American Security’s report on investing in the National Guard and reserve, said. “You can’t have a strong defense without a strong economy” and “some hard choices are coming” for the Defense Department and Congress in deciding what will be the priorities for spending.

As an example of rising costs, he said the annual compensation cost for a mid-grade officer has risen from \$80,000 a decade ago to \$250,000. “Thirty-five percent of all DoD spending” goes through the personnel accounts. Punaro, a retired Marine Corps Reserve major general, said the military retirement system was designed for a conscripted force. “We know that it is not sustainable to pay people for 60 years to serve 20.”

Punaro, who also recently chaired a Defense Business Board task force looking for ways to increase the department’s efficiency, said that the reserve components were not only indispensable they were a bargain.

John Nagl, one of the co-authors of the “Indispensable Force” report which was endorsed by all the commissioners of Punaro’s panel, said, “The ongoing demand for the guard and reserve remains high and I expect it to remain high in the future,” in part due to the civilian skills these service members bring to the military.

In looking at the reserve components’ situation now, “The glass is more than half full” in defining the roles and missions of the National Guard and reserve, their readiness, their cost, availability of professional education and developing a “continuum of service.”

Nagl, a retired Army lieutenant colonel and president of the center, said areas of concern include “too many turf battles” in crisis response—especially with the Department of Homeland Security—the shortage of modern equipment for training and the strain of continuing deployments over nine years of war in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Adding, “It’s way too hard to switch from active service to reserve and back. ... We need a more flexible personnel system” to create a continuum of service.

Margaret Leed, director and senior fellow in the New Defenses Approach Project at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, suggested launching a series of demonstration projects to see how a true continuum of service could be developed for different specialties. She said that cyber would be a good area for such an early test.

**Top operations officer praises Army school system.** The Army’s top operations officer praised the service’s school system for teaching leaders such as Dwight D. Eisenhower in World War II “how to think big.”

Speaking Sept. 10 in suburban Washington at the Institute of Land Warfare Breakfast, Lt. Gen. Dan Bolger, G-3/5/7, said West Point, the Command and General Staff Course at Fort Leavenworth, Kan., and the Army War College at Carlisle Barracks, Pa., gave them the skills “to put those ideas on the table.”

Looking back to Sept. 11, 2001, he said the role of the Army staff had changed from World War II from fighting the war to one of providing trained and ready troops equipped to fight the war.

The staff “had to pivot” and provide the forces “that toppled the Afghan Taliban in a lightning campaign.” Similarly, its strategists in 2003 had to adjust to being able to fight a long war with an All-Volunteer Force in Iraq while operations continued in Afghanistan.

“The decision to go with a unit-based force rotation—Army Force Generation—was strategic in nature.” Bolger said that in the past individuals were sent to units rather than one unit replacing another. “Cohesion and teamwork matter. Our Army chose early and got it right.”

After strategy comes organizing, training and equipping, especially modernization.

Bolger disputed the belief that the Army has no modernization plan in the wake of the cancellation of the manned ground vehicle part of the Future Combat System. Through incremental changes, “we have upgraded everything from our rifles, to our body armor, to our fighting vehicles and our aircraft.”

Adding, “It’s been like NASCAR” where the vehicle may look like a Ford Fusion in the showroom but “it is a lot different under the hood.”

He also cited new equipment brought to the force, including Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles and unmanned aerial systems such as Warrior Alpha.

“The only folks who don’t see the immediate benefits are our al Qaeda enemies, and that’s fine with us,” Bolger said.

Looking into the future, he said that instead of looking for a new “Big Five” in weapons systems the Army is looking “at the Big One,” the network “in the biggest sense.” “If you wonder how we can pick out one guy in civilian clothes [as a] bomb-maker from among ten thousands, it’s because we can fuse and share the key bits and bytes of information.”

**National Guard changes way of communicating with families.** The chief of the National Guard Bureau's family programs told bloggers, "We have to change our communication strategy to those of our customers."

Alex Baird, speaking from the National Guard Family Volunteer Workshop in New Orleans used an example involving himself and his daughter to make the point.

"One day I went to the mall, I was trying to track down my daughter and I called her three times, left three voicemails. And I was becoming concerned and I pulled out my phone and I just sent her a text, I said: 'Where are you,' and it instantly came back: 'I'm in such and such store.'"

Baird added, "We're using social media throughout this workshop so that those who could not attend are able to stay connected, and they can stay connected through Twitter, through Facebook, and they're writing other stuff down for me that I probably don't even know how to pronounce."

He said there were about 1,300 attendees at the workshop and about half were volunteers.

In an AUSA NEWS check of the National Guard Twitter account when Adm. Michael Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff was speaking, slightly more than 1,400 were following the address through that medium.

During his address, Mullen said he would work on eliminating the "yes/no box" on contacting families.

Adair told the bloggers, "I remember my father, who was a Marine, told me: 'Always say no unless you have to say yes.' And so what happens is, as people go through the processing line, they just start marking no on these checklists. And what would happen then is a family member would come back two months into a deployment and say: 'You know, I haven't heard a thing from my husband or my wife's unit about the deployment, and I don't understand why I'm not being contacted.' And then the unit has to tell them: 'Well, your spouse said they did not want you contacted.' And so then we put the spouse in a bad position."

He said because the National Guard is community-based, its family programs often help families from other reserve components—20,000 encounters with the Navy Reserve and 12,000 with the Marine Corps Reserve—and from active duty.

"What we try to do is augment their services to provide somebody local, because sometimes there's a big difference between somebody who can come face to face with you and somebody who is, you know, halfway across the country."

**Panel asks health affairs nominee about rising costs.** Members of the Senate Armed Services Committee wanted to know what steps the nominee for assistant secretary of defense for health affairs would take to contain health care costs that have risen from \$16 billion in Fiscal Year 2001 to more than \$50 billion in the coming year's budget request.

Jonathan Woodson, a brigadier general in the Army Reserve, said he would work with the constituencies in military health care to find efficient and effective therapies and more inter-service collaboration on training, use of facilities and providing care.

"A lot of the costs are in the retiree community," Woodson said. To help control that cost, there has to be a better sharing of patient data between the Department of Defense and the private sector.

There "are a lot of varieties and flavors of electronic health records" in the private sector that are not compatible with each other or the Defense Department's system or the Department of Veterans Affairs' system.

He added that DoD's electronic record-keeping system while ahead of the private sector in handling administrative aspects of medicine "is not an efficient tool" for providers in taking care of patients.

Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., ranking member, said, "Your major challenge is to get these health care costs under control" in a system with 9.5 million beneficiaries.

Woodson, who served in Operations Desert Shield, Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom, said that there are shortages in a number of medical specialties. "We need to implement some new strategies" to attract the kinds of medical professionals the military needs.

Complicating recruiting is the increasingly narrow specialization of many physicians, he said, where the armed forces need professionals with broader skills. "General surgeons are difficult to recruit."

Sen. Roger Wicker, R-Miss., said about the shortages of medical professionals in the armed forces, "I do think it is severe" and causes delays for patients seeking care.

When asked about the Army's recently completed study of suicide, Woodson said, it "provided a better profile of who is at risk" and the need to do a better job of screening recruits and building resiliency training into basic combat training.

**Army Reserve chief enjoys hearing from soldiers.** The chief of the Army Reserve finds “getting out and talking to the soldiers” the most personally rewarding part of his job. Lt. Gen Jack Stultz said, “I find out what’s real. Watching them in action is much more valuable and rewarding than sitting through a power point presentation.”

Adding, “A Pfc, lieutenant or captain explaining something, well, they know what’s going on. He’s got it. He’s going to be deployed to Afghanistan.”

Stultz, who was asked to stay on as chief of the Army Reserve by Gen. George W. Casey Jr., Army chief of staff, said the flip side is “the lack of equipping.”

AUSA NEWS spent most of a day traveling with Stultz as he met with soldiers, ate with soldiers and sat through power point presentations as part of the Global Medic 2010 exercise held at Fort Gordon, Ga.

**Gates urges service members to claim ‘Stop-Loss’ pay.** Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates urged service members whose military service was involuntarily extended between 2001 and 2009 under the so-called “Stop Loss” program to claim the special pay to which they’re entitled before the Dec. 3 deadline.

“As secretary of defense, one of my responsibilities is to make sure members of the armed forces receive the benefits they have earned,” Gates said in a message aired on the Pentagon Channel.

More than 145,000 people are eligible for the special pay, but fewer than half have submitted claims, defense officials said. Service members and veterans are entitled to \$500 for each month or partial month they served in Stop Loss status.

Gates’ message is the department’s latest attempt to reach eligible service members, veterans and beneficiaries. Since October 2009—when the War Supplemental Appropriations Act established the retroactive special pay—the services have used direct mail, veteran service organizations, the media and the Internet to reach those who are eligible.

On Sept. 15, President Barack Obama recorded a video message that is posted on the White House blog page, and Navy Adm. Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, posted a blog entry on the topic on the Defense Department’s website.

“If you were affected by Stop Loss, ... I would encourage you to go to [www.defense.gov/stoploss](http://www.defense.gov/stoploss) to learn more,” Gates said. “The average payment has been about \$3,800. But don’t wait too long. The deadline to submit a claim is Dec. 3, 2010.”

**Army outlines performance guidance manned ground combat vehicle.** Army’s next combat vehicle must perform through the full spectrum of Army operations, be designed to protect itself and the soldier, and be built with a budget in mind.

Nearly 300 attendees gathered at an industry day Oct. 1 in Detroit to discuss the acquisition strategy for the Army’s Ground Combat Vehicle. During that time, Army officials explained their vision of the GCV program and gave industry insight into what they can expect with the release of the request for proposal that will kick off the development of the new vehicle.

After the Manned Ground Vehicle component was cut from the Army’s Future Combat Systems program in June 2009, the Army moved quickly to develop a new vehicle—the Ground Combat Vehicle. The program released an RFP—an invitation to industry to come forward with offers to develop the vehicle—in February 2010. But that RFP was ultimately cancelled in August.

Army officials said they expected a new RFP would be released within 60 days of the August cancellation—that places the release of the new RFP in November. Program managers say they expect that release date is still doable.

“We’re still aiming for that,” said Col. Andrew DiMarco, project manager for the GCV, during a telephone conference with media following the industry day. “But the caveat for that is—what I don’t want to do is to put something out on the street that isn’t quite right.”

While the GCV program is expected to eventually produce multiple vehicles with varying capabilities, the focus for the first block of GCV development is an infantry combat vehicle, said DiMarco.

“With the incremental approach to GCV capability, our increment or block, if you will, is focused on the infantry fighting vehicle,” he said. “There may be other variants that are identified from a requirements perspective, and there may be other capabilities that emerge over time ... our focus right now is on one GCV, and that is the infantry fighting vehicle.”

Michael N. Smith, director of the Army Maneuver Center of Excellence, said the Army emphasized the importance of the infantry fighting vehicle to potential GCV contractors during the industry day.

“The requirement is that we need an infantry fighting vehicle that can deliver a squad to the battlefield, in an improvised-explosive-device environment—realistically in an environment of anywhere along the continuum of operations under Army,” Smith said.