



Enduring Advantages: A Department of Defense People Strategy

Fiscal Years 2024-2028





INTRODUCTION

The Department of Defense faces evolving threats brought on by shifting geopolitics, technological advancements, economic instability, and climate change that require a robust response. The Department's total force must be able to deter and defeat adversaries while also instilling and maintaining peace and stability across the globe.

As a world leader, the United States must continue to prioritize its democratic values by leveraging the diversity of its people's backgrounds, experiences, and capabilities. Together with our alliance partners, we can continue to build upon a strong foundation, advancing our nation's core strengths and ingenuity to deliver innovative approaches to this decade's challenges.

Internal organizations supporting people strategies must lead change and examine actions that enhance mission readiness and surgically focus on

securing and retaining resources and talents essential to Departmental operations. Ultimately, DoD must capitalize on critical thinking, analytics, and cultural fluency to successfully assess information from disparate factors and situations.

An inclusive, accessible climate welcomes innovation and collaboration, preparing DoD for its increasingly complex mission of safeguarding our nation. Thus, this strategic plan provides guideposts¹ to ensure *everyone* within the Department of Defense is respected, valued, and can access experiences that enhance their ability to execute the mission.

The second portion of this document includes a separate Workplace Safety and Harassment Prevention and Response Efforts section, as specified by in the technical advisement document provided and led by OPM and OMB.

¹The DoD will collaborate across its Components to develop implementation plans that include metrics for initiatives that serves as a baseline for program assessment to inform leadership guidance.

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VISION AND MISSION

VISION

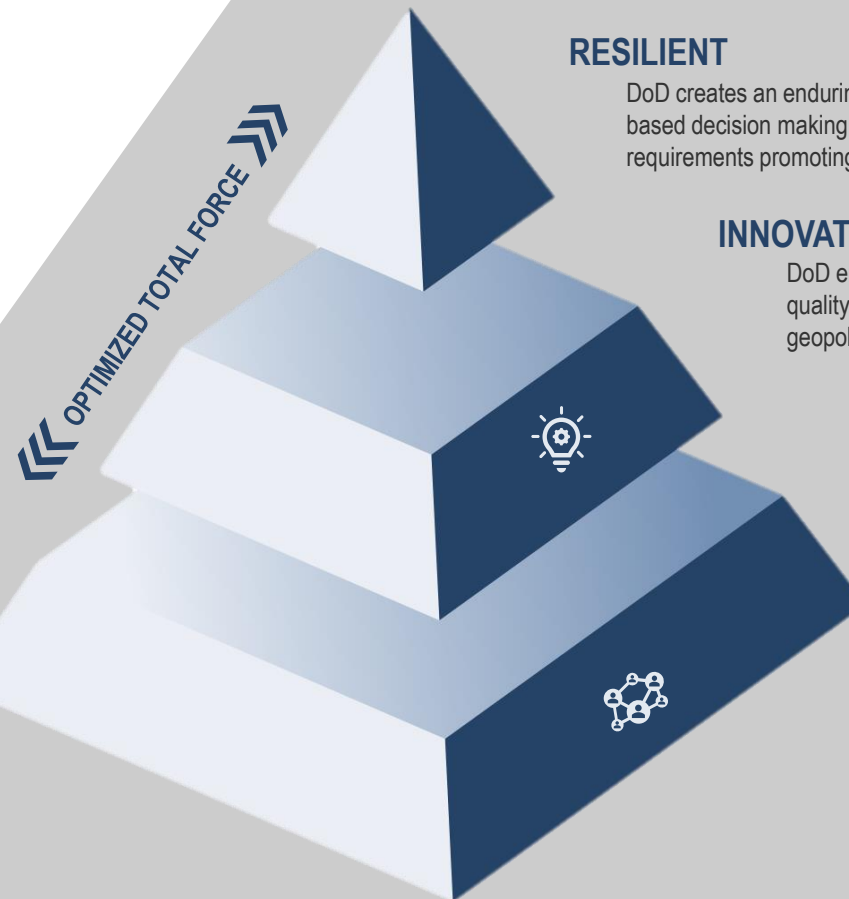
The Department values and leverages the unique strengths of all people across the total force to deter and defeat adversaries while ensuring the security of the Nation.

MISSION

Establish and foster the organizational structure and culture necessary to facilitate a total force with the diverse perspectives and required capabilities to effectively operate in today's complex global environment.

DoD's aspirational vision results in a total force that is:

- ▶ Resilient
- ▶ Innovative
- ▶ Interoperable



RESILIENT

DoD creates an enduring framework and structure that supports evidence-based decision making about people and culture to address shifting requirements promoting continuous improvement

INNOVATIVE

DoD enhances organizational capacity for adaptation and quality decision making arising from dramatic changes in geopolitics, technology, economics, and environment

INTEROPERABLE

DoD leverages diverse perspectives to execute coordinated approaches with enterprise-wide senior leadership and global partners

FY2024-2028
ENDURING
ADVANTAGES
PEOPLE STRATEGY
GOALS

The strategic plan outlines five overarching **strategic goals** for 2024-2028 shown below. Additionally, the vision attributes cut across the strategic goals to set a holistic aspirational view of DoD's force.

Each goal has accompanying objectives supported by individual initiatives from across the DoD and Military Departments. These initiatives will be mapped for implementation and must include measurable outcomes that can be tracked and reported on over time. Implementation activities will be tracked in corresponding Plan of Action and Milestones (POAMs).

1

Enhance DoD's ability to address current and emerging mission challenges to deter war and ensure the nation's security.

2

Institutionalize a cohesive organizational framework that is effective, resilient, and sustainable.

3

Transform DoD's human capital strategies by leveraging global talent to achieve readiness, global relevance, and sustainable flexibility.

4

Advance a DoD culture that respects and values the contributions of every individual to the mission.

5

Broaden internal and external partnerships to support DoD's mission achievement.

Resilient

Innovative

Interoperable

GOAL 1:

ENHANCE DOD'S ABILITY TO ADDRESS CURRENT AND EMERGING MISSION CHALLENGES TO DETER WAR AND ENSURE THE NATION'S SECURITY

DoD leadership is actively extending the focus of culture and people services beyond workforce initiatives exclusively to include those cutting-edge innovative efforts that provide direct support to mission achievement. DoD organizations responsible for the policy guidance, strategy, and implementation of people services will seek to provide support for those units providing various competitive alternatives such as experimental warfighting scenarios, risk analyses that are essential aids to workforce deployment, right sizing of personnel resources and equipment, and future analytical analyses that are useful to define warfighting postures. The adjacent objectives will allow the DoD to strengthen its ability to contribute directly to mission achievement.

OBJECTIVES

- 1.1. Leverage research efforts and experiential activities such as wargaming to demonstrate how diverse perspectives, teams, and approaches impact warfighting capabilities.
- 1.2. Evolve protocols for analyzing and developing key DoD guiding and mission-focused documents, such as doctrine and planning processes, to fully integrate people and culture considerations.
- 1.3. Continuously expand the use of risk analysis and research to inform personnel and mission/operational strategies.
- 1.4. Expand enterprise-wide capability to ensure on-going research, key strategic partnerships, and sharing of best practices/lessons learned to continuously inform priorities and accelerate data driven decision making.
- 1.5. Adjust internal and external messaging to connect enduring strategic people and culture institutionalization directly to DoD strategic objectives and mission readiness.

“Now and over the next two decades, we face strategic challenges stemming from complex interactions between a rapidly changing global balance of military capabilities; emerging technologies; competitor doctrines that pose new threats to the U.S. homeland and to strategic stability; an escalation of competitor’s coercive and malign activities in the “gray zone;” and transboundary challenges that impose new demands on the Joint Force and the defense enterprise.”

National Defense Strategy (NDS)(2022)

GOAL 2:

INSTITUTIONALIZE A COHESIVE ORGANIZATIONAL FRAMEWORK THAT IS EFFECTIVE, RESILIENT, AND SUSTAINABLE

There is a need for specific enabling efforts to support the organization's ability to provide sustainability and resiliency. An intentional, embedded strategic people and culture framework equipped with a qualified workforce, comprehensive tools for measuring effectiveness and performance, and consistent senior leadership engagement can facilitate sustainable progress. An enhanced structure will ensure accountability, oversight, and continuous improvement in implementing DoD's Enduring Advantages strategy.

OBJECTIVES

- 2.1. Institute a governance structure that drives leadership commitment, decision making, and accountability for DoD's people and culture programs, initiatives, and actions.
- 2.2. Develop standardized DoD operational tracking processes to systematically define and codify people and culture programs, initiatives, and progress.
- 2.3. Build upon existing enterprise-wide data collection and analysis frameworks for people and culture measures to expand current analytical quantitative and qualitative data capabilities and existing DoD systems to provide insight into the full range of Department decision-making needs.
- 2.4. Continue to rebrand and structure DEOMI as DoD's people and culture centralized cultural integrator, educator, and research hub.
- 2.5. Conduct ongoing organizational analysis to determine appropriate resources, personnel, processes, and infrastructure needed to support enterprise-wide Enduring Advantages efforts.
- 2.6. Expand and continue the institutionalization of an accessibility framework including policy, structure, and capabilities to improve the impact and visibility of the function.

"The 2022 NDS states: "[our] strategy will not be successful if we fail to resource its major initiatives or fail to make the hard choices to align available resources with the strategy's level of ambition. If we do not effectively incorporate new technologies and identify, recruit, and leverage new talent; and if we are unsuccessful in reducing the barriers that limit collaboration with Allies and partners. Implementation risks will be forestalled by leadership focus and discipline, as well as consistent attention to monitoring implementation in line with clear metrics to enable assessment and course correction."

National Defense Strategy
(2022)

GOAL 3:

TRANSFORM DOD'S HUMAN CAPITAL STRATEGIES BY LEVERAGING GLOBAL TALENT TO ACHIEVE READINESS, GLOBAL RELEVANCE, AND SUSTAINABLE FLEXIBILITY

Throughout the NDS, deterrence, enhancement of defense systems, and nuclear capabilities are mentioned as necessary to meet the goals of DoD's mission. These objectives require a workforce with the highest job level satisfaction. DoD is prioritizing effective changes in promotions, development, and mentoring and coaching programs as essential elements of attracting mission relevant talent and mitigating turnover. The aim of this strategic goal and objectives is to define a cohesive, aligned approach to ensure all employees have access to all elements of the DoD talent management and benefit systems.

OBJECTIVES

- 3.1. Develop and continuously adjust an integrated talent management strategy to align people's skillsets with DoD mission needs.
- 3.2. Develop and implement an integrated framework to evaluate recruitment and retention personnel lifecycle programs to identify and remove barriers to equity and enforce accountability for continuous process improvement.
- 3.3. Assess and refine total force workforce training, education, and development processes and programs to enhance people and culture organizational competency.
- 3.4. Improve DoD's ability to attract, accommodate, advance, and retain qualified individuals of diverse backgrounds, individuals with disabilities/targeted disabilities, and disabled Veterans.
- 3.5. Strengthen the assessment process used to sustain supervisory competency in maximizing talent.

"DoD's strategic advantage in overcoming the myriad global security threats facing the United States is the diverse and dynamic talent pool in our nation from which it can draw. Given the evolving nature of future global challenges, so too must DoD grow and evolve to bolster the integrated deterrence required to overcome these challenges. DoD needs diverse perspectives, experiences, and skillsets to remain a global leader, to deter war, and to keep our nation secure."

Department of Defense Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility Strategic Plan FY 2022-2023 (2022), as required by E.O. 14035

GOAL 4:

ADVANCE A DOD CULTURE THAT RESPECTS AND VALUES THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF EVERY INDIVIDUAL TO THE MISSION

DoD and its Components have well-established cultures with a long history of success in protecting the nation and leading the charge in an ever-changing global warfare environment. The Department continues to build on the military's decades long tradition of leading the charge in building an inclusive environment where all employees thrive. The success of the enterprise's collective cultures will allow it to meet the needs of the 21st century and incorporate the written and unwritten mores, beliefs, and assumptions to support mission achievement. Culture is characterized as leadership views, treatment of employees, chain of command approaches, communication systems, and opportunities for employees to be heard regarding organizational decisions. The aim of the goal and strategic objectives adjacent is to provide a roadmap to achieve a culture where individuals are valued and respected.

OBJECTIVES

- 4.1. Support individuals' abilities to succeed and contribute to the mission.
- 4.2. Increase and enhance collaboration with DoD educational, academic, and industry partners to develop leadership training to inculcate inclusive behaviors and foster psychological safety throughout the enterprise.
- 4.3. Assess, define, and clarify intersectional factors that will allow DoD to broaden and progressively build an inclusive climate that drives cultural change beyond demographics.
- 4.4. Provide the workforce and community with comprehensive access to tools and services that enable individuals to maximize their contributions to the DoD mission (e.g., personal services, administrative supports, readers, interpreters).

"Cultural representation and competence of different cultures, and the interoperability of such, is a critical skillset, particularly in different geographic regions of the world."

Building Language Skills and Cultural Competencies in the Military: DoD's Challenge in Today's Educational Environment (2008)

GOAL 5:

BROADEN INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL PARTNERSHIPS TO SUPPORT DOD'S MISSION ACHEIVEMENT

DoD moved toward a strategic partnership with external stakeholders to enhance mission achievement at the Office of Secretary and Component level. Senior leadership oversees the organization's involvement, influence, and impact on communities within the borders and partner nations globally. This objective outlines DoD's external brand both within its borders and globally.

OBJECTIVES

- 5.1. Expand and enhance community internal and external partnerships in underrepresented and underserved communities across the nation.
- 5.2. Modify, implement, and measure policies and programs to ensure continuous advancement of forums to leverage voices of diverse internal and external communities that integrates collaboration and sharing of best practices/lessons learned.
- 5.3. Leverage minority procurement contracting, assistance instruments, outreach program communications, and branding to highlight DoD's mission, strategies, and accomplishments for underrepresented community audiences.
- 5.4. Continue joint DoD and DOL intra-department working group efforts to address inclusivity and accessibility for individuals with disabilities under the Workforce Recruitment Program (WRP). This includes the finalization of a preliminary report with recommendations and action items for submission to the Office of the Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy.
- 5.5. Strengthen Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) and revitalize Arts and Humanities programs exploring partnerships that provide best practices relevant to DoD mission critical capabilities.
- 5.6. Continue to advance interagency and global partnerships to share challenges and build upon successful practices that inform DoD policy, strategy, and interoperability.

"When managed carefully, alliances contribute to regional and global stability (and therefore allow prosperity to be maximized). They deter aggression, provide some predictability and restrain allies from destabilizing postures. Dismantling US alliances or diluting them by retreating from a forward presence could make it difficult for the US to reinsert itself into theaters and rebuild allied trust in a crisis.²"

Wainwright (2016). *The Fears of US Allies, the Benefits of US Alliances*

²Wainwright, E. (2016, July 26). *The fears of US allies, the benefits of US Alliances*. The Strategist, The Australian Strategic Policy Institute. <https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/fears-us-allies-benefits-us-alliances/>

MISSION AND PEOPLE STRATEGY: NEXT STEPS

A striking metaphor for the work navigating the inclusive enduring advantages within the DoD is similar to navigating a large ocean liner through a storm in the open sea. In an era of increased strategic competition, repositioning the work of units focused on DoD's strategic advantage – its people – is essential to maintaining global power and influence on peers and adversaries. A reader of this plan can see that in some sections it was necessary to provide goals and objectives focused on developing organizational structures, policies, and processes, and in others there is a concerted effort to focus on talent management approaches predominantly. DoD is in a transitional phase of building an infrastructure that supports mission achievement more directly, while concurrently continuing to support personnel life cycle retention programs. This transition will take time to mature.

DoD is positioned to be a lynchpin for such efforts and is building an infrastructure to partner with numerous organizational units with discrete responsibilities related to the employee wellbeing and mission achievement.

This is a five-year plan, and the goal is to continuously assess progress through yearly implementation plans. These implementation plans will be utilized as working documents to gauge progress against the five-year goals and objectives with the ultimate outcome of positioning DoD as a leader in people management and an employer of choice. The plan focuses on creating an environment that is fair, respectful, and allows all employees to thrive and succeed while supporting the mission. This implies that the institution must be attentive to the status of the majority as well as the minorities.

THIS PLAN SEEKS TO SET FORTH THE STRATEGIC GUIDEPOST BELOW:

Ensure that DoD efforts are mission-focused.

Achieve senior leadership engagement, commitment, and continuous involvement and create the resources, analytics, and enduring infrastructure to ensure success.

Sharpen the research capabilities related to workforce development, engagement, coaching, and performance so that managers, leaders, and practitioners are equipped both professionally and personally to support an organization that values all people.

Create an internal communication place that includes policies, memos, and organizational artifacts that consistently support the tenets of an inclusive environment.

Strengthen the ability to influence and support the American communities and partners, especially those where there are installations.

Strengthen DoD's global impact with allies and partners.

WORKPLACE SAFETY AND HARASSMENT PREVENTION AND RESPONSE EFFORTS

Priorities for Advancing a Safe Work Environment

DoD maintains a guiding principle on workplace safety: DoD institutes a model workplace and environment that furthers safety and prevention policies, programs, and practices, preventing and addressing all forms of workforce harassment, sexual assault, discrimination, or retaliation.

To align with this principle and foster a safe work environment Department-wide, DoD will develop and implement a comprehensive and enduring framework to address all forms of workforce harassment, assault, discrimination, or retaliation.

GOAL Workplace Safety: Develop Safe Workplace Framework

Create an enduring, comprehensive framework to prevent and address all forms of workforce harassment, sexual assault, discrimination, or retaliation

To create a culture and environment intolerant of any form of harassment, assault, discrimination, and retaliation, DoD will first confirm that the policies and practices in place across the Department fully enable a comprehensive, consistent, and uniform approach to safe work environments and align with the prevention and response frameworks outlined in foundational strategies like the PPOA 2.0. Additionally, DoD will provide, as appropriate, updated educational resources regarding workplace harms and reporting methods across multiple channels, such as hotlines or onsite staff, ensure all employees have easy access to required resources.

A key element of creating a safe work environment is the willingness of the workforce to report incidents when they do occur, without stigma or fear of retaliation. To reduce the stigma of reporting, investigators and other program team members involved with reports of safe workplace violations will receive relevant training, such as communicating in a trauma informed manner.

Additionally, targeted training that addresses retaliatory behaviors such as reprisal, maltreatment, and ostracism can serve as a first step in reassuring employees that DoD does not tolerate retaliation in any form. Across DoD, the Component Head will promote and provide employee assistance programs, work-life programs, and available mental health experts and/or referral services to the workforce. While these programs and efforts may vary slightly between Components, all efforts will be linked back to the overarching goal of developing a comprehensive safe framework.

WORKPLACE SAFETY AND HARASSMENT PREVENTION AND RESPONSE EFFORTS

DOD SAFE WORKPLACE STRATEGY MAP

DOD PRINCIPLE

DoD institutes a model workplace and environment that furthers safety and prevention policies, programs, and practices, preventing and addressing all forms of workforce harassment, sexual assault, discrimination, or retaliation.

DOD GOAL

WORKPLACE SAFETY: Develop Safe Workplace Framework

DOD OBJECTIVES

Conduct comprehensive reviews and assessment of safe workplace policies, programs, and practices.

Provide updated educational resources to supervisors, bystanders, and employees using multiple channels and delivery methods.

Provide and communicate the availability of support services to those who experience workplace harassment, assault, discrimination, or retaliation.

Reduce stigma of reporting workplace harassment, discrimination, sexual assault, or retaliation, and include trauma-informed communication training for investigators and other program team members.

WORKPLACE SAFETY AND HARASSMENT PREVENTION AND RESPONSE PLAN

NEXT STEPS AND IMPLEMENTATION

The Department's framework for establishing a safe work environment that prevents and responds to harassment, sexual assault, and other types of behaviors already includes several statutory- and policy-based data collection, analysis, and reporting requirements.

In addition, the PPoA efforts discussed above have their own respective timelines for implementation and reporting requirements, including briefing the DWC on a quarterly basis on the status of sexual assault in the military population. DoD will take a collaborative approach when establishing a Safe Workplace framework, as many different offices across the Department are involved with or responsible for overseeing sexual harassment, sexual assault, and other types of workplace violence prevention and response efforts.

Consequently, the Department will continue to engage its cross-organizational stakeholders, senior executive leadership, and subject matter experts to identify barriers to a safe work environment, free from harassment, sexual assault, and other types of behaviors, and to generate actionable solutions to overcome these barriers.



Appendix: **ACRONYMS**

DoD Department of Defense

DoDI Department of Defense Instruction

DoL Department of Labor

DWC Deputy's Workforce Council

E.O. Executive Order

PPoA Prevention Plan of Action

WRP Workforce Recruitment Program