



## DoD DIRECTIVE 5111.10

### ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR SPECIAL OPERATIONS AND LOW-INTENSITY CONFLICT

---

**Originating Component:** Office of the Director of Administration and Management

**Effective:** May 5, 2021

**Releasability:** Cleared for public release. Available on the Directives Division Website at <https://www.esd.whs.mil/DD/>.

**Cancel:** DoD Directive 5111.10, "Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict (ASD(SO/LIC))," March 22, 1995, as amended

**Approved by:** Kathleen H. Hicks, Deputy Secretary of Defense

---

**Purpose:** Consistent with the authorities detailed in Sections 138 and 167 of Title 10, United States Code (U.S.C.), this issuance:

- Establishes the responsibilities and functions, relationships, and authorities of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict (ASD(SO/LIC)).
- Designates the ASD(SO/LIC), as a Principal Staff Assistant (PSA) reporting directly to the Secretary of Defense, to assist the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, and to execute the responsibilities, functions, and authorities assigned in this issuance, and in accordance with applicable law, policy, DoD regulations, the November 18, 2020, and May 5, 2021, Secretary of Defense Memoranda, and the December 3, 2020, and December 30, 2020, Deputy Secretary of Defense Memoranda.
- The ASD(SO/LIC) reports directly to the Secretary of Defense in exercising authority, direction, and control of all special operations-peculiar administrative matters relating to the organization, training, and equipping of special operations forces. The ASD(SO/LIC) is also a member of the senior leader fora as designated in the November 18, 2020, Secretary of Defense Memorandum.
- The ASD(SO/LIC) is in the administrative chain of command and exercises authority, direction, and control of the Commander, U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), for special operations-peculiar administration including the readiness and organization of special operations forces, resources and equipment, and civilian personnel (per section 167(f) of Title 10, U.S.C.).

- For all other policy matters, ASD(SO/LIC) will be subject to the authority, direction, and control of the Under Secretary of Defense (Policy).

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION 1: GENERAL ISSUANCE INFORMATION .....	4
Applicability .....	4
SECTION 2: RESPONSIBILITIES AND FUNCTIONS .....	5
a. Policy Oversight.....	5
b. Resources and Administrative Oversight.....	6
c. Sensitive Special Operations.....	9
d. Operational Preparation of the Environment (OPE).....	9
e. Crisis Response.....	9
f. Direct Action.....	10
g. Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD).....	10
h. IW.....	11
i. Security Cooperation.....	12
j. Civil Affairs.....	12
k. Information Operations (IO).....	12
l. Military Information Support Operations.....	12
m. DoD Rewards Program.....	13
n. Regional Defense Counterterrorism and Irregular Warfare Fellowship Program.....	13
o. IW Technical Support Matters.....	13
p. Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction (CWMD).....	14
q. Personnel Recovery.....	14
r. Military Diving.....	15
s. Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics Matters.....	15
t. Special Access Programs (SAPs) Matters.....	16
u. SO Policy and Oversight Council.....	17
v. Evaluations and Compliance.....	17
w. Agreements, Understandings, Arrangements, and Similar Instruments.....	17
x. General Matters.....	17
SECTION 3: RELATIONSHIPS .....	19
3.1. ASD(SO/LIC).....	19
3.2. OSD PSAS and DoD Component Heads.....	19
3.3. CJCS.....	20
3.4. CDRUSSOCOM.....	20
SECTION 4: AUTHORITIES.....	21
GLOSSARY .....	23
G.1. Acronyms.....	23
G.2. Definitions.....	24
REFERENCES .....	26

## **SECTION 1: GENERAL ISSUANCE INFORMATION**

### **APPLICABILITY.**

This issuance applies to OSD, the Military Departments, the Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) and the Joint Staff, the Combatant Commands (CCMDs), the Office of Inspector General of the Department of Defense, the Defense Agencies, the DoD Field Activities, and all other organizational entities within the DoD (referred to collectively in this issuance as the “DoD Components”).

## SECTION 2: RESPONSIBILITIES AND FUNCTIONS

The ASD(SO/LIC) is the PSA and principal civilian advisor to the Secretary of Defense for special operations (SO), low-intensity conflict (LIC), and SO-peculiar administrative matters and, after the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of Defense, is the principal DoD official for these matters. The ASD(SO/LIC) supervises SO activities consistent with Sections 138 and 167 of Title 10, U.S.C., and oversees LIC and irregular warfare (IW) activities of the DoD. As appropriate, the ASD(SO/LIC), in their role as a PSA to the Secretary of Defense, assists the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (USD(P)) on those issues, policies, and activities identified in Sections 138 and 167 of Title 10, U.S.C., and in other applicable laws and policies, and as described in this issuance. In the exercise of assigned responsibilities, the ASD(SO/LIC):

### a. Policy Oversight.

- (1) In their role as a PSA to the Secretary of Defense, assists the USD(P):
  - (a) In developing overall policy pertaining to SO, LIC, and IW and ensuring that the DoD maintains related capabilities and capacity.
  - (b) On policy recommendations and guidance to incorporate SO, LIC, and IW mission options in steady-state and contingency planning; reviews contributions to, and evaluates the support of, such plans.
  - (c) On interagency support requests for utilization of DoD forces or resources in SO, LIC, and IW and monitors interagency use of DoD forces or resources in such activities in consultation with the Office of General Counsel of the Department of Defense and in accordance with DoD Directive (DoDD) S-5210.36, when applicable.
  - (d) Oversee the promulgation and periodic review of regulations for the USSOCOM activities and review, in coordination with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the CDRUSSOCOM, the procedures by which the CDRUSSOCOM receives, plans, and executes taskings of the President or the Secretary of Defense.
- (2) Implements policy established by the Secretary or Deputy Secretary of Defense and issues guidance and direction in regard to special operations forces (SOF)-related readiness.
  - (a) Oversees, in coordination with the CDRUSSOCOM, the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (USD(P&R)), and the Military Departments, the readiness of forces and individuals assigned to United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM).
  - (b) Evaluates and advises on the readiness of SOF to conduct SO for steady-state and contingency plans in coordination with the CJCS. Initiates, reviews, and coordinates with the USD(P&R), CJCS, CDRUSSOCOM, and the Secretaries of the Military Departments on changes in readiness policies that may impact SOF.
- (3) Under the direction of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Legislative Affairs and the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller)/Chief Financial Officer, Department of Defense (USD(C)/CFO), directs and controls legislative matters and congressional liaison activities for all

SO activities and programs except for those legislative affairs activities that require direct engagement with Congress as part of the CDRUSSOCOM's operational role as a Combatant Commander (CCDR), in accordance with DoDDs 5142.01 and 5118.03, and the January 14, 2020, Secretary of Defense Memorandum.

(a) Maintains awareness of CDRUSSOCOM's participation in the DoD legislative process in their role as a CCDR.

(b) Coordinates with CDRUSSOCOM on legislative matters and conducts engagements with Congress jointly with CDRUSSOCOM, when appropriate.

(4) In coordination with the CDRUSSOCOM, provides oversight of the readiness of the theater SO commands to conduct IW and SO and LIC activities. Coordinates with the Joint Staff, USSOCOM, the geographic CCMDs, and the Military Departments, as necessary, to identify and mitigate readiness issues related to the theater SO commands.

(5) Coordinates with the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence and Security (USD(I&S)) on intelligence policies for IW and SO and LIC activities. Coordinates for intelligence support to IW and SO and LIC activities and identifies risks associated with any potential intelligence support shortfalls.

(6) Promotes understanding of IW, and SO and LIC activities within the DoD, other Federal agencies, Congress, the public, and foreign officials.

(7) Conducts independent and collaborative studies, analyses, and examinations that support the exercise of assigned responsibilities and functions.

(8) Oversees the issuance and periodic review of regulations for USSOCOM and SO activities, in coordination with other OSD PSAs, the Joint Staff, USSOCOM staff, and other DoD Components as applicable.

(9) Co-Chairs the Irregular Warfare – Security Force Assistance Executive Steering Committee, providing overall oversight to ensure DoD maintains capabilities and capacity in IW, in accordance with DoDD 3000.07.

#### **b. Resources and Administrative Oversight.**

The ASD(SO/LIC) is in the USSOCOM administrative chain of command. This chain of command runs from the Secretary of Defense to the ASD(SO/LIC), and from the ASD(SO/LIC) to the CDRUSSOCOM. The ASD(SO/LIC):

(1) Exercises authority, direction, and control of all SO-peculiar administrative matters relating to the organization, readiness, training, resourcing, and equipping of SO forces.

(2) Performs a budgetary role and responsibility similar to those of the Secretaries of the Military Departments, and receives topline guidance and leads the development and justification of the SOF Major Force Program-11 Program Objective Memorandum and Budget Estimate

Submission; and provides input to the President's Budget. The ASD(SO/LIC) will issue programming guidance and fiscal guidance to USSOCOM.

(3) Provides overall supervision of the preparation and justification of SO programs and budget for Major Force Program-11; approves the USSOCOM program objective memoranda and budget before submission to the Director of Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation (DCAPE) and the USD(C)/CFO; and advocates for program objective memoranda and budgets to Congress, in coordination with the CDRUSSOCOM.

(4) Reviews, analyzes, and evaluates the various OSD PSA and DoD Component policies, processes, and programs that impact DoD's capability to:

(a) Oversee planning, resourcing, training, and equipping of SO forces for IW, and to execute SO and LIC activities and operations. Advocates with the Military Services to plan, resource, train, and equip non-SO forces for IW and LIC missions as required.

(b) Initiate and coordinate actions that enhance the readiness, capabilities, and effective use of SOF.

(5) Advises and coordinates with the USD(I&S) on priorities and requirements for SO intelligence and intelligence-related material, equipment, and resources.

(6) Advises and coordinates with the DCAPE on program issues that impact SO activities.

(7) Advises and coordinates with the USD(C)/CFO on budget issues that impact SOF activities.

(8) Advises the Secretary of Defense on assigning SO, Reserve, and other forces to USSOCOM.

(9) Advises and coordinates with the USD(P&R) and the Secretaries of the Military Departments on matters in the following categories that affect USSOCOM and SO forces, including, but not limited to:

(a) Readiness.

(b) Total Force management.

(c) Reserve and National Guard affairs.

(d) Health affairs (including, but not limited to, psychological and physical health issues) and wounded warrior care.

(e) Military and civilian personnel requirements, including, but not limited to:

1. Recruiting, accessions, retention, and promotions.

2. Professional military education.





(b) This authority is not further delegable. This does not include authority to approve a transfer of forces to or from the operational control of the CDRUSSOCOM or another CCMD.

**c. Sensitive Special Operations.**

(1) In their role as a PSA to the Secretary of Defense, assists the USD(P) and coordinates with the USD(I&S) to:

(a) Develop policy for the planning of, seeking approval to conduct, and permissible and prohibited activities when conducting sensitive special operations, including policies for execution, management, reporting, and resources.

(b) Review all sensitive special operations proposals and conduct an independent evaluation of the policy and administrative-related risks and gains of each.

(c) Monitor execution of sensitive special operations and keep Executive and Legislative Branches leadership appropriately informed on sensitive special operations matters.

(2) Develop, coordinate, and oversee the implementation of policy for nonconventional assisted recovery activities.

(3) Conduct oversight of sensitive special operations.

**d. Operational Preparation of the Environment (OPE).**

In their role as a PSA to the Secretary of Defense, assists the USD(P), in coordination with the USD(I&S), to:

(1) Develop policy, coordinate with interagency and international partners, and monitor planning and resourcing for DoD Components to conduct OPE.

(2) Oversee SO and LIC OPE activities.

**e. Crisis Response.**

In their role as a PSA to the Secretary of Defense, assists the USD(P) to:

(1) Establish and maintain an interactive process with other OSD PSAs and the DoD Components, other U.S. Government departments and agencies, and other bodies to promote early identification of potential problems and initiate planning guidance.

(2) Monitor the development of crises and, as appropriate:

(a) Recommend options for actions utilizing SOF capabilities and authorities.

(b) Monitor SO actions during planning and execution.

(3) In coordination with other senior DoD officials, as appropriate, notify the Secretary of Defense when there are significant changes in the relationship between SO actions, targets, level of force and risk, and the policy objectives to be achieved.

**f. Direct Action.**

Coordinates with the USD(P) to oversee planning and resourcing of capabilities for SO forces to conduct direct action, and monitors SO actions during planning and execution.

**g. Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD).**

(1) In coordination with the USD(P):

(a) In their role as a PSA to the Secretary of Defense, assists with the development and oversight of policy, plans, programs, and budgets, and issues guidance and provides direction on DoD EOD activities.

(b) Coordinates and provides advice to senior DoD officials regarding the use of U.S. Government resources for EOD, in accordance with DoDDs 5160.62 and 3025.13.

(c) In their role as a PSA to the Secretary of Defense, assists the USD(P) with the development, coordination, and oversight of policy on all matters pertaining to the roles, missions, capabilities, and employment of EOD. Reviews and evaluates policies, processes, and programs of DoD Components that affect the capability to plan, resource, prepare forces for, and execute EOD activities, in accordance with DoDDs 5160.62 and 3025.13.

(d) Serves as principal staff advisor to the USD(P) and the Secretary of Defense for EOD. In this capacity, the ASD(SO/LIC) will execute these functions, in accordance with DoDD 5160.62.

(e) Coordinates with the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and Global Security (ASD(HD&GS)) on EOD in defense support of civil authorities, in accordance with DoDDs 5160.62 and 3025.13.

(2) Coordinates with the USD(I&S) on explosive ordnance technical intelligence.

(3) Coordinates with the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment (USD(A&S)) on EOD research, development, acquisition, and sustainment; and with the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Nuclear, Chemical, and Biological Defense programs on EOD for combating weapons of mass destruction.

(4) Coordinates with the Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering (USD(R&E)) on EOD research, development, test, and evaluation.

(5) Coordinates with the Secretary of the Navy as the DoD Executive Agent for EOD Technology and Training, as designated in the June 2, 2020, Secretary of Defense Memorandum, on oversight of the training and technology program that coordinates and integrates:

(a) Joint requirements for EOD.

(b) Common individual training.

(c) Joint research, development, test, and evaluation activities for common tools for the Military Departments with respect to EOD.

**h. IW.**

(1) In their role as a PSA to the Secretary of Defense, assists the USD(P) to:

(a) Develop and oversee policies for IW as it pertains to DoD IW-related activities either independently or in support of other U.S. Government departments and agencies, foreign security partners, or other select organizations, in accordance with DoDD 3000.07.

(b) Lead DoD efforts to establish and sustain processes and authorities to assess and analyze the viability of unconventional warfare as a strategic policy option, and incorporate relevant concepts into strategic planning documents.

(c) Develop policy in coordination with other U.S. Government departments and agencies, and provide advice to senior DoD officials regarding the use of U.S. Government resources in stabilization, in accordance with DoDD 3000.05.

(d) Develop policy and provide advice and guidance to senior DoD officials regarding the use of U.S. Government resources to conduct foreign internal defense as a strategic policy option, and incorporate relevant concepts into strategic planning documents to defend against and impose costs on malign internal security threats.

(e) Develop, coordinate, and oversee implementation of counterterrorism policy consistent with national strategies and DoD policy and objectives.

(2) In their role as a PSA to the Secretary of Defense, assists the USD(P) and, in coordination with the USD(I&S):

(a) Develops policy and provides advice to senior DoD officials regarding the use of U.S. Government resources in counterinsurgency.

(b) Develops policy in coordination with other U.S. Government departments and agencies, and provides advice to senior DoD officials regarding the use of U.S. Government resources in counterterrorism consistent with national strategies, DoD policy, and objectives.

(3) In coordination with the CJCS, the Secretaries of the Military Departments, the OSD PSAs (as applicable), and the CCDRs, determines the optimal organizational structure and decision processes for the DoD to ensure the uninterrupted oversight, management, direction, and accountability over the development and maintenance of required forces and capabilities to conduct or support IW missions.

(4) In coordination with the USD(C)/CFO and DCAPE, develops, coordinates, and submits the DoD portion of the national counterterrorism budget to the Office of Management and Budget via the National Counterterrorism Center.

(5) In coordination with the USD(R&E), collaborates with the Department of State Bureau of Counterterrorism to identify, prioritize, and coordinate DoD, interagency, and international research and development requirements for combatting terrorism.

**i. Security Cooperation.**

(1) In accordance with DoDD 5132.03, and in their role as a PSA to the Secretary of Defense, assists the USD(P) to develop guidance, prioritization, and validation for the Defense Security Cooperation Agency on IW (including UW-, Foreign Internal Defense-, CT-, Counter-Insurgency-, Stability Operations-), SO- and LIC-related security cooperation proposals from the DoD Component heads that:

(a) Provide training and equipment to foreign national security forces with SO, IW, or LIC missions.

(b) Support U.S. activities in these mission areas.

(2) Regarding security force assistance, in their role as a PSA to the Secretary of Defense, assists the USD(P) with policy, capability development, and the operational employment of DoD forces, DoD Components, and other OSD PSAs engaged in security force assistance across all domains, in accordance with DoD Instruction (DoDI) 5000.68.

**j. Civil Affairs.**

In their role as a PSA to the Secretary of Defense, assists the USD(P) to develop, coordinate, and oversee the implementation of strategy, policy, and plans for civil affairs forces and operations, in accordance with DoDD 2000.13.

**k. Information Operations (IO).**

In their role as a PSA to the Secretary of Defense, assists the USD(P) to:

(1) Develop, coordinate, and oversee implementation of policy for DoD IO.

(2) Support the IO Executive Steering Group in the management and implementation of the DoD Strategy for Operations in the Information Environment, pursuant to the November 18, 2016 Deputy Secretary of Defense Memorandum.

**l. Military Information Support Operations.**

In their role as a PSA to the Secretary of Defense, assists the USD(P) to develop, coordinate, and oversee the implementation of strategy, policy, and plans for military information support operations activities, in accordance with DoDD 3600.01 and DoDI O-3607.02.

**m. DoD Rewards Program.**

In their role as a PSA to the Secretary of Defense, assists the USD(P) to administer the DoD Rewards Program, in accordance with Section 127b of Title 10, U.S.C., and DoDI O-3000.13.

**n. Regional Defense Counterterrorism and Irregular Warfare Fellowship Program.**

In their role as a PSA to the Secretary of Defense, assists the USD(P) to develop program goals and objectives, approve budgets, and oversee execution of the Combating Terrorism Fellowship Program, in accordance with Section 345 of Title 10, U.S.C., and DoDI 2000.28.

**o. IW Technical Support Matters.**

(1) Oversees, plans, approves, and executes programs and budgets for IW Technical Support Directorate to:

(a) Identify and develop capabilities for the DoD to conduct IW against all adversaries, including Great Power competitors and non-state actors.

(b) Deliver those capabilities to DoD Components, other OSD PSAs, and the Technical Support Working Group interagency partners through rapid research and development, advanced studies and technical innovation, and provision of support to U.S. military operations.

(2) Conducts research, development, testing, and evaluation (RDT&E) and information sharing to develop rapidly and fill the capability gaps of the operational community.

(3) Provides prototypes for operational testing and evaluation and training and support for the prototypes to DoD Components in furtherance of U.S. military operations and to interagency users for operational evaluation and feedback.

(4) Procures commercial or non-developmental items for testing and operational evaluation that relates to RDT&E efforts.

(5) Conducts international cooperative RDT&E and information sharing with member nations of NATO, with major non-NATO allies, or with any other ally or friendly foreign country.

(6) Provides technology transition assistance associated with RDT&E efforts to DoD Components and to non-DoD U.S. Government departments and agencies and foreign governments, facilitating:

(a) The commercialization of capabilities developed through RDT&E efforts.

(b) The transition of capabilities to programs of record, in accordance with applicable DoD policies, as appropriate.

(7) Accepts and applies funds from DoD Components, other U.S. Government departments and agencies, and foreign cooperative RDT&E partners to perform the IW technical

support functions in cooperation with or on behalf of the DoD Component or interagency or foreign partner.

(8) Collaborates with and supports related requirements of the Technical Support Working Group non-DoD U.S. Government departments and agencies to understand those users' priorities and requirements, to share expertise, and to develop mutually beneficial capabilities.

(9) Supervises, plans, approves, and executes budgets for IW technical support in the management of the Technical Support Working Group.

(a) Collaborates with the Department of State Bureau of Counterterrorism to identify, prioritize, and coordinate DoD, interagency, and international research and development requirements for combating terrorism and IW.

(b) In collaboration with the USD(A&S) and the USD(R&E), establishes and executes cost sharing research and development bilateral agreements with international partners and allies to meet joint capability gaps.

**p. Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction (CWMD).**

In their role as a PSA to the Secretary of Defense, assists the USD(P) to:

(1) Develop, coordinate, and oversee implementation of policy on all matters pertaining to the roles, missions, capabilities, and employment of SOF in CWMD, in accordance with DoDD 2060.02.

(2) Review and evaluate OSD PSA and DoD Component policies, processes, programs, and budgets that affect the capability to plan, resource, and prepare SOF to execute CWMD activities, in accordance with DoDD 2060.02.

(3) Coordinate with the ASD(HD&GS) on SO and LIC programs and resources for CWMD, in accordance with DoDDs 2060.02 and 5111.13.

(4) Develop programs and resources related to EOD support for SOF, in accordance with DoDD 5160.62.

(5) Coordinate with the ASD(HD&GS) on programs and resources for EOD render safe procedures for CWMD, in accordance with DoDDs 2060.02 and 3025.13.

**q. Personnel Recovery.**

In their role as a PSA to the Secretary of Defense, assists the USD(P) to:

(1) Develop policy, conduct oversight, and provide advice to senior DoD officials regarding personnel recovery planning, preparation, and operations, in accordance with DoDD 3002.01.

(2) Coordinate with the Director of Operations, Joint Staff, and other designated executive agents, to integrate and synchronize DoD personnel recovery policy.

(a) Represent the Secretary of Defense in the Hostage Recovery Fusion Cell and Hostage Recovery Group meetings convened by the National Security Council. In this capacity, and in coordination with the Director of Operations, Joint Staff, and other designated executive agents, integrate and synchronize DoD personnel recovery policy for U.S. citizens.

(b) Provide programmatic and policy oversight of nonconventional assisted recovery activities, in accordance with DoDI 3002.04.

(c) Serve as the DoD policy proponent for DoD support to civil search and rescue and the National Search and Rescue Plan, in accordance with DoDI 3003.01. In this capacity, and in coordination with the Director of Operations, Joint Staff, and other designated executive agents, integrate and synchronize DoD support to civil search and rescue policy for U.S. citizens.

#### **r. Military Diving.**

In their role as a PSA to the Secretary of Defense, assists the USD(P) to:

(1) Coordinate policy and provide advice to senior DoD officials regarding the use of U.S. Government resources for military diving in support of the Single Manager in the DoD for military diving technology and training, as designated by the Secretary of the Navy, in accordance with DoDI 3224.04.

(2) Advise the Secretary of Defense on military diving. Review and evaluate policies, processes, and programs of DoD Components that affect the capability to plan, resource, prepare forces for, and execute military diving activities. Serve as DoD point of contact and proponent for military diving matters, execute functions, in accordance with DoDI 3224.04.

(3) Coordinate Joint military diving technology and training with other offices within OSD having collateral or related responsibilities.

#### **s. Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics Matters.**

(1) Conducts oversight to determine whether CDRUSSOCOM's SO acquisition programs are consistent with budget and required capability priorities.

(2) Advises and coordinates with the USD(A&S), USD(R&E), USD(I&S), Director of Operational Test and Evaluation, and Secretaries of the Military Departments on:

(a) SO acquisition programs, projects, priorities, and contracting of services, in accordance with validated requirements and approved budgets, throughout the acquisition lifecycle.

(b) Matters in the following categories that affect USSOCOM and SO programs:

1. Research and development; science and technology; and engineering.

2. Contracting and acquisition planning and execution, including decision points, waivers, and source selection processes.

3. Testing and training events that support ASD(SO/LIC)-designated special interest programs.

4. Fielding and deployment releases and analysis.

5. Acquisition logistics and sustainment planning and execution.

6. Acquisition financial management planning and execution.

7. DoD and external organization audits, protests, allegations, reports, and studies as they pertain to USSOCOM acquisition, technology, and logistics.

(3) Participates in the Defense Acquisition Board and other appropriate board and committees as the proponent for SO, IW, and LIC issues.

(4) Determines which USSOCOM acquisition programs are ASD(SO/LIC)-designated special interest programs.

(5) Provides guidance on USSOCOM Acquisition Category I programs and ASD(SO/LIC)-designated special interest programs.

(6) Establishes reporting requirements for CDRUSSOCOM reports to the ASD(SO/LIC) on USSOCOM Acquisition Category I programs and ASD(SO/LIC)-designated special interest programs and program updates with OSD, the Military Departments, external organizations, and foreign partners.

(7) Coordinates on USSOCOM acquisition decisions that require Defense Acquisition Executive approval. Participates in program events as required.

(8) Establishes, directs, and chairs task forces, advisory boards, councils, or other bodies for ASD(SO/LIC)-designated special interest programs.

**t. Special Access Programs (SAPs) Matters.**

(1) Establishes a SAP Central Office, serves as cognizant authority for all USSOCOM SAPs, and carries out cognizant authority responsibilities consistent with DoDD 5205.07. The ASD(SO/LIC) may delegate responsibility in these matters to the CDRUSSOCOM.

(2) Advises and coordinates on all SO SAPs with the appropriate oversight authorities as outlined in DoDI 5205.11.

(3) Participates in the DoD SAP governance structure as a member of the SAP Oversight Council, Senior SAP Working Group, and other SAP fora.

(4) Supervises the USSOCOM planning, programming, budget, and execution processes, including validating USSOCOM SAP manpower assessments. Certifies the USSOCOM SAP



annual reports, and responds through DoD Special Access Program Central Office to the Congressional Committees on SAP requests for information, visits, and other reporting requirements.

**u. SO Policy and Oversight Council.**

Leads the SO Policy and Oversight Council, in accordance with DoDD 3801.01.

**v. Evaluations and Compliance.**

Evaluates and assesses compliance with applicable regulations, policy, and guidance within the ASD(SO/LIC)'s assigned areas of responsibility.

**w. Agreements, Understandings, Arrangements, and Similar Instruments.**

(1) Assists the USD(P) to supervise the development of agreements, understandings, arrangements, and similar instruments that have potential policy implications.

(2) Supervises development of agreements, understandings, arrangements, and similar instruments between USSOCOM and other organizations that are under the purview of ASD(SO/LIC) responsibilities for exercising authority, direction, and control in the administrative chain of command, in accordance with DoDI 4000.19 and any other applicable DoD issuances.

(a) Reviews, coordinates on, or approves (as the ASD(SO/LIC) deems appropriate) agreements, understandings, arrangements, or similar instruments between USSOCOM and other U.S. Government departments and agencies; other CCMDs; and international partners, allies, and organizations. This authority is delegable to CDRUSSOCOM.

(b) Reviews and approves all Secretary of Military Department-level agreements, understandings, arrangements, or similar instruments, and their respective annexes, appendices, and enclosures (except for those that USSOCOM enters into, pursuant to Section 167(e)(4)(C)(i)(I) of Title 10 U.S.C.) between USSOCOM and the Military Departments. This authority is delegable to the CDRUSSOCOM.

**x. General Matters.**

(1) Uses existing systems, facilities, and services of DoD and other U.S. Government departments and agencies, when possible, to avoid duplication and achieve maximum efficiency and economy.

(2) Ensures that assigned policies and programs are designed and managed to improve standards of performance, ethics, economy, and efficiency.

(3) Periodically assesses the DoD Executive Agent assignments under the cognizance of the ASD(SO/LIC) for continued need, currency, and effectiveness and efficiency in satisfying end-user requirements, in accordance with DoDD 5101.01.

(4) In their role as a PSA to the Secretary of Defense, assists the USD(P) by representing the Secretary of Defense in interagency deliberations, pursuant to assigned areas of responsibility.

(5) Negotiates and concludes international agreements, pursuant to assigned areas of responsibilities, subject to the requirements of DoDI 5530.03 and other applicable laws and regulations.

(6) Is designated as a member of senior leadership fora and other DoD governance bodies for matters within ASD(SO/LIC) areas of responsibilities.

(7) Performs such other duties as the Secretary of Defense may prescribe.

## **SECTION 3: RELATIONSHIPS**

### **3.1. ASD(SO/LIC).**

In performing their assigned responsibilities and functions, the ASD(SO/LIC):

- a. Reports directly to the Secretary of Defense, consistent with his/her duties as a PSA for the purposes of executing 10 U.S.C 167(f) administrative chain of command duties. Reports to the USD(P) for matters of policy and consistent with the duties identified in this issuance.
- b. Exercises authority, direction, and control over such positions and organizations as may be established by the ASD(SO/LIC), consistent with applicable law, using resources provided by the Secretary of Defense.
- c. Coordinates and exchanges information with other OSD officials, the DoD Component heads, and Federal, State, or local officials having collateral or related functions.
- d. Insofar as the exercise of ASD(SO/LIC) responsibilities and functions described in Section 2 of this issuance impacts on, or is conducted in, specific geographic regions of the world, exercises those responsibilities and functions in cooperation with the Assistant Secretary of Defense that is assigned responsibility for overall U.S. Defense policy in that region.
- e. Carries out assigned duties to the extent that nothing in this directive will be interpreted to interpose the ASD(SO/LIC) in the operational chain of command prescribed by Section 162 of Title 10, U.S.C., or to subsume and replace the functions and responsibilities of the CJCS and the CCDRs prescribed by law or DoD policy.
- f. Unless otherwise directed by the President, carries out assigned duties wherein the administrative chain of command to the USSOCOM runs from the President, to the Secretary of Defense, to the ASD(SO/LIC), to the CDRUSSOCOM.
- g. Communicates directly with the CDRUSSOCOM on matters identified in this directive. These communications do not need to be transmitted through the CJCS, but the ASD(SO/LIC) will inform the CJCS, as appropriate.

### **3.2. OSD PSAS AND DOD COMPONENT HEADS.**

The other OSD PSAs and DoD Component heads coordinate with the ASD(SO/LIC) on matters under their purview related to the authorities, responsibilities, and functions assigned to the ASD(SO/LIC) in this issuance.

### **3.3. CJCS.**

The CJCS will include the ASD(SO/LIC) on all communications to the Secretaries of the Military Departments or CDRUSSOCOM related to SO organization, training, equipping, readiness, capability requirements, global force management, and personnel matters.

### **3.4. CDRUSSOCOM.**

In addition to Paragraph 3.2, the CDRUSSOCOM:

a. Is subject to the authority, direction, and control of the ASD(SO/LIC) for matters related to the authorities, responsibilities, functions, and activities identified in Sections 138 and 167 of Title 10 U.S.C., and those assigned to the ASD(SO/LIC) in this issuance.

b. Coordinates with the ASD(SO/LIC) on all SO matters described in Paragraph 3.4.a.

c. Transmits all communications to the Secretary of Defense, Deputy Secretary of Defense, USD(P), USD(I&S), USD(P&R), USD(C)/CFO, DCAPE, and Assistant Secretary of Defense for Legislative Affairs related to SO organization, training, equipping, readiness, resourcing, budget, legislative affairs, posture, global force management, and personnel matters through the ASD(SO/LIC).

d. Will include the ASD(SO/LIC) on all communications to the Secretaries of the Military Departments or to the CJCS related to SO organization, training, equipping, readiness, capability requirements, global force management, and personnel matters.

## **SECTION 4: AUTHORITIES**

Pursuant to the authority vested in the Secretary of Defense, and subject to their authority, direction, and control, and in accordance with DoD policies and issuances, the ASD(SO/LIC) is hereby delegated authority to exercise, within assigned responsibilities and functions, all authority of the Secretary of Defense derived from statute, Executive order (E.O.), or interagency agreement, except where specifically limited by statute or E.O. to the Secretary of Defense. The ASD(SO/LIC) is specifically delegated authority to:

a. Establish DoD policy regarding those matters identified in 10 U.S.C. 167(f) and for which the ASD(SO/LIC) is designated a PSA, through DoDIs, directive-type memorandums (DTMs), and rules published in the Federal Register, within the authorities and responsibilities assigned in this issuance and in accordance with DoDI 5025.01 or Administrative Instruction (AI) 102.

(1) In those documents, assign responsibilities related to the authorities and responsibilities in this issuance to other OSD PSAs and the DoD Component heads. Assignment of responsibilities in DoD issuances or rules published in the Federal Register to Military Department officials must be made through the Secretaries of those Departments. DoD issuances or rules published in the Federal Register assigning responsibilities to the CCMDs must be coordinated with the CJCS.

(2) DoDIs and DTMs must be fully coordinated, in accordance with DoDI 5025.01. Rules published in the Federal Register must be fully coordinated with impacted OSD and DoD Component heads and be consistent with AI 102.

(3) This authority may not be redelegated.

b. Approve other DoDIs, DoD manuals (DoDMs), and DTMs in areas of assigned responsibilities and functions that implement policy already established by a DoDD, DoDI, DTM, or policy memorandum issued by the Secretary or Deputy Secretary of Defense.

(1) In these documents, assign responsibilities related to the authorities and responsibilities in this issuance to other OSD PSAs and the DoD Component heads. Assignment of responsibilities in these DoD issuances to Military Department officials must be made through the Secretaries of those Departments. DoD issuances assigning responsibilities to the CCMDs must be coordinated with the CJCS.

(2) Such documents must be fully coordinated in accordance with DoDI 5025.01.

(3) This authority may only be further delegated to subordinate officials as specified in DoDI 5025.01.

c. Approve Federal Register publication of significant guidance documents as defined in E.O. 13891 and determined by the Office of Management and Budget. This authority may not be redelegated.

d. Approve the Federal Register publication of documents other than rules and significant guidance documents, (e.g., notices, orders, and non-significant guidance documents as defined

by E.O. 13891 and determined by the Office of Management and Budget) in accordance with AI 102. Unless otherwise restricted by law, this authority may be further delegated only in writing to subordinate officials at or above the level of a general or flag officer, Senior Executive Service member, or equivalent.

e. Communicate directly with the DoD Component heads, as necessary, to carry out assigned responsibilities and functions, including transmitting requests for advice and assistance. Communications to Military Department officials must be transmitted through the Secretaries of the Military Departments or as otherwise provided in law or directed by the Secretary of Defense in other DoD issuances. Communications to the CCDRs must be in accordance with DoDD 5100.01.

f. Communicate with other U.S. Government officials, members of the public, and representatives of foreign governments, as appropriate, in carrying out assigned responsibilities and functions. Communications with representatives and members of the Legislative Branch must be conducted through the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Legislative Affairs, except for communications with the Defense Appropriations Committees, which must be coordinated with the Office of the USD(C)/CFO.

g. In addition to the requirements of Paragraph 2.t. on specific SAP matters, communicate with agencies of the Executive Branch and Congress on SO SAPs. For all SO SAP matters, the ASD(SO/LIC) must conduct communications with agencies of the Executive Branch and Congress, consistent with DoDD 5205.07 and any other applicable DoD issuances.

h. Obtain reports and information, in accordance with DoDI 8910.01, as necessary, to carry out assigned responsibilities and functions.

i. Establish arrangements for DoD participation in non-DoD governmental programs for which the ASD(SO/LIC) is assigned primary DoD cognizance, in accordance with DoDD S-5210.36 and any other applicable DoD issuances.

j. Enter into support agreements, as required, for the effective performance of responsibilities and functions assigned to the ASD(SO/LIC), in accordance with DoDI 4000.19, the February 13, 2020, Deputy Secretary of Defense Memorandum, and any other applicable DoD issuances.

k. Implement an information security program, in accordance with E.O. 13526, DoDI 5200.01, and DoDM 5200.01 Volumes 1-3, and exercise original classification authority up to Top Secret, and issue appropriate security classification guidance, in accordance with DoDM 5200.45 and Volume 1 of DoDM 5200.01.

## GLOSSARY

### G.1. ACRONYMS.

ACRONYM	MEANING
AI	administrative instruction
ASD(HD&GS)	Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and Global Security
ASD(SO/LIC)	Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict
CCDR	Combatant Commander
CCMD	Combatant Command
CDRUSSOCOM	Commander, U.S. Special Operations Command
CJCS	Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff
CWMD	countering weapons of mass destruction
DCAPE	Director of Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation
DoDD	DoD directive
DoDI	DoD instruction
DoDM	DoD manual
DTM	directive-type memorandum
E.O.	Executive order
EOD	explosive ordnance disposal
IO	information operations
IW	irregular warfare
LIC	low-intensity conflict
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OPE	operational preparation of the environment
PSA	principal staff assistant
RDT&E	research, development, testing, and evaluation
SAP	special access program
SO	special operations
SOF	special operations forces
U.S.C.	United States Code
USD(A&S)	Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment

<b>ACRONYM</b>	<b>MEANING</b>
USD(C)/CFO	Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller)/Chief Financial Officer, Department of Defense
USD(I&S)	Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence and Security
USD(P)	Under Secretary of Defense for Policy
USD(P&R)	Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness
USD(R&E)	Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering
USSOCOM	United States Special Operations Command

## **G.2. DEFINITIONS.**

Unless otherwise noted, these terms and their definitions are for the purpose of this issuance.

<b>TERM</b>	<b>DEFINITION</b>
<b>civil affairs</b>	Defined in Joint Publication 3-57.
<b>civil search and rescue</b>	Defined in Joint Publication 3-50.
<b>counterterrorism</b>	Defined in Joint Publication 3-26.
<b>CWMD</b>	Defined in Joint Publication 3-40.
<b>IO</b>	Defined in Joint Publication 3-13.
<b>IW</b>	Defined in the DoD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms.
<b>LIC</b>	Political-military confrontation between competing states or non-state actors as part of competition below the threshold of armed conflict. It involves protracted struggles of competing principles and ideologies, and its manifestations range from subversion to the use of armed force. It is waged by a combination of means employing political, economic, informational, and military instruments. These confrontations are often localized, generally in the Third World, but contain regional and global security implications.
<b>military information support operations</b>	Defined in Joint Publication 3-13.2.
<b>nonconventional assisted recovery</b>	Defined in Joint Publication 3-50.
<b>OPE</b>	Defined in Joint Publication 3-05.



<b>TERM</b>	<b>DEFINITION</b>
<b>personnel recovery</b>	Defined in Joint Publication 3-50.
<b>security force assistance</b>	Defined in Joint Publication 3-20.
<b>sensitive special operations</b>	Those activities conducted by SOF using clandestine or (under special circumstances) covert methods to ensure secrecy or concealment in pursuit of national political or military objectives. These operations are characterized as politically or militarily sensitive, are of a high-risk nature, and require oversight at the national level.
<b>SO</b>	Defined in Joint Publication 3-05.

## REFERENCES

- Administrative Instruction 102, “Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) Federal Register (FR) System,” November 6, 2006, as amended
- Deputy Secretary of Defense Memorandum, “Implementation Plan for the Department of Defense Strategy for Operations in the Information Environment (SOIE),” November 18, 2016
- Deputy Secretary of Defense Memorandum, “Delegation of Authority for OSD Component Heads to Enter into Support Agreements,” February 13, 2020
- Deputy Secretary of Defense Memorandum, “Development of an Implementation Plan for a Direct Reporting Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict,” December 3, 2020
- Deputy Secretary of Defense Memorandum, “Organizational Role of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict with Respect to U.S. Special Operations Command,” December 30, 2020
- DoD Directive 2000.13, “Civil Affairs,” March 11, 2014, as amended
- DoD Directive 2060.02, “DoD Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) Policy,” January 27, 2017
- DoD Directive 3000.05, “Stabilization,” December 13, 2018
- DoD Directive 3000.07, “Irregular Warfare (IW),” August 28, 2014, as amended
- DoD Directive 3002.01, “Personnel Recovery in the Department of Defense,” April 16, 2009, as amended
- DoD Directive 3025.13, “Employment of DoD Capabilities in Support of the U.S. Secret Service (USSS), Department of Homeland Security (DHS),” October 8, 2010, as amended
- DoD Directive 3600.01, “Information Operations (IO),” May 2, 2013, as amended
- DoD Directive 3801.01, “Special Operations Policy and Oversight Council (SOPOC),” February 12, 2018
- DoD Directive 5100.01, “Functions of the Department of Defense and Its Major Components,” December 21, 2010, as amended
- DoD Directive 5101.01, “DoD Executive Agent,” September 3, 2002, as amended
- DoD Directive 5111.13, “Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and Global Security (ASD(HD&GS)),” March 23, 2018
- DoD Directive 5118.03, “Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller)/Chief Financial Officer, Department of Defense (USD(C)/CFO),” April 20, 2012, as amended
- DoD Directive 5132.03, “DoD Policy and Responsibilities Relating to Security Cooperation,” December 29, 2016
- DoD Directive 5142.01, “Assistant Secretary of Defense for Legislative Affairs (ASD(LA)),” September 15, 2006
- DoD Directive 5160.62, “Single Manager Responsibility for Military Explosive Ordnance Disposal Technology and Training (EODT&T)” June 3, 2011, as amended
- DoD Directive 5205.07, “Special Access Program (SAP) Policy,” July 1, 2010, as amended

DoD Directive S-5210.36, “(U) Provision of DoD Sensitive Support to DoD Components and Other Departments and Agencies of the U.S. Government,” November 6, 2008, as amended

DoD Instruction 2000.28, “DoD Policy and Responsibilities Relating to the Regional Defense Combating Terrorism Fellowship Program (CTFP),” November 14, 2013, as amended

DoD Instruction O-3000.13, “DoD Rewards Program (DoDRP),” April 4, 2017

DoD Instruction 3002.04, “DoD Personnel Recovery - Non-conventional Assisted Recovery (NAR),” November 17, 2014, as amended

DoD Instruction 3003.01, “DoD Support to Civil Search and Rescue (SAR),” September 26, 2011, as amended

DoD Instruction 3224.04, “Single Manager Responsibility for Joint Military Diving Technology and Training (MDT&T),” May 23, 2008, as amended

DoD Instruction O-3607.02, “Military Information Support Operations (MISO),” June 13, 2016

DoD Instruction 4000.19, “Support Agreements,” December 16, 2020

DoD Instruction 5000.68, “Security Force Assistance (SFA),” October 27, 2010

DoD Instruction 5025.01, “DoD Issuances Program,” August 1, 2016, as amended

DoD Instruction 5200.01, “DoD Information Security Program and Protection of Sensitive Compartmented Information (SCI),” April 21, 2016, as amended

DoD Instruction 5205.11, “Management, Administration, and Oversight of DoD Special Access Programs (SAPs),” February 6, 2013, as amended

DoD Instruction 5530.03, “International Agreements,” December 4, 2019

DoD Instruction 8910.01, “Information Collection and Reporting,” May 19, 2014, as amended

DoD Manual 5200.01, Volume 1, “DoD Information Security Program: Overview, Classification, and Declassification,” February 24, 2012, as amended

DoD Manual 5200.01, Volume 2, “DoD Information Security Program: Marking of Information,” February 24, 2012, as amended

DoD Manual 5200.01, Volume 3, “DoD Information Security Program: Protection of Classified Information,” February 24, 2012, as amended

DoD Manual 5200.45, “Instructions for Developing Security Classification Guides,” April 2, 2013, as amended

Executive Order 13526, “Classified National Security Information,” December 29, 2009, as amended

Executive Order 13891, “Promoting the Rule of Law Through Improved Agency Guidance Documents,” October 9, 2019

Joint Publication 3-05, “Joint Doctrine for Special Operations,” current edition<sup>1</sup>

Joint Publication 3-13, “Information Operations,” current edition

Joint Publication 3-13.2, “Military Information Support Operations,” current edition<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Available on the Joint Doctrine, Education & Training Electronic Information System at [https://jdeis.js.mil/jdeis/new\\_pubs/jp3\\_05.pdf](https://jdeis.js.mil/jdeis/new_pubs/jp3_05.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Available on the Joint Doctrine, Education & Training Electronic Information System at [https://jdeis.js.mil/jdeis/new\\_pubs/jp3\\_13\\_2.pdf](https://jdeis.js.mil/jdeis/new_pubs/jp3_13_2.pdf)

Joint Publication 3-20, “Security Cooperation,” current edition  
Joint Publication 3-26, “Joint Combating Terrorism,” current edition<sup>3</sup>  
Joint Publication 3-40, “Joint Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction,” current edition  
Joint Publication 3-50, “Personnel Recovery,” October 2, 2015<sup>4</sup>  
Joint Publication 3-57, “Civil-Military Operations,” current edition  
Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, “DoD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms,” current edition  
Secretary of Defense Memorandum, “Department of Defense Congressional Liaison Activities,” January 14, 2020  
Secretary of Defense Memorandum, “Designation of the Secretary of the Navy as the DoD Executive Agent for Explosive Ordnance Disposal Technology and Training,” June 2, 2020  
Secretary of Defense Memorandum, “Organizational Role of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict,” November 18, 2020  
Secretary of Defense Memorandum, “Organizational Role of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict,” May 5, 2021  
United States Code, Title 10

---

<sup>3</sup> Available on the Joint Doctrine, Education & Training Electronic Information System at [https://jdeis.js.mil/jdeis/new\\_pubs/jp3\\_26.pdf](https://jdeis.js.mil/jdeis/new_pubs/jp3_26.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Available on the Joint Doctrine, Education & Training Electronic Information System at [https://jdeis.js.mil/jdeis/new\\_pubs/jp3\\_50.pdf](https://jdeis.js.mil/jdeis/new_pubs/jp3_50.pdf)