



DoD INSTRUCTION 3000.18

STRATEGIC READINESS

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Approved by:	Ashish S. Vazirani, Acting Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness

Purpose: In accordance with the authority in DoD Directive 5124.02 and the policy in DoD Directive 7730.65, this issuance establishes policy, assigns responsibilities, and provides the framework and process for assessing strategic readiness within the DoD.

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SECTION 1: GENERAL ISSUANCE INFORMATION

1.1. 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, the Office of Inspector General of the Department of Defense, the Defense Agencies, the DoD Field Activities, and all other organizational entities within the Department of Defense (referred to collectively in this issuance as the “DoD Components”).

1.2. POLICY.

The DoD:

- a. Evaluates readiness through a strategic lens that focuses on building capability and proficiency for future crises or conflict, while still meeting existing strategic missions and demands.
- b. Establishes a comprehensive framework to assess strategic readiness that leverages advanced data analytics, existing products, and assessments conducted across the DoD.
- c. Assigns responsibilities, functions, and authorities to ensure that the strategic readiness framework is incorporated into DoD policies, processes, and practices with common terminology and definitions.
- d. Uses findings from the Strategic Readiness Assessment (SRA) to inform:
 - (1) Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Execution processes in DoD Directive 7045.14.
 - (2) Strategic-level documents establishing goals and priorities for the DoD including the National Defense Strategy (NDS) and Defense Planning Guidance (DPG) pursuant to Section 113 of Title 10, United States Code (U.S.C.).
 - (3) Guidance for preparation and review of contingency and campaign plans as described in the Contingency Planning Guidance pursuant to Section 113 of Title 10, U.S.C.
 - (4) Global force management processes and products as described in the Global Force Management Implementation Guidance pursuant to Section 113 of Title 10, U.S.C.

SECTION 2: RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1. UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR PERSONNEL AND READINESS (USD(P&R)).

In addition to the responsibilities in Paragraph 2.15., the USD(P&R):

- a. Exercises overall responsibility for development of DoD strategic readiness policy, including defining and assessing strategic readiness within the DoD.
- b. Develops policies and plans, provides advice, and makes recommendations to ensure strategic readiness is the foundational framework to inform DoD readiness programs, reporting, and assessments to execute the NDS.
- c. Leads the coordination of the annual SRA with support and input provided by the offices of primary responsibility (OPRs) and offices of collateral responsibility (OCRs) utilizing existing products and assessments with supplemental inputs, as needed.
- d. Issues annual guidance on the SRA. This guidance will provide detailed instructions for OPRs and OCRs on required inputs to the assessment.
- e. Is the OPR for:
 - (1) Management and administration of the 10 dimensions of strategic readiness as described in Paragraph 3.2.
 - (2) Inputs to the force structure, human capital, and mobilization dimension assessments.
- f. Is an OCR for inputs to the operational readiness, modernization, and resilience dimension assessments.
- g. In conjunction with the Chief Digital and Artificial Intelligence Officer (CDAO), supports automation of strategic readiness-related data and assessments for inclusion in data presentations provided to senior DoD leadership.

2.2. ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR READINESS (ASD(R)).

Under the authority, direction, and control of the USD(P&R), the ASD(R) oversees development of strategic readiness-related policy initiatives.

2.3. DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR FORCE READINESS.

Under the authority, direction, and control of the USD(P&R), through the ASD(R), the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Force Readiness:

- a. Develops strategic readiness-related policy initiatives and the annual SRA.
- b. Provides guidance, as needed, to the Offices of the Principal Staff Assistants (PSAs) and DoD Components on the implementation of policy related to strategic readiness.

2.4. UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR RESEARCH AND ENGINEERING.

In addition to the responsibilities in Paragraph 2.15., the Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering is an OCR for inputs to the modernization and sustainment dimension assessments.

2.5. UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR ACQUISITION AND SUSTAINMENT.

In addition to the responsibilities in Paragraph 2.15., the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment is:

- a. The OPR for inputs to the sustainment and modernization dimension assessments.
- b. An OCR for inputs to the mobilization and resilience dimension assessments.

2.6. UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR POLICY.

In addition to the responsibilities in Paragraph 2.15., the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy is:

- a. The OPR for inputs to the global defense posture (to include the continental United States), Allies and partners, and resilience dimension assessments.
- b. An OCR for inputs to the force structure dimension assessment.

2.7. UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE (COMPTROLLER)/CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER, DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.

In addition to the responsibilities in Paragraph 2.15., the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller)/Chief Financial Officer, Department of Defense is an OCR for inputs to the business systems and organizational effectiveness dimension assessment.

2.8. UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR INTELLIGENCE AND SECURITY.

In addition to the responsibilities in Paragraph 2.15., the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence and Security is an OCR for inputs to the Allies and partners and global defense posture dimension assessments.

2.9. DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT.

In addition to the responsibilities in Paragraph 2.15., the Director of Administration and Management is:

- a. The OPR for inputs to the organizational effectiveness section of the business systems and organizational effectiveness dimension assessment.
- b. An OCR for inputs to the sustainment, operational readiness, force structure, and modernization dimension assessments.

2.10. DIRECTOR, COST ASSESSMENT AND PROGRAM EVALUATION.

In addition to the responsibilities in Paragraph 2.15., the Director, Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation is an OCR for inputs to the force structure, sustainment, operational readiness, global defense posture, and modernization dimension assessments.

2.11. DIRECTOR, OPERATIONAL TEST AND EVALUATION.

In addition to the responsibilities in Paragraph 2.15., the Director, Operational Test and Evaluation, is an OCR for inputs to the modernization dimension assessment.

2.12. DOD CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER.

In addition to the responsibilities in Paragraph 2.15., the DoD Chief Information Officer is:

- a. The OPR for inputs to the business systems section of the business systems and organizational effectiveness dimension assessment for the development and maintenance of integrated business processes within the DoD, including the Defense Business Enterprise Architecture.
- b. An OCR for inputs to sustainment, force structure, operational readiness, modernization, mobilization, global defense posture, human capital, Allies and partners, and resilience dimension assessments.

2.13. CDAO.

In addition to the responsibilities in Paragraph 2.15., the CDAO:

- a. Leads DoD efforts to automate strategic readiness-related data and assessments in conjunction with the USD(P&R) for inclusion in the data presentations provided to senior DoD leadership.
- b. Provides the systems and infrastructure to support the analysis of predictive readiness data to inform strategic readiness related initiatives.

2.14. DIRECTORS OF THE DEFENSE AGENCIES AND DOD FIELD ACTIVITIES.

In addition to the responsibilities in Paragraph 2.15., the Directors of the Defense Agencies and DoD Field Activities support OPRs and OCRs by preparing inputs for each dimension assessment, as appropriate.

2.15. PSAS AND DOD COMPONENT HEADS.

The PSAs and DoD Component heads:

- a. Ensure the framework of strategic readiness is incorporated into their respective Component's policies, processes, and practices.
- b. In coordination with the USD(P&R), coordinate the SRA's drafting and publication.
- c. Ensure records and information created in accordance with this issuance are retained in accordance with DoD Instruction 5015.02 and Component records management disposition schedules, policies, procedures, and authorized retention disposition authorities, regardless of the form, format, location, or classification of such records and information.

2.16. SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS AND THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR SPECIAL OPERATIONS AND LOW-INTENSITY CONFLICT.

In addition to the responsibilities in Paragraph 2.15., the Secretaries of the Military Departments and the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict are OCRs who provide data, analysis, and subject matter expertise to each OPR, as required, to support the development of inputs to dimension assessments, in accordance with Sections 7013, 8013, 9013, and 138 of Title 10, U.S.C., responsibilities, respectively.

2.17. CHIEF, NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU.

In addition to the responsibilities in Paragraph 2.15., the Chief, National Guard Bureau:

- a. Is an OCR for inputs on Army National Guard and Air National Guard forces in support of the Secretaries of the Military Departments for the mobilization and human capital dimension assessments.
- b. Provides data, analysis, and subject matter expertise to each OPR, as needed, to support the development of inputs to dimension assessments.

2.18. CJCS.

In addition to the responsibilities in Paragraph 2.15., the CJCS is:

- a. The OPR for inputs to the operational readiness dimension assessment as it applies to the joint force.
- b. An OCR for inputs to all other strategic readiness dimension assessments.

2.19. COMBATANT COMMANDERS.

In addition to the responsibilities in Paragraph 2.15., the Combatant Commanders:

- a. Are OCRs for inputs to the resilience, operational readiness, global defense posture, and Allies and partners dimension assessments.
- b. With Joint Force Provider responsibility, are OCRs to provide data, analysis, and subject matter expertise to each OPR, as required, to support the development of inputs to dimension assessments, in accordance with Section 164 of Title 10, U.S.C., responsibilities.

SECTION 3: STRATEGIC READINESS

3.1. GENERAL.

Improving DoD understanding of the comprehensive and cumulative impacts of senior leaders' decisions on future readiness is central to strategic readiness, as defined in the Glossary.

a. The strategic readiness framework combines a comprehensive assessment of readiness with advanced data analytics to inform senior leaders of the readiness trade-offs and impacts resulting from their decisions to better illuminate associated risks to force, mission, and the NDS.

b. Once DoD conducts the first SRA, this issuance may be updated to garner best practices and lessons learned on how to conduct an SRA and establish the strategic readiness framework.

3.2. STRATEGIC READINESS DIMENSIONS.

Strategic readiness dimensions describe the extent of DoD combined capability and capacity that is vital to achieving strategic objectives.

a. These dimensions help break down the complexity of strategic readiness by organizing disparate elements into more easily assessable and meaningful components. Although the dimensions are distinct, interconnected relationships clearly exist among them.

b. The descriptions in Paragraphs 3.2.b.(1)-(10) are designed to help guide the OPRs and OCRs when developing SRA dimension assessments. These strategic readiness dimension descriptions are not meant to redefine terms which have doctrinal meaning in the broader DoD context.

(1) Operational Readiness Dimension.

Operational readiness includes all factors impacting the joint force's ability to perform assigned missions and functions for which they are organized and designed in support of the National Military Strategy and NDS.

(2) Sustainment Dimension.

(a) Sustainment includes all factors impacting the production and maintenance of the materiel, supply capacity, logistics flow, and global lines of communication necessary for the joint force to achieve strategic objectives, uninterrupted or resilient to interruptions, and for the duration required.

(b) This dimension also includes things such as provision of logistics, medical, and personnel services required to maintain and prolong operations until successful mission accomplishment.

(3) Mobilization Dimension.

Mobilization, in the context of strategic readiness, includes three different aspects: personnel, industry, and materiel and equipment.

(a) Personnel.

Mobilization of personnel is a DoD-wide effort that includes all the Military Services (including the Active and Reserve Components).

(b) Industry.

Mobilizing industry provides required materiel, equipment, and services that will support the joint force. This entails increasing capacity in sectors that currently produce or provide defense products and services as well as developing new industrial base capabilities, when needed.

(c) Material and Equipment.

Mobilizing materiel and equipment consists of many activities that can be grouped under two major tasks:

1. Increasing the availability of materiel and equipment to accommodate the needs of a larger active force.
2. Alleviating shortages by allocating or redistributing materiel and equipment in accordance with validated priorities.

(4) Modernization Dimension.

(a) The modernization dimension includes all factors impacting the timely technological advancement of current and new weapons systems to field, employ, and sustain a combat credible force that delivers and maintains overmatch.

(b) In simplest terms, the modernization dimension must ensure the DoD gains and maintains technological superiority over adversaries. To effectively modernize, the joint force must work with industry to develop, produce, acquire, and integrate technologically advanced capabilities in sufficient time while effectively balancing between capability and capacity.

(c) Modernization also accounts for the operational concepts and associated infrastructure to train and employ new technologies and modernized equipment to gain and maintain advantage.

(5) Global Defense Posture Dimension.

(a) The global defense posture dimension considers the totality of U.S. forces and capabilities forward stationed and rotationally deployed for defense activities in U.S. foreign and overseas locations, as well as the network of bases and infrastructure and international

agreements and arrangements that underwrite and support the stationing, deployment, and employment of these forces.

(b) It is the network of host nation relationships and agreements, activities, footprint, and forces that comprise existing and potential forward U.S. military presence and capabilities to address current and future security challenges.

(c) In the strategic readiness context, these are the forces (forward stationed and in the homeland), footprints, and agreements necessary to create favorable conditions that support and enable the DoD to achieve strategic objectives.

(6) Force Structure Dimension.

(a) Force structure includes all factors relevant to identifying the appropriate number of personnel, weapon systems, equipment, and units to field, employ, and sustain a combat credible force aligned to national security objectives.

(b) In simplest terms, this is the capacity that ensures capabilities are effective and can meet the demands placed upon the force.

(7) Resilience Dimension.

Resilience involves retaining the capability and capacity to perform essential functions and services that enable the DoD to train, deploy, and employ forces in support of projecting power with little to no indications or warning of a threat. If an attack or natural disaster interrupts essential functions and services, the DoD can rapidly mitigate the effect on the ability to train, deploy and employ forces, and project power.

(8) Human Capital Dimension.

(a) Human capital encompasses all factors affecting the policies, systems, and actions taken to recruit, train, develop, promote, and retain DoD personnel to optimally execute its missions and functions to achieve strategic objectives.

(b) This includes cultivating a civilian and military workforce with the appropriate disciplines and knowledge base to compete with our strategic competitors.

(9) Allies and Partners Dimension.

This dimension involves the specific areas where Allies and partner nations and forces act in support of U.S. defense priorities including, but not limited to:

- (a) Providing capabilities to support U.S. operations and activities.
- (b) Allowing access, basing, and overflight.
- (c) Sharing information and intelligence.

(10) Business Systems and Organizational Effectiveness Dimension.

This dimension considers the agility of DoD's processes, procedures, and business systems to efficiently and effectively process information, act in response to a changing national security environment, and reach decisions that are aligned with strategic objectives. Business systems and organizational effectiveness are mutually supporting but assessed separately within one dimension.

(a) Business Systems.

1. Information systems that are operated by, for, or on behalf of the DoD, including: financial systems, financial data feeder systems, contracting systems, logistics systems, planning and budgeting systems, installations management systems, human resources management systems, and training and readiness systems.

2. These do not include a national security system or an information system used exclusively by and within the defense commissary system or the exchange system or other instrumentality of the DoD conducted for the morale, welfare, and recreation of members of the U.S. Armed Forces using non-appropriated funds.

(b) Organizational Effectiveness.

1. In the strategic readiness context, this dimension assesses how the DoD (and organizations and individuals within it) best allocates time and energy towards activities and efforts that support and align with strategic objectives and reduce activities that detract from them.

2. This includes reducing or eliminating administrative burdens, finding efficiencies in required processes, and maximizing the effectiveness of processes, systems, and forums.

3.3. EXTERNAL DEPENDENCIES.

Given the overarching nature of the dimensions, DoD's ability to overcome some strategic readiness challenges is dependent on factors outside of its control. The DoD does not have oversight of all aspects of strategic readiness and might incur risk due to issues outside the scope of its mission. Accordingly, addressing challenges to strategic readiness may require DoD to collaborate with interagency partners, industry, academia, Allies, and other partners, when appropriate.

SECTION 4: SRA

4.1. GENERAL.

a. Led by the USD(P&R), DoD will conduct an annual comprehensive assessment of its readiness to achieve strategic objectives as outlined in the NDS.

b. The SRA findings will inform the Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Execution process, DPG, Contingency Planning Guidance, NDS development, and global force management processes and products. Further, the SRA findings will help to illuminate potential risks to strategic readiness and inform senior decision makers of available options and trade-offs to mitigate these risks.

4.2. ANNUAL GUIDANCE.

a. The SRA annual guidance issued by the USD(P&R) will provide detailed instructions for OPRs and OCRs on required inputs to the assessment. As such, it should be used by OPRs in the development of their related assessments. This will serve to better synchronize products and limit the need for supplemental requests for information. It will include, at a minimum:

(1) A strategic objective that will outline the threat and timeline(s) against which to measure DoD strategic readiness.

(2) Detailed instructions that will outline, specifically, the required inputs from OPRs and OCRs.

(3) Assessment guidance that will provide the parameters for evaluation to ensure uniformity across dimension assessments and inputs.

(4) Additional assessment criteria, as warranted.

(5) Prescribed timelines that show the SRA will be published in November of each year in support of DPG development in the following January.

b. Upon delivery of the SRA, USD(P&R) will solicit direction from the Secretary of Defense or Deputy Secretary of Defense on focus areas for the subsequent year's SRA annual guidance.

4.3. ANNUAL REPORT.

a. The SRA will:

(1) Be coordinated across the Department and inform senior leaders of DoD's ability to resource and execute strategic priorities over time.

(2) Aggregate inputs and comprehensively assess DoD's ability to achieve subordinate objectives relative to the strategic objective identified in the annual SRA guidance.

(3) Evaluate strategic readiness across the dimensions described in Paragraph 3.2.b.(1)-(10).

(4) Account for the interdependencies between and the cumulative readiness impacts among the various dimensions.

b. The SRA report will, as appropriate, use existing products and processes as inputs for analysis and to inform OPR and OCR outputs. On an annual basis, each SRA report will, at a minimum, include:

(1) *Executive Summary.*

An overview of the most critical readiness issues creating strategic risk for the strategic objective identified in the annual guidance outlined in Paragraph 4.2.

(2) *Assumptions.*

A statement of assumptions made in developing the annual SRA.

(3) *Dimension Assessment.*

In line with the annual strategic guidance, OPRs and OCRs will assess each dimension as a component of strategic readiness. Dimension assessments will also identify any areas of overlap between dimensions with the potential to create compounded risks across dimensions. Dimension assessments will be included in the annual SRA.

(a) Assigned OPRs and OCRs will provide input to each dimension, highlighting the key variables and critical challenges that degrade or inhibit strategic readiness within their respective dimensions. Inputs will include, at a minimum:

1. A complete list of challenges to strategic readiness for the prescribed strategic objective, in order of severity.

2. The key metrics used for evaluating challenges to strategic readiness for the prescribed strategic objective.

3. A complete list of all assessments, analyses, and data sources used to support the prioritized challenges and metrics identified in the Paragraphs 4.3.b.(3)(a)1 and 4.3.b.(3)(a)2, as well as areas where gaps in data prevent comprehensive analyses.

4. A list of available strategic mitigation options the Secretary of Defense and other senior leaders could take to reduce identified risks. These strategic mitigation options will be high-level policy, guidance, or programmatic changes senior leadership can direct to increase overall strategic readiness.

5. A list of known areas of overlap with other dimensions to ensure dependent variables are identified and mapped appropriately. Identifying dependent variables will ensure the SRA accounts for impacts on other dimensions and that recommendations are complementary.

(b) The SRA framework requires consistency and standardization across the dimensions to ensure objective, rigorous, and unbiased reporting. Therefore, each dimension assessment will:

1. Align to the approved strategic objective identified in the annual guidance.
2. Adhere to the risk assessment guidelines provided in the annual assessment guidance.

4.4. COORDINATION AND SIGNATURE AUTHORITY.

The SRA will be coordinated by the USD(P&R) among the PSAs and the DoD Component heads before publication of the final report. The SRA will be signed by the USD(P&R).

4.5. ADMINISTRATION.

Administrative requirements and guidelines for conducting the SRA are as follows.

a. Timeline.

The annual SRA cycle will inform the development of the DPG and the subsequent Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Execution cycle. The annual SRA guidance will set specific dates for the year's SRA cycle, with the guidance issued in time for publication of the SRA in November of that year, in line with DPG development.

b. Classification.

The SRA will be classified no higher than SECRET//NOFORN to ensure the widest participation, coordination, and distribution of the final report. If required, higher-level classification appendices may be included for supporting information, with appropriate accesses and controls.

c. Process Improvement.

This is an iterative process, and the SRA will evolve with the changing strategic landscape and as the DoD conducts successive SRAs. Recommended changes to the SRA framework will also be incorporated into the periodic updates of this issuance.

GLOSSARY

G.1. ACRONYMS.

ACRONYM	MEANING
ASD(R)	Assistant Secretary of Defense for Readiness
CDAO	Chief Digital and Artificial Intelligence Officer
CJCS	Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff
DPG	Defense Planning Guidance
NDS	National Defense Strategy
OCR	office of collateral responsibility
OPR	office of primary responsibility
PSA	Principal Staff Assistant
SRA	Strategic Readiness Assessment
U.S.C.	United States Code
USD(P&R)	Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness

G.2. DEFINITIONS.

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

TERM	DEFINITION
capability	The ability to complete a task or execute a course of action under specified conditions and level of performance.
capacity	The extent (scale, scope, and duration parameters) to which a task can be performed. Capacity is the measurable aspects of a capability.
dimensions of strategic readiness	Groupings of related DoD capabilities, activities, and outputs vital to achieving strategic objectives.

TERM	DEFINITION
global defense posture	The U.S. forces and capabilities forward stationed and rotationally deployed for defense activities in U.S. foreign and overseas locations, as well as the network of bases and infrastructure and international agreements and arrangements that underwrite and support the stationing, deployment, and employment of these forces. It is the network of host nation relationships and agreements, activities, footprint, and forces that comprise forward U.S. military presence and capabilities to address current and future security challenges.
military forces	Agencies or organizations of a government providing armed forces that operate according to the methods, laws, and customs of war, established by an act of the government, in which persons are appointed, enlisted, or inducted for military service and that operate and are administered within a military or executive department.
office of collateral responsibility	The PSA or DoD Component designated as responsible for assisting the OPR in the development, management, and coordination of an SRA dimension.
office of primary responsibility	The PSA or DoD Component designated as responsible for the development, management, and coordination of an SRA dimension with inputs from OCRs.
readiness	The ability of military forces to fight and meet the demands of assigned missions.
strategic readiness	The ability to build, maintain, and balance warfighting capabilities and competitive advantages that ensure the DoD can achieve strategic objectives across threats and time horizons.

REFERENCES

- DoD Directive 5124.02, “Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (USD(P&R)),” June 23, 2008
- DoD Directive 7045.14, “The Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Execution (PPBE) Process,” January 25, 2013, as amended
- DoD Directive 7730.65, “DoD Readiness Reporting System,” May 31, 2023
- DoD Instruction 5015.02, “DoD Records Management Program,” February 24, 2015, as amended
- Secretary of Defense, Contingency Planning Guidance, current edition
- Secretary of Defense, Fiscal Year Defense Planning Guidance, current edition
- Secretary of Defense, Global Force Management Implementation Guidance, current edition
- United States Code, Title 10