



SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
1000 DEFENSE PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1000

1/30/21

MEMORANDUM FOR SENIOR PENTAGON LEADERSHIP  
COMMANDERS OF THE COMBATANT COMMANDS  
DEFENSE AGENCY AND DOD FIELD ACTIVITY DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: DoD Advisory Committees — Zero-Based Review

Advisory committees have and will continue to provide an important role in shaping public policy within DoD. That said, our stewardship responsibilities require that we continually assess to ensure each advisory committee provides appropriate value today and in the future, as times and requirements change.

I am aware of and appreciate earlier review efforts to reshape how we use advisory committees and consider the tangible benefits they bring to the Department. Nevertheless, I am directing a zero-based review of all DoD advisory committees, to include any advisory committee that is not subject to the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) (5 U.S.C., Appendix). This review will, by definition and intent, focus our advisory committee efforts to align with our most pressing strategic priorities and the National Defense Strategy.

The Interim Director of Administration and Management (DA&M), in consultation with the Acting General Counsel of the DoD (GC DoD) will lead this review, and I am asking for your personal attention in this effort. As an interim step, I am directing the immediate suspension of all advisory committee operations until the review is completed unless otherwise directed by myself or the Deputy Secretary of Defense. In addition, the DA&M, who exercises the Secretary of Defense statutory and regulatory authorities pertaining to the FACA, will not, for the duration of the review, establish or renew a DoD advisory committee unless authorized by myself or the Deputy Secretary of Defense.

I also direct, no later than February 16, 2021, the conclusion of service for all DoD advisory committee and subcommittee members currently serving on DoD advisory committees where the DoD approving authority is the Secretary of Defense or where statute authorizes another DoD civilian officer or employee, or Active Duty member of the Armed Services to act as the DoD approving authority. Each Component head ("DoD Sponsor") that sponsors a DoD advisory committee subject to this review, will ensure that appropriate letters are sent no later than February 26, 2021 to each advisory committee or subcommittee member thanking them for their service. The Interim DA&M will provide each component head the required letter that must be signed by the DoD Sponsor.

A list of the affected DoD advisory committees, to include those not subject to the FACA, is attached. Please note the only advisory committees and/or committee members not subject to the zero-based review or conclusion of service are described in the attachment. In addition, each Component head, no later than February 28, 2021, will certify to the Interim DA&M that no other advisory committee has been established and utilized within the Component where at least one advisory committee member is not a full-time or permanent part-



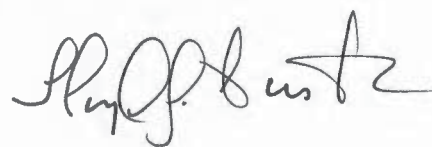
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time Federal civilian officer or employee, or Active Duty member of the uniformed services. If the Component established or utilized such an advisory committee, then it will be suspended until the Interim DA&M, in consultation with the Acting GC DoD, determines the advisory committee's status. The Interim DA&M will notify me no later than March 15, 2021 of any such identified advisory committee and its status.

With regard to the zero-based review, each DoD Sponsor will conduct an in-depth business case of every sponsored advisory committee, supported by fact-based evidence for continued utilization of the advisory committee. Each business case should consider, but is not limited to: review of the committee's mission and function as it relates to DoD strategic priorities and National Defense Strategy; potential functional realignments to create a single cross-functional advisory committee; and potential legislative changes to non-discretionary advisory committees to properly align them with our strategic priorities. Each DoD Sponsor will provide his or her business case(s) to the Interim DA&M based on the tier-review schedule described in the attachment.

The Interim DA&M, in consultation with the Acting GC DoD and following the tier-review schedule, will review each DoD Sponsor's business case and make final recommendations to me on each DoD advisory committee, to include retention, realignment, termination, changes to mission or functions, membership balance, membership size, and possible legislative changes to non-discretionary advisory committees. Following appropriate discussions, I will take action on the Interim DA&M recommendations.

This process shall ensure that advisory committee and subcommittee member appointments comply with all applicable federal statutes and regulations, to include DoD policies and procedures. DoD Sponsors, in consultation with the Special Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for White House Liaison, will develop potential member candidates that conform to the advisory committee's membership balance plan or, in the case of those not subject to the FACA, statutory requirements. All member and subcommittee member appointments will be approved by me or the Deputy Secretary of Defense using the DoD Appointment Approval Instrument prepared by the DoD Advisory Committee Management Officer, in consultation with the Office of the GC DoD. In addition, all committee and subcommittee work will be based on written terms of reference unless otherwise provided for by statute or Presidential directive. No committee or subcommittee member will perform any work until properly appointed, unless they have an active appointment.



Attachment:  
As stated